Burnout Among Interpreters for the Deaf

by

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Abstract

This study examines the relationship of job burnout to various demographic variables, including: gender, job classification, age, education, tenure, supervision, children in the household, education, and interpreter training program (ITP) completion. Interpreters from the United States and Canada, as well as several European nations (N=260), completed the Maslach Burnout Inventory, or MBI (Maslach, 1996) as well as several scales on autonomy , role conflict (Quinn & Staines, 1979) and workload (Caplan et al, 1975). There were strong positive correlations between: exhaustion burnout and autonomy, workload, and role conflict; cynicism burnout and autonomy, workload, and role conflict; and professional efficacy and age, number of children, and years interpreting, among interpreters for the Deaf in general. Role conflict and autonomy emerged as the most important factors for interpreters, accounting for 22.7% of the total variance in exhaustion and 19.1% of the total variance in cynicism. The findings suggest that certain life choices have a significant impact upon interpreter burnout in their chosen profession. The type of environment in which an interpreter works appears to play a major role as well. Interpreters should find these findings useful in determining career choices as well as gaining a better understanding of variables that affect their own job burnout. Additionally, trainers/educators, employers, and recruiters of interpreters should note those variables that would indicate interpreter burnout and those who may have a proclivity to burnout, as well as those who are in danger of burning out and leaving the profession.

Burnout Among Interpreters for the Deaf

There are several reasons for this research burnout (initial research done by Swartz, 1999): (1) Interpreting for the deaf is a burgeoning profession meriting additional awareness; (2) initial research regarding the burnout of interpreters for the deaf suggests the need for more in-depth study (Swartz, 1999); (3) educators and employers require a better understanding of interpreter well-being; (4) recruiting challenges exist in finding qualified interpreter candidates; (5) varying degrees of deficit in number of interpreters throughout North America, would motivate interpreter scholars, educators, and employers in the profession to better understand optimal methods for retaining interpreters (lessening job burnout); (6) development and implementation of a national standard on interpreter working conditions that would reduce stress and stain, subsequently leading lower burnout; (7) addressing specific issues proactively is much easier now while the profession is young and growing, versus tackling them after they are firmly entrenched in an establishment that may be reluctant to change; and (8) interpreters need to examine their perceptions of their own profession, including indicators and predictors of stress and burnout.

The use of interpreters for the deaf has become more prevalent as more individuals have entered the profession. This natural progression of the profession demands work standards, ethics, and supporting constructs. Unfortunately, in this new profession, little research has been conducted in the area of interpreter burnout (Swartz, 1999). Burnout is of critical concern, especially in light of the profession's newness, rapid growth, and the far-reaching impact that interpreters have in the lives of both deaf and hearing individuals. It is in the profession's best interest to know if its members are successfully managing their work environments. Feedback

will better enable recruiters, trainers, and managers to address effective training, hiring and retention of interpreters. More importantly, it will help interpreters currently working in the profession, as well as those considering it as a career.

While it is clear that certain variables outside the control of the interpreter affect job burnout, it was believed, at the outset of this research, that certain variables under the control of the interpreter influence job burnout. Bearing this in mind, the following working hypotheses were offered at the commencement of this study: 1) There are significant positive correlations between exhaustion (MBI), and cynicism (MBI) and the following variables: Autonomy (Quinn & Staines, 1979); Role Conflict (Quinn & Staines, 1979); Workload (Caplan et al, 1975); number of kids; number of years married; years interpreting; years interpreting full-time; and years at current job; 2) There are significant negative correlations between exhaustion (MBI), cynicism (MBI), and the following variables: years of college, level of education, salary, Autonomy (Quinn & Staines, 1979), Role Conflict (Quinn & Staines, 1979), and Workload (Caplan et al, 1975); and 3) There are significant negative correlations between professional efficacy (MBI) and following variables: Autonomy (Quinn & Staines, 1979); and Role Conflict (Quinn & Staines, 1979).

Definitions

There are a number of terms used in this paper that are germane to the interpreting profession, germane to this article, or both. They are defined here:

Freelance Interpreter – any professional interpreter not employed by an agency, company, or corporation on a full or part-time basis, but rather working for one or many such entities on a contractual or "as needed" basis.

Staff Interpreter – any professional interpreter employed by an agency, company, or corporation on a full or part-time basis. These interpreters may also be defined as standard wage earner interpreters.

Dependent Contractor – any freelance interpreter working exclusively, or primarily, for one agency, company, or corporation, while still maintaining freelance status.

 Independent Contractor – any freelance interpreter not working exclusively for one agency, company, or corporation, but rather for many such entities on a contractual or "as needed" basis.

Certified – any interpreter who has earned national certification as recognized by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc. (RID), and the National Association of the Deaf (NAD) in the United States, or the Association of Visual Language Interpreters (AVLIC) in Canada.

Employment Status – whether an interpreter works full-time or part-time.

Background

The need for sign language interpreters has increased significantly since the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (Government Printing Office, 1990). Even though more interpreters are entering the work force than previously, there remains a critical shortage of qualified interpreters throughout the United States and Canada. This deficit has resulted in interpreters working long hours and sometimes under less than ideal conditions. However, not all scholars acknowledge a labor shortage (J. L. Bailey, personal communication, November 26, 2003). This will be discussed at length later in this article.

Interpreters, functioning as the conduits of information exchange, cross languages and cultures to decode and encode messages. Accordingly, interpreters often find themselves

immersed in two cultures - one grounded in "hearing" and the other in "deafness."   In order to understand how interpreters operate between these two cultures, Lockmiller (1982) conducted research on the stressors that interpreters face. Lockmiller (1982) determined that there is a great deal of emotional and job-related conflict internally for interpreters. They often feel they must meet the expectations, however unreasonable they may seem, of both the hearing and deaf participants in the interpreting communication process. The strains and stresses placed on interpreters for the deaf merit an analytical look at how interpreters resolve this conflict.

Many interpreters function as private contract interpreters, free from some of the organizational constraints faced by typical wage earners. Alternatively, private contract interpreters may face workplace problems that are different and/or compounded by their unique situation. Interpreters often enter the workplace absent people management skills and knowledge of personal health maintenance.

Burnout involves many components of employment. Training, ability, environment, salary, promotion opportunities, recognition, optimal working conditions, adept supervision, and intra/ as well as extra-office personal support are variables contributing to the larger whole of job burnout (or the reduction of it). Burnout is the degree to which one experiences unrelieved work stress. This can result in deleted energy, emotional exhaustion, lowered resistance to illness, increased depersonalization in interpersonal relationships, increased dissatisfaction and pessimism, and increased absenteeism and work inefficiency (Hatfield & Gray, 2003). Therefore, one can surmise that interpreters desire a rewarding work experience with minimal conflict and stress. Thus, what draws an interpreter to the profession or a given work environment?

An interpreter's job is inherently a difficult one. Scholars suggest that interpreters are constantly making linguistic and cultural adjustments (Loncke, 1995; Dean & Pollard, 2003). These adjustments reflect the paces an interpreter must go through in order to render the message faithfully and accurately from the source language to the target language. Though Loncke suggests these adjustments are geared towards those who have lower linguistic skills, these adjustments are still applicable in varying degrees as interpreters function in both the hearing world and deaf culture. When both sides of the language interchange fail to understand these adjustments, and/or appreciate the difficult decisions involved, interpreter stress can result. The interpreter feels under-valued, unappreciated, misunderstood, and even incompetent. Ultimately, this stress can trigger burnout.

Other researchers agree that interpreters must possess considerable skill (Anderson & Stauffer, 1991; Bosman, 1995; Dean & Pollard, 2003). Not only must they be fluent in both the source and the target language, they must also have skills that allow them to mediate beyond cultural boundaries and deal effectively with the demands placed upon them during the interpreting process. Additionally, they must be ethical (see Code of Ethics, RID, 1998, p. 34), culturally sensitive, and rhetorically and pragmatically astute.

The term "ethical" is broad and bears some explanation. RID's Code of Ethics mandates that interpreters remain neutral, uninvolved, and true (faithful) to the message. In essence, the interpreter is required to make the message of one party completely available to the other, while maintaining intended incongruence, attitudinal slights, and other psychologically-charged meta messages (overt and covert). The delivery must be made in accordance with these ethical

standards maintaining a constant state of emotional distance and separation from a process in which they are integral.

Bourcier (1981) points out that the interpreter's condition of neutrality and separation leads to a feeling of powerlessness. According to Herzberg's theory of motivation (Herzberg, 1968), interpreters need effective and strong interpersonal relations (hygiene factors). An absence of strong interpersonal skills creates incongruence, as interpreters are often obligated to think and make decisions for the deaf person, but receive no recognition for right decisions and all the blame for wrong ones.

Working Conditions

Working conditions involve compensation, benefits, hours and schedules, teaming and support (both physical and emotional), supervision, evaluation, mentoring/support, professional development and advancement, and physical environment. Hurwitz (1995) reports that working conditions and compensation for interpreters are diverse. The passage of PL 94-142 in 1974 (implemented in 1976) created a tremendous demand for sign language interpreters, a demand that increased significantly with the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act in 1990. Both pieces of federal legislation caught interpreters and educators largely unprepared. Hurwitz (1995) also makes the following contentions:

1.   The interpreter's role is largely undefined.

2.   Sparse training is available for educational interpreters.

3.   Poor working conditions in schools results in high interpreter turnover.

4.   Many people falsely equate signing skill to interpreting skill.

5.   Many interpreters worldwide suffer from repetitive motion injury, or upper

extremity cumulative trauma disorder.

6.   Interpreters report that they are isolated.

Though made nearly a decade ago, these comments are still significantly relevant today.

Training is an appreciably important construct influencing work conditions relative to

overall burnout. As early as 1985, Barber-Gonzales, Preston and Sanderson (1985) reported that

the National Center on Deafness at California State University Northridge provided varied

programs and avenues for improving working conditions. These ranged from workshops for

stress, performance recognition, and in-services. It appears that most training for interpreters

regarding stress is directed toward staff interpreters. This does not include freelance and private

contract interpreters functioning as self-employed entrepreneurs or the interpreters who consider

themselves the "lone wolf" (Hurwitz, 1995, p. 9). These dependent and independent contractors

may not be benefiting from job-based training that alleviates job tension and improves overall

working conditions.

Woll & Porcari (1995) state that there are negative social implications of using, and

being, an interpreter. Interpreters can be perceived as an oddity in the working environment. This

can be discomforting to the deaf person who does not want to elicit attention or to an interpreter

who has low self-esteem or lacks confidence. It is akin to being in a fishbowl in which not

everyone is comfortable.

Table 1

RID Member Working Conditions Concerns

Condition	Explanation
1. Two hour minimum	1. Minimum 2 hours pay
2. Compensatory preparatory time	2. Payment for preparation time
3. Limitations on contract interpreting time (avoid Repetitive Motion Injury – RMI)	3. More protection for private contract interpreters – support of team interpreting
4. Career ladders/upward mobility	4. Alleviation of job "stuckness"
5. Cancellation policy	5. Payment for interpreting services contracted, but cancelled
6. Portal to portal	6. Payment for roundtrip mileage
7. Paying time for travel	7. On-the-clock while enroute
8. Conditions of employment with service agencies	8. Protection when the "lone wolf"

The Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (1993) membership discussed working conditions during its 1993 convention. Subjects of interest are outlined and explained in Table 1. Much of the discussion showed the infancy of the profession and the lack of standardized professional practices. It also showed a lack of the public's understanding of the job/profession. While working standards of other professionals are well- developed, or at least instituted, fought for, and supported by labor unions, interpreters are still struggling to build a foundation of minimal working conditions.

