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Occupational Burnout Level of Preschool Teachers Working in the East and West of Turkey*

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Abstract

The aim of this research is to examine the occupational burnout levels of preschool teachers' work in terms of working in the eastern and western parts of Turkey, voluntariness, gender, working location and age. In accordance with the general aim of the study, "Maslach Burnout Inventory" and "Personal Information Form" (prepared by the researcher) were filled by 72 preschool teachers working in the eastern provinces of Turkey and 82 preschool teachers working in the western ones: a total of 154 preschool teachers, 133 females and 21 males. ANOVA and t-test were used in the evaluation of the data. It was determined that the part of Turkey where teachers work, east or west, did not cause any difference in their occupational burnout. However, preschool teachers who inadvertently chose their profession experienced greater emotional exhaustion and decreased sense of personal achievement compared with preschool teachers who chose their profession voluntarily. Also, preschool teachers who worked in the west at the age of 31-40 years and at over 40 years experienced higher emotional exhaustion levels than those who worked in the east at the age of 31-40 years and at over 40 years. Further studies should be conducted with more teachers from all the cities in the seven regions of the country.

Keywords: Emotional Burnout, Depersonalization, Decrease in Personal Achievement, Working Region, Turkey

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INTRODUCTION

Relationships and interactions are important parts of the lives of individuals who work directly with others. These interactions are experienced more intensely in the field of education (Sucuoglu and Kuloglu 1996). In today's Turkey, the increased roles assigned to teachers, the intense stress sources in their working environments and the compulsory eastern duty may create a situation that challenges their mental health. In addition to stress and problems arising from financial difficulties, teachers may have many physical and physiological problems and may feel tired and distressed. While such teachers establish a defense mechanism by isolating themselves from their environments, they lose sensitivity to their professional environments and feel that their personal achievements are diminishing. Observation of these situations indicate the development of burnout. In accordance with the educational policy applied in our country, eastern duty is mandatory. The lack of materials in the educational settings of the East, overpopulation of classes (because the school is a single class and preschool teachers teach children within the age group of 4, 5 and 6 years at the same time), educational backgrounds of parents, their socio-economical levels, their perspectives towards schools, cultural differences, adverse environmental conditions and even terrorist incidents lead to an increase in the professional concerns of teachers working in this area.

In literature, there are various definitions of burnout. According to Antoniou, Polychroni and Walters (2009); burnout is a feeling of exhaustion in physiological and emotional areas due to failure to cope with experienced stress in occupations that require intensive communication with people. While they defined the concept of burnout in occupational terms, Maslach and Jackson (1986) presented three different categories, emotions related to emotional burnout, depersonalization and lack of personal achievement. Emotional burnout is defined as a feeling of overburden and exhaustion due to the work done by a person. Depersonalization involves the manifestation of attitudes and behaviors devoid of emotion by individuals towards people whom they give care and service. Personal achievement is defined as coping with problems, success and feeling competent (Ergin 1992, Haran et.al. 1998; Arslan et.al. 1996; Cam 1992; Sayil et.al. 1997).

Problems such as disciplinary problems of students, overcrowded classes (Metin and Sacan 2017), criticism of the society (Farber 1984) and inadequate physical conditions, excess bureaucratic works (Sari 2004), low income (Otacioglu 2008; Lasota et al. 2018), lack of social support (Cheuk and Sail 1995; Taormina and Law 2000; Gunduz 2005), student-teacher conflicts, school-family conflicts (Tumkaya and Turker 2010), difficulties of getting promotion (Cano-Garcia, Padilla-Munoz and Carrasco-Ortiz 2005), geographic isolation and a lack of funding for school resources (Berry et al. 2011; Oram, Owens & Maras 2016), pressures of social and political forces on educational institutions, inadequate reward and inadequate participation in the decision making process of the institution (Deniz Kan 2008) are among the factors of occupational burnout related to teachers. Because of these problems, teachers may experience more stress than other professionals (Cokluk 2003). Occupational burnout leads to absenteeism and tardiness due to illness, increase in the tendency or intention to leave one’s work, detachment from work, deterioration in the quality of service, tendency to stay away from work without permission or longer than the period of permission, deterioration in human relations (both in the working area and outside of it), problems in marriage and family life, low work performance, decrease in organizational commitment and growing dissatisfaction against work (Surgevil 2006). Additionally, in teachers, occupational burnout leads to fatigue, insomnia, low self-esteem and other psychosomatic disorders. It also causes alienation from work and their profession, loss of compassion, idealism and kindness towards their students, administrators, student's parents, schools and profession and the development of negative emotions towards the individuals they interact with at work (Cimen 2007; Gunduz 2005; Baysal 1995). According to Jennings and Greenberg (2009), teachers who experience occupational burnout often become stricter in behavior management practices.

