

International Journal of Research in Medicine and Ayurveda

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Research Article

PREVALENCE, RISK FACTORS AND IMPACT OF BURNOUT AMONG DOCTORS

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ABSTRACT

Background: Burnout is an occupational hazard increasingly affecting healthcare professionals worldwide. It manifests as emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a diminished sense of personal accomplishment. This study examines the prevalence, risk factors, and impact of burnout among doctors. **Methods:** A cross-sectional study was conducted among 200 doctors in various private and government healthcare facilities across Andhra Pradesh. Data was collected using an online questionnaire assessing burnout levels, work hours, and associated risk factors. Statistical analysis was performed using IBM SPSS Software version 20. **Results:** Burnout was highly prevalent, with 10% of doctors frequently experiencing emotional exhaustion and 32% sometimes. Workload was a major factor, with 74% considering it excessive and 52% frequently working overtime. Burnout significantly impacted personal lives, with 78% reporting its effect on relationships and 76% experiencing sleep disturbances. Despite these challenges, 98% had not sought professional help. Work-life balance was rated poor or fair by 82% of participants. **Conclusion:** Burnout among doctors is driven by excessive work hours, lack of support, and emotional exhaustion. Its impact extends beyond professional settings, affecting personal well-being. Addressing burnout requires systemic interventions, improved work-life balance, and organizational support to enhance doctors' overall health and job satisfaction.

KEY WORDS

- Burnout among physicians
- Emotional exhaustion
- Depersonalization
- Workload
- Occupational stress
- Sleep disturbances
- Work-life balance
- Mental wellbeing

Article Info

Article Received: 20 May 2025,
Article Revised: 11 June 2025,
Published on: 01 July 2025.

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INTRODUCTION

Burnout is an occupational hazard that is becoming increasingly common in healthcare professionals worldwide. It is characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a reduced sense of personal accomplishment. This research aims to explore the prevalence, risk factors, and impact of burnout among doctors, focusing on its effects on their personal and professional lives.

OBJECTIVE

To study the prevalence, risk factors, and impact of burnout among doctors, and its consequences on their physical, mental, and emotional well-being.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Place of Study

The study was conducted among doctors working in various private and government healthcare facilities across Andhra Pradesh.

Study Design

A cross-sectional study was conducted using a structured questionnaire distributed to doctors across different medical specialties.

Study Period

The study was conducted over a period of 2 months (January & February 2025)

Study Participants

Doctors from all medical specialties were included in the study.

Sample Size

A total of 200 doctors participated in the survey.

Data Collection Procedure

Data was collected using a self-designed online questionnaire, which included questions about the prevalence of burnout, risk factors, work hours, and physical and emotional health symptoms.

Data Analysis

Data was entered using Microsoft Excel sheet. Summarization and analysis of data was carried out by using IBM SPSS Software version 20(licensed). Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the demographic information, and inferential statistics were applied to assess the relationship between burnout and its associated risk factors.

Inclusion Criteria

Doctors from all medical specialties, aged 21 years or older.

Exclusion Criteria

Doctors who were on extended leave or unwilling to participate.

