RESEARCH ARTICLE

Factors influencing job burnout and its impact on work performance among undergraduate university teachers in Yunnan: The moderating effect of organizational identification

ISSN: 2424-8975 (O)

2424-7979 (P)

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ABSTRACT

The purposes of this study were 1) to identify the factors of job burnout, work performance, organizational identification among undergraduate university teachers in Yunnan. 2) To analyze the influencing factors of job burnout affecting the work performance among undergraduate university teachers in Yunnan. 3) To examine the organizational identification as the moderating variable affect the job burnout and work performance among undergraduate university teachers in Yunnan. The sample group consisted of teachers using Yamane's formula, to be 737 teachers. The research instrument used in this study was a structured questionnaire. Data were analyzed by finding frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient, and path analysis. The research results can be summarized as follows:

- 1) The factors of job burnout and work performance have a high level (\overline{X} =5.773 S= 0. 929 and \overline{X} =3.467 S=1.420), except organizational identification is moderate level (\overline{X} =3.371 S=1.164).
- 2) The path coefficients of the structural equation model, there is significant correlation between emotional exhaustion and work performance (standardized path coefficient = -0.302, p < 0.001), depersonalization and work performance (standardized path coefficient = -0.325, p < 0.001), reduced personal accomplishment and work performance (standardized path coefficient = -0.288, p < 0.001).
- 3) The organizational identification as the moderating variable affects the job burnout and work performance are significant (t = -6.259, p = 0.000 < 0.05, t = -6.737 p = 0.000 < 0.05, t = -6.230, t =

Keywords: Factors influencing job burnout; work performance, moderating effect of organizational identification

1. Introduction

In recent years, job burnout has become increasingly prominent among university faculty, emerging as one of the key factors affecting their work performance. The social transformation characterized by diversified values, increased economic pressure, and intensified social competition has led university teachers to face greater psychological stress and professional challenges, which negatively impact their lives and health^[1]. Educational reforms require teachers to continuously update their educational philosophies,

ARTICLE INFO

Received: 20 October 2025 | Accepted: 2 November 2025 | Available online: 13 November 2025

CITATION

Liu HB, Vorawattanachai P. Factors influencing job burnout and its impact on work performance among undergraduate university teachers in Yunnan: The moderating effect of organizational identification. *Environment and Social Psychology* 2025; 10(11): 4190 doi:10.59429/esp.v10i11.4190

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teaching methods, and content to meet the demands of the new era. However, if teachers are unable to adapt to these reforms or cope with the challenges, they may experience job burnout. Academic competition places significant professional pressure on teachers, stemming not only from the heavy teaching workload but also from research demands, promotion requirements, and peer evaluations^[2]. University teachers are expected to manage extensive teaching responsibilities while also addressing conflicts among students, parents, and the institution. This multifaceted role within the educational environment increases the workload and further exacerbates job-related stress, thereby intensifying burnout. Poor working conditions, such as high work pressure and lack of supportive colleague relationships, as well as limited opportunities for personal development (e.g., difficulties in promotion, lack of training and development resources) are also important factors contributing to job burnout [3]. Research by Troman and Woods [4] indicates that teachers under prolonged stress are more susceptible to burnout, which not only affects their personal well-being but also threatens the stability and effectiveness of the education system. Therefore, understanding and addressing teacher burnout is crucial for improving educational quality, maintaining the physical and mental health of teachers, and optimizing the educational environment. Research on job burnout in China began relatively late compared to other countries. Existing studies on university faculty largely draw on foreign theories and remain mostly descriptive, with few integrative approaches. Most research has focused on causes and countermeasures of burnout, targeting groups such as medical staff, primary and secondary school teachers, and teachers of specific disciplines like physical education and English. However, limited attention has been given to the relationship between job burnout and work performance among undergraduate faculty.