Preschool period is a term covering the years from the birth date of the child to the start of primary school. It has an important influence on a child's future, during which physical, motor and social-emotional, mental and language developments are mostly completed; also, personality is

shaped, and the child is constantly growing. In particular, considering the importance of preschool education, preschool teachers feel great responsibility. Because preschool education, which forms the first step of education, can be likened to the first button of a shirt, it should be worn right. For this reason, it is important for the child to continue his development in a healthy environment at the early ages. So, it is necessary that preschool educational institutions are equipped, and teachers are interested, willing and sensitive to the profession.

There are numerous studies in literature that attempted to determine the occupational burnout of teachers. The studies focused on the occupational burnout levels of teachers (Wang, Hall and Rahimi 2015; Roslan et. al. 2015; Brouwers and Tomic 2014; Akin et.al. 2014), the relation between corporate culture and burnout levels of early childhood education teachers (Park and Lee 2016), the effects of occupational burnout on the intention of nursery teachers to leave their job (Kim 2016), the relation between preschool teacher's tendency to love students and their occupational burnout (Kabakli Cimen 2016), the relations between age, gender, marital status and educational levels and occupational burnout of teachers working in public schools (Shaheen and Mahmood 2016), the occupational burnout of primary and secondary teachers (Antoniou, Ploumpi and Ntalla 2013), the occupational burnout levels of teachers working in Kilis (Ulutasdemir and Deveci 2015), and the physical education teachers working in Ankara (Tuna and Cimen 2013). However, no study has examined the occupational burnout levels of preschool teachers working in different regions of Turkey. This is the first study to compare occupational burnout in eastern and western regions of Turkey. It shows the originality of this work, and it should be an example for furure studies.

This study may lead to early and intensive interventions in alleviating occupational burnout risks. In addition, preschool teachers experiencing occupational burnout have serious consequences on students, families, educational environment, school management and the community. This study, which examines the occupational burnout of preschool teachers, is important in terms of identifying the personal and organizational factors that cause the feeling of occupational burnout, and it proposes solutions to eliminate these factors. Determining the occupational burnout levels of preschool teachers and identifying their problems better are helpful in proposing solutions; this study is of importance in terms of making contributions to the effectiveness of their profession and their achievements. Moreover, the results of this study are also important because they are an addition to the findings of the few studies carried out in relation to occupational burnout of preschool teachers and the study added the dimension of working in the eastern and western provinces to the occupational burnout problem of preschool teachers in Turkey. The aim of this study is to compare the burnout levels of preschool teachers working in the east and west of Turkey in terms of whether they willingly chose their job or not, their gender, age and the type of residence where they work.

In response to this main objective, the following questions are relevant:

1) Are the occupational burnout levels of preschool teachers working in the east and west of Turkey different according to age?

2) Are the occupational burnout levels of preschool teachers working in the east and west of Turkey different according to gender?

3) Are the occupational burnout levels of preschool teachers working in the east and west of Turkey different according to their willingness in choosing their profession?

4) Are the occupational burnout levels of preschool teachers working in the east and west of Turkey different according to the type of residence where they work?

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METHOD

Research Design

This study, which aims to determine the occupational burnout level of preschool teachers working in the east and west of Turkey, is a study carried out in descriptive survey model.