Confidentiality

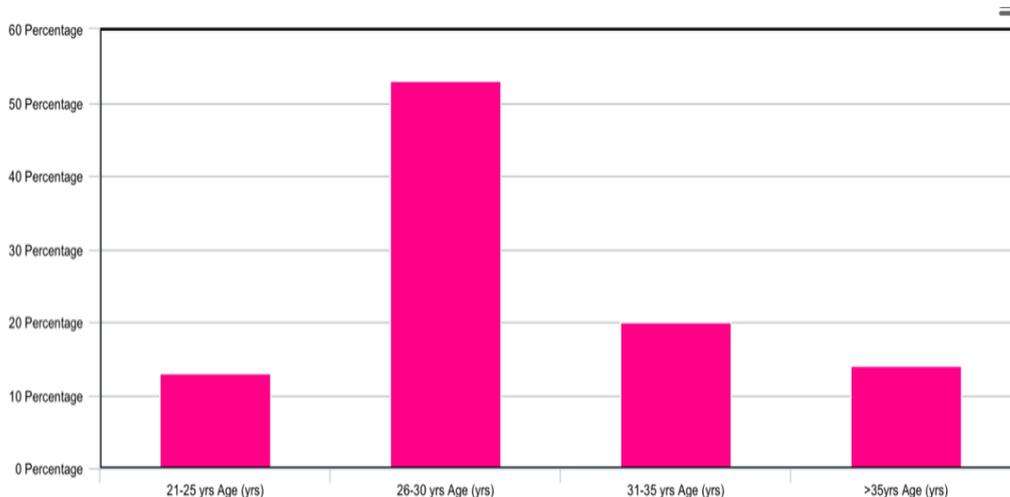
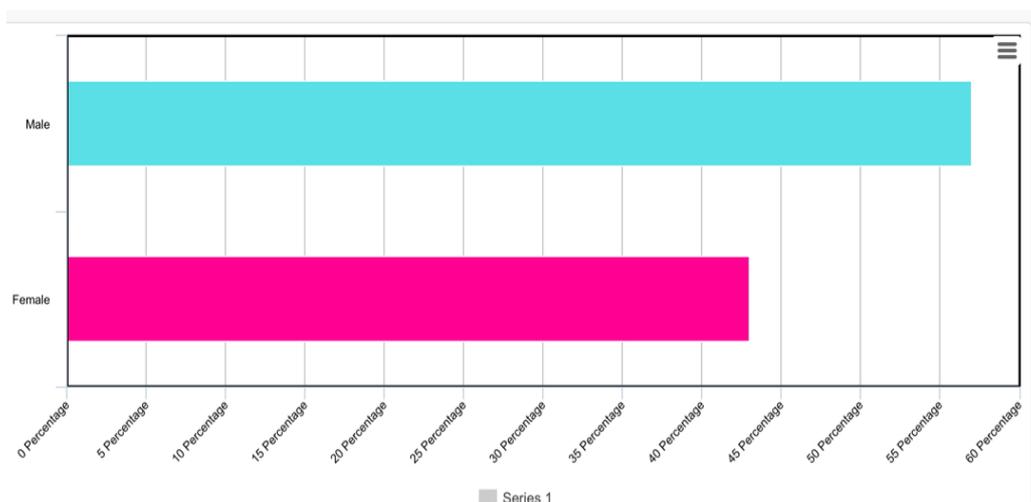
All participant details were kept confidential, and only aggregated data was used in the results.

Ethical Consideration

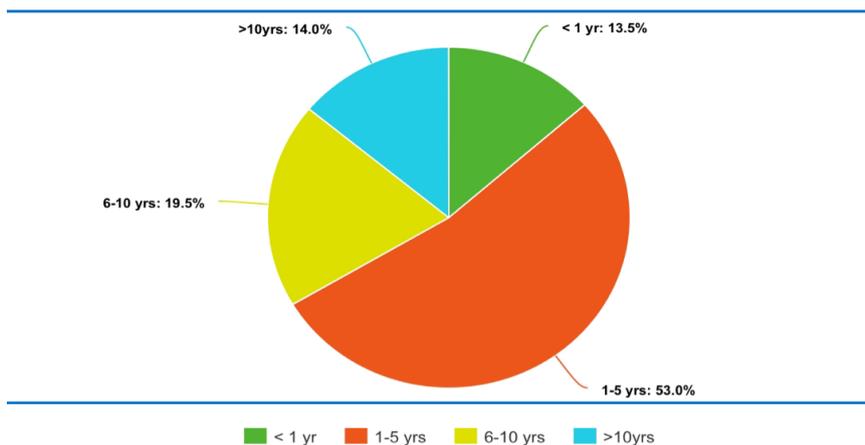
The study received approval from the institutional ethics committee. Informed consent was obtained from all participants.