Furthermore, the concept of working standards for North American interpreters has yet to be addressed in an official capacity by the prominent professional organization, the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) and the National Association of the Deaf (NAD). Despite growing concern among the interpreting profession regarding working conditions, limited research has been done on this subject. Carstensen (1994) discussed that Denmark issued a survey to interpreters gauging working conditions, and most reported physical distress associated with their job. Ninety-five percent said they had motion disorders in the past year. Among interpreters for the deaf, physical distress and injury is tantamount to the potential loss of the very tools (their hands) they need to perform their vocation.

Interpreting Standards

Interpreting standards concerns the professional requirements that various entities place upon practicing interpreters. Though the Americans with Disabilities Act dictates that only "qualified" interpreters are used (Government Printing Office, 1990), it is a state's issue in determining compliance with this mandate in individual jurisdiction. In so deciding, states may or may not establish professional standards and guidelines by which interpreters may practice their profession within each respective state. Many states have developed their own certification requirements, while others have deferred the testing and qualifications to a national body, such as RID, NAD, or both.

One problem confronting states in implementing rigid statewide requirements for interpreters is that they effectively eliminate many interpreters who are already working in the system. This problem is indicative of the less than satisfactory quality of many interpreters who are currently working, causing many states to establish a waiver system allowing present

interpreters eventually to come into compliance. However, some states do not have a waiver

system, and interpreters failing to meet the new standards are eliminated from the pool of

interpreters.

The Georgia State Department of Labor is managing the state quality assurance program

for interpreters (F. Nesbit, personal interview, November 26, 2003). Dr. Nesbit, who is an

Education Program Specialist (Deaf and Hard of Hearing consultant) for Georgia's Department

of Education, believes that his state's requirement that educational interpreters be nationally

certified is a mixed blessing. While it can potentially serve to remove those interpreters who are

clearly not qualified to work (and doing a disservice to the deaf children for whom they

interpret), it also creates a potential shortage of interpreters. Georgia passed a "rule" in the

summer of 2003 that required educational interpreters to have either state licensure or national

certification, with a two-year grace period for those falling short to come into compliance (F.

Nesbit, personal communication, December 2, 2003). This means that interpreters practicing

within Georgia can continue to work until 2005 if they have passed RID's written test and, using

the performance evaluation from Kansas, can demonstrate reception and expression of only 50%

(F. Nesbit, personal communication, December 2, 2003). After that point, they must have Level

III certification, minimally (F. Powell, personal communication, December 2, 2003).

As suggested previously, though, the mere creation of standards for interpreters creates

its own shortage. While most will argue that these standards are sorely needed, the more

constraints placed upon the requirements to interpret, the greater the demand upon the profession

to relieve subsequent shortages. Such shortages cannot be resolved quickly, especially in light of

the fact that RID has suspended its written test until June, 2004 at the earliest due to the merging

of the RID/NAD testing systems (F. Nesbit, personal interview, November 26, 2003; Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, 2003a).

Further issues directly relate to professional standards. One such problem is incongruence within the profession, or chaos as some might refer to it (refer to Table 2). While one state may have stringent regulations governing ability to work, other states literally allow someone who merely professes to be an interpreter to work within that state.

New Hampshire requires interpreters to have national certification to practice professionally within its state (Title XXX: Occupations and Professions, 2001). Yet, across the state line in New York, you can practice interpreting freely, without any type of certification (M. Reaver, personal communication, December 7, 2003). There are clearly gaping discrepancies in qualifications from state to state, and such disparity can only lead to confusion in the profession and for the public, which it serves. We can only hope this improves over time as states that are currently wrestling with legislation and licensure issues develop systems with meaningful standards.

Table 2

State Standards that Govern Working Interpreters

States that Require National or State Certification to work in Schools	States that Require National or State Certification to work for State Agencies	States that require national or state certification to work anywhere in state	States that do not require any type of certification, regardless of venue

CA; CO; CT; GA; IL;	AL[a]; AZ[b]; CA[b]; CT[b];	AL; AZ; CA; CT; IL;	AK; AR; DE; DC;
KY; LA; ME; MN; MO;	PA[b]; IL[b]; IN; IO[a];	KY; LA; ME; MO;	FL; HI; ID; KS;
NE; NM; NC, OH; OK;	KY[b]; LA[b]; MA[c];	NC; RI; UT	MD; MI; MS; MT;
RI; TX; UT; VA; WI	ME[b]; MA[b]; MO[b];		NV; ND; OR; SD;
	NE[b]; NH[b]; NJ[a]; NM[b];		TN; VT; WA; WY
	NY[d]; NC[b]; OK[b]; RI[b];		
	SC[a]; TX[a]; UT[b]; VA[a];		
	WV[a]		

Note. [a]Certification is required to work in state courts only. [b]Certification is required to work in both state agencies and courts. [c]Certification is required for courts, state agencies, and medical settings. [d]Currently suspended due to critical shortage of interpreters. This is not a complete listing of states. Some states have no information published, while others failed to respond to a request for information.

Although states mandate minimum standards for interpreters this does not automatically lead to compliance, nor do they necessarily improve the situation or diminish any existing shortage. In fact, they often exacerbate the shortage. Stewart and Kluwin (1996) found discrepancies between guideline recommendations and actual occurrences in the interpreting environment (schools). There appears to be a gap between training, implementation of standards, delivery of services, and the development of mechanisms by which these factors can be monitored ensuring compliance.

In Missouri, there are currently three commissions that oversee the interpreting profession (Missouri Commission for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing; Board of Certification of

Interpreters; and the Missouri State Committee of Interpreters). This amounts to 21 state civil

servants overseeing the state's 450 certified/licensed interpreters (D. Wagner, personal

communication, November 29, 2003). In the state's ultimate wisdom, it has effectively squashed

the professional status of all interpreters in the state who previously functioned at Quality

Assurance (QA) levels of 1 and 2, removing over 100 interpreters from the state's rolls (D.

Wagner, personal communication, November 29, 2003). This has led many of these interpreters

in the lower levels to drop out of the profession altogether, as they are no longer able to receive

work for income in their profession of choice. A better route may have been to provide effective

training for these lower level interpreters (on-the-job training) so that they could continue to

support themselves and improve their skill simultaneously. It appears that Missouri legislation

has effectively worsened a bad situation, at least in terms of the interpreter shortage. On the other

hand, South Carolina had legislation pending, but put its passage on hold due to the extreme

shortage of interpreters in the state (S. Fitzmaurice, personal communication, December 12,

2003). South Carolina recognized the need for regulation but believed that the passage of such

legislation would worsen the situation. worse.

     These discrepancies in requirements to work send mixed messages to interpreters and

consumers about qualifications and compliance with satisfactory terms of service delivery.

Additionally, the present situation can lead to animosity between qualified, trained interpreters

and those who are not qualified but are in high demand due to the severe shortage of interpreters.

It is akin to a doctor with many years of training working side-by-side with someone who has

received no medical training, yet is receiving pay that is par or nearly par. With this lack of

congruence, interpreters who are in the profession are prone to unequal treatment from state to

state, and even within their own jurisdictions. As stated earlier, expectations placed upon

interpreters have been recognized as a predictor of job satisfaction (Hurwitz, 1995; Lockmiller,

1982). This incongruence can only lead to higher levels of stress and burnout.

The concept of interpreter standards not only includes nationally or locally recognized

certification, but also employer and consumer expectations of interpreters. There is extensive

discord among deaf people, educators, and interpreters with regard to sign language and what

may constitute a "sign system." Sign systems refer to those methods of communication for the

deaf that usually constitute a contrived system of symbols, rather than a natural progression of a

maturing language as found in American Sign Language (ASL). The Canadian Association of

the Deaf (1994b) is in direct opposition to sign systems, only recognizing American Sign

Language (ASL) and la Langue des Signes du Quebec (LSQ) as the only official, working sign

languages in Canada. This contention within the Deaf community often places interpreters in the

precarious position of being required by a school district or other paying entity to interpret in a

given "sign system" with many political undertones directed towards the interpreter.

In a conflicting report, The Canadian Association of the Deaf (1994a) supports the right

of deaf people to use sign systems in interpreting situations. This paradox exemplifies the

confusion faced by many people who are deaf or who work in the field of deafness. There is

strong public demand for adherence to politically correct behavior and "standards," but these

requirements lack consideration of the present condition of the population. This discord and

confusion places the interpreters in the middle, trying to please both sides of the interpreting

equation, but usually only managing to satisfy one, at best. This disparity among institutions and

people who use interpreters may lead confusion and stress among interpreters for the deaf, and subsequently lead to burnout.

Interpreter Shortages

As addressed earlier, the demand for interpreters far surpasses supply (Benoit, 2003; Berke, 2003; Center on Deafness, 2003; Dean & Pollard, 2001; NTID News Release, 2003; NeRID, 2003; S. Fitzmaurice, personal communication, December 12, 2003). Although most believe there is a critical interpreter shortage (citations), not all agree. Janet Bailey, past president of RID, does not believe there is a shortage: "I really don't think there is a crisis or shortage. We have huge numbers of students in ITPs, new folks in the field every year, our numbers are up dramatically in terms of certified folks and members. I really don't see the shortage problem." (J. Bailey, personal communication, November 26, 2003). Therefore, we can certainly identify a disagreement as to the problem, if one exists at all, among the higher echelons in the profession. Ms. Bailey is currently serving on the NAD/RID Task Force on Interpreting, a group working to address the needs of consumers and interpreters. Those believing there is a critical shortage may find it distressing that Ms. Bailey denies a shortage, and perhaps find it even more agonizing if the entire task force shares her opinion.

Additionally, there are others who believe the shortage to be contrived, most probably from the selectiveness of interpreters in accepting work assignments. This has been explained as "free market enterprise," the notion that interpreters only take the jobs they want (S. Bedrosian, personal communication, November 28, 2003). In essence, this phenomenon of interpreters only taking work they desire, and rejecting the rest, is the main cause of the shortage, according to Bedrosian (personal communication, November 28, 2003).

For this paper, we will assume there is a shortage, and the shortage is severe (Anderson et al, 2003; Benoit, 2003; Guthman & Blozis, 2001; NeRid, 2003; NTID News Release, 2003). While it is plausible to attribute part of the shortage to interpreters being selective with work assignments, it is reasonable to believe that other factors are at work creating this shortage, and in fact exacerbating it. We can look at the problem as multi-faceted: 1) attracting and recruiting individuals to the interpreting profession; 2) providing effective training to make these individuals competent in the profession; 3) regulating this training in conjunction with state mandated standards for interpreters; and 4) providing support for interpreters in the profession to minimize work-related burnout.

We can look at the interpreter shortage in general terms, and certainly examine its historical perspective more globally with regard to the service industry in general. Fisher (1997) believes that fallout from the air traffic controller strike during the Reagan era, a revamping of human resource policy, has global implications. He points out that attracting, motivating, and retaining employees must be a part of cultural and institutional norms. Recent emphasis has suggested that an employee go "where the grass is greener." Employee loyalty is a negligible issue in many industries. The contemporary employee rarely works for a company throughout his or her career. Free agency in Major League Baseball is a trend that typifies the American worker's changing ethic. With the transitory and/or temporary nature of many interpreters and their assignments, such longevity in a given position is most likely a rarity (Swartz, 1999).

