

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE RESEARCH ASSISTANTS' BURNOUT LEVELS AND THEIR PERCEPTIONS OF ORGANIZATIONAL CYNICISM



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Abstract

This research aimed to examine the relationship between the burnout levels in research associates, as important shareholders of universities, and their perceptions of organizational cynicism. This study used the correlational survey model, a quantitative research method. The population of the study included 5503 research associates employed in public universities in Aegean region, Turkey, in 2019-2020 academic years. In this research, all research associates in the population were reached, without conducting a sampling study, and 427 research associates responded to the participation calls. The data, collected through the Maslach Burnout Inventory and the Organizational Cynicism Scale, were analyzed in SPSS 24.0 software. The study results showed that the highest average score in research associates' burnout levels was on the individual achievement dimension. The emotional burnout dimension followed, and the lowest average score was on the depersonalization dimension. The highest average score in research associates' perceptions of organizational cynicism was on the cognitive dimension and their lowest average score was on the affective dimension. There was no significant difference between the burnout and the organizational cynicism levels based on gender variable. Males and females were found to have similar perception levels. There were significant differences between the levels of professional satisfaction and burnout and organizational cynicism. Medium-level positive and significant relationships were found between the burnout and the organizational cynicism concepts and their sub-dimensions. Based on those results, some recommendations such as clarified and refined job descriptions, shorter working time, increasing reward sources, providing adaptation training and in-service training, and including other academic staff in the research, were added.

1. Introduction

Organizations are systems established with people coming together to collaborate on certain purposes and goals. Human factors for organizations are quite an important element. Therefore, how people feel in the organization, how devoted they are, and what they think are very influential on organizational survival.

People's performances in the organization may be impacted based on social, psychological, and emotional factors. Also, organizational structure, relationships within an organization,

compensation policy, and technology development may have various influences on people. Negative experiences may impact someone's environment, work, and personal life. Someone, not only physically but also emotionally exhausted, feels helpless and weak, loses positive drive towards life and work, and experiences burnout. Burnout, defined with emotional depletion, depersonalization, and decreasing personal achievement levels in people, is a phenomenon more often seen in professions requiring more social relationships.

Freudenberger coined the concept of burnout in literature in the 1970s. Burnout has been increasingly important and often studied by the researchers. Many studies on burnout were conducted among professional groups such as teachers, academicians, health employees and service providers. Burnout is also frequently experienced by the research associates employed in the colleges. Research associates in the universities have some negative experiences. Research associates feel unhappy and hurt due to unappreciated scientific studies, tenure problems, being assigned with personal dealings instead of academic responsibilities, and continuous non-constructive criticism. Thus, organizational cynicism, defined as “individual’s negative attitude toward the organization”, occurs. Organizational cynicism involves tough criticism and negative beliefs and emotions about the organization. Both problems and malfunctions in the organizations and the conceptual and practical failures indicate that the burnout and the organizational cynicism must be studied. Therefore, thorough research on “the burnout and the organizational cynicism” will be importantly beneficial in the field.

1.1. Burnout

Today, in parallel with increasing possibilities and progress, people have growing expectations. People expect a healthier and better living. People face hardships due to globalization in various areas and increasing competition in achievements. This creates a lack of balance in people’s work and individual lives. People work in enthusiasm and with higher levels of belongingness toward their jobs in the beginning; however, later, negative changes emerge due to the experienced competition and perfectionism. Experiences such as working in an unfit environment, receiving unstable assignments, conflicting with the other staff members, being unappreciated, and feeling worthless lead to physical, psychological, and emotional breakdown in the employees (Arkan, 2018).

A review of literature on the concept of burnout reveals various and comprehensive views. German psychologist Herbert Freudenberger is the leading figure for this concept. Freudenberger, in 1974, described burnout as the individuals’ experience of exhaustion in their inner sources due to failure, attrition and their decreasing energy and enthusiasm in the workplace (Eroğlu, 2014).

Many researchers discussed and tried to develop a model of the burnout concept. Researchers in different fields developed various models of burnout. Prominent models include Maslach Burnout Model, Cherniss Burnout Model, Pines Burnout Model, Meier Burnout Model, and Pearlman and Hartman Burnout Model.

It is considered highly likely that research associates, continuously facing students with various characteristics, academic staff, the university administration, and other personnel, experience stress. That universities present many stressors puts the professionals in this job group at risk in terms of burnout. Compared to other job groups and academic staff, it can be said that research associates experience burnout more often. That is because the job of research associates requires effective communication and hard-work, and individuals get physically exhausted. Many factors may be said to lead to burnout in research associates.

Research associates may experience burnout based on their personal characteristics, environmental factors, financial reasons, work hours, excessive workload, and being assigned to jobs outside of their job description. The experience of burnout may lead to decreased effectiveness and quality in relation to their academic promotion. It may be said that research associates are exposed to mobbing in terms of continuous pressure to improve and to be competent in their fields. In addition to that, they have tasks to accomplish, other than their academic assignment. Research associates, also, happen to have relationships with many students with different characteristics. Research associates, short of meeting all those expectations, experience hardships.

1.2. Organizational Cynicism

Cynicism can be defined as an attitude expressed as negative feelings and distrust towards an individual, group, thought, social contract or organization (Andersson & Bateman, 1997). Studies on organizational cynicism improved in early 1990s. The concept of organizational cynicism emerged after Kanter and Mirvis’ 1989 book about employees in the USA (Kalağan, 2009). Organizational cynicism is often described as “an individual’s negative attitude towards the organization they work for”. Overt or covert harsh criticism, negative emotions, and attitudes explain this concept (Yazıcıoğlu, 2019).

Today, organizational cynicism does not involve a positive and respectable attitude and it is not commendable to tell that someone is cynic. However, this concept, often considered negative, may have organizational and personal benefits. From a personal point of view, for those who can be abused by dishonest and deceptive people, cynicism may be lifesaving. From an organizational point of view, cynical individuals may contribute to auditing the conflicts of interest, dishonest approaches, etc. (Bulut, 2019).