RESULTS

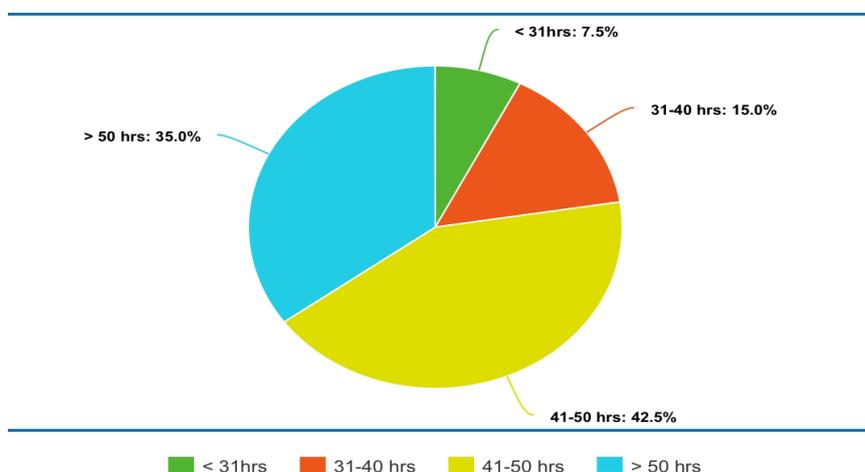
The survey included 200 doctors (57% male, 43% female) from various age groups, with the majority aged 26-30 years (53%). Most participants had been working in healthcare for 1-5 years (53%), with 42.5% working 41-50 hours per week and 35% working more than 50 hours weekly.



How many years have you been working in healthcare?



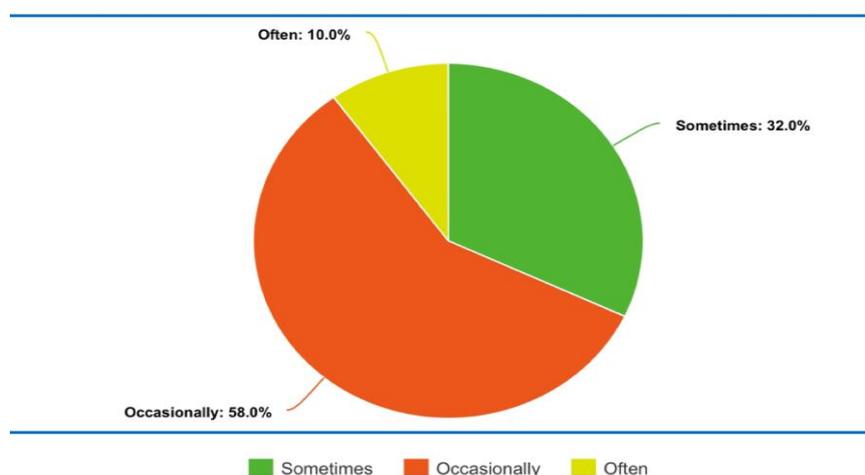
How many hours per week do you typically work?



Burnout prevalence was evident, with 10% of doctors feeling emotionally exhausted often, 32% sometimes, and 58% occasionally. Additionally, 46% reported having considered leaving their job, while 74% believed their

workload was excessive. Over 52% frequently worked overtime or extra shifts, contributing to stress and burnout.^[1]

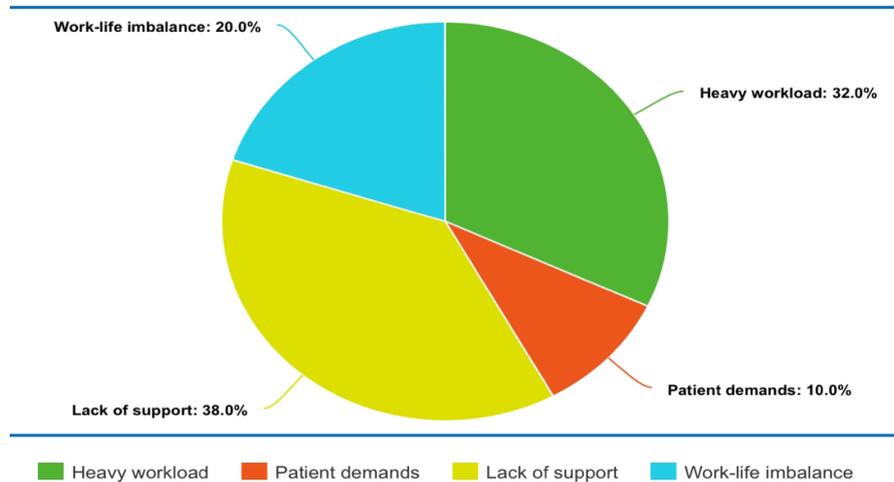
How often do you feel emotionally exhausted at work?