According to Green (1998), demographic changes have reduced the labor supply, with ". . . fewer people ages 16-34 are [sic] entering the labor force than was the case over the past few decades--approximately one-half the rate of the 1980s--and a growing number of workers are

retiring" (p. 34). Coupling this with the increasing proportion of older and retired Americans, we

have a shrinking human resource pool serving a much larger population of increased longevity.

In the sign language interpreting profession there has been an unusual situation related to

demographics. Until recently, most interpreters for the deaf were those who had deaf parents

(Children of deaf adults, or Coda's). Interpreting, moving from a gratis profession to one that is

legitimate and financially rewarding, is blossoming and has had to increase the range of its

demographic draw. Other non-Coda's are entering the field, but not at a rate adequate to meet the

requisite. Additionally, the profession has failed to attract sufficient numbers to the field to close

the gap between supply and demand.

The Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID), addressed the shortage of interpreters as

early as 1994 ("National Interpreter Crisis Declared," RID, 1994). Additionally, the shortage of

interpreters is in its mission statement: ". . . RID has worked diligently to provide the three Q's

of interpreting: Quantity, Qualification and Quality" (Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf,

2002). However, as suggested earlier, local governments are becoming less reliant on RID to set

a minimum standard for interpreters and are more frequently establishing their own local testing

and quality controls. Despite RID's best efforts, RID membership and/or certification is not seen

as a necessary requirement for professional interpreting practitioners. Many interpreters forgo the

expense of joining RID, opting for a working environment where there are no ties to a

professional association of interpreters. This could be due to a lack of confidence in RID,

monetary concerns (although RID membership is a bit more than $100 annually for certified

members), inability or lack of desire to earn continuing education units to maintain certification,

or fear that RID will require them to adhere to ethical standards that they do not support or endorse.

Another reason that interpreters are in increasing demand is the rising number of job opportunities for deaf people. Deaf people are becoming more upwardly mobile and need interpreters more frequently (increased need to communicate with the hearing majority). There has been a change in the curriculum for deaf children. Due to PL94-142, the current focus is on mainstreaming into public school settings, requiring an exponential increase in the number of classroom interpreters.

Paradoxically, as the need for interpreters increases, it has become increasingly difficult to recruit them to the profession. Interpreter pay, while increasing in recent years, is not on a par with that of spoken language interpreters. Interpreting for the deaf is treated as a social service/civil servant function, with pay reflective of a lack of understanding or appreciation for the profession. While referral agencies may wish to increase the rate of pay to interpreters, third party users of the service often contest even minimal payment for a service they perceive as benefiting a small minority of the population (akin to funding for "orphan" diseases).

However, K. Shirley (Personal Communication, February 12, 1999), an interpreter educator, suggests that money is not always the deciding factor when recruiting an interpreter. Often the candidate is more interested in support they will receive once they are hired, as well as opportunities for professional growth and job variety. B. Way (Personal Communication, February 24, 1999), another interpreter educator, says it is not always money that is the top priority when hiring interpreters in British Columbia and Alberta, but also the stability of the position. In Way's school district, it is often difficult to hire interpreters because the Ministry

personnel are hesitant to hire interpreters on a fulltime basis, but hire rather based upon a "per

school year" contract. This employment always involves the risk of termination if a student

withdraws. It would be valuable to recruiters and managers to know the needs of interpreters to

create higher levels of satisfaction.

In many situations in which interpreters function as private practice interpreters, these

professionals bid on contracts for a specified length of time. Generally, these contracts do not

include benefits but rather allow only for payment of an hourly rate or even a lump sum

payment. Therefore, interpreters functioning in this capacity (roughly 1/3 of all interpreters

according to Swartz's 1999 research) are not provided: health insurance; vacation, holiday,

personal, or sick pay; training or mentoring (unless it is provided by the contractor); labor

bargaining/union representation; educational reimbursement; Employee Assistance Programs

(EAPs); and other perks afforded regular, fulltime and/or part-time employees.

This is apparently true in many jurisdictions, especially relative to educational

interpreters. One example is Smithtown Central School District in Long Island, New York. Here

the educational sign language interpreters have worked for 10 years as independent contractors

without the aforementioned benefits (T. Adwar, personal communication, November 28, 2003).

Thus, we can attribute part of the shortage, at least as it relates to educational interpreters, to the

lack of fulltime jobs with benefits.

According to many educational interpreters, we can further attribute this shortage to poor

pay in certain areas. In Florida, a starting interpreter at the School for the Deaf and the Blind can

expect to make $15,000 per year with minimal credentials (Interpreter Education Project, 2003).

An interpreter at Chickasha Public Schools in Chickasha, Oklahoma can expect to make $5.50

per hour with no benefits (W. Farr, personal communication, December 12, 2003). Then there are interpreters in other areas of the country that are paid at a more realistic rate. In New Jersey, a mid-level interpreter can make more than $20 per hour with full benefits, including medical, dental, sick and leave days (W. Ehrhardt, personal communication, December 12, 2003). In 2002, Omaha, Nebraska interpreters successfully bargained for their very first contract, with substantial pay raises (National Education Association, 2002).

Others are addressing the interpreter shortage in innovative ways. The National Science Foundation has awarded the National Technical Institute for the Deaf at Rochester Institute of Technology (NTID/RIT) an $883,883 to study STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) information acquisition by deaf and hard-of-hearing students. The researchers, and those granting the funding, recognize that there is a shortage of qualified interpreters and alternatives must be explored for imparting STEM information to deaf and hard-of-hearing students (NTID News Release, 2003). This reflects an apparent shifting to explore communication aids that are minimally adjunct to the interpreter, and potentially a replacement to interpreters in some instances.

Benoit (2003) describes how CART (Communication Access Realtime Translation) is used in lieu of an interpreter: "CART is accepted as an effective, beneficial alternative to the growing crisis of the qualified interpreter shortage in our Deaf community…" (Benoit, 2003). Clearly, the private and public sectors are looking for alternatives to interpreters when confronted with the continuing interpreter shortage.

An interpreter shortage has created an unhealthy and dangerous burden on the professional interpreters. Frequently one interpreter is sent to an interpreting situation in which

two are required. Best practices in the profession suggest two interpreters on any engagement

lasting over two hours, and in some instances one-and-one-half hours or less (RID, 1997). This

creates physical and mental stress on the interpreter expected to do the job of two. Interpreters

who must work in these situations are endangering their very livelihood with increased incidence

of Cumulative Motion Injury/Repetitive Motion Injury (RID, 1998), as well as mental fatigue.

These factors can lead the interpreter to lose faith in the profession, the job, and his or her

ability to deliver quality professional services. Subsequently, the loss in vocational satisfaction

results in burnout, prompting the interpreter to exit the profession.

Job Definition

Seemingly, some individuals in the private and public sector hire interpreters absent any

concept as to the role or function of an interpreter for the deaf. A recent vacancy published by

the U.S. Department of Defense, identified "interpreter" duties to include:1) supervision of and

instruction to students; 2) motor coordination skills, rhythm movements, and remedial subject

matter review; 3) supervision of independent study in laboratories; 4) setting up laboratory

demonstrations; and 5) development of audio-visual tactile aids (U.S. Department of Defense,

2003). The duties for this job do not reflect the appropriate duties of an interpreter as published

by various organizations, including those as published by the Occupational Information Network

(O*NET™), a project sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor. O*NET™ describes the

duties of an interpreter/translators as follows: "27-3091-00 – Interpreters and Translators:

Translate or interpret written, oral, or sign language text into another language for others" (U.S.

Department of Labor, 2003).

Moreover, interpreters often function in their daily assignments with confusion over their actual role in the process, or at least to the degree in which they are involved in communication relationship. DeMatteo et al (1986) examined the interpreter's role in the psychotherapeutic relationship with deaf clients. Those findings indicate that in order to function as a genuinely meaningful participant in the communication exchange, performing an optimal job, the interpreter must violate RID's published Code of Ethics. Most notably, that in the therapeutic relationship it is sometimes helpful for the interpreter to interject personal opinions and observations, which is in direct contradiction to RID's Code of Ethics.

Heller et al (1986) made similar findings when examining the interpreting process in general and found that most stressors that interpreters confront relate to role confusion. Those included paradoxes, ambiguities, conflicts, and high levels of demand characteristics (Heller et al, 1986, p. 440). As with the role confusions identified by DeMatteo et al (1986), these discrepancies and paradoxes have, as stated earlier, a direct impact on job satisfaction (Hurwitz, 1995), and can possibly lead to stress and job burnout.

Working Conditions

Burnout is also affected by other factors, including how the employees are recruited, trained, mentored, and what initiatives are instituted to retain them. One method of alleviating the shrinking human resource pool in certain trades/professions is through active and creative recruitment. H. L. Reed (Personal Communication, February 17, 1999) says that it is difficult to recruit interpreters because of keen competition from other agencies who need interpreters. Not only are many organizations looking to recruit interpreters for employment, there are also those willing to contract with interpreters on an as-needed basis. Interpreters can make a comfortable,

livable salary as freelancers, so there may be less incentive for them to exchange this freedom in exchange for fulltime employment. The result is that many agencies contract freelance interpreting services.

Human resource shortages due to high employee turnover are destructive to the stability and growth of any company, particularly those not anticipating or planning for such possibilities. Other theories, issues, and forces previously mentioned focus on alternative strategies to increase the influx of human resources (supply) into the supply-demand chain. Retention is the logical issue a company must consider internally, a force under its own control in most instances.

According to Catlette and Hadden (1998), one method to curb human resource shortages is through proactive retention of employees. Their methods, as outlined in The Contented Cows Book (Catlette & Hadden, 1998) focus on getting employees committed, demonstrating concern for them, and enabling their achievement of top performance. The authors (Catlette & Hadden, 1998) suggest such employee perquisites as flexible workweeks, compressed work scheduling, telecommuting, childcare, and gourmet cafeterias. Some of these perks may be difficult to accomplish for many interpreters due to the transitory nature of the work; however, it is notable that exhibiting concern for interpreter well-being encourages maximum job performance and satisfaction.

There are retention problems specific to interpreters: 1) many interpreters who enroll in interpreter training programs never graduate (K. Kasper, personal communication, December 3, 2003; W. Farr, personal communication, December 3, 2003); 2) those who do graduate leave the field in short order due to burnout and general dissatisfaction (K. Kasper, personal communication, December 3, 2003); 3) many interpreters leave due to poor pay and lack of job

benefits (Swartz, 1999; W. Farr, personal communication, December 12, 2003); 4) interpreters

suffer work-related injuries such as repetitive motion injury (RMI) and leave for this or other

health reasons (Peper and Gibney, 1999; Swartz, 1999); and 5) those who remain in the

profession are unhappy to a great degree and function at a less than optimal level (Swartz, 1999).

Regarding injury, this problem is significant especially considering the current shortage

of interpreters. Practitioners and interpreters in training need to be aware of the physical strains

imposed by the profession and techniques for minimizing harmful effects. Peper and Gibney

(1999) discussed the ill effects of RMI and its prevention, such as correct breathing, hand

preparation, and taking mini-breaks. Others have written on the subject of RMI (Sanderson et al,

1999; Smith et al, 2000; Tanaka et al, 1995). Still, this is a work regimen that is often overlooked

by many practicing interpreters, and a skill that is not taught by many ITPs. This type of training,

as well as other training designed to minimize burnout would further the improvement of

interpreter working conditions.