Studies found in the relevant literature indicate that organizational cynicism is considered in three dimensions. Organizational cynicism is described as an attitude constructed

by the individual. This attitude is transformed into a cognitive, affective, and behavioral action shaped based on the individual's experience and emotions involving their person or any condition in their environment (Yazıcıoğlu, 2019).

Employees in education organizations are open to cynicism, as there can be employees exhibiting cynic attitudes in various organizations. Education organizations have active structures as the human factor is in the forefront (Karayaka, 2019). As in every organization, the attitudes, interests, lifestyles, cultures, beliefs, personal characteristics, etc. of the academic staff, students, and the administration in universities are impacted by many factors. Research associates experiencing the organizational cynicism may feel that they are ignored by other employees; they may avoid providing suggestions; they may feel that their recommendations are not considered; they put forward efforts in vain; they may think that equality and justice are not in place; and they may not be hopeful about the future in the university.

1.3. The purpose of the study

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between the burnout levels in research associates, employed in various faculties in public universities in Aegean region in 2019-2020 academic years, and their perceptions of organizational cynicism. Based on this purpose, the questions below are posed:

1. What are the levels of burnout and the perception of organizational cynicism in research associates?
2. Do research associates' burnout levels and their perceptions of organizational cynicism significantly differ on all sub-dimensions: gender, age, marital status, professional seniority, education level, professional satisfaction, and the faculty?
3. Is there a statistically significant relationship between research associates' burnout levels and their perceptions of organizational cynicism?

In addition, based on the results of this study, preventive recommendations about the burnout and organizational cynicism in research associates are provided.

2. Method

The method of the research is presented under the headings of model, population sampling, data collection tools, data collection, and data analysis.

2.1. Research Model

Correlational survey model, among the general survey models, was used in this study aiming to examine the relationship between the burnout levels in research associates, employed in public universities in Aegean region, and their perceptions of organizational cynicism. Data collected in this study were analyzed through quantitative techniques.

Survey models aim to describe a past or present state. The survey model targeting at examining a relationship between two or among more variables and the level of that relationship is considered a correlational survey model (Karasar, 2000). Correlational models are used to define relationships and for the purpose of prediction.

2.2. Population and the Sample

The population of this study, aiming to examine the relationship between research associates' burnout levels and their perceptions of organizational cynicism, included 5503 research associates employed in 12 public universities (<http://www.yok.gov.tr>, 10.09.2020). The entire study population was reached through email addresses in Academic Search System of the Higher education Council. Therefore, no sampling was conducted in this study. Table 1 includes the study population.

Table 1. Public Universities Employing the Study Population in Aegean Region

Universities	Number of Research Associates
1. Adnan Menderes University	546
2. Afyon Kocatepe University	203
3. Dokuz Eylül University	994
4. Ege University	998
5. İzmir Bakırçay University	53
6. İzmir Kâtip Çelebi University	343
7. İzmir Institute of Technology	245
8. Kütahya Dumlupınar University	186
9. Manisa Celal Bayar University	680
10. Muğla Sıtkı Koçman University	385

11.Pamukkale University	701
12.Uşak University	169
Total	5503

Numbers related to the population of the research are given in Table 1. The study population of the research consists of 427 research assistants, who were reached without sampling from a total of 5503 research assistants in 12 universities in the Aegean region.

2.3. Data Collection Tools

A detailed literature review was conducted to choose the data collection tools to be used in this study. In this literature review, the reliability and validity coefficients of the scales were considered. A “Personal Information Form”, “Maslach Burnout Inventory”, and “Organizational Cynicism Scale” were used as data collection tools in the current study.

“Maslach Burnout Inventory” was used to define the burnout levels in research associates. The scale was developed by Maslach (1981) and adopted into Turkish language by Ergin (1993). In this scale, consisting of totally 22 Likert-type items, burnout is measured in three dimensions as emotional burnout, depersonalization, and individual achievement. Emotional burnout dimension consists of 9 items; depersonalization 5 items; and low individual achievement dimension consists of 8 items. Emotional burnout dimension consists of 9 items and items 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 13, 14, 16 and 20 refer to this dimension. Depersonalization sub-dimension consists of 5 items and items 5, 10, 11, 15, and 22 refer to this dimension. Individual achievement sub-dimension consists of 7 items and items 4, 7, 9, 12, 17, 18, and 19 refer to this dimension. Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficients were calculated in relation to the reliability of this study: it was found as .88 for emotional burnout, .73 for depersonalization dimension, and .74 for individual achievement dimension. Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficient was calculated as .72 for the overall scale. It may be said that they mean the scale is reliable. Higher scores on emotional burnout and depersonalization dimensions and lower scores on individual achievement refer to burnout.

In this study, “Organizational Cynicism Scale”, developed by Brandes, Dharwadkar, and Dean (1999) and adopted into Turkish by Kalagan (2009), was used to measure research associates’ perceptions of organizational cynicism. The scale consists of 13 Likert-type items measuring cognitive, emotional, and behavioral sub-dimensions. 5 items refer to cognitive dimension; 4 refer to emotional dimension; and 4 items refer to behavioral dimension. Cognitive sub-dimension consists of 5 items. Items 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 refer to this dimension. Emotional sub-dimension consists of 4

items; items 6, 7, 8, and 9 refer to this dimension. Behavioral sub-dimension consists of 4 items; items 10, 11, 12, and 13 refer to this dimension. Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficient for the entire scale was calculated as .94. It may be said that data in this research indicate that the scale is reliable. Participants’ higher scores on the scale mean that their perceptions of organizational cynicism are high and their lower scores on the scale mean that their perceptions of organizational cynicism are low. Consent for the use of the scale was obtained through email and the consent forms are attached below.