The impact of burnout extended beyond work, as 78% of doctors stated that burnout affected their personal relationships. Physical health was also impacted, with 64.5% sometimes experiencing symptoms such as headaches, fatigue, and digestive issues, while 18%

experienced them often. Alarming, 76% suffered from sleep disturbances due to work stress, and 98% had not sought professional help for burnout or work-related stress.^[2,3]

What are the main sources of stress in your job?



Work-life balance was a significant concern, with 18% rating it as poor, 64% as fair, and only 18% as good. Additionally, 38% identified lack of support as the main source of stress, while 32% attributed it to heavy workload. These findings align with previous studies suggesting that lack of support and an overwhelming workload are major contributors to physician burnout.^[4,5]

DISCUSSION

Burnout among healthcare professionals, particularly doctors, is a significant issue with profound implications for both the individuals and the healthcare system as a whole. The findings of this study are consistent with those of other studies that have reported a high prevalence of burnout among medical professionals due to excessive workloads, long working hours, and emotional exhaustion.

The prevalence of burnout in this study aligns with findings from Shanafelt et al. (2019), who reported a high incidence of burnout among physicians, with emotional exhaustion being one of the most common symptoms.^[1] Similarly, Maslach & Leiter (2016) noted that burnout is closely linked to long working hours and insufficient support, both of which were also identified as risk factors in our study.^[2]

Moreover, the impact of burnout on personal relationships and physical health is a significant concern, as 78% of doctors in our study reported that burnout negatively affected their personal lives. This is in agreement with Dyrbye et al. (2020), who found that burnout often leads to decreased satisfaction with personal relationships, as well as physical health issues like fatigue and headaches.^[3] Furthermore, the high incidence of sleep disturbances, as

reported by 76% of doctors in this study, aligns with findings from Kaur & Sharma (2017), who highlighted sleep disturbances as a common symptom of burnout.^[4]

The role of excessive work hours and lack of support in contributing to burnout is also supported by the work of Bodenheimer & Sinsky (2014), who emphasized the importance of work-life balance and organizational support in mitigating burnout.^[5] Our study found that 52% of doctors frequently worked overtime or extra shifts, which is consistent with other research indicating that prolonged work hours contribute significantly to burnout (Shanafelt et al., 2016).^[1]

CONCLUSION

This study highlights the high prevalence of burnout among doctors, driven primarily by excessive work hours, lack of support, and emotional exhaustion. The negative impact of burnout on personal relationships and physical health underscores the importance of addressing this issue within healthcare systems. Efforts to improve work-life balance, provide support for healthcare workers, and reduce the excessive workload are essential for mitigating burnout and ensuring the well-being of medical professionals. Further research is needed to explore the long-term effects of burnout on healthcare professionals and to develop effective interventions to prevent and manage burnout. These findings provide valuable insights into the factors contributing to burnout among doctors and offer a foundation for future policy changes and support programs in healthcare settings.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We extend our sincere gratitude to all the doctors who participated in this study, dedicating their time to provide valuable insights despite their demanding schedules. We are also grateful to the faculty and administration of Konaseema Institute of Medical Sciences and Research Foundation, Amalapuram, for their continuous support and guidance throughout this research.

Special thanks to the institutional ethics committee for their approval and oversight, ensuring the ethical conduct of this study. Lastly, we appreciate the contributions of our colleagues and mentors, whose feedback and encouragement played a crucial role in the successful completion of this research.

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