Training Specific for Interpreters

In some areas, we are losing Interpreter Training Programs (ITP's). According to The

Canadian Hearing Society (1996), Sheridan College in Ontario announced the closing of their

ITP. Sheridan closed reportedly because of provincial government budget cuts. Other programs

have also closed recently, or have announced their closing, including those located at: Puget

Sound Community College; University of Akron, and Floyd College in Georgia (E. Monn,

personal communication, November 29, 2003; F. Nesbitt, personal communication, November

26, 2003). Rather than taking steps forward, some areas are taking steps backwards by not

affording more training to prepare interpreters.

Limited research has been done on ITPs. Most of what has been done was for institutional or "in house" purposes. Smith and Gorelick (1979) conducted a survey of the effectiveness and efficiency of recruiting and training in ITPs approximately 20 years ago with results that were inconclusive. Dahl and Wilcox did research in 1990 on the efficacy of ITPs in training educational interpreters. They found that the ITPS were not properly preparing educational interpreters:

"The results suggest that graduates of interpreter training programs who obtain employment as public school interpreters are not adequately prepared. Training programs provide few courses on the education of deaf children, on the language systems used, and on issues specific to classroom interpreting" (Dahl & Wilcox, 1990, p. 328).

Monn did research on ITPs in 2002, examining the types of courses offered as well as other facets of the programs (E. Monn, personal communication, December 1, 2003). Monn found that 20 of the 111 programs examined (18%) required a business skills course. As nearly 1/3 of all practicing interpreters are engaged as private contract interpreters (Swartz, 1999), it appears that the ITPs are not meeting their students' needs, at least in this regard.

There are training programs that do address issues related to interpreting that go far in supporting the student upon graduation and entrance of the profession. Douglas College in New Westminster, British Columbia, is one such program. Students are required to complete a series of courses that support business practices and the health of the interpreter, including: 1) Wellness: Personal Approaches; 2) Wellness: Self and Professional Practice; 3) Working with Others; 4) Professionalism and Cultural Mediation; and 5) Professional and Business Practices (C. Palmer, personal communication, November 30, 2003). Douglas College is not alone, as

several other programs require these essential courses and training. Corning Community College's interpreter program requires courses that address interpersonal communication skills, stress, problem resolution, and business aspects (S. Bruno, personal communication, December 1, 2003).

These courses offer valuable tools for interpreters to help them function as business professionals, handle the interpreting processes and many of the tangential situations related to the demands of interpreting, and deal with stress and avoid potential burnout. Both the interpreter and the profession are well served by these courses in terms of effective training that should maximize satisfaction, minimize burnout, and maximize job retention.

However, for every model program, there are many more programs experiencing difficulty in preparing the interpreter for the profession. Program administrators complain of students entering interpreting programs ill prepared. Wilcox (S. Wilcox, personal conversation, January 31, 1999) says that students often have to be "taught" the language (American Sign Language) – the actual process of learning interpretation cannot begin until after the students have effectively become fluent in the language.

Others complain that students graduate from interpreting programs less than prepared to tackle even the most simplistic of interpreting tasks (Cartwright, 1999). In the interpreting profession, it appears that our best efforts may be falling short. There is reason to believe that there may be continued inadequate training for educational interpreters specifically and interpreters for the deaf in general. Elliott & Povers (1995) did research that supports this notion; there is a need for specialized training for educational interpreters. The University of Tennessee,

in recognizing this need, has established an interpreter training program designed specifically for educational interpreters (Educational Interpreter Training Program, 2003).

Dean & Pollard (2003) also suggest that interpreters in training are being ill prepared for the "art of interpreting. An interpreter who enters the profession without the proper training is akin to sending a plumber into the field without his pipe wrench – the worker cannot be effective. Traditional training in interpreter training programs focuses on language and culture, with cross-cultural nuances being explained through a myriad of situations being played out with a plethora of conditions and variables (Dean & Pollard, 2003; Roy, 2002). Dean and Pollard (2003) suggest that for interpreter training to be more effective, it should also include the many variables that "…impact effective translation, such as environmental context, communication goals, thought world factors, paralinguistic challenges to articulation clarity, and the potential impact of interpreter physiological or psychological states on the ultimate professional product (p. 11). In other words, the current curricula of most interpreter training programs needs to be revamped to reflect more real-world situations that the interpreter faces on a daily basis.

Therefore, in order for interpreters to enter the profession fully prepared, ITP's and other training options must be fully examined, funded, revamped, and expanded. A poorly trained interpreter is likely to become a dissatisfied one, disillusioned and destined to leave the profession prematurely, in addition to providing poor or unethical service to deaf and hearing consumers.

Personal Issues

Interpreters are under a great deal of pressure, rarely enjoying the satisfaction that they have been involved in resolving any problems that have arisen during the

communication/interpretation process (Lockmiller, 1982). They are seen as passive participants in a communication process, and must be so, according to strict adherence to RID's Code of Ethics (RID, 1998). For many years, it has been instilled in interpreters, through training, codes of ethics, and job descriptions, that for an interpreter to be truly effective they must be "invisible." Invisibility, the concept that the interpreter is a transparent channel through which communication is encoded and decoded, has been expressed as a goal yet, yet remains a paradox for interpreters. The interpreter who is successful often feels worthless, meaningless, and never recognized for their hard work (Lockmiller, 1982). They feel powerless to influence the outcome of the communication situation in any way. As mentioned earlier, this paradox of so much power over the communication process, yet no recognized or realized power, places interpreters in a state of limbo and flux; anxiety, stress, dissatisfaction and burnout are natural fallouts.

Additionally, the short supply of interpreters has forced many to work long hours. This can result in burnout in even the most motivated interpreters. New interpreters, as well as seasoned ones, become disillusioned citing feelings of exhaustion, depression and besiege. Lockmiller (1982) says that interpreting students, or any interpreters entering the profession, need advisement about burnout and its prevention. Again, education and training are key components.

Watson (1987) first examined interpreter burnout, mostly in an anecdotal manner. The number of interpreters who were leaving the field due to stress and exhaustion alarmed her. A few years later, Branam (1991) did another brief study on interpreter burnout, finding that burnout was most influenced by autonomy, organizational factors, and interpersonal relationships. However, this research did not identify any differences between interpreters and

the general population, and can best be considered non-conclusive. The Conference of Interpreter

Trainers (1995) stated in their standards that ITP's must include in their content instruction in

stress management and personal health care. Today, few ITP's require or provide stress

management classes; a few are cited earlier in this article.

Recruiters should also consider looking for interpreters who provide the best fit to meet

the stress and other requirements inherent to the profession. Taylor and Elliott (1994) report, in

their survey of interpreters and trainers, that 75% of all respondents believed that "attitudinal

requirements are equally as important as those for knowledge and skills" (p. 186). Assuming a

valid survey, it appears that three-fourths of the population believes that the interpreter's attitude,

and indeed his or her personality are integral factors in ensuring one's success in the profession.

Luciano and Swartz (1997) found, as did Blake (1997), that personality type and job

satisfaction are interrelated. Blake cites Myers (1980) in stating that the S/N (Sensors/Intuitives)

preference is dominant in predicting career choice. Sensors are fact oriented, while intuitives are

drawn to possibilities, and both can be profiled in Myers-Briggs as well as the California

Personality Inventory as used by Luciano and Swartz (1997).

As Provost (1990) suggests, if we do not work in a profession that is congruent to our

personality type, then undue stress can be experienced. Provost also found that many interpreters

were Myers-Briggs NF types (Intuitive/Feeling). This is not surprising – interpreters are people

who base decisions on values, harmony, and mercy (Provost, 1990).

However, even the most even-tempered interpreter has difficulty in remaining neutral in

interpreting situations. Harvey (2003) found that interpreters often empathize with the deaf

participants in an interpreting exchange, mostly due to witnessing to oppression (intentional and

unintentional) and the hands of the hearing participants. Interpreters, being the compassionate participants that they are, often internalize this negative fallout and carry it with them, unable to resolve the paradoxes witnessed, and helpless via their role of benign interaction to effect change or satisfactory resolution.

Burnout Research

An extensive amount of research exists on burnout in general (see Table 3). This research reflects the multitude of variables that play a more important role in burnout. As stated earlier, an employee's perception of job function, and its congruence with his or her own expectations, also plays an important role. Other factors are management style, interpersonal relationships on and off the job, and personality type.

As previously mentioned, interpreters for the deaf are in extremely short supply, mostly due to the incredible demand placed upon the profession with the passage of ADA (and subsequent requirements under Title III). Interpreters complain of burnout, being under-appreciated, having poor working conditions (e.g. carpal tunnel syndrome, repetitive motion injury, and cumulative motion injury), consumer ignorance or confusion regarding the interpreter's role, personal disparity over professional role and "power," and lack of appropriate training. All of these factors can lead to burnout, yet there is very little current literature on burnout among interpreters for the deaf.

Table 3

Burnout Research Summary

Study	Findings

1. Maslach & Jackson (1985); Maslach & Pines (1977); Pines & Kafry (1978	1. consequences of burnout effect workers, clients and organizations
2. Meier (1984)	2. burnout not the same as clinical depression
3. Firth, McKeown, McIntee, and Britton (1987)	3. noted overlap between depression (Beck Depression Inventory) and exhaustion (MBI)
4. Cox, Kuk & Leiter (1993)	4. limitations to preventing or alleviating burnout
5. Schaufeli, Leiter, and Kalimo (1995)	5. levels of burnout differ among national samples, and between cultures

To date very little research has been done on interpreter burnout. Watson (1987) first examined interpreter burnout, mostly in an anecdotal manner. The number of interpreters who were leaving the field due to stress and exhaustion alarmed her. Swartz (1999) examined burnout as well, and had similar findings. Swartz also found that several interpreters who experienced burnout, rather than leave the field entirely, went back to earn advanced degrees and remained in the interpreting field as educators.

Various studies suggest that training, empowerment, promotions, performance ratings, mentoring/support, upward mobility, recognition, general working conditions, and goal realization are some of the key ingredients contributing to the gestalt of overall job satisfaction. As mentioned earlier, other factors, such as supply shortages, increased demands placed on

employees and educational preparation are contributory in affecting an employee's overall attitude and satisfaction. The goal here, in this article via this research, is to enlighten the profession, and those connected to it, as to inherent problems regarding burnout. Hopefully, any identified problems can be diminished with changes in training and working conditions, which will be discussed later.

Measurements of Burnout

There exist numerous instruments for the measurement of burnout (authors, years). Many inventories for burnout have been developed for specific populations, such as the xxxxx which is for xxxx workers.

Among survey instruments, the xxxxx was one of the first used, developed by xxxxx. Like most job burnout survey instruments used today, subjects respond by checking weighted value statements that ask how they feel about their job and the stressors that they experience.

For assessing burnout among interpreters, an instrument with application to general populations, as well as good validity and design, would be preferable. Maslach's Burnout Inventory or the MBI (Schaufeli et al, 1996) appears to be a good instrument for this purpose, and was used successfully by Swartz in a precursor to this study (1999). This instrument (MBI) was chosen as it historically and effectively measures a person's relationships with his or her work along a continuum (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993; Riggat et al, 1984; & Schaufeli et al, 1995). This continuum ranges from the energetic state of engagement to the deteriorated state of burnout (Maslach et al, 1996). Here, burnout is measured in terms of exhaustion, cynicism, and efficacy. Leiter & Durup (1996) found that the MBI's subscales had stability coefficients of .65 (Exhaustion), .60 (Cynicim), and .67 (Professional Efficacy). Additionally, Schaufei, Leiter, and

Kalimo (1995) found that the actually measured the constructs intended. A series of analyses

found that Exhaustion was associated with mental and physical strain as well as workload and

role conflict. Professional Efficacy was related to satisfaction, job involvement, and available

resources. Cynicism is primarily to the same components of Exhaustion, with the added

constructs of negative loading of similar constructs as found with Professional Efficacy.