2.4. Data Collection

To be able to collect data, 12 public universities in Aegean region were approached by the Director of Social Sciences Institute, Adnan Menderes University, and each was sent a license letter, a survey form, and the decision by the ethical council. Following the issuance of required authorization, scales were prepared in Google forms and the relevant link page was sent to the 3940 email addresses obtained. As the response rate was low, a reminder email was periodically sent. A total of 450 survey forms were returned due to reasons such as survey forms not being seen by some research associates or some not being willing to fill out the form. The total 450 survey forms had missing or not-filled-out responses. Those were eliminated and a total of 427 forms were analyzed for the purposes of this study.

2.5. Data Analysis

SPSS 24.0 software was used to analyze the data. For the data collected through the Personal Information Form, descriptive statistics of frequency and percentage distributions were calculated; the results were presented in tables in the results section. Normality tests were conducted to decide whether to use parametric or non-parametric tests for the data analysis. Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro Wilks tests, often used for the normal distribution, may mislead the researchers as they are highly sensitive to sampling number and structure (Kalayci, 2010). For defining the normal distribution, checking the coefficients of skewness and kurtosis is an approved method in the literature. Normality may be discussed based on skewness and kurtosis internally on each sub-dimension. The same method was used in this study also.

Normality can be discussed based on the proximity of skewness and kurtosis coefficients to zero. The distribution can be considered normal when skewness and kurtosis coefficients,

respectively, fall between -1.96 and +1.96 after dividing them by their own standard errors (Can, 2017). In this study, the significance level for statistical analyses was accepted as $p < .05$.

Based on the characteristics of the research data, frequency analyses, descriptive analyses, independent sampling t test, one-way variance analysis (ANOVA), and correlation analysis were conducted.

3. Findings

The findings of the research are given respectively and under subheadings in line with the determined sub-objectives. Relevant findings are presented in tables.

3.1. Reviewing the Basic Statistical Values associated with Burnout, Organizational Cynicism, and their Sub-Dimensions

Basic statistical values for the sub-dimensions of Burnout, Organizational Cynicism and concepts are presented in Table 2. Relevant data was calculated on 427 people.

Table 2. Basic Statistical Values associated with Burnout and Organizational Cynicism

Concepts and Dimensions	n	\bar{X}^*	Ss	Skewness Statistics	S.E.	Kurtosis Statistics	S.E.
Burnout	427	2.7946	.41174	.404	.118	.184	.236
Emotional Burnout	427	2.5553	.81949	.478	.118	-.244	.236
Depersonalization	427	2.1156	.77913	.661	.118	-.009	.236
Individual Achievement	427	3.5109	.62156	-.490	.118	.223	.236
Organizational Cynicism	427	2.9301	.92987	.132	.118	-.745	.236
Cognitive	427	3.2290	1.04988	-.155	.118	-.707	.236
Affective	427	2.4713	1.23080	.615	.118	-.648	.236
Behavioral	427	3.0164	.92264	-.109	.118	-.619	.236

Values on Table 2 indicate that concepts refer to low-level perception. However, compared to each other, Organizational Cynicism ($\bar{X}^* = 2.93$, $Ss = .92$) was perceived on a higher level than Burnout ($\bar{X}^* = 2.79$, $Ss = .41$) was. Other concepts had very similar perception levels. Skewness-Kurtosis values indicate that concepts had a normal distribution. Considering the sub-dimensions of the concepts, it is statistically emphasized that Cognitive ($\bar{X}^* = 3.2$, $Ss = 1.04$) and Behavioral ($\bar{X}^* = 3.01$, $Ss = .92$) dimensions of Organizational Cynicism were perceived on higher levels.

3.2. Reviewing the Descriptive Findings associated with Burnout and Organizational Cynicism Sub-Dimensions

Table 3 presents descriptive findings regarding the Burnout and Organizational Cynicism sub-dimensions. The relevant findings consist of minimum, maximum, mean and standard deviation.

Table 3. Descriptive Findings Associated with Burnout and Organizational Cynicism Sub-Dimensions

Sub Dimensions and Item Numbers	n	Min	Max	\bar{X}	Ss
Burnout					
Emotional Burnout Dimension (1,2,3,6,8,13,14,16)	427	1.00	5.00	2.55	.819
Depersonalization Dimension (5,10,11,15,22)	427	1.00	5.00	2.11	.779
Individual Achievement Dimension	427	1.43	5.00	3.51	.621

<i>(4,7,9,12,17,18,19)</i>					
Organizational Cynicism					
Cognitive Dimension <i>(1,2,3,4,5)</i>	427	1.00	5.00	3.22	1.04
Affective Dimension <i>(6,7,8,9)</i>	427	1.00	5.00	2.47	1.23
Behavioral Dimension <i>(10,11,12,13)</i>	427	1.00	5.00	3.01	.922

A review of Table 3 shows that the highest ($\bar{X}=3.51$) level of burnout in research associates is on Individual Achievement; the lowest ($\bar{X}=2.11$) is on Depersonalization. In addition, the highest level of agreement ($Ss=.621$) among the sub-dimensions is on Individual Agreement and Emotional Burnout involves more conflicts ($Sd=.819$) than other sub-dimensions.

Research associates' highest level ($\bar{X}=3.22$) of organizational cynicism perception is on Cognitive dimension; the lowest ($\bar{X}=2.47$) is on the Affective dimension. The highest level of agreement ($Ss=.922$) among the sub-dimensions is on Behavioral dimension and Affective dimension involves more conflicts ($Ss=1.23$) than other sub-dimensions.

3.3. Reviewing the t-test Results associated with Research Associates' Gender, Burnout Levels, and their Organizational Cynicism Perceptions

The t-test findings between Research Assistants' gender, burnout levels and organizational cynicism perceptions are presented in Table 4. Relevant concepts are presented separately with their sub-dimensions.