Research Sample / Study Group

Snowball sampling method is used in sample selection for purposeful sampling. In the logic of the snowball sampling method, the principle of chain transportation is dominant. The researcher first identifies a person or a small number of people in the target domain. These are usually the first people the researcher can reach first. Then the researcher gets help from these people and reaches out to other people involved in the research. In short, in this method, after the first persons are found, other people are reached with their help, like snowballs (Guler, Halicioglu and Tasgin 2013). The researcher first contacted preschool teachers who were known to have worked in the east or west of Turkey. Eastern Anatolia Region, Southeastern Anatolia Region and Eastern Black Sea Region have been accepted as the east of Turkey; Marmara Region, Aegean Region, Mediterranean Region, Western Black Sea Region and Central Anatolia Region have been accepted as the western part of Turkey. The Maslach Burnout Scale was sent online to these teachers, and they were asked to fill it out. At the same time, the names and e-mail addresses of other preschool teachers that these teachers knew to be working in the east and west were obtained. Thus, these teachers and other teachers known by them helped reach new teachers to be included in the research.

Table 1 Demographic information of the working group

Demographic Variables			East-West Region		Total	Chi-Square Value	p
			West	East			
Gender	Female	f	73	60	133	1.05	0.21
		%	89	83	86		
	Male	f	9	12	21		
		%	11	17	14		
	Total	f	82	72	154		
		%	100	100	100		
Marital status	Maried	f	49	22	71	13.16[a]	0.00**
		%	59.80	30.60	46.10		
	Single	f	33	50	83		
		%	40.20	69.40	53.90		
	Total	f	82	72	154		
		%	100	100	100		
Income rate	1.500-2.500 TL	f	70	62	132	0.22	0.90
		%	85.40	86.10	85.70		
	2.500- 3.500 TL	f	10	9	19		
		%	12.20	12.50	12.30		
	3.500 and upper	f	2	1	3		
		%	2.40	1.40	1.90		
	Total	f	82	72	154		
		%	100	100	100		

In total, 154 preschool teachers were included in the study; 72 preschool teachers were working in the eastern provinces and 82 preschool teachers were working in the western provinces of Turkey during the 2013-2014 education year, 133 of which are female, while 21 are male. Sixty percent (60%) of the preschool teachers working in the west were married and 40% were single, while 31% of the preschool teachers working in the east were married and 69% were single. As to the level of income, 85% of the preschool teachers working in the west were receiving less than 2500 TL, 12% were receiving 2500-3500 TL and 2% were receiving more than 3500 TL, whereas 86% of those in the east were receiving less than 2500 TL, 13% were receiving 2500-3500 TL and 1% were receiving more than 3500 TL.

When the demographic characteristics were examined, it was seen that there were no statistically significant differences between the groups in terms of gender and income level. In terms of marital status, it was seen that majority of the teachers who worked in the east were single. This indicates that the characteristics of the groups are close to each other.

Research Instruments and Procedures

In the study, Maslach Burnout Scale, developed by Maslach and Jackson (1986), and "Personal Information Form", prepared by the researcher, were used for data collection. Personal Information Form includes information such as teacher's age, gender, willingness to choose their profession and the residence where they work. Maslach Burnout Inventory is a 5 point likert scale consisting of 22 expressions. The expressions are formed by three sub dimensions, namely emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and decrease in personal achievement. When the scale is scored, individual or total points can be obtained in each of the three dimensions. Responses given to scale are scored in intervals as follows: 1= never and 5=always. The lowest score that can be obtained from this scale is 22, and the highest score is 110. During the implementation of the scale, the high scores obtained from emotional exhaustion and depersonalization and the low scores obtained from decrease in personal achievement are indicators of occupational burnout.