As role conflict, workload, and autonomy were found by previously (Swartz, 1999;

Swartz, In Press) to have a significant bear on job satisfaction, it was postulated that these

variables of employment would also have a major bearing on burnout. Quinn and Staines (1979)

have developed scales for autonomy and role conflict that have been used with assessment of

human service workers (Jayaratne & Chess, 1986; Siefert, Jayaratne, & Chess, 1991). Earlier,

Quinn et al. (1971) developed a 4-item scale that explicitly examines the variable of workload.

Jayaratne & Chess (1986), and Siefert, Jayaratne & Chess (1991), used this scale for human

service workers. These three subscales, examining autonomy, role conflict, and workload, would

be a good complement for the examination of overall burnout among interpreters for the deaf.

Method

Variables, Levels of Measurement, and Definitions

The main dependent variables in this study are burnout (interval), autonomy (interval),

workload (interval), and role conflict (interval). The independent variables in this study included

the following: gender (nominal-dichotomous), job classification, which includes standard wage

earner, independent contractor, dependent contractor (nominal-dichotomous), age (ratio),

education (nominal-dichotomous), time in current job (ratio), supervision (interval), salary

(ratio), and education (nominal-dichotomous). For the purpose of this study, these variables were

conceptualized as follows:

Burnout is the degree to which an interpreter experiences unrelieved work stress.

Workload is the extent to which the demands made of interpreters for the deaf are

excessive.

Autonomy is the extent to which interpreters for the Deaf have freedom to assume

responsibility for their actions and success.

Role conflict is the conflict between what interpreters for the deaf are expected to do and

actually, what they are capable of doing.

Emotional exhaustion is the extent to which interpreters for the deaf experience a

depletion of mental resources (Schaufeli, Leiter, and Kalimo, 1995).

Professional efficacy is the extent to which interpreters for the deaf experience perceived

effectiveness and accomplishment at work. (Schaufeli, Leiter, and Kalimo, 1995).

Cynicism is the extent to which interpreters for the deaf have an indifferent or distant

attitude toward work (Schaufeli, Leiter, and Kalimo, 1995).

Sample and Procedures

Because all subjects would be contacted by electronic mail (email), a pool of email

addresses obtained from the following sources in the United States and Canada:

1. Database of interpreters maintained by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf,

Inc. (RID, 2003b).

2. An email capture program that searches web documents related to interpreting,

and scans for related interpreters and their email addresses.

Emails were forwarded to subjects, requesting that they complete the web-based survey. Subjects were asked to describe their gender, marital status, age, number of children, education, years of college, ethnicity, religion, time in current job, title in current job, monthly income, interpreter training received, level of certification, job status (standard wage earner or free-lance/contractor interpreter, with identification of independent and dependent contractor status), and full or part-time status.

Autonomy was measured using a scale of six items developed by Quinn and Staines (1979) and has a reliability coefficient of .78 (Quinn & Staines, 1979) and .82 as verified by Swartz (1999). In the current study, the Cronbach alpha coefficient was .81. This instrument was selected due to its extensive use with human service professionals.

Workload was measured using a scale of four items developed by Caplan, Cobb, French, Harrison, & Pinneau (1975). It has a reliability coefficient of .60 (Caplan et al., 1975) and .76 as verified by Swartz (1999). In the current study, the Cronbach alpha coefficient was .79. This instrument was selected due to its extensive use with human service professionals.

Role Conflict was measured using a scale first used by Quinn and Staines (1979). The 4-item scale has a reliability coefficient of .62 (Quinn & Staines, 1979) and .77 as verified by Swartz (1999). In the current study, the Cronbach alpha coefficient was .72. This instrument was selected due to its extensive use with human service professionals.

Burnout was measured by using Maslach's Burnout Inventory (Maslach et al, 1996), an instrument that has demonstrated good internal consistency. This 16-item instrument has three subscales of exhaustion, cynicism, and professional efficacy, with Cronbach alpha coefficients of .89, .80, and .76, respectively (Maslach et al, 1996). Swartz (1999) found that the subscales of

exhaustion, cynicism, and professional efficacy had Cronbach alpha coefficients of .87, .83, and .80, respectively. In the current study, the Cronbach alpha coefficient was .90 for exhaustion, .81 for cynicism, and .78 for professional efficacy.

Results

Measures of central tendency, variations, Pearson's skewness coefficient, distributions, and Fisher's skewness coefficients were generated for all variables. The standardized skewness statistics (Pearson's and Fisher's) were used as they render the statistic free of scale. Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistics were also computed. All scales were tested to see if they follow a normal distribution, and all the satisfaction subscales were found normally distributed. Reliability analysis was conducted on every subscale, to check the strength of measurement performed by these scales. To meet the reliability condition, the alpha coefficient should be greater than .70. In our case our scales' alphas were: Exhaustion .90; Cynicism .81; and Professional Efficacy .78; all the subscales were declared reliable.

The following statistical tests were accomplished to analyze the survey data:

1. T-tests, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) tests, and two-way between groups ANOVA tests were used to test group differences regarding gender, age, employment status (full-time or part-time), certification, number of children, marital status, years of education, monthly pay, and years in current job.

2. Pearson product-moment correlations and linear regressions were used to address relationships between independent variables (demographics) and dependent variables (autonomy, workload, role conflict, burnout, and burnout subscales).

Results

Sample Characteristics

Of the 653 subjects emailed invitation to participate, 479 were successfully delivered. Of these 479 delivered, 260 completed the surveys for a response rate of 54.3%. A response rate of 50%, according to Rubin and Babbie (1997), is considered adequate for analysis and reporting. Therefore, the response rate obtained falls within an acceptable range of what Rubin (1997) considers adequate.

Table 4

Descriptve Statistics for Subscales (N =260)

Variable	$\underline{N}$	Mean	Published Means	$\underline{Mdn}$	$\underline{SD}$	Range
Workload	260	12.1	N/A	12	3.7	4-20
Role conflict	260	10.3	N/A	10	2.3	4-16
Autonomy	260	13.7	N/A	14	3.9	6-24
Professional Efficacy	260	5.02	4.50[a]	5	0.9	0-6
Exhaustion	260	2.24	2.60[a]	2	1.3	0-6
Cynicism	260	1.38	1.60[a]	1	1.3	0-6

Note. [a]Survey norms from Maslach et al, 1996, where N=3,727.

Most respondents were female (88.5%), Caucasian (90.4%), married (65.4%), had graduated from an interpreter training program (62.7%), were certified (78.5%), and had a Bachelor's degree (35.0%). Participants' ages ranged from 18 to 77 years old, with a mean age of 38.92 years ($\underline{Mdn}$ = 38, $\underline{SD}$ = 9.51). Monthly gross income of all participants ranged from

$101 to $5,899 (adjusted for U.S. Dollars), with a mean monthly income of $2,198 (Mdn =

$2,000, SD = $1,108). In this study there were more standard wage earner interpreters (49.6%, N

= 129) than private contractor interpreters (32.7%, N = 85). Of the private contractor interpreters

there were more who were independent (contracting with many agencies, N = 49) than

dependent (contracting exclusively with one agency, N = 36).

In addition to the demographic characteristics, data was collected for 4 scales: burnout

(with subscales of professional efficacy, exhaustion, and cynicism); workload; role conflict; and

autonomy. Table 4 presents the means, medians, standard deviations, and ranges of scores for

each variable.

Job Burnout

Table 5 shows the frequency distribution for selected responses from the Maslach

Burnout Inventory. Notable is that 23.4% of respondents experience, at least one time per week,

a feeling of being emotionally drained at their work. Additionally, nearly 3 in 10 interpreters, or

29.6%, simply want to do their jobs and "not be bothered."

A series of independent-sample t-tests were performed to test autonomy, role conflict,

workload and burnout subscale scores for the variables of gender, supervision, marital/partner

status, employment status (full-time/part-time), employment classification (staff or contract

interpreter), and whether the interpreter graduated from an ITP. There was no significant

differences noted for gender or employment classification. However, the following significant

findings were noted:

Table 5

Frequency Distributions for Survey Responses on Maslach Burnout Inventory

Survey Item	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
I feel emotionally drained from my work.	3.5	30.0	19.6	23.4	6.9	13.8	2.7
I feel used up at the end of the workday.	4.6	18.8	23.5	21.5	9.6	17.3	4.6
I feel burned out from my work.	17.3	37.7	19.2	11.9	4.2	7.3	2.3
I feel I am making an effective contribution to my organization.	1.2	1.2	3.8	5.8	4.6	37.7	45.8
I have become less interested in my work since I started my job.	45.8	29.2	9.2	5.0	1.9	4.6	4.2
I have become less enthusiastic about my work.	33.1	40.0	9.2	7.7	2.7	3.8	3.5
In my opinion, I am good at my job.	0	1.2	.4	3.5	1.5	24.2	69.2
I feel exhilarated when I accomplish something at work.	1.2	2.3	6.2	13.8	9.2	32.6	34.6
I have accomplished many worthwhile things in this job.	.4	7.3	6.5	12.7	11.1	29.6	32.3
I just want to do my job and not be bothered.	24.6	20.8	14.6	10.4	5.4	9.2	15.0
I have become cynical if my work contributes anything.	43.5	35.7	6.2	6.2	3.1	1.9	3.5
I doubt fhe significance of my work.	55.2	28.6	4.2	5.8	1.5	2.7	1.9
I feel confident that I am effective at getting things done.	1.5	2.3	2.7	5.8	3.8	27.3	56.5

Note: Frequency expressed in percentage. N=260. 0=Never; 1=A few times a year; 3=one time a month; 4=a few times a month; 5=a few times a week; 6=Everyday

ITP completion status was discriminating with the cynicism and professional efficacy subscales of the MBI:

1. Those interpreters who completed an ITP ($\underline{M}$=1.50, $\underline{SD}$=1.36) experienced significantly more cynicism than those who did not complete an ITP [$\underline{M}$=1.18, $\underline{SD}$=1.02; $\underline{t}$(258)=2.16, $\underline{p}$=.03]. The magnitude of the differences in the means was small (eta squared=.02); and

2. Those interpreters who completed an ITP (M=4.89, SD=1.01) experienced

    significantly less professional efficacy than those who did not complete an ITP

    [M=5.24, SD=0.70; t(258)=3.30, p=.001]. The magnitude of the differences in the

    means was nearly moderate (eta squared=.04).

Marital/partner status was discriminating with professional efficacy:

1. Married/partnered interpreters (M=5.17, SD=0.79) experienced significantly more

    professional efficacy than those who were single [M=4.73, SD=1.07; t(258)=3.43,

    p=.001]. The magnitude of the differences in the means was nearly moderate (eta

    squared=.04).