Table 4. t-test Findings Associated with Research Associates' Gender, Burnout Levels, and Their Organizational Cynicism Perceptions

Concepts and Dimensions	Gender	n	\bar{X}	Ss	Sd	t	p
Burnout	Female	230	2.81	.41	425	1.04	.295
	Male	197	2.77	.40			
Emotional Burnout	Female	230	2.64	.83	425	2.45	.210
	Male	197	2.45	.78			
Depersonalization	Female	230	2.11	.78	425	-.128	.898
	Male	197	2.12	.77			
Individual Achievement	Female	230	3.48	.48	425	-.814	.416
	Male	197	3.53	.66			
Organizational Cynicism	Female	230	2.96	.94	425	.947	.344
	Male	197	2.88	.91			
Cognitive	Female	230	3.20	1.05	425	-.617	.537
	Male	197	3.26	1.05			
Affective	Female	230	2.57	1.25	425	1.82	.068
	Male	197	2.35	1.19			
Behavioral	Female	230	3.08	.93	425	1.57	.115
	Male	197	2.94	.90			

Table 4 includes the t-test results on research associates' perceptions of main study concepts and their sub-dimensions based on gender. Findings [$p>.05$] indicate no significant difference between the study concepts and their sub-dimensions based on research associates' genders. Based on the findings, it is statistically revealed that males and females had similar perception levels.

3.4. Reviewing the t-test Results Associated with Research Associates' Marital Status, Burnout Levels, and Their Organizational Cynicism Perceptions

The t-test findings betwis the marital status of research assistants and their burnout levels and perceptions of organizational

cynicism are presented in Table 5. Relevant concepts are presented separately with their sub-dimensions.

Table 5. t-test Results Associated with Research Associates' Marital Status, Burnout Levels, and Their Organizational Cynicism Perceptions

Concepts and Dimensions	Marital Status	n	\bar{X}	Ss	Sd	t	p
Burnout	Single	204	2.73	.408	425	-1.23	.218
	Married	223	2.81	.414			
Emotional Burnout	Single	204	2.56	.819	425	.229	.819
	Married	223	2.54	.821			
Depersonalization	Single	204	2.11	.785	425	-.022	.982
	Married	223	2.11	.775			
Individual Achievement	Single	204	3.42	.676	425	-2.81	.005*
	Married	223	3.59	.556			
Organizational Cynicism	Single	204	2.89	.903	425	-.805	.421
	Married	223	2.96	.954			
Cognitive	Single	204	3.17	1.03	425	-.934	.351
	Married	223	3.27	1.06			
Affective	Single	204	2.43	1.24	425	-.523	.601
	Married	223	2.50	1.22			
Behavioral	Single	204	2.98	.884	425	-.539	.523
	Married	223	3.04	.957			

Table 5 presents the t-test results associated with significant differences between study concepts and sub-dimensions based on research associates' marital statuses. Results indicate that there is a significant difference between research associates' marital statuses and the Individual Achievement sub-dimension of Burnout concept [$t(425)=-2.81, p<0.05$]. As can be seen on the table, married research associates ($\bar{X}=3.59$) had higher levels of perception than single research associates ($\bar{X}=3.42$) did. There was no significant difference between other concepts and sub-dimensions in the study and the marital status [$p>.05$].

3.5. Reviewing the ANOVA Test Results Associated with the Research Associates' Burnout Levels, Their Perceptions of Organizational Cynicism and the Sub-Dimensions Based on the Variable of Age

ANOVA test findings of research assistants' burnout levels, organizational cynicism perceptions and sub-dimensions according to age variable are given in Table 6. Relevant concepts are presented separately with their sub-dimensions.

Table 6. ANOVA Test Results Associated with the Research Associates' Burnout Levels, their Perceptions of Organizational Cynicism and the Sub-Dimensions Based on the Variable of Age

Concepts and Dimensions	Age	n	\bar{X}	Ss	Sd	F	p	Significant Difference
Burnout	1) 20-29	168	2.75	.45	2 424	3.755	.024*	1-3
	2) 30-39	250	2.80	.36				
	3) 40 and older	9	3.12	.53				
Emotional Burnout	1) 20-29	168	2.52	.86	2 424	3.234	.040*	1-3, 2-3
	2) 30-39	250	2.55	.77				
	3) 40 and older	9	3.23	.86				
Depersonalization	1) 20-29	168	2.13	.79	2 424	1.347	.261	-
	2) 30-39	250	2.08	.76				
	3) 40 and older	9	2.51	.90				
Individual Achievement	1) 20-29	168	3.42	.56	2 424	2.593	.076	-
	2) 30-39	250	3.56	.64				
	3) 40 and older	9	3.47	.90				
Organizational Cynicism	1) 20-29	168	2.80	.91	2 424	3.623	.028*	1-3
	2) 30-39	250	2.99	.93				
	3) 40 and older	9	3.47	.78				
Cognitive	1) 20-29	168	3.08	1.07	2 424	4.509	.012*	1-3
	2) 30-39	250	3.30	1.02				
	3) 40 and older	9	3.95	.76				

Affective	1) 20-29	168	2.31	1.13	2	2.750	.065	-
	2) 30-39	250	2.56	1.28	424			
	3) 40 and older	9	2.94	1.05				
Behavioral	1) 20-29	168	2.96	.91	2	1.115	.329	-
	2) 30-39	250	3.04	.92	424			
	3) 40 and older	9	3.38	.98				

ANOVA results associated with the research associates' ages are presented in Table 6. A significant difference between the research associates' ages and Burnout was found based on the obtained findings [F(2-424)=3.755, $p<0.05$]. A significant difference is also found on the Emotional Burnout sub-dimension [F(2-424)=3.234, $p<0.05$]. The difference is found in research associates with ages 20-29 ($\bar{X}=2.52$) and 40 and older ($\bar{X}=3.23$); ages 30-39 ($\bar{X}=2.55$) and 40 and older ($\bar{X}=3.23$). There was also a significant difference between the research associates' ages and the concept of Organizational Cynicism [F(2-424)=3.623, $p<0.05$]. The same was found on the Cognitive dimension of the concept [F(2-424)=4.509, $p<0.05$].

