Burnout, workplace stressors and period of employment in a particular profession among Slovenian employees

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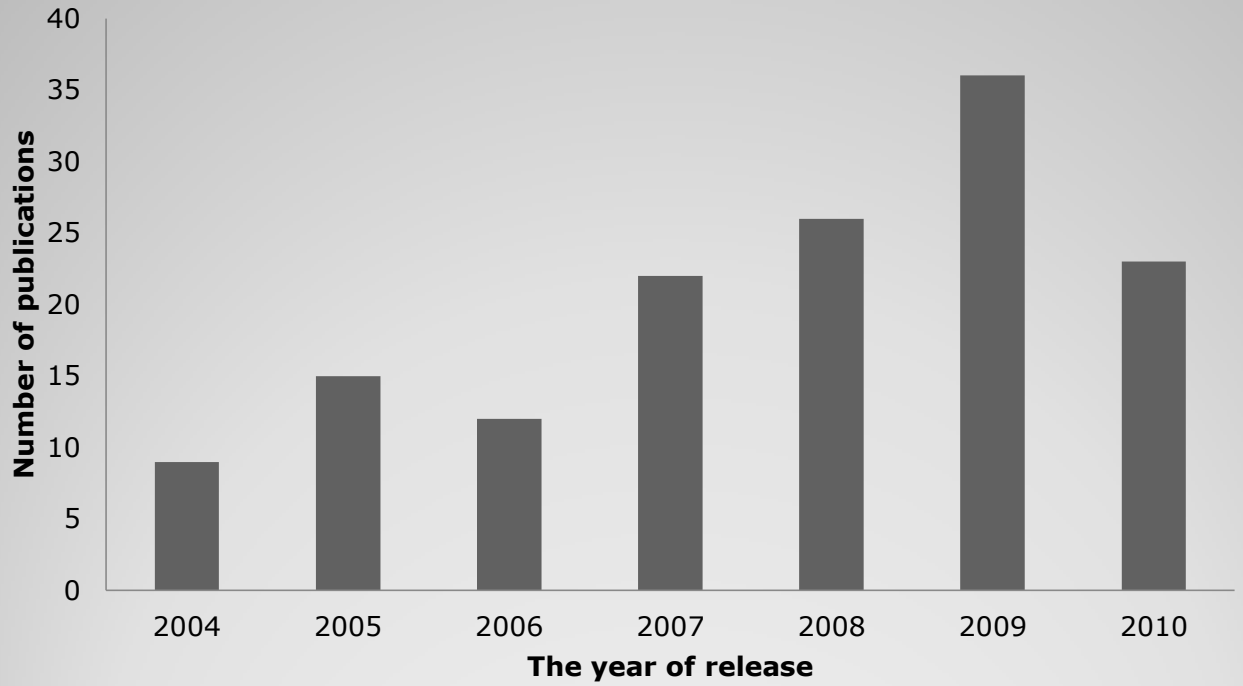
Introduction

- the burnout problem has recently been receiving a proper research attention in Slovenia



Picture 1. *Number (N=148) of idenified publication researching burnout from 2004 to 2010.*

Introduction

- different aspects of job stressors have been linked to burnout among employees [1] .

- to our knowledge none of the studies employed the **cognitive ergonomics approach** [2]
  - quantifies the burden of workplace stressors on human resources
  - 3 basic cognitive ergonomic processes
  - insight into the nature of the occupational stress

[1] Maslach, C., Schaufeli, W.B. & Leiter, M.P. (2001). Job burnout. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *52*, 397-422.
[2] Belkić, K. & Savić, C. (2008). The occupational stress index: An approach derived from cognitive ergonomics applicable to clinical practice. *Scandinavian Journal of Work and Environmental Health, 6*, 169-175.

Introduction

- inconsistent results of studies which address burnout with the period of employment in a particular profession [3]
  - possibly a small negative correlation with emotional exhaustion

[3] Brewer , E. W. & Shapard , L. (2004). Employee burnout: A meta-analysis of the relationship between age or years of experience. *Human Resource Development, 3(2),* 102-123.