Type of employment (full-time/part-time) was discriminating among all dependent

variables measured:

1. Full-time interpreters (M=14.62, SD=3.90) experienced significantly less autonomy

    than those who worked part-time [M=12.58, SD=3.58; t(258)=4.37, p<.001]. The

    magnitude of the differences in the means was moderate (eta squared=.07);

2. Full-time interpreters (M=10.07, SD=2.46) experienced significantly less role conflict

    than those who worked part-time [M=10.67, SD=2.16; t(258)=2.09, p=.04]. The

    magnitude of the differences in the means was small (eta squared=.02);

3. Full-time interpreters (M=12.48, SD=3.47) experienced significantly more workload

    than those who worked part-time [M=11.60, SD=3.82; t(258)=1.95, p=.05]. The

    magnitude of the differences in the means was small (eta squared=.01);

4. Full-time interpreters (M=2.54, SD=1.44) experienced significantly more exhaustion than those who worked part-time [M=1.90, SD=1.23; t(258)=4.02, p<.001]. The magnitude of the differences in the means was moderate (eta squared=.06);

5. Full-time interpreters (M=1.60, SD=1.38) experienced significantly more cynicism than those who worked part-time [M=1.13, SD=1.04; t(258)=3.12, p=.002]. The magnitude of the differences in the means was small (eta squared=.04); and

6. Full-time interpreters (M=4.90, SD=0.88) experienced significantly less professional efficacy than those who worked part-time [M=5.16, SD=0.94; t(258)=2.26, p=.02]. The magnitude of the differences in the means was small (eta squared=.02).

Presence or absence of direct supervision was discriminating among with autonomy, role conflict, and exhaustion:

1. Interpreters with direct supervision (M=14.13, SD=4.02) experienced significantly less autonomy than those who did not have direction supervision [M=12.68, SD=3.38; t(258)=2.83, p=.005]. The magnitude of the differences in the means was small (eta squared=.03);

2. Interpreters with direct supervision (M=10.13, SD=2.41) experienced significantly less role conflict than those who did not have direct supervision [M=10.82, SD=2.10; t(258)=2.23, p=.03]. The magnitude of the differences in the means was small (eta squared=.02); and

3. Interpreters with direct supervision (M=2.35, SD=1.40) experienced significantly more exhaustion than those who did not have direct supervision [M=2.01, SD=1.19;

$\underline{t}$(258)=1.98, $\underline{p}$=.05]. The magnitude of the differences in the means was small (eta squared=.02).

A one-way between-groups analysis of variance was conducted to explore the impact of job classification (staff or freelance interpreter) on various dependent variables. The results showed significant differences in levels of autonomy, role conflict, exhaustion and professional efficacy as measured by their respective scales. To examine job classification the homoscedasticity was checked and these scales was found to be homoscedastic. Subjects were divided into three groups according to job classification (Group 1: staff interpreter; Group 2: freelance interpreter; and Group 3: other classification).

1. There was a statistically significant difference at the p<.05 level in autonomy scores for the three job classification groups [F(2, 259)=4.40, $\underline{p}$=.01]. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was .03 which translates to a small effect. Post-hoc comparisons using Tukey HSD test indicated that; the mean score for Group 1 ($\underline{M}$=14.38, $\underline{SD}$=4.24) was significantly different from Group 2 ($\underline{M}$=13.00, $\underline{SD}$=2.95). Group 3 ($\underline{M}$=12.93, $\underline{SD}$=4.07) did not differ significantly from either Group 1 or 2.

2. There was a statistically significant difference at the p<.05 level in role conflict scores for the three job classification groups [F(2, 259)=4.26, $\underline{p}$=.02]. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was .03 which translates to a small effect. Post-hoc comparisons using Tukey HSD test indicated that; the mean score for Group 1 ($\underline{M}$=10.12, $\underline{SD}$=2.53) was significantly different from Group 2 ($\underline{M}$=10.93, $\underline{SD}$=1.91); and the mean score for Group 2 ($\underline{M}$=10.93, $\underline{SD}$=1.91) was significantly different from Group 3 ($\underline{M}$=9.90, $\underline{SD}$=2.32).

3. There was a statistically significant difference at the p<.05 level in exhaustion scores for the three job classification groups [F(2, 259)=3.34, p=.04]. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was .03 which translates to a small effect. Post-hoc comparisons using Tukey HSD test indicated that; the mean score for Group 1 (M=2.46, SD=1.43) was significantly different from Group 2 (M=2.03, SD=1.06). Group 3 (M=2.04, SD=1.46) did not differ significantly from either Group 1 or 2.

4. There was a statistically significant difference at the p<.05 level in professional efficacy scores for the three job classification groups [F(2, 259)=2.41, p=.05], with higher scores translating to positive (higher) levels of efficacy. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was .02 which translates to a small effect. Post-hoc comparisons using Tukey HSD test indicated that; the mean score for Group 1 (M=4.89, SD=1.04) was significantly different from Group 2 (M=5.19, SD=0.63). Group 3 (M=5.06, SD=0.97) did not differ significantly from either Group 1 or 2.

A one-way between-groups analysis of variance was conducted to explore the impact of tenure (years interpreting) on various dependent variables. The results showed significant differences when exploring the impact of tenure on levels of autonomy, workload, and professional efficacy. To examine tenure the homoscedasticity was checked and both scales were found to be homoscedastic. Subjects were divided into three groups according to years interpreting (Group 1: 7 or less; Group 2: 7.1 to 15; and Group 3: 15.1 and above).

1. There was a statistically significant difference at the p<.05 level in autonomy scores for the three tenure groups [F(2, 257)=4.28, p=.02]. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was .03 which translates to a small effect. Post-hoc comparisons using

Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for Group 1 ($\underline{M}$=14.53, $\underline{SD}$=3.32) was significantly different from Group 3 ($\underline{M}$=12.87, $\underline{SD}$=4.02). Group 2 ($\underline{M}$=13.43, $\underline{SD}$=4.17) did not differ significantly from Groups 1 and 3.

2. There was a statistically significant difference at the p<.05 level in workload scores for the three experience groups [F(2, 257)=3.11, $\underline{p}$=.05]. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was .02 which translates to a small effect. Post-hoc comparisons using Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for Group 2 ($\underline{M}$=12.70, $\underline{SD}$=3.52) was significantly different from Group 3 ($\underline{M}$=11.32, $\underline{SD}$=3.52). Group 1 ($\underline{M}$=12.19, $\underline{SD}$=3.78) did not differ significantly from Groups 2 and 3.

3. There was a statistically significant difference at the p<.05 level in professional efficacy scores for the three tenure groups [F(2, 257)=8.07, $\underline{p}$<.001]. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was .06 which translates to a medium effect. Post-hoc comparisons using Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for Group 1 ($\underline{M}$=4.75, $\underline{SD}$=1.07) was significantly different from Group 3 ($\underline{M}$=5.29, $\underline{SD}$=0.70). Group 2 ($\underline{M}$=5.05, $\underline{SD}$=0.86) did not differ significantly from Groups 1 and 3.

A one-way between-groups analysis of variance was conducted to explore the impact of years an interpreter had been working full-time on levels the dependent variables. The results showed significant differences when exploring the impact of tenure on levels of role conflict, workload, exhaustion, and professional efficacy. To examine tenure full-time the homoscedasticity was checked and these scales was found to be homoscedastic. Subjects were divided into three groups according to years interpreting full-time (Group 1: 3 or less; Group 2: 3.1 to 9; and Group 3: 9.1 and above).

1. There was a statistically significant difference at the $p<.05$ level in role conflict scores for the three full-time groups [$F(2, 256)=3.42$, $p=.03$]. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was .03 which translates to a small effect. Post-hoc comparisons using Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for Group 1 (M=10.82, SD=2.19) was significantly different from Group 2 (M=9.91, SD=2.48). Group 3 (M=10.34, SD=2.27) did not differ significantly from Groups 1 and 2.

2. There was a statistically significant difference at the $p<.05$ level in workload scores for the three full-time groups [$F(2, 256)=3.18$, $p=.04$]. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was .02 which translates to a small effect. Post-hoc comparisons using Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for Group 1 (M=11.42, SD=3.79) was significantly different from Group 2 (M=12.76, SD=3.55). Group 3 (M=11.97, SD=3.47) did not differ significantly from Groups 1 and 2.

3. There was a statistically significant difference at the $p<.05$ level in exhaustion scores for the three full-time groups [$F(2, 256)=3.47$, $p=.03$]. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was .03 which translates to a small effect. Post-hoc comparisons using Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for Group 1 (M=1.96, SD=1.28) was significantly different from Group 2 (M=2.47, SD=1.37). Group 3 (M=2.33, SD=1.35) did not differ significantly from Groups 1 and 2.

4. There was a statistically significant difference at the $p<.05$ level in professional efficacy scores for the three full-time groups [$F(2, 256)=3.62$, $p=.03$]. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was .03 which translates to a small effect. Post-hoc comparisons using Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for Group 2

($\underline{M}$=4.91, $\underline{SD}$=0.94) was significantly different from Group 3 ($\underline{M}$=5.25, $\underline{SD}$=0.67).

Group 1 ($\underline{M}$=4.92, $\underline{SD}$=1.05) did not differ significantly from Groups 2 and 3.

A one-way between-groups analysis of variance was conducted to explore the impact of years married or partnered on various dependent variables. The results showed significant differences when exploring the impact of years married on levels of autonomy and cynicism. To examine years married the homoscedasticity was checked and both scales were found to be homoscedastic. Subjects were divided into three groups according to years married (Group 1: 6 or less; Group 2: >6 to 16; and Group 3: >16).

1. There was a statistically significant difference at the p<.05 level in autonomy scores for the three tenure groups [F(2, 164)=3.98, $\underline{p}$=.02]. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was .05 which translates to a medium effect. Post-hoc comparisons using Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for Group 1 ($\underline{M}$=14.03, $\underline{SD}$=4.03) was significantly different from Group 2 ($\underline{M}$=12.01, $\underline{SD}$=4.09). Group 3 ($\underline{M}$=13.55, $\underline{SD}$=3.63) did not differ significantly from Groups 1 and 2.

2. There was a statistically significant difference at the p<.05 level in cynicism scores for the three tenure groups [F(2, 164)=3.87, $\underline{p}$=.02]. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was .05 which translates to a medium effect. Post-hoc comparisons using Tukey HSD test indicated that the mean score for Group 1 ($\underline{M}$=1.56, $\underline{SD}$=1.33) was significantly different from Group 2 ($\underline{M}$=1.07, $\underline{SD}$=0.78). Group 3 ($\underline{M}$=1.15, $\underline{SD}$=0.92) did not differ significantly from Groups 1 and 2.

A one-way between-groups analysis of variance was conducted to explore the impact of age on various dependent variables. The results showed significant differences in levels of

autonomy, exhaustion, cynicism and professional efficacy as measured by their respective scales. To examine age the homoscedasticity was checked and these scales was found to be homoscedastic. Subjects were divided into three groups according to age in years (Group 1: 18-34; Group 2: 35-43; and Group 3: 44 and above).

1. There was a statistically significant difference at the $p<.05$ level in autonomy scores for the three job classification groups [$F(2, 258)=4.26$, $p=.02$]. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was .03 which translates to a small effect. Post-hoc comparisons using Tukey HSD test indicated that; the mean score for Group 1 ($M=14.54$, $SD=3.72$) was significantly different from Group 2 ($M=12.92$, $SD=3.91$). Group 3 ($M=13.41$, $SD=3.87$) did not differ significantly from either Group 1 or 2.

2. There was a statistically significant difference at the $p<.05$ level in exhaustion scores for the three age groups [$F(2, 258)=3.96$, $p=.02$]. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was .05 which translates to a medium effect. Post-hoc comparisons using Tukey HSD test indicated that; the mean score for Group 1 ($M=2.53$, $SD=1.40$) was significantly different from Group 3 ($M=1.96$, $SD=1.19$). Group 2 ($M=2.21$, $SD=1.36$) did not differ significantly from either Group 1 or 3.