3.6. Reviewing the ANOVA Test Results associated with the Research Associates' Burnout Levels, their Perceptions of Organizational Cynicism and the Sub-Dimensions based on the Variable of Professional Seniority

ANOVA findings of research assistants' burnout levels, organizational cynicism perceptions and sub-dimensions according to the professional seniority variable are presented in Table 7. Relevant concepts are presented separately with their sub-dimensions.

Table 7. ANOVA Test Results Associated with the Research Associates' Burnout Levels, Their Perceptions of Organizational Cynicism, and the Sub-Dimensions Based on the Variable of Professional Seniority

Concepts and Dimensions	Seniority	n	\bar{X}	Ss	Sd	F	p	Significant Difference
Burnout	1) 1-2 years	87	2.67	.44	4 422	3.639	.006*	1-2, 1-5
	2) 3-4 years	76	2.89	.47				
	3) 5-6 years	91	2.76	.36				
	4) 7-8 years	93	2.80	.37				
	5) 9 years and over	80	2.85	.36				
Emotional Burnout	1) 1-2 years	87	2.36	.84	4 422	3.710	.006*	1-2
	2) 3-4 years	76	2.81	.96				
	3) 5-6 years	91	2.56	.75				
	4) 7-8 years	93	2.45	.73				
	5) 9 years and over	80	2.62	.74				
Depersonalization	1) 1-2 years	87	2.02	.76	4 422	1.708	.147	-
	2) 3-4 years	76	2.31	.84				
	3) 5-6 years	91	2.06	.78				
	4) 7-8 years	93	2.11	.68				
	5) 9 years and over	80	2.08	.80				
Individual Achievement	1) 1-2 years	87	3.44	.60	4 422	3.791	.005*	2-4
	2) 3-4 years	76	3.35	.62				
	3) 5-6 years	91	3.44	.62				
	4) 7-8 years	93	3.66	.55				
	5) 9 years and over	80	3.62	.66				
Organizational Cynicism	1) 1-2 years	87	2.58	.89	4 422	4.394	.002*	1-2, 1-3, 1-5
	2) 3-4 years	76	3.15	.92				
	3) 5-6 years	91	2.96	.93				
	4) 7-8 years	93	2.96	.93				
	5) 9 years and over	80	3.00	.87				
Cognitive	1) 1-2 years	87	2.82	1.07	4 422	5.188	.000*	1-2, 1-4, 1-5
	2) 3-4 years	76	3.47	1.05				
	3) 5-6 years	91	3.18	1.01				
	4) 7-8 years	93	3.40	1.00				
	5) 9 years and over	80	3.27	1.00				
Affective	1) 1-2 years	87	2.12	1.06	4 422	2.636	.034*	1-2
	2) 3-4 years	76	2.69	1.28				
	3) 5-6 years	91	2.59	1.31				
	4) 7-8 years	93	2.44	1.27				
	5) 9 years and over	80	2.52	1.14				
Behavioral	1) 1-2 years	87	2.75	.91	4 422	3.539	.007*	1-2, 1-5
	2) 3-4 years	76	3.21	.90				
	3) 5-6 years	91	3.08	.90				
	4) 7-8 years	93	2.91	.95				
	5) 9 years and over	80	3.14	.87				

Study findings indicate a significant difference between the research associates' professional seniority and the Burnout concept [$F(4-422)=3.639$, $p<0.05$]. Tukey test, conducted to find the differences between seniority levels, showed that there is a significant difference between the research associates with 1-2 years of seniority ($\bar{X}=2.67$), 3-4 years of seniority ($\bar{X}=2.89$), and 9 and more years of seniority ($\bar{X}=2.85$). On the Emotional Burnout sub-dimension, there is a significant difference between the research associates with 1-2 years of seniority and 3-4 years of seniority ($\bar{X}=2.81$). No significant difference was found among the groups on the Depersonalization dimension [$F(4-422)=1.708$, $p>0.05$]. There is a significant difference on the Individual Achievement dimension [$F(4-422)=3.791$, $p<0.05$].

There is a significant difference between the research associates' professional seniority and the Organizational Cynicism concept [$F(4-422)=4.394$, $p<0.05$]. Tukey test, conducted to find the differences among the seniority levels, showed that the research associates with 1-2 years of seniority ($\bar{X}=2.58$) had lower levels of perception than those with 5-6 years of seniority ($\bar{X}=2.96$) and 9 and more years of seniority ($\bar{X}=3.00$) did. A significant difference was also found on the Cognitive dimension of the concept [$F(4-422)=5.188$, $p<0.05$]. Differences were found

between the research associates with 1-2 years of seniority ($\bar{X}=2.82$), 7-8 years of seniority ($\bar{X}=3.40$) and 9 and more years of seniority ($\bar{X}=3.27$). A significant difference was found on the Affective dimension of the same concept [$F(4-422)=2.636$, $p<0.05$]. The research associates with 1-2 years of seniority ($\bar{X}=2.12$) were found to have lower levels of perception than those with 3-4 years of seniority ($\bar{X}=2.69$).

3.7. Reviewing the ANOVA Test Results Associated with the Research Associates' Burnout Levels, Their Perceptions of Organizational Cynicism and the Sub-Dimensions Based on the Variables of Education Status and Faculty

ANOVA findings of research assistants' burnout levels, organizational cynicism perceptions and sub-dimensions according to their educational status variable are shown in Table 8. Relevant concepts are presented separately with their sub-dimensions.