From all the above, it leads to the interest of the researcher to study "Factors Influencing Job Burnout and Its Impact on Work Performance among Undergraduate University Teachers in Yunnan: The Moderating Effect of Organizational Identification". This study addresses that gap by examining the link between teacher burnout and work performance, introducing organizational identification as a moderating variable. The aim is to reveal how job burnout influences faculty performance and how a strong sense of organizational identification can mitigate its impact, thereby improving both individual and institutional effectiveness. Yunnan Province was selected because its universities represent a cross-section of China's developing higher education system, characterized by diverse ethnic populations, regional economic disparities, and evolving educational policies. These contextual factors make it an ideal setting for studying how organizational identification influences the burnout–performance relationship in a transitional academic environment.

While previous studies have explored the general relationship between job burnout and work performance^[5,8], few have contextualized this relationship within Chinese undergraduate universities, particularly in Yunnan Province, where institutional transitions and localized educational reforms have uniquely influenced teacher identity and stress levels. This study contributes originality by examining the moderating role of organizational identification-a variable underexplored in the Chinese academic context-thus bridging a critical gap between global burnout theories and region-specific empirical evidence.

2. Research objectives

- 1. To identify the factors of job burnout, work performance, organizational identification among undergraduate university teachers in Yunnan.
- 2. To analyze the influencing factors of job burnout affecting work performance among undergraduate university teachers in Yunnan.
- 3. To examine the organizational identification as the moderating variable affects the job burnout and work performance among undergraduate university teachers in Yunnan.

3. Research questions

- 1. How do the factors of job burnout, work performance and organizational identification present among undergraduate university teachers in Yunnan?
- 2. How do the influencing factors of job burnout affect the work performance among undergraduate university teachers in Yunnan?
- 3. How does the organizational identification as the moderating variable affect the job burnout and work performance among undergraduate university teachers in Yunnan?

4. Research hypotheses

- H1: The factors of job burnout, work performance, organizational identification among undergraduate university teachers in Yunnan have high level scores.
- H2: Job burnout has correlation with work performance among undergraduate university teachers in Yunnan.
- H3: Organizational identification has moderating effect on job burnout and work performance among undergraduate university teachers in Yunnan.

These hypotheses are grounded in the Conservation of Resources Theory (Hobfoll, 1989)⁷ and the Person–Job Fit Model^[8], which emphasize that burnout arises when resource demands exceed individual capacity and when job conditions fail to align with personal expectations. Prior research^[9,10] also supports the moderating role of organizational identification, indicating that employees with stronger identification are better able to buffer stress and maintain work engagement. Therefore, the following hypotheses were formulated.

5. Literature review

- 1) **Burnout**: Burnout, first defined by Freudenberger^[11], is a state of emotional, psychological, and behavioral exhaustion caused by prolonged work-related stress, especially in helping professions. Maslach and Jackson^[12] described it as a syndrome with three dimensions: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment. Dunham and Varma^[13] further noted that teacher burnout stems from ongoing pressure, reducing satisfaction, motivation, and emotional engagement.
- 2) Work Performance: The behaviors and outcomes individuals demonstrate at work contribute to both organizational and personal goals through the acquisition and application of relevant knowledge.
- 2.1) Task Performance: Task performance Refers to how effectively and efficiently employees carry out their core job duties. According to Campbell^[14], task performance is driven by employees' knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs), directly impacting productivity and organizational outcomes.
- 2.2) Relationship Performance: While not directly tied to technical tasks, it underpins the social and psychological foundation of the organization. It supports communication, teamwork, and overall organizational effectiveness and long-term success^[15].
- 3) Organizational Identification: It is a multifaceted concept involving how individuals cognitively and emotionally connect with their organization. It influences behavior, performance, and workplace dynamics and can be categorized into three main forms.
- 3.1) Survival organizational identification occurs when individuals see their well-being as dependent on the organization, aligning their self-concept with it for material, emotional, and security needs^[16].