Aim

- to examine the relatedness of self-reported burnout with workplace stressors and years of employment in among Slovenian employees in different occupations
  - different types of workplace stressors in different occupations contribute to experienced burnout
  - in helping professions stronger association of burnout and years of employment

Methods

721 Slovenian employees of different occupations filled out:

- Oldenburg Burnout Inventory (OLBI) [4]

OLBI DIMENSION	Description
EXHAUSTION	general feelings of emptiness, overtaxing from work, a strong need for rest, a state of physical exhaustion
DISENGAGEMENT	distancing from work, negative, cynical attitudes and behaviors toward work

- 4 point scale (strongly agree to strongly disagree)
- positively and negativela framed items

[4] Demerouti, E., Bakker, A.B., Vardakou, I., & Kantas, A. (2003). The convergent validity of two burnout instruments: A multitrait-multimethod analysis. *European Journal of Psychological Assessment , 18*, 296-/307.

Methods

- General Occupational Stress Index (OSI) questionnaire [2], assessing 7 stress dimensions

OSI STRESS DIMENSION	Description
UNDERLOAD	homogenous, simple tasks
HIGH DEMAND	heterogenous tasks, complex decisions
STRICTNESS	strictly defined standards of work
EXTRINSIC TIME PRESSURE	no control over work pace, deadline pressure
AVERSIVE/NOXIOUS EXPOSURE	heat, cold, noise
AVOIDANCE/SYMBOLIC AVERSIVENESS	serious consequences of a wrong decision, high level of attention
CONFLICT/UNCERTAINTY	conflicting demands
TOTAL OSI SCORE	quantifies the overall burden of working conditions upon the human operator

[2] Belkić, K. & Savić, C. (2008). The occupational stress index: An approach derived from cognitive ergonomics applicable to clinical practice. *Scandinavian Journal of Work and Environmental Health, 6*, 169-175.