Table 8. ANOVA Test Results Associated with the Research Associates' Burnout Levels, Their Perceptions of Organizational Cynicism and the Sub-Dimensions Based on the Variables of Education Status and Faculty

Concepts and Dimensions	Education Level	n	\bar{X}	Ss	Sd	F	p	Significant Difference
Burnout	1) Bachelor's	18	2.77	.52	2	.763	.467	-
	2) Master's	180	2.76	.39	424			
	3) Doctorate	229	2.81	.41				
Emotional Burnout	1) Bachelor's	18	2.55	.97	2	.453	.636	-
	2) Master's	180	2.51	.77	424			
	3) Doctorate	229	2.58	.84				
Depersonalization	1) Bachelor's	18	2.02	.63	2	.334	.717	
	2) Master's	180	2.09	.73	424			
	3) Doctorate	229	2.14	.82				
Individual Achievement	1) Bachelor's	18	3.46	.43	2	.183	.833	-
	2) Master's	180	3.49	.64	424			
	3) Doctorate	229	3.52	.61				
Organizational Cynicism	1) Bachelor's	18	2.87	.92	2	.537	.585	-
	2) Master's	180	2.88	.92	424			
	3) Doctorate	229	2.97	.93				
Cognitive	1) Bachelor's	18	3.17	1.08	2	.834	.435	-
	2) Master's	180	3.15	1.07	424			
	3) Doctorate	229	3.29	1.02				
Affective	1) Bachelor's	18	2.38	1.09	2	.853	.427	-
	2) Master's	180	2.38	1.18	424			
	3) Doctorate							

		229	2.54	1.27					
		18	2.98	1.03					
	1) Bachelor's	180	3.03	.93	2				
	2) Master's				424	.041	.960	-	
	3) Doctorate	229	3.00	.90					

Findings indicate that the research associates' various education levels do not constitute a significant difference on the study concepts and their sub-dimensions [$p > .05$].

ANOVA Findings of Research Assistants' Burnout Levels, Perceptions of Organizational Cynicism and Sub-Dimensions According to Faculty Variable are given in Table 9.

Table 9. ANOVA Test Results associated with the Research Associates' Burnout Levels, their Perceptions of Organizational Cynicism and the Sub-Dimensions based on the Variable of Faculty

Concepts and Dimensions	Faculty	n	\bar{X}	Ss	Sd	F	p	Significant Difference
Burnout		59	2.78	.39				
		65	2.78	.40				
	1) Education	54	2.89	.51				
	2) Arts and Sciences	72	2.78	.41				
	3) Medicine	53	2.79	.35				
	4) Engineering	20	2.98	.39	10	1.237	.265	-
	5) Health Sciences	13	2.82	.42	416			-
	6) Dentistry	20	2.72	.37				
	7) Veterinary	11	2.69	.29				
	8) Agriculture	50	2.69	.41				
	9) Law	10	2.86	.33				
	10) Business	59	2.45	.71				
	11) Communication	65	2.53	.81				
	1) Education	54	2.81	.88				
	2) Arts and Sciences	72	2.48	.79				
	3) Medicine	53	2.59	.72				
Emotional Burnout	4) Engineering	20	2.93	.89	10	1.600	.104	-
	5) Health Sciences	13	2.68	1.07	416			
	6) Dentistry	20	2.28	.63				
	7) Veterinary	11	2.43	.53				
	8) Agriculture	50	2.41	.95				
	9) Law	10	2.68	.77				
	10) Business	59	2.00	.68				
	11) Communication	65	2.12	.77				
	1) Education	54	2.30	.78				
	2) Arts and Sciences	72	2.06	.85				
	3) Medicine	53	2.02	.74				
	4) Engineering	20	2.38	.70	10	.893	.540	
	5) Health Sciences	13	2.21	.78	416			
	6) Dentistry	20	2.15	.59				
	7) Veterinary	11	2.00	.78				
	8) Agriculture	50	2.05	.87				
Depersonalization	9) Law	10	2.26	.86				
	10) Business	59	3.66	.53				
	11) Communication	65	3.52	.64	10	1.213	.280	-
	1) Education	54	3.34	.61	416			
	2) Arts and Sciences	72	3.59	.56				
	3) Medicine							
Individual Achievement	4) Engineering							
	5) Health Sciences							
	6) Dentistry							

	7) Veterinary	53	3.53	.58				
	8) Agriculture	20	3.41	.59				
	9) Law	13	3.36	.93				
	10) Business	20	3.59	.64				
	11) Communication	11	3.46	.54				
		50	3.42	.69				
		10	3.51	.70				
		59	2.81	.93				
		65	2.96	.89				
Organizational Cynicism	1) Education	54	3.24	.89				
	2) Arts and Sciences	72	2.81	.87				
	3) Medicine	53	2.96	.90				
	4) Engineering	53	2.96	.90	10			
	5) Health Sciences	20	3.24	.98	416	1.164	.092	-
	6) Dentistry	13	2.86	1.26				
	7) Veterinary	20	2.47	.63				
	8) Agriculture	11	2.69	.64				
	9) Law	11	2.69	.64				
	10) Business	50	2.92	1.05				
	11) Communication	10	2.96	.98				
Cognitive		59	3.20	1.08				
		65	3.32	1.04				
	1) Education	54	3.45	.96				
	2) Arts and Sciences	72	3.14	1.02				
	3) Medicine	53	3.15	1.00				
	4) Engineering	53	3.15	1.00	10			
	5) Health Sciences	20	3.45	1.15	416	.751	.676	-
	6) Dentistry	13	3.09	1.53				
	7) Veterinary	20	2.86	.74				
	8) Agriculture	11	3.18	.89				
	9) Law	11	3.18	.89				
Affective	10) Business	50	3.18	1.12				
	11) Communication	10	3.36	1.15				
		59	2.19	1.19				
		65	2.35	1.24				
	1) Education	54	2.92	1.20				
	2) Arts and Sciences	72	2.32	1.12				
	3) Medicine	53	2.62	1.19				
	4) Engineering	53	2.62	1.19	10			
	5) Health Sciences	20	3.06	1.30	416	2.328	.011*	3-7
	6) Dentistry	13	2.34	1.37				
	7) Veterinary	20	1.88	.84				
Behavioral	8) Agriculture	11	2.25	.71				
	9) Law	11	2.25	.71				
	10) Business	50	2.54	1.44				
	11) Communication	10	2.65	1.21				
		59	2.94	.90				
		65	3.14	.87				
	1) Education	54	3.30	.96				
	2) Arts and Sciences	72	2.91	.91				
	3) Medicine	53	3.06	.88	10			
	4) Engineering	53	3.06	.88	416	1.727	.072	-
	5) Health Sciences	20	3.16	.85				
	6) Dentistry	13	3.09	1.17				
	7) Veterinary	20	2.57	.82				
	8) Agriculture	11	2.52	.77				
	9) Law	11	2.52	.77				
	10) Business	50	2.98	.95				
	11) Communication	50	2.98	.95				