The validity and reliability of the Turkish translation of Maslach Burnout Inventory were evaluated according to Ergin (1992), and the validity studies of the scale confirmed the three factor structure. The Cronbach alpha coefficients for the scale were found: emotional exhaustion – .83, depersonalization – .65 and the personal achievement – .72. When the internal consistency of the scale is considered, Cronbach alpha internal consistency coefficient was determined as .83 and the personal achievement sub-dimension was determined as .72, the emotional exhaustion sub-dimension was determined as .77 and the depersonalization sub-dimension was determined as .67 for the subscales. Version studies of the scale for teachers in Turkey were carried out according to Girgin (1995), and the reliability coefficients of the scale were determined as .87 for emotional exhaustion, .63 for depersonalization and .74 for decrease in sense of personal achievement. In the study carried out by Celik and Yilmaz (2015), the Cronbach alpha internal consistency coefficients of the scale were calculated as 0.87 for emotional exhaustion, 0.70 for depersonalization and 0.78 for sense of personal failure. Maslach Burnout Inventory is a scale that is current and has been used in numerous studies (Oberle and Schonert-Reichl 2016; Rey, Extremera and Pena 2016; Fiorilli et. al. 2016; Gluschkoff et. al. 2016; Platsidou & Daniilidou 2016; Sadeghi & Khezrlou 2016).

Data Analysis

SPSS 22 was used in the analysis of the data. First, analysis was done to determine whether the scores of the teachers showed normal distribution. As a result of the analysis, the skewness and kurtosis values of the scores were examined, and it was obsrved that both values are between -1.5 and +1.5 (Table 2). According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2013), the values of skewness and kurtosis are between -1.5 and +1.5, whereas those of George and Mallery (2010) are between -2 and +2. It is, therefore, assumed that teachers' occupational burnout scores are normally distributed. For this reason, one-way variance analysis and t-test were used for the evaluation of data.

Table 2 Normality test results of burnout scale points of preschool teachers

The Occupational Burnout Scale Subscales		Statistic	Std. Error
Depersonalization	Mean	12.75	0.59
	Skewness	0.29	0.195
	Kurtosis	-0.78	0.39
Emotional Exhaustion	Mean	7.01	0.322
	Skewness	0.81	0.195
	Kurtosis	0.47	0.39
Decrease in the Personal Achievement Sense	Mean	23.01	0.37
	Skewness	-0.25	0.195
	Kurtosis	-0.25	0.39

*p<0.05

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RESULTS

The findings obtained in this section were summarized and were discussed in relation to studies in literature.

Table 3: Occupational burnout levels of teachers working in eastern and western Turkey

The Occupational Burnout Scale Subscales	Working Region	n	$\overline{X}$	ss	t	p
Emotional Exhaustion	East	82	12.85	7.41	0.18	0.85
	West	72	12.63	7.13		
Depersonalization	East	82	6.84	4.00	-0.55	0.59
	West	72	7.19	4.00		
Decrease in the Personal Achievement Sense	East	82	23.40	4.70	1.2	0.22
	West	72	22.50	4.40		

*p<0.05

As shown in Table 3, the emotional exhaustion point average was determined as 12.85, depersonalization point average was determined as 6.84, and decrease in personal achievement sense point average was determined as 23.4 for preschool teachers working in the east. Similarly, the emotional exhaustion point average was determined as 12.63, depersonalization point average was determined as 7.19, and decrease in personal achievement sense point average was determined as 22.5 for preschool teachers working in the west. According to the t-test, there was no significant difference between emotional burnout, depersonalization and decrease in sense of personal achievement of preschool teachers working in the east and west of Turkey (p>0.05).

Table 4 Univariate analysis of variance of preschool teachers' occupational burnout levels according to the variables of region where they work and age