- 3.2) Attributive Organizational Identification Involves seeking meaning and belonging through association with the organization's identity, values, and culture. Perceived organizational prestige strengthens this bond^[17].
- 3.3) Successful Organizational Identification happens when individuals align their personal growth with organizational goals, promoting mutual development. This leads to higher engagement, performance, and job satisfaction^[18].
- 4) Organizational Identification role is to influence how job burnout affects work performance among undergraduate teachers: Organizational Identification refers to how strongly employees define themselves through their organization and view their successes and failures as their own^[16]. High identification leads to greater alignment with organizational goals and can buffer negative experiences. In cases of burnout, it helps maintain performance by fostering a sense of belonging and loyalty. Teachers with strong organizational identification are less affected by burnout, as it provides psychological resources that reduce stress and support continued engagement^[9,16].

5) Related Theories

- 5.1) Theories of Job Burnout: Job burnout is a psychological syndrome caused by prolonged work-related stress, especially when personal values conflict with job demands. Freudenberger^[11] first described it as emotional, psychological, and behavioral exhaustion. Maslach and Jackson^[12] defined it as involving emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment. Pines and Aronson^[19] and Cherniss^[20] emphasized its impact on overall well-being. Key symptoms include extreme fatigue, detachment, negative self-view, and a sense of helplessness.
- 5.2) Theories of Teacher Job Burnout: Teacher job burnout is a serious issue characterized by emotional exhaustion, low motivation, and detachment^[13]. It negatively affects mental health, performance, and professional growth^[21], with symptoms like chronic fatigue, frustration, and dissatisfaction. The Job-Mismatch Theory links burnout to mismatches in workload, rewards, communication, fairness, and values. Teacher-specific models show that both personal and organizational factors impact teacher well-being and education quality.
- 5.3) Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs: It outlines five levels of human motivation, physiological, safety, belonging, esteem, and self-actualization^[22]. Unmet needs, like low salary, lack of job security, poor support, or limited growth, can contribute to teacher burnout ^[23]. While early evidence was limited, later research supports the interaction and overlap of these needs ^[24].
- 5.4) Conservation of Resources Theory: Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory [7] explains burnout as a result of losing more resources than one gains. These resources include time, energy, social support, and personal traits. Burnout occurs when teachers invest heavily without adequate return, leading to exhaustion and reduced performance^[25]. To prevent this, improving compensation, working conditions, support, and personal resilience is key.

6) Related Studies

Several studies highlight the role of organizational and professional identity in teacher outcomes. Guglielmi et al. [26] found that increased professional development boosts organizational identification, which enhances job satisfaction. Zhou (2012)²⁷ showed organizational identification positively influences organizational citizenship behavior. Liu and Zhang^[28] identified value congruence, external reputation, and procedural justice as key factors strengthening organizational identification, while distributive and interactional justice had no effect. Wang^[29] noted that professional identity improves teaching engagement,

but organizational identification had no significant impact. There was a strong negative link between professional identity and burnout, especially through emotional reward and self-regulation. Zhang and Guo^[30] found work values positively affect job performance, professional identity, and organizational identification, with the latter two mediating this relationship.

Recent studies have expanded the understanding of job burnout in higher education through the integration of emotional intelligence, digital pedagogy, and organizational culture frameworks. For example, the mediating effect of digital workload on teacher burnout in Chinese universities, while institutional trust moderates the burnout–performance relationship. Moreover, organizational identification can be reinforced through participatory decision-making and transparent communication, which reduces stress and enhances teaching quality. Incorporating these perspectives helps position the current study within the evolving discourse on faculty well-being and performance in modern academia.

6. Research methodology

Population and sample

The study adopted a **stratified random sampling technique** to ensure representation from different demographic categories such as gender, teaching experience, and academic rank. The population comprised 1,964 full-time faculty members from three public undergraduate universities in Yunnan Province (referred to as Universities A, B, and C). Using Yamane's (1967) formula with a 95% confidence level and a margin of error of 0.04, a sample of 737 teachers was determined. Participants were randomly selected from faculty directories provided by the human resource departments of each institution.