3. There was a statistically significant difference at the $p<.05$ level in cynicism scores for the three age groups [$F(2, 258)=3.24$, $p=.04$]. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was .03 which translates to a small effect. Post-hoc comparisons using Tukey HSD test indicated that; the mean score for Group 1 ($M=1.64$, $SD=1.46$) was significantly different from Group 3 ($M=1.18$, $SD=0.96$). Group 2 ($M=1.29$, $SD=1.21$) did not differ significantly from either Group 1 or 3.

4. There was a statistically significant difference at the p<.05 level in professional efficacy scores for the three age groups [F(2, 258)=6.85, p=.001], with higher scores translating to positive (higher) levels of efficacy. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was .05 which translates to a medium effect. Post-hoc comparisons using Tukey HSD test indicated that; the mean score for Group 1 (M=4.76, SD=1.05) was significantly different from Group 2 (M=5.08, SD=0.82); and the mean score for Group 1 (M=4.76, SD=1.05) was significantly different from Group 3 (M=5.25, SD=0.78).

A two-way between-groups analysis of variance was conducted to explore the impact of gender and employment status (full-time/part-time) on levels of autonomy, role conflict, workload, exhaustion, cynicism, and professional efficacy. Only autonomy showed significant effects. There was a statistically significantly main effect for employment status [F(1,256)=12.58, p<.001], and the effect size was moderate (eta squared=.05). The main effect for gender [F(1,256)=1.25, p=.26] and the interaction effect [F(1,256)=0.96, p=.33] did not reach statistical significance.

A two-way between-groups analysis of variance was conducted to explore the impact of job classification (staff, freelance, and other) and employment status (full-time/part-time) on levels of autonomy, role conflict, workload, exhaustion, cynicism, and professional efficacy. Only autonomy showed significant effects. There was a statistically significant main effect for employment status [F(1,254)=13.43, p<.001], and the effect size was moderate (eta squared=.05). The main effect for job classification [F(2,254)=2.49, p=.09] did not reach statistical significance. However, there was a statistically significantly interaction effect

[$F(2,254)=4.18$, p=.02], however the effect size was small (eta squared=.03). Because the interaction effect reached statistical significance, a one-way between-groups analysis of variance was conducted, examining the effect of job classification on autonomy separately for full-time and part-time interpreters. There was a statistically significant difference at the p<.05 level in autonomy scores for the three job classification groups [$F(2, 138)=3.81$, p=.03] when examining full-time interpreters as a separate group. The effect size, calculated using eta squared, was .05 which translates to a medium effect. Post-hoc comparisons using Tukey HSD test indicated that; the mean score for Group 1, staff interpreters, (M=15.21, SD=4.01) was significantly different from Group 2, freelance interpreters, (M=12.87, SD=3.62). Group 3, other, (M=14.38, SD=3.31) did not differ significantly from either Group 1 or 2. No statistical significance was found when examining part-time interpreters as a separate group on terms of job classification and autonomy.

A two-way between-groups analysis of variance was conducted to explore the impact of graduation from an ITP and number of years interpreting on levels of autonomy, role conflict, workload, exhaustion, cynicism, and professional efficacy. Only professional efficacy showed significant effects. Subjects were divided into three groups according to number of years they had been interpreting (Group 1: 0-7 years; Group 2: 7.1-15 years; and Group 3: 15.1 or more years). There was a statistically significant main effect for ITP graduation status [$F(1,252)=5.03$, p=.03], but the effect size was but (eta squared=.02). The was also a statistically significant main effect for number of years interpreting [$F(2,252)=5.13$, p=.01], but the effect was small to moderate (eta squared=.04). There interaction effect [$F(2,254)=0.01$, p=.99] did not reach statistical significance.

Relationships of Burnout Variables and Related Factors

Pearson product-moment correlations were computed in order to estimate the strength of association between the independent and dependent variables with the sample in general. Preliminary analyses were performed to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity.

Exhaustion (MBI). There were strong, positive correlations with: autonomy [r=.337, n=260, p<.001], with increased autonomy associated with higher levels exhaustion; workload [r=.496, n=260, p<.001], with higher workload associated with higher levels exhaustion; and role conflict [r=.456, n=260, p<.001], with increased role conflict associated with higher levels exhaustion. There were strong, negative correlations with: age [r=-.221, n=259, p<.001], with older age associated with lower levels of exhaustion; number of children [r=-.134, n=260, p=.031], with having more children associated with lower levels of exhaustion; and years interpreting [r=-.152, n=258, p=.015], with mores years interpreting associated with lower levels of exhaustion.

Cynicism (MBI). There were strong, positive correlations with: autonomy [r=.285, n=260, p<.001], with increased autonomy associated with higher levels cynicism; workload [r=.314, n=260, p<.001], with higher workload associated with higher levels cynicism; and role conflict [r=.425, n=260, p<.001], with increased role conflict associated with higher levels cynicism. There were strong, negative correlations with: age [r=-.226, n=259, p<.001], with increased age associated with lower levels of cynicism; number of children [r=-.126, n=260, p=.043], with having more children associated with lower levels of cynicism; number of years married [r=-.175, n=165, p=.025], with being married longer associated with lower levels of

cynicism; and number of years interpreting [r=-.147, n=258, p=.018], with mores years interpreting associated with lower levels of exhaustion.

Professional Efficacy (MBI). There were strong, positive correlations with: age [r=.267, n=259, p<.001], with increased age associated with higher levels professional efficacy; number of children [r=.219, n=260, p<.001], with more children associated with higher levels professional efficacy; number of years married [r=.166, n=165, p=.033], with being married longer associated with higher levels professional efficacy; years in current job [r=.138, n=258, p=.026], with more time in job associated with higher levels of professional efficacy; years interpreting [r=.251, n=258, p<.001], with more years interpreting associated with higher levels of professional efficacy; and years worked full-time [r=.131, n=257, p=.036], with more years full-time associated with higher levels of professional efficacy. There were strong, negative correlations with: autonomy [r=-.277, n=260, p<.001], with more autonomy associated with lower levels of professional efficacy; and role conflict [r=-.282, n=260, p<.001], with more conflict associated with lower levels of professional efficacy.

Autonomy. There were strong, positive correlations with: role conflict [r=.145, n=260, p=.019], with increased role conflict associated with increased autonomy; exhaustion [r=.337, n=260, p<.001], with higher levels of exhaustion associated with increased autonomy; and cynicism [r=.285, n=260, p<.001], with higher levels of cynicism associated with increased autonomy. There were strong, negative correlations with: age [r=-.128, n=259, p=.040], with older age associated with decreased autonomy; years interpreting [r=-.137, n=258, p=.028], with more years interpreting associated with lower levels of autonomy; and pay [r=-.196, n=248, p=.002], with higher pay associated with decreased autonomy.

Role Conflict. There were strong, positive correlations with: autonomy [r=.145, n=260, p=.019], with increased autonomy associated with increased role conflict; and workload [r=.556, n=260, p<.001], with increased workload associated with increased role conflict.

Workload. There was a strong, positive correlation with role conflict [r=.556, n=260, p<.001], with increased role conflict associated with increased workload. There was a strong, negative correlation with age[r=-.153, n=259, p=.013], with older age associated with increased workload.

A series of regression analyses were conducted to see how well any two given measures would predict a third measure:

- Exhaustion scores were regressed on autonomy and role conflict. These two predictors accounted for 28% of the variance in exhaustion, which was highly significant, $F(2,259)=50.68$, p<.0005. Both role conflict (b=.42, p<.0001) and the autonomy (b=.28, p<.0001) demonstrated significant effects on the exhaustion scores.

- Cynicism scores were regressed on autonomy and role conflict. These two predictors accounted for 23% of the variance in cynicism, which was highly significant, $F(2,259)=38.69$, p<.0005. Both role conflict (b=.39, p<.0001) and the autonomy (b=.23, p<.0001) demonstrated significant effects on the cynicism scores.

- Cynicism scores were regressed on role conflict and workload. These two predictors accounted for 19% of the variance in cynicism, which was highly significant, $F(2,259)=29.98$, p<.0005. Role conflict (b=.36, p<.0001)

demonstrated significant effect on the cynicism scores, while workload (b=.11,

p=.10) did not.

A series of hierarchical regression analyses were conducted to evaluate the ability of the

model to predict cynicism and exhaustion after controlling for a number of different variables:

- Cynicism scores were regressed on autonomy and role conflict while controlling

  for employment type (full-time or part-time), years as an interpreter, and age. The

  overall model explained 27.5% of the variance. Once role conflict and autonomy

  had been included, the model as a whole explained 51.7% of the variance. The R

  square change revealed that role conflict and autonomy explained an additional

  19.1% of the variance in cynicism, even when the effects of employment type,

  years interpreting, and age were statistically controlled. This is a statistically

  significant contribution, $F(5,257)=18.35$, p<.0005.

- Exhaustion scores were regressed on autonomy and role conflict while controlling

  for employment type (full-time or part-time), years as an interpreter, and age. The

  overall model explained 30.4% of the variance. Once role conflict and autonomy

  had been included, the model as a whole explained 56.5% of the variance. The R

  square change revealed that role conflict and autonomy explained an additional

  22.7% of the variance in exhaustion, even when the effects of employment type,

  years interpreting, and age were statistically controlled. This is a statistically

  significant contribution, $F(5,257)=23.68$, p<.0005.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to the relationship of job burnout to various demographic variables, including: gender, job classification, age, education, tenure, supervision, children in the household, education, and interpreter training program (ITP) completion, as well as over variables including role conflict, autonomy, and workload.

Initial Impressions of Burnout Among Interpreters

Frequency data revealed that the interpreter sample as a whole had a mean score for the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) on each of the subscales as follows: Exhaustion – 2.24 (SD=1.3); Cynicism – 1.38 (SD=1.3); and Professional Efficacy – 5.02 (SD=0.9), all better than the published norms (Maslach et al, 1996). This suggests that our interpreter sample as a whole is at or better than the national average in terms of burnout.

Regarding specific questions on the MBI, 23.4% of respondents experience, at least one time per week, a feeling of being emotionally drained at their work. Additionally, nearly 3 in 10 interpreters, or 29.6%, simply want to do their jobs and "not be bothered." However, 94.9% of respondents believed they are good at their jobs.

Regarding specific questions on the MBI, better than half of interpreters surveyed felt:

1. Do not feel burned out from their work;

2. Exhilarated when they accomplish something at work

3. They have accomplished many worthwhile things at their jobs; and

4. Rarely that their work as insignificant.

Simply based upon the above frequency data, we can surmise that although the majority of interpreters feel a great deal of pride in what they do, they do value their independence.

The results partially supported the working hypotheses:

1) There are significant positive correlations between exhaustion (MBI), and cynicism (MBI) and the following variables: Autonomy (Quinn & Staines, 1979); Role Conflict (Quinn & Staines, 1979); Workload (Caplan et al, 1975); number of kids; number of years married; years interpreting; years interpreting full-time; and years at current job.

2) There are significant negative correlations between exhaustion (MBI), cynicism (MBI), and the following variables: years of college, level of education, salary, Autonomy (Quinn & Staines, 1979), Role Conflict (Quinn & Staines, 1979), and Workload (Caplan et al, 1975).

3) There are significant negative correlations between professional efficacy (MBI) and following variables: Autonomy (Quinn & Staines, 1979); and Role Conflict (Quinn & Staines, 1979).