No significant difference was found between the research associates' faculties and their perception of Organizational Cynicism levels [$F(10-416)=1.164$, $p>0.05$]. There was a significant difference between faculties and the Affective sub-dimension of the same concept [$F(10-416)=2.328$, $p<0.05$]. Tukey test was used to define the differences among the groups based on the faculties. The results of this test showed a significant difference between the research associates in the Faculty of Agriculture ($\bar{X}=1.88$) and Medicine ($\bar{X}=2.92$).

3.8. Reviewing the ANOVA Test Results Associated with the Research Associates' Burnout Levels, Their Perceptions of Organizational Cynicism, and the Sub-Dimensions Based on the Variable of Professional Satisfaction

ANOVA findings of research assistants' burnout levels, organizational cynicism perceptions and sub-dimensions according to the professional satisfaction variable are presented in Table 10. Relevant concepts are presented separately with their sub-dimensions.

Table 10. ANOVA Test Results Associated with the Research Associates' Burnout Levels, Their Perceptions of Organizational Cynicism, and the Sub-Dimensions Based on the Variable of Professional Satisfaction

Concepts and Dimensions	Professional Satisfaction	n	\bar{X}	Ss	Sd	F	p	Significant Difference
Burnout	1) A little	67	3.07	.49	2	30.328	0.00*	1-2, 1-3
	2) Fair	234	2.80	.37	424			
	3) Much	126	2.62	.34				
Emotional Burnout	1) A little	67	3.39	.85	2	85.369	0.00*	1-2, 1-3
	2) Fair	234	2.59	.67	424			
	3) Much	126	2.03	.62				
Depersonalization	1) A little	67	2.62	.91	2	26.102	0.00*	1-2, 1-3
	2) Fair	234	2.12	.71	424			
	3) Much	126	1.82	.66				
Individual Achievement	1) A little	67	3.00	.72	2	42.706	0.00*	1-2, 1-3
	2) Fair	234	3.49	.51	424			
	3) Much	126	3.80	.56				
Organizational Cynicism	1) A little	67	3.69	.87	2	48.278	0.00*	1-2, 1-3
	2) Fair	234	2.97	.81	424			
	3) Much	126	2.44	.87				
Cognitive	1) A little	67	3.92	.96	2	36.056	0.00*	1-2, 1-3
	2) Fair	234	3.30	.92	424			
	3) Much	126	2.70	1.05				
Affective	1) A little	67	3.57	1.22	2	48.620	0.00*	1-2, 1-3
	2) Fair	234	2.45	1.11	424			
	3) Much	126	1.91	1.04				
Behavioral	1) A little	67	3.51	.87	2	21.460	0.00*	1-2, 1-3
	2) Fair	234	3.06	.83	424			
	3) Much	126	2.65	.96				

Results showed a significant difference between the research associates' professional satisfaction and the concept of Burnout [$F(2-424)=30.328$, $p<0.05$]. Results of the Tukey test, conducted to find the differences among the professional satisfaction levels, showed a significant difference between the research associates' low ($\bar{X}=3.07$), moderate ($\bar{X}=2.80$), and high ($\bar{X}=2.62$)

professional satisfaction levels. The same was found about the Emotional Burnout, Depersonalization, and Individual Achievement sub-dimensions.

A significant difference between the research associates' professional satisfaction and the concept of Organizational

Cynicism was also found [$F(2-424)=48.278$, $p<0.05$]. Results of the Tukey test, conducted to find the differences, showed that the research associates with low ($\bar{X}=3.69$) levels of professional satisfaction were found to have higher levels of perception than the researcher associates with moderate ($\bar{X}=2.97$) and high ($\bar{X}=2.44$) levels of professional satisfaction did. The same was found about the Cognitive [$F(2-424)=36.056$, $p<0.05$], Affective [$F(2-424)=48.620$, $p<0.05$], and Behavioral [$F(2-424)=21.460$, $p<0.05$] dimensions.

3.9. Reviewing the Correlations between the Research Associates' Burnout Levels and Perceptions of Organizational Cynicism and the Sub-Dimensions

The correlations between research assistants' burnout levels and organizational cynicism perceptions and their sub-dimensions are presented in Table 11.