Research Instrument

The study collected data via online questionnaires to examine university teachers' job burnout, work performance, and organizational identification. The survey had two parts: demographic information (gender, age, teaching experience, professional title, and discipline) and 39 items measuring the three constructs. Job burnout (15 items) covered emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment; work performance (15 items) included task and relationship performance; organizational identification (9 items) assessed survival, attributive, and successful identification. Most items used a 5-point scale, except related to job burnout, which are scored on a 7-point scale.

The questionnaire was developed based on validated scales from prior research: the Maslach Burnout Inventory^[12], the Work Performance Scale^[15], and the Organizational Identification Scale^[16]. Each scale was translated into Chinese using the back-translation method to ensure linguistic accuracy. A pilot study with 60 teachers was conducted to test reliability and clarity. Cronbach's alpha coefficients for job burnout (0.91), work performance (0.87), and organizational identification (0.88) confirmed internal consistency and construct reliability.

Data Analysis

Descriptive Statistics: Mean, standard deviation, frequency and percentage values.

Inferential Statistics: The collected data are analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) and AMOS (Analysis of Moment Structures) software for data entry, organization, and analysis of variance (ANOVA), factor analysis, and various other data analysis methods which were also used to create visual charts and graphs.

7. Results

1) Result of descriptive analysis

In this study, a total of 737 university teachers were surveyed, possessing a solid demographic foundation. The demographic characteristics of the respondents are summarized as follows.

Table 1. Analysis of Demographic

Items	Classification	No.	Percentage (%)
1.0.1	Female	387	52.51
1. Gender	Male	350	47.49
	under 30 years old	145	19.67
2 4	31-40 years old	293	39.76
2. Age	41-50 years old	172	23.34
	51 years old or older	127	17.23

Gender: Female constitutes the majority of respondents, accounting for 52.51% of the total. Male teachers account for 47.49%, indicating a relatively balanced gender composition in the education industry.

Age: the group aged 31-40 has the highest proportion, reaching 39.76%, and is the main age group that completed the questionnaire. Those aged 41-50 account for 23.34%, which is at a medium level. The proportions of individuals under 30 and over 51 are relatively low, at 19.67% and 17.23% respectively.

2) Result of Hypotheses testing

2.1) to identify the factors of job burnout, work performance, organizational identification among undergraduate university teachers in Yunnan

H1: The factors of job burnout, work performance, organizational identification among undergraduate university teachers in Yunnan have a high-level score.

H1a: Job burnout has a high-level score.

H1b: Work performance has a high-level score.

H1c: Organizational identification has a high-level score.

Table 2. Factors of Job Burnout

Dimension	$\overline{\mathbf{x}}$	S	Level
Emotional Exhaustion	6.03	0.78	high
Depersonalization	5.49	0.89	slightly high
Reduced Personal Accomplishment	5.74	0.91	high
Total	5.77	0.92	high

In Table 2, the overall Job Burnout is high (\overline{X} =5.77 S=0.92). When considering each item, the data shows the average of Emotional exhaustion is high (\overline{X} =6.03 S=0.78), Depersonalization is moderately high (\overline{X} = 5.49, S = 0.91). Reduced personal accomplishment is high (\overline{X} =5.740 S=0.89), indicating **H1a** Job Burnout has a high level.

Table 3. Factors of Work Performance

Dimension	$\overline{\mathbf{x}}$	S	Level
Task Performance	3.45	1.47	high
Relationship Performance	3.44	1.40	high
Total	3.46	1.42	high

In Table 3, the overall Work Performance is high ($\overline{X} = 3.46 \text{ S} = 1.42$). When considering each item, it is found the means of Task Performance is high ($\overline{X} = 3,45 \text{ S} = 1.47$), Relationship Performance is high ($\overline{X} = 3.44 \text{ S} = 1.40$), indicating **H1b** Work Performance has a high level.