Results

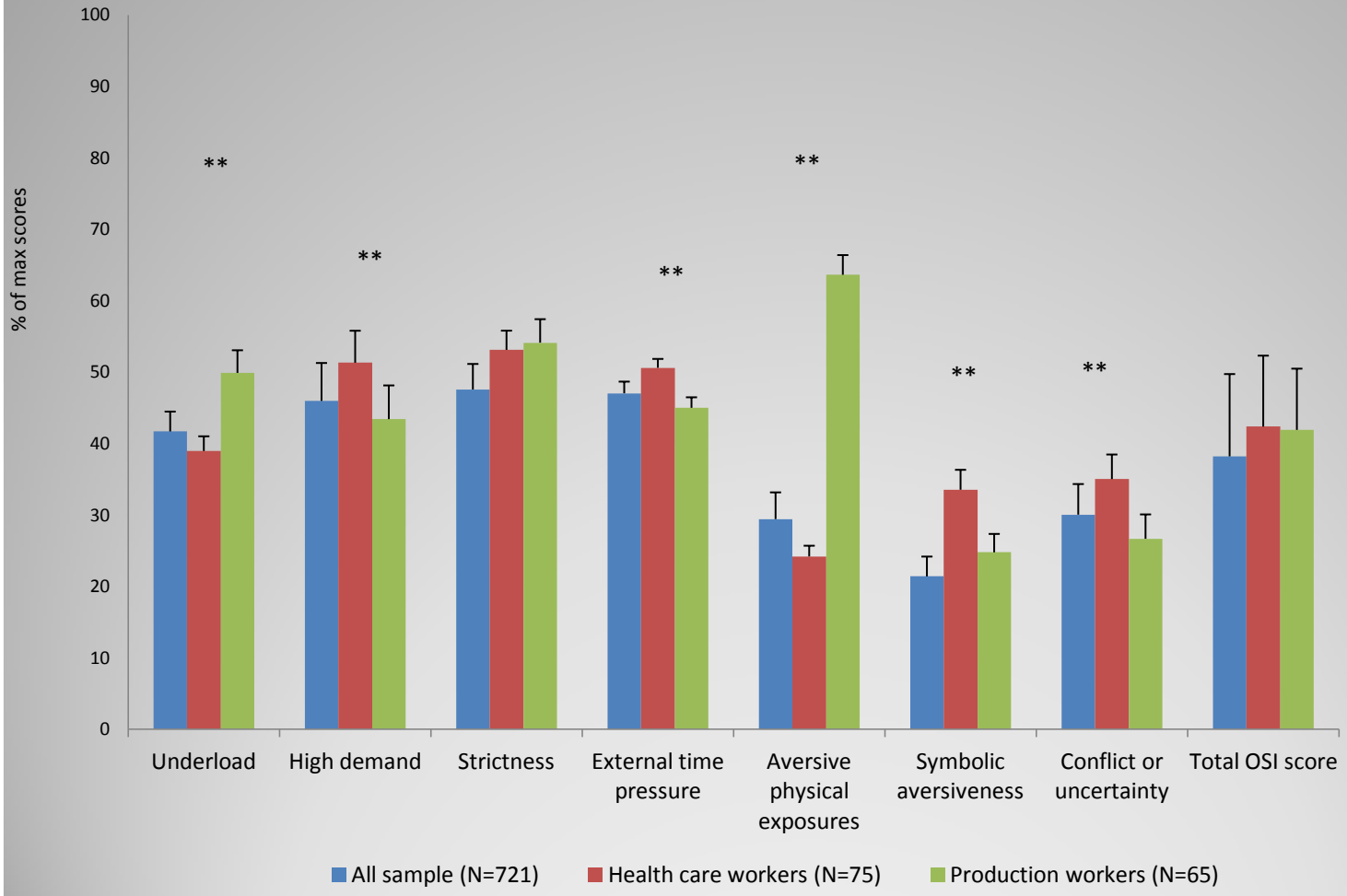


Figure 1. *Comparison of OSI stress dimensions between the whole sample and two different occupational groups of Slovenian workers.*

Results

	TOTAL (N=721)		HEALTH CARE WORKERS(N=75)		PRODUCTION WORKERS (N=65)	
OLBI dimensions	***Disengagement***	***Exhaustion***	***Disengagement***	***Exhaustion***	***Disengagement***	***Exhaustion***
OSI dimension						
Underload	0,138**	0,123**	-0,014	-0,085	-0,265**	-0,108
High demand	-0,061*	-0,037	-0,231**	-0,051	0,132	-0,016
Strictness	0,177**	0,166**	0,034	0,034	-0,144	-0,138
Extrinsic time pressure	0,044	0,100**	-0,051	0,012	-0,161	-0,097
Aversive exposures	0,140**	0,154**	-0,216*	-0,094	0,221*	0,217*
Symbolic aversiveness	0,092**	0,160**	-0,194*	-0,086	-0,014	0,071
Conflict	0,144**	0,187**	-0,087	0,026	-0,069	0,102
Total OSI	0,158**	0,208**	-0,213*	-0,048	0,080	-0,019
YEARS OF EMPLOYMENT						
Workplace	0,054*	0,079**	-0,215	-0164	-0,027	0,059
Occupation	0,051*	0,068**	-0,366**	-0,358**	0,040	0,091
Total	0,033	0,063*	-0,333*	-0,308**	0,030	-0,024

Table 1. Kendall tau correlations between OLBI and OSI stress dimensions and period of employment.

Conclusions

- professional subgroups of the sample significantly differed on OSI stress dimensions
- different types of workplace stressors contribute to experienced burnout
- stronger association between burnout and years of employment in helping professions
- cognitive-ergonomic approach/instruments helps to identify workplace stressors that may increase the risk for occupational burnout in particular profession

Thank you for your attention

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