Table 11. The Correlations Between the Research Associates' Burnout Levels and Perceptions of Organizational Cynicism and the Sub-Dimensions (n=427)

Concepts and Dimensions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1) Burnout	1							
2) Emotional Burnout	.83*	1						
3) Depersonalization	.75*	.65*	1					
4) Individual Achievement	.002	-.45*	-.36*	1				
5) Organizational Cynicism	.58*	.65*	.52*	-.36*	1			
6) Cognitive	.48*	.51*	.42*	-.20*	.88*	1		
7) Affective	.56*	.67*	.51*	-.36	.89*	.68	1	
8) Behavioral	.46*	.51*	.42*	-.24*	.81*	.57*	.63*	1

A review of Table 11 shows significant relationships between the main study concepts and their sub-dimensions. A medium-level, positive, and significant relationship $r=.58$, $p<.01$ between the concepts of Burnout and Organizational Cynicism and a medium-level, positive, and significant relationship between Burnout and its Cognitive $r=.48$, $p<.01$, Affective $r=.56$, $p<.01$, and Behavioral $r=.46$, $p<.01$ sub-dimensions were found. A medium-level, positive, and significant relationship $r=.65$, $p<.01$ between the Organizational Cynicism and the dimension of Emotional Burnout and a medium-level, positive, and significant relationship between the Organizational Cynicism and the dimension of Depersonalization $r=.52$, $p<.01$, and a medium-level, negative and significant relationship between the Organizational Cynicism and the dimension of Individual Achievement $r=-.36$, $p<.01$ were found. A medium-level, positive and significant $r=.51$, $p<.01$ relationship between the Cognitive and Affective dimensions; a medium-level, positive and significant relationship $r=.42$, $p<.01$ between the Cognitive and Depersonalization dimensions; and a low-level, negative and significant relationship $r=-.20$, $p<.01$ between the Cognitive and Individual Achievement dimensions were found. A medium-level, positive, and significant relationship $r=.67$, $p<.01$ between the Cognitive and Emotional Burnout dimensions and a medium-level, negative, and significant relationship $r=-.36$, $p<.01$ between

the Individual Achievement and the Affective dimensions were found. A medium-level, positive and significant relationship between the Behavioral dimension and the dimension of Emotional Burnout $r=.51$, $p<.01$ and the dimension of Depersonalization $r=.41$, $p<.01$ was found. A low-level, negative, and significant relationship $r=-.24$, $p<.01$ between the Behavioral and Individual Achievement dimensions was found.

Overall, significant relationships were found between the burnout and organizational cynicism concepts and their sub-dimensions. These relationships in general are medium-level and significant. A review of the table shows that majority of the relationships between the dimensions are in positive direction. Based on these data, decrease or increase on any dimension of burnout will alter the research associates' organizational cynicism perception.

4. Conclusions, Discussion, and Recommendations

This section of the paper includes a discussion of findings about the relationship between the research associates' burnout levels and their perceptions of organizational cynicism and the recommendations.

As can be found in the literature, the concepts of burnout and organizational cynicism have been associated with many different concepts and many studies were conducted to describe the relationships between those and other concepts. The current research is different in that it is among the few studies on the relationship between these two concepts. One important characteristic of the current research is that the relationship between those concepts have been examined within the higher education. The results of the current research, aiming to study the relationship between burnout and the organizational cynicism and the main aspects that could impact these concepts, are explained below.

In the current study, gender did not influence the burnout levels and the perceptions of organizational cynicism. Findings showed that females and males had similar levels of perceptions. Researchers such as Sencan (2019), Polatcan (2012), and Khan (2012) have also stated that their results did not differ on gender. Bang and Reio (2017) found that the sub-dimensions of burnout in universities were negatively related to task performance and prosocial behavior, and that there was an indirect relationship between cynicism and emotional exhaustion and personal achievement sub-dimensions in their research on the relationship between burnout and employee behavior. It has been stated that burnout and cynicism are caused by excessive workload and social conflicts.

Marital status is a variable influencing the individual achievement as a sub-dimension of burnout. Particularly married research associates have been found to differ on that. This may be due to excessive home duties, in addition to their workload, and conflicts based on saving little time for the family due to work hours and workload. As can be known, marriage brings responsibility, and it needs time. Being married and being with children may make the research associates feel inadequate in relation to the responsibilities.

Age is a variable influencing the burnout concept and its emotional burnout sub-dimension. A statistically significant difference was found particularly between the research associates of ages 20-29 and 40 and older. This may be due to the disappointment based on long work hours and excessive workload in research associates who initially began willingly as enthusiasts in the profession but could not find what they had expected.

It was found that the professional seniority was a variable influencing the burnout concept. The burnout levels differed on the emotional burnout and the individual achievement as sub-dimensions of the concept. The burnout levels were found higher

particularly in research associates with 1-2, 7-8, and 9 and more years of seniority. Beginners in the profession may have felt burned-out due to not being adapted in the work environment and receiving many duties as beginners. As their seniority grew, they may have faced more perceived inequalities, and their burnout levels may have increased due to long years of service. Comerchero (2008) also found a difference in length of service, depersonalization, and personal achievement dimensions.

A review of the correlational analyses in this study shows a significant relationship particularly between burnout and the organizational cynicism. This relationship is medium level in positive direction. Based on this, we can assume that perceptions of organizational cynicism levels will increase as the burnout levels increase. Study findings show medium-level burnout levels and perceptions of organizational cynicism levels in research associates employed in public universities in the Aegean region. Methods of taking those to low levels can be studied: equality among employees may be established; social support may be provided for the employees; healthy communication within the organization can be built; and workload can be reduced. Burnout and organizational cynicism are often found in younger employees. Therefore, beginner research associates may be offered more realistic employee goals; a mentorship program may be provided; they may be assured that they are a part of the university; and adaptation trainings may be offered within their professional development.

The study population consists of the research associates employed in public universities in Aegean region. Comparative studies can be conducted with data to be collected from various public and private universities in different provinces in Turkey. Thus, overall conclusions can be obtained about the profiles of universities in Turkey. This study focused on the relationship between research associates' burnout levels and their perceptions of the organizational cynicism, based on gender, age, marital status, education levels, faculty, and professional satisfaction variables. Larger studies can be conducted based on different variables (such as employer support, satisfaction with the work hours, reward system, and social support sources). The current research examined the relationship between burnout and the organizational cynicism. The study findings showed a positive relationship between the two. The relationships of both the burnout and the organizational cynicism with other organizational behaviors (such as organizational justice, organizational loyalty, organizational citizenship, alienation, and job satisfaction) can be studied.

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