The Occupational Burnout Scale Subscales	Source		Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Emotional Exhaustion	Intercept	Hypothesis	6944.50	1	6944.50	33.82	0.11
		Error	205.32	1	205.32[a]		
	Age	Hypothesis	239.62	2	119.81	.51	0.66
		Error	472.86	2	236.43[b]		
	East-West	Hypothesis	205.32	1	205.32	1.18	0.37
		Error	428.05	2.45	174.56[c]		
	Age * East-West	Hypothesis	472.86	2	236.43	4.65	0.01
		Error	7516.91	148	50.79[d]		
Depersonalization	Intercept	Hypothesis	2464.14	1	2464.14	1803.96	0.02
		Error	1.37	1	1.37[a]		
	Age	Hypothesis	21.32	2	10.66	2.99	0.25
		Error	7.14	2	3.57[b]		
	East-West	Hypothesis	1.37	1	1.37	0.18	0.68
		Error	158.101	20.21	7.825[c]		
	Age * East-West	Hypothesis	7.14	2	3.57	0.22	0.80
		Error	2418.21	148	16.34[d]		
Decrease in the Personal Achievement Sense	Intercept	Hypothesis	29826.68	1	29826.68	864.24	0.02
		Error	34.51	1	34.51[a]		
	Age	Hypothesis	94.07	2	47.04	0.55	0.65
		Error	171.68	2	85.84[b]		
	East-West	Hypothesis	34.51	1	34.51	0.54	0.53
		Error	160.65	2.51	64.08[c]		
	Age * East-West	Hypothesis	171.68	2	85.84	4.18	0.02
		Error	3042.39	148	20.56[d]		

*p<0.05

According to Table 4, it is observed that there is a statistically significant difference in the age variable in the scores of emotional exhaustion and decrease in personal achievement sense of preschool teachers in Turkey between eastern and western regions.

Table 5 Occupational burnout levels of preschool teachers according to the variables of region where they work and age

The Occupational Burnout Scale Subscales	Age	Working Region	n	$\overline{X}$	ss	t	p
Emotional Exhaustion	20-30	West	45	12.31	8.18	-1.04	0.30
		East	60	13.83	6.86		
	31-40	West	28	13.78	6.35	3.13	0.004**
		East	9	6.55	4.77		
	40 +	West	9	12.66	6.87	1.19	0.26
		East	3	7.00	8.18		
Depersonalization	20-30	West					
		East	45	7.10	4.54	-0.29	0.78
		West	60	7.35	4.00		
	31-40	East	28	6.5	3.42	-0.27	0.79
		West	9	6.9	4.53		
	40 +	East	9	6.60	2.92	0.81	0.44
		West	3	5.0	2.64		
Decrease in the Personal Achievement Sense	20-30	East	45	23.5	4.78	1.45	0.15
		West	60	22.2	4.33		
	31-40	East	28	23.03	4.89	-1.65	0.11
		West	9	26	3.90		
	40 +	East	9	24.33	4.35	2.42	0.04*
		West	3	18	1.00		

*p<0.05

According to Table 5, the emotional burnout point average was found to be 13.78 for preschool teachers who are 31-40 years old working in the west; the emotional burnout point average was found to be 6.55 for preschool teachers who are 31-40 years old working in the east. Between teachers who are 31-40 years old working in the west and east, a significant difference was observed in terms of emotional burnout, with teachers working in the east having a lower value (p<0.01). Teachers who are 31-40 years old working in the west experience emotional burnout more intensely.

The point average of decrease in achievement sense of preschool teachers working in the West at the age of 40 years and above was found to be 24.33, and the point average of decrease in achievement sense of preschool teachers working in the East at the age of 40 years and above was found to be 18. A significant difference was observed between the decrease in achievement sense of teachers working in the West and East at the age of 40 years and above (p<0.05). Teachers working in the West at the age of 40 years and above experience a decrease in their personal achievement more intensely.