Table 4. Factors of Organizational Identification

Dimension	$\overline{\mathbf{x}}$	\mathbf{S}	Level
Attributive Organizational Identification	3.38	1.41	moderate
Successful Organizational Identification	3.40	142	moderate
Survival Organizational Identification	3.39	1.39	moderate
Total	3.39	1.44	moderate

In Table 7.4, the overall Organizational Identification is moderate (\overline{X} =3.394 S=1.44). When considering each item, the data show that the average score for emotional exhaustion is high (\overline{X} =3.38 S=1.41), Successful Organizational Identification is moderate (\overline{X} =3.40 S=1.42), Survival Organizational Identification is moderate (\overline{X} =3.399 S=1.39), indicating Organizational Identification has a moderate level, not accepted **H1c**.

- 2.2) to analyze the job burnout affecting the work performance among undergraduate university teachers in Yunnan: Structural Equation Model Analysis for test Hypotheses: **H2**
- **H2**: Job burnout has correlation with work performance among undergraduate university teachers in Yunnan.
 - H2a: The correlation between emotional exhaustion and work performance is significant.
 - H2b: The correlation between depersonalization and work performance is significant.
 - H2c: The correlation between reduced personal accomplishment and work performance is significant.

Table 5. The Path Coefficient of Structural Equation Model

Structural Equation Path		Non- standard Path Coefficient	S.E.	C.R.	р	Standardized Path Coefficient	
Work Performance	<	Emotional exhaustion	178	.029	-6.154	***	302
Work Performance	<	Depersonalization	194	.032	-6.087	***	325
Work Performance	<	Reduced personal accomplishment	168	.030	-5.582	***	288

The results of the structural equation model demonstrate significant negative relationships between burnout dimensions and work performance. Specifically: H2a: Emotional exhaustion has a significant negative effect on work performance (standardized path coefficient = -0.302, p < 0.001).H2b:

Depersonalization has a significant negative effect on work performance (standardized path coefficient = -0.325, p < 0.001).H2c: Reduced personal accomplishment has a significant negative effect on work performance (standardized path coefficient = -0.288, p < 0.001).These findings confirm all three hypotheses (H2a, H2b, and H2c), indicating that higher levels of burnout are consistently associated with lower levels of work performance.

- 2.3) to examine the effect of organizational identification as a moderating variable of job burnout on work performance among undergraduate university teachers in Yunnan
- **H3**: Organizational identification has moderating effect on job burnout and work performance among undergraduate university teachers in Yunnan.

H3a: Survival organizational identification has a significant moderating effect on job burnout and work performance.

H3b: Attributive organizational identification has a significant moderating effect on job burnout and work performance.

H3c: Work performance and job burnout are significantly moderated by successful organizational identification.

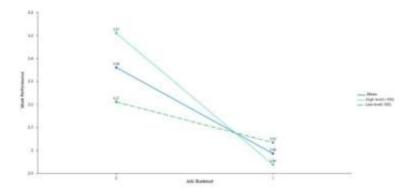


Figure 1. Moderator Variable Level 1

According to the analysis's findings, there is a greater detrimental effect when survival organizational identification is high since the link between job burnout and work performance has a steeper slope. On the other hand, job burnout has a less significant impact on work performance when survival organizational identification is low. Hypothesis **H3a** is thus validated.

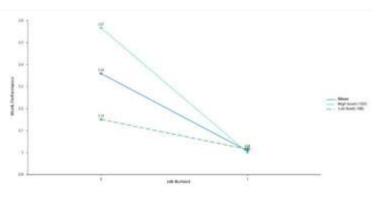


Figure 2. Moderator Variable Level 2

The analysis's findings indicate that job burnout has a more pronounced detrimental effect on work performance since the line's slope is steeper when attributive organizational identification is high. On the other hand, job burnout has less of an effect on performance when attributive organizational identification is low. As a result, Hypothesis H3b is validated.