Table 6 Occupational burnout levels of preschool teachers according to the variables of region where they work and gender

The Occupational Burnout Scale Subscales	Gender	Working Region	n	$\overline{X}$	ss	t	p
Emotional Exhaustion	Female	West	73	12.93	7.33	-0.08	0.94
		East	60	13.03	7.04		
	Male	West	9	12.22	8.45	0.44	0.66
		East	12	10.66	7.55		
Depersonalization	Female	West	73	6.69	3.80	-0.73	0.47
		East	60	7.20	4.14		
	Male	West	9	8.00	5.54	0.43	0.68
		East	12	7.16	3.43		
Decrease in the Personal Achievement Sense	Female	West	73	23.4	4.8	1.10	0.27
		East	60	22.5	4.4		
	Male	West	9	23.2	4.05	0.51	0.61
		East	12	22.2	4.45		

*p<0.05

According to Table 6, the emotional exhaustion point average was determined as 12.93, depersonalization point average was determined as 6.69, and decrease in personal achievement sense point average was determined as 23.4 for female preschool teachers working in the west; also, emotional exhaustion point average was determined as 13.03, depersonalization point average was determined as 7.20, and decrease in personal achievement sense point average was determined as 22.5 for female preschool teachers working in the east. According to the t-test, there was no significant difference in emotional burnout, depersonalization and decrease in sense of personal achievement between female preschool teachers working in the east and west of Turkey ($p>0.05$).

The emotional exhaustion point average was determined as 12.22, depersonalization point average was determined as 8.00, decrease in personal achievement sense point average was determined as 23.2 for male preschool teachers working in the west; also, the emotional exhaustion point average was determined as 10.66, depersonalization point average was determined as 7.16, decrease in personal achievement sense point average was determined as 22.2 for male preschool teachers working in the east. According to the t-test, there was no significant difference in emotional burnout, depersonalization and decrease in sense of personal achievement between male preschool teachers working in east and west of Turkey ($p>0.05$).

Table 7 Occupational burnout levels of preschool teachers according to the variables of area where they work and willingness to choose their job

The Occupational Burnout Scale Subscales	Willingness to choose their job	Working Region	n	$\overline{X}$	ss	t	p
Emotional Exhaustion	Yes	West	73	13.09	7.52	1.34	0.18
		East	58	11.41	6.65		
	No	West	9	10.88	6.52	-2.34	0.029*
		East	14	17.71	7.02		
Depersonalization	Yes	West	73	7.02	4.11	0.36	0.72
		East	58	6.77	3.81		
	No	West	9	5.33	2.64	-2.17	0.04*
		East	14	8.92	4.48		
Decrease in the Personal Achievement Sense	Yes	West	73	23.7	4.7	1.05	0.30
		East	58	22.9	4.4		
	No	West	9	20.5	3.8	-0.09	0.93
		East	14	20.7	4.3		

According to Table 7, there was a significant difference in terms of emotional burnout between preschool teachers working in the West who chose their job inadvertently and those working in the East who chose their job inadvertently ($p<0.05$). In comparison with preschool teachers working in the west who chose their job inadvertently, those working in the east who chose their job inadvertently experience emotional burnout more intensely. The depersonalization point average was determined as 5.33 for preschool teachers working in the West who chose their job inadvertently and 8.92 for preschool teachers working in the East who chose their job inadvertently. Based on the result of t-test, a significant difference in terms of depersonalization was observed between preschool teachers working in the west who chose their job inadvertently and those working in the east who chose their job inadvertently ($p<0.05$). There was more depersonalization in preschool teachers working in the east who chose their job inadvertently in comparison with preschool teachers working in the west who chose their job inadvertently. The point average of decrease in personal achievement sense was determined as 20.5 for preschool teachers working in the west who chose their job advertently and 20.7 for preschool teachers working in the east who chose their job advertently. Based on the result of t-test, no significant difference was observed in terms of decrease in personal achievement sense between teachers working in the west and east who chose their job inadvertently ($p>0.05$). Also, according to the findings of the table, no significant difference was observed in terms of decrease in personal achievement sense between teachers working in the west and east who chose their job inadvertently ($p>0.05$).

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Table 8 Univariate analysis of variance of preschool teachers' occupational burnout levels according to the variables of region where they work and age

The Occupational Burnout Scale Subscales	Source		Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Emotional Exhaustion	Intercept	Hypothesis	22842.43	1	22842.43	3722.75	0.01
		Error	6.14	1	6.14[a]		
	School Location	Hypothesis	4.96	2	2.481	0.01	0.99
		Error	517.91	2	258.95[b]		
	East-West	Hypothesis	6.14	1	6.14	0.02	0.89
		Error	514.90	2.01	256.01[c]		
	School Location* East-West	Hypothesis	517.1	2	258.95	5.10	0.01
		Error	7519.09	148	50.81[d]		
Depersonalization	Intercept	Hypothesis	6947.83	1	6947.83	4645.62	0.01
		Error	1.50	1	1.50[a]		
	School Location	Hypothesis	9.79	2	4.89	0.28	0.78
		Error	35.55	2	17.78[b]		
	East-West	Hypothesis	1.50	1	1.50	0.08	0.80
		Error	36.45	2.05	17.75[c]		
	School Location* East-West	Hypothesis	35.55	2	17.78	1.10	0.34
		Error	2401.28	148	16.23[d]		
Decrease in the Personal Achievement Sense	Intercept	Hypothesis	76309.74	1	76309.74	2126.11	0.01
		Error	35.89	1	35.89[a]		
	School Location	Hypothesis	9.01	2	4.51	0.90	0.53
		Error	10.01	2	5.01[b]		
	East-West	Hypothesis	35.89	1	35.89	6.85	0.11
		Error	11.83	2.26	5.24[c]		
	School Location* East-West	Hypothesis	10.01	2	5.01	0.23	0.79
		Error	3208.54	148	21.68[d]		

*p<0.05

Based on Table 8, it is observed that there is a statistically significant difference in the school location variable in the scores of emotional exhaustion of preschool teachers in Turkey between the eastern and western regions.

Table 9 Analysis of burnout in east-west direction according to the variable of school location

The Occupational Burnout Scale Subscales	School Location	Working Region	n	$\overline{X}$	ss	t	P
Emotional Exhaustion	City center	West	29	15.28	7.25	2.29	0.027*
		East	15	9.93	7.49		
	District	West	26	12.57	7.46	0.27	0.79
		East	34	12.11	5.96		
	Villages and towns	West	26	10.57	7.12	-2.05	0.046*
		East	24	14.91	7.86		
Depersonalization	City center	West	29	7.7	4.3	0.83	4.41
		East	15	6.06	3.7		
	District	West	26	7.1	4.2	-0.14	0.89
		East	34	7.3	3.02		
	Villages and towns	West	26	6.1	3.40	-1.16	0.25
		East	24	7.6	5.10		
Decrease in the Personal Achievement Sense	City center	West	29	22.9	4.50	0.33	0.74
		East	15	22.4	5.04		
	District	West	26	23.6	4.80	0.52	0.61
		East	34	22.9	4.60		
	Villages and towns	West	26	23.7	5.04	1.37	0.18
		East	24	22	3.70		

*p<0.05

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According to Table 9, a significant difference was observed between the emotional burnout levels of preschool teachers working in the city centers of the east and west of Turkey ($p<0.05$). No significant difference was found between the emotional burnout levels of preschool teachers working in the districts of the east and west of Turkey ($p>0.05$). There were significant differences between the emotional burnout levels of preschool teachers working in the villages and towns of the east and west of Turkey ($p<0.05$). No significant differences were found between preschool teachers working in the city centers, districts, villages and towns of the east and west of Turkey in terms of depersonalization ($p>0.05$). Also, no significant differences were found between preschool teachers working in the city centers, districts, villages and towns of the east and west of Turkey in terms of decrease in personal achievement sense ($p>0.05$).

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the light of the findings, working in the east or west of Turkey did not have an effect on the occupational burnout of preschool teachers. Although there is a large number of studies on burnout of preschool teachers in literature, no study has examined the difference according to the variables of the occupation in the eastern and western regions. Studies in literature in general state that there is no relation between the ages of teachers and the levels of their occupational burnout (Cemaloglu and Erdemoglu Sahin 2007; Shaheen and Mahmood 2016). In addition, no significant differences were found between emotional burnout, depersonalization and decrease in sense of personal achievement of special education teachers (Oruc 2007) and preschool teachers (Tugrul and Celik 2002; Ozturk and Deniz 2008). In this study, it was found that preschool teachers working in the west at the age of 31-40 years experience emotional burnout more intensely than preschool teachers working in the east at the same age range.