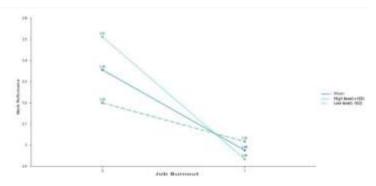


Figure 3. Moderator Variable Level 3

The analysis's findings indicate that job burnout has a substantially larger effect on work performance when successful organizational identification is at a high level, while it has a comparatively smaller effect on work performance when successful organizational identification is at a low level. Consequently, this study's hypothesis H3c is validated.

8. Conclusions

This study focused on the moderating effect of organizational identity as it investigated the relationship between job burnout and work performance among Yunnan undergraduate university teachers. The results show that emotional tiredness, depersonalization, and diminished personal accomplishment-three aspects of burnout-consistently impair productivity at work. However, the detrimental impacts of burnout were somewhat lessened by teachers who showed better resilience and commitment when they had higher degrees of organizational identification. The study comes to the conclusion that increasing faculty motivation and productivity can be achieved by cultivating a strong feeling of belonging and institutional pride. These observations can help university officials create identity-building initiatives and supporting policies that improve the wellbeing and engagement of teachers.

9. Discussion

Research Objective 1

Hypothesis H1a is supported by the descriptive data, which show a significant degree of job burnout. These results prove that the emotional fatigue of Chinese university professors is strong, and the feeling of personal achievement is low, which negatively influence their interaction and teaching performance (Wang et al., 2021)³¹. The descriptive statistics of overall work performance ($\overline{X} = -3.969$, S =0.1219) imply that the Hypothesis 1b, which concerns work performance, would be at a high level. As a result, the statistics indicate that moderate burnout is strongly linked to low levels of engagement and productivity among the university professors (Leung and Chen, 2019)³². The overall organizational identification ($\overline{X} = -3.394$, S = 1.437) descriptive statistic demonstrates that there is a moderate level of identification, which does not provide a support of Hypothesis 1c. These results suggest that individual commitment and organizational perceived support can be the determinants of the level of identification (Riketta, 2005)⁹.

Research Objective 2

The substantial negative correlation between emotional exhaustion and work performance supported by a standardized path coefficients of -0.302 (p < 0.001) supports hypothesis H2a. Consistent with this observation, job performance was observed to have a negative relationship with job burnout and especially the emotional exhaustion element among various professional groups (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004)⁵. The strong link between depersonalization and work performance supports Hypothesis H2b where the standardized path coefficient takes value of = -0.325 (p < 0.001). This study shows that depersonalization reduces the interaction between instructors and the students and to the employees via the process of emotional detachment (Maslach and Leiter, 2008)⁶. The personal accomplishment role in lowering work performance is established with the standardized path coefficient of 0.288 between a reduced personal accomplishment and work performance that is significant (p < 0.001). The above finding is consistent with previous research by Maslach and Leiter (2016)⁸ that found low personal accomplishment as a major element of burnout that directly erodes the ability of individuals to remain productive and meet goals.

Research Objective 3

Job burnout and surviving organizational identification has statistically significant interaction (t = -6.259, p < 0.05). In this regard, hypothesis H3a was confirmed, according to which the correlation between personal identity and professional pressures creates a significant impact on the job outcomes (Riketta, 2005)⁹. The relationship between the job burnout and the attributional organizational identity was significant (t = -6.737, p < 0.05). The results support hypothesis H3b, which argues that a strong identification can strengthen the psychological after-effects of burnout (Avanzi et al., 2018)³³. Job burnout and positive organizational identification interaction had become statistically significant (t = -6.230, p < 0.05). As a result, hypothesis H3c was confirmed, which proved that the increase in psychological capital of teachers may lead to increased satisfaction with the job and professional identity and, consequently, to the increase in work engagement (Zou, 2022)³⁴.

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