In addition, it was determined that preschool teachers that are over 40 years old and are working in the west experienced burnout more in terms of decrease in their personal achievement sense. Sucuoglu and Kuloglu (1996) found that teachers at old ages had higher scores in personal failure. Similarly, in the study carried out by Seferoglu, Yildiz and Avci Yucel (2014), it was found that the highest score of decrease in personal achievement sense was obtained from teachers at the ages of 51 years and above. Students educated by teachers working in the west experience more educational stimuli, their parents are more relevant and knowledgeable, and they have more expectations; it is thought that these factors may lead teachers to feel themselves inadequate in terms of personal achievement. Moreover, according to Erikson's developmental theory, the ages between 30 and 60 are expressed as a period of stagnation against productivity. Between these ages, teachers are not able to do whatever they want in their profession, so since they think they cannot get the outcome they desire, there is a decrease in their personal achievement, and they experience emotional burnout.

Regarding gender, it was determined that there was no difference between the burnout levels of teachers working in the east and west. No significant differences were found in terms of emotional burnout, depersonalization and decrease in personal achievement sense with respect to gender in the studies by Akman et al. (2010) among preschool teachers, by Yerlikaya (2000) among class teachers, by Kucuksuleymanoglu (2007) among instructors of the Faculty of Education, by Oruc (2007) among special education teachers and by Cemaloglu and Erdemoglu Sahin (2007) among teachers.

Teachers working in the east who chose their jobs inadvertently experience emotional burnout and depersonalization more intensely than teachers working in the west. Since they chose their jobs inadvertently, they experience more burnouts because they are not happy with their profession, and they live in difficult conditions in the east. Kabakli Cimen (2016) and Cemaloglu and Erdemoglu Sahin (2007) asserted that preschool teachers who chose their jobs inadvertently have higher levels of burnouts. According to the study carried out by Deniz Kan (2008) about preschool teachers and the study carried out by Dolunay and Piyal (2003) about teachers, it was determined that there is a statistically significant difference in emotional burnout when burnout types of teachers were examined according to their willingness to choose their profession.

It was determined that preschool teachers working in the village in the east had higher emotional exhaustion scores than those in the west. Teachers who work in the village/town in the east work under difficult conditions, such as severe winter conditions, transportation problems, terrorist incidents, etc. In addition to these, they also experience emotional exhaustion due to occupational difficulties and the limited social environment. According to Berry et al. (2011), 42% of rural special education teachers reported that they planned to drop out of special education in the next 5 years, and about one-third of them indicated burnout as the cause. Garwood et al. (2018) found that the lack of a strong social network among peers increased the level of burnout of special education teachers working in rural areas.

In accordance with these results, the following propositions are put forward. This study was conducted with a limited number of teachers. Further studies could be conducted with more teachers from every city in the seven different regions of the country. Moreover, in this study, the effects of occupational burnout on life satisfaction, job satisfaction and marital status of preschool teachers working in eastern and western Turkey were not examined. Future studies could focus on these aspects.

Awareness about exhaustion and the ways to overcome it should be raised among novice teachers. In order to do this, in-service training activities should be carried out for teachers at regular intervals during their recruitment and service periods. Furthermore, psychological counseling services should be given to teachers occasionally.

Teachers with more experience should share their knowledge with novice teachers and support them. For this purpose, a virtual platform or portal can be formed among teachers. While choosing teachers, people with self-devotion, involvement and compassion must be prioritized. The choice of a profession should be made through a series of decisions starting from elementary education. Thus, vocational guidance services should be provided, and the difficulties of the teaching profession should be explained. Teachers should be encouraged to choose their profession intentionally, and their job satisfaction should be increased. Hence, studies to raise the status of the teaching profession in the society should be carried out, and necessary actions should be taken to improve the social and economic conditions of teachers.

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