However, the following points are noted:

Full-time interpreters. Feelings of being overwhelmed by one's workload increased in the first nine years of working full-time, then declined; feelings of role conflict decreased in the first nine years, then increased; and exhaustion increased during the early career of the interpreter, then declined somewhat after the first nine years. In essence, full-time interpreters who were new to their jobs felt overwhelmed by their work tasks, yet were not experiencing frustration by confusion of their identity as an interpreter and what was expected of them. However, as the interpreter became more seasoned in their full-time role they settled into a regimen of work tasks that was not perceived as overwhelming, but role conflicts became more predominant. This latter point could be attributable to the interpreter being exposed to many more scenarios, and asked to

take on many more tasks in which they experienced cognitive dissonance with regard to ethical definition of their role as an interpreter. Full-time interpreters experienced more factors of burnout (workload, exhaustion, and cynicism) than their part-time counterparts. Coupled with this, full-time interpreters had less feeling of accomplishment (professional efficacy) and autonomy than part-time interpreters in their work tasks. It could be the longer an interpreter works full-time, they become accustomed to certain job conditions, both positive and negative. Still, it is discouraging that the more time an interpreter spends in their task per week, the less they feel they are making a positive impact (professional efficacy). More than likely a great deal more is expected of full-time interpreters, where the job is most probably a career as opposed to supplemental income for part-timers. For this reason, full-time interpreters are prone to expect much more out of their employment, and disappointed when it does not deliver or meet their expectations.

Years (tenure) in the profession. Feelings of being overwhelmed by one's workload decreased the longer the interpreter stayed in the profession. This could be explained by the fact that as the interpreter's time in their profession increased, they had grown accustomed to the level and intensity of work they were required to complete. Especially interesting is that new interpreters experienced significantly more professional efficacy than those who are more seasoned. Perhaps new interpreters have an inflated feeling of self-worth, and as time goes on, the interpreter realizes that what they are doing may not be making as big of a positive impact as they once envisioned.

Staff or Freelance work status. Staff interpreters, when compared to freelance interpreters, experienced less role conflict, professional efficacy and autonomy. The concept of

role conflict is an interesting one, and goes to the root of the problems that many freelance interpreters face on a daily basis. As was pointed out previously, interpreters, and especially freelance interpreters, feel like the "lone wolf" when they are in the field interpreter. Staff interpreters may perceive less isolation, especially if they are one of several staff interpreters in an organization where they have an opportunity to collaborate with their colleagues. For this reason the autonomy is reduced, often being part of a team or larger work unit. The two-way ANOVA revealed that there is a significant difference in the effect of work status on autonomy for full- and part-time interpreters. On further examination, it was found that full-time staff interpreters had significantly less autonomy than full-time freelance interpreters. This is not surprising, as freelance interpreters function independently to a greater degree, and are often not under the direct supervision or direction of any one agency or set of supervisors.

Supervision. Those interpreters with direct supervision experienced more exhaustion burnout, yet less role conflict, professional efficacy, and autonomy. Supervision may create the feeling of a need to work harder, thus creating the feeling of more exhaustion. This same supervision also lessens any feelings of autonomy that the interpreter may experience. A positive effect of direct supervision is a lessening of role conflict. This is most likely due to the support that a supervisor lends, especially in terms of role clarification. However, those interpreter with direct supervision experienced significantly less professional efficacy, meaning that they feel less positive about their professional contributions that those without direct supervision. It is possible that interpreters with direct supervision may not feel like stakeholders in their job, but merely following the directives of superiors. In this context, they may be less inclined to accept ownership of positives they contribute to their work environment.

Married/Partnered. Married or partnered (in a committed relationship) interpreters experienced less autonomy early in their marriage, but this increased about the 6th year of marriage. Additionally, married or partnered interpreters experienced lower cynicism burnout early in their marriage, which increased after their 6th year of marriage. Both of these findings, regarding autonomy and cynicism, are probably attributable to the "honeymoon" period of the early marriage, one that wanes as time goes on. Notable is that intimate relationships outside of work have a direct impact on how we perceive our work environment and handle the stressors related to it.

Age. Younger interpreters (those less than 34 years old) experienced less autonomy and professional efficacy than their middle-aged (34-43) counterparts. This is understandable, as younger interpreters, new in their careers, are often in a team relationship, and hopefully a mentoring one. Additionally, younger interpreters experienced more exhaustion and cynicism burnout than those interpreters who were older (44 and above). Again, younger interpreters may be overburdening themselves with work, as they enter the profession with a great deal of energy and vigor. Unfortunately, this seems to be coupled with significantly great cynicism, possible suggesting that their initial expectations are not met, and perhaps the lofty expectations they had about their "dream" profession may not be measuring up.

Relationships Among Variables

A series of Spearman's rho rank correlations were performed to examine which independent variables most significantly related to overall job satisfaction and various facets (subscales) of burnout, as well as autonomy, workload, and role conflict. Significant correlations presented in Table 6 partially support our hypotheses:

1) There are significant positive correlations between exhaustion (MBI), and cynicism (MBI) and the following variables: Autonomy (Quinn & Staines, 1979); Role Conflict (Quinn & Staines, 1979); Workload (Caplan et al, 1975); number of kids; number of years married; years interpreting; years interpreting full-time; and years at current job; 2) There are significant negative correlations between exhaustion (MBI), cynicism (MBI), and the following variables: years of college, level of education, and salary; and 3)

The results supported only portions of these three hypotheses:

1)   There were significant positive correlations between exhaustion and: autonomy ($\underline{r}$=.337, $\underline{n}$=260, $\underline{p}$<.001); workload ($\underline{r}$=.496, $\underline{n}$=260, $\underline{p}$<.001); and role conflict ($\underline{r}$=.456, $\underline{n}$=260, $\underline{p}$<.001). As for cynicism, there were significant positive correlations with autonomy ($\underline{r}$=.285, $\underline{n}$=260, $\underline{p}$<.001); workload ($\underline{r}$=.314, $\underline{n}$=260, $\underline{p}$<.001); and role conflict ($\underline{r}$=.425, $\underline{n}$=260, $\underline{p}$<.001). No significant positive correlations were found between exhaustion and cynicism and: number of kids; number of year married; years interpreting; years interpreting full-time; and years at current job. This hypothesis was partially supported by the findings.

2)   There were significant negative correlations between exhaustion and: age ($\underline{r}$=-.221, $\underline{n}$=259, $\underline{p}$<.001); number of children ($\underline{r}$=-.134, $\underline{n}$=260, $\underline{p}$=.031); and years interpreting ($\underline{r}$=-.152, $\underline{n}$=258, $\underline{p}$=.015). There were significant negative correlations between cynicism and: age ($\underline{r}$=-.226, $\underline{n}$=259, $\underline{p}$<.001); number of children ($\underline{r}$=-.126, $\underline{n}$=260, $\underline{p}$=.043); years married ($\underline{r}$=-.175, $\underline{n}$=165, $\underline{p}$=.025); and years interpreting ($\underline{r}$=-.147, $\underline{n}$=258, $\underline{p}$=.018). No

significant negative correlations was found for: years of college; level of

education; and salary for either exhaustion or cynicism. Therefore, this

hypothesis was not supported.

3)   There were significant negative correlations between professional efficacy

and: autonomy ($\underline{r}$=-.277, $\underline{n}$=260, $\underline{p}$<.001); and role conflict ($\underline{r}$=-.282, $\underline{n}$=260,

$\underline{p}$<.001. Therefore, this hypothesis was fully supported.

Exhaustion. In this study, higher levels of exhaustion were significantly associated with

more autonomy; higher workload; more role conflict; younger interpreters; fewer children in the

household; and less years as a working interpreter

Cynicism. In this study, higher levels of cynicism were significantly associated with

more autonomy; higher workload; more role conflict; younger interpreters; fewer children in the

household; few years married/partnered; and less years as a working interpreter.

Professional Efficacy. In this study, higher levels of professional efficacy were

significantly associated with younger interpreters; more children in the household; more years

married/partnered; more years in current interpreting job; more years as a working interpreter;

more years working full-time as an interpreter; less autonomy; and lower role conflict.

Autonomy. In this study, higher levels of autonomy were significantly associated with

higher role conflict; exhaustion; and cynicism. This suggests that although interpreters value

their freedom and independence, there is a price to pay in terms of burnout. Conversely, higher

levels of autonomy were associated with: younger interpreters; fewer years interpreting; and

lower pay. This suggests that interpreters who are new to the field have more autonomy, a

freedom that has associated stressors and personal costs.

Role Conflict. In this study, a significant negative correlation was found between role conflict and workload and quality of supervision. That is, higher quality of supervision was significantly associated with lower role conflict as well as less feelings of being overwhelmed by workload. These results support Poulin (1994), who previously found quality of supervision to be a significant predictor of work satisfaction. The results of this study suggest that supervision among interpreters is an important factor in promoting as stress-reduced environment. As earlier indicated in this study, interpreters value autonomy, with a great degree of independence associated with high job satisfaction. It is possible that interpreters also perceive supervision as a desirable condition of employment.

Workload. This study also found a significant correlation between job satisfaction and workload among interpreters. That is, higher work satisfaction was significantly associated with a more manageable, lighter, or acceptable workload. Carstensen (1994) previously suggested workload as a significant predictor of job satisfaction among European interpreters for the deaf. The results of this study also support Watson's (1987) suggestion that excessive workload leads to lesser job satisfaction and possible job burnout. This study's results emphasize the critical effect that manageable workload has in promoting happiness and satisfaction among interpreters.

Table 6

Significant Correlates of Scale and Independent Variables

Variable	Positively Correlated	Negatively Correlated
Exhaustion	Autonomy; Workload; Role Conflict	Age; Number of Children; Years Interpreting
Cynicism	Autonomy; Workload; Role Conflict	Age; Number of Children; Years Married; Years Interpreting
Professional Efficacy	Age; Number of Children; Years Married; Years in Current Job; Years Interpreting; Years Worked Full-time	Autonomy; Role Conflict
Autonomy	Role Conflict; Exhaustion; Cynicism	Age; Years Interpreting; Pay
Role Conflict	Autonomy; Workload	-
Workload	Role Conflict	Age

Opportunities for Promotion. This study found that higher job satisfaction was associated

with greater opportunities for promotion. These results support the findings of Russ and

McNeilly (1995). They suggested that existing opportunities for promotion would increase

employees' sense of satisfaction. The results of this study and others emphasize the importance

of opportunities for promotion in increasing job satisfaction among interpreters for the deaf.

Enhancing Interpreters' Satisfaction

Thanks for the insight. I believe that in our profession we work in extreme isolation in many instances, by default. Where I work, I am the lone wolf here. There are no other interpreters, and no staff when I can share my concerns without, seemingly, being in violation of the code of ethics.

This goes to the very heart of my research on interpreter burnout. Interpreters (and I have collected countless case studies) can share their misery, or their pleasure, with so few people, if any. Many have left the field due to burnout resulting from frustration, etc. In my particular instance, I am looking to leave the profession of practice and go into teaching - it is safer and boundaries are much more clearly defined.

It is my hope that the CoE, as RID agrees and publishes them, will reflect a real-life dynamic in which interpreters must be allowed to share positive and negative experiences on a need-to-know basis, at the very least. Additionally, a mechanism must be established in which interpreters can be allowed to express their experiences in a safe forum, w/o fear of reprisal or sanction.

The findings suggest that as long as interpreters: 1) experience a high degree of

autonomy; 2) have an excessive workload; and 4) have excessive role conflict, they are likely to

experience a higher degree of burnout (more exhaustion, more cynicism, and less professional

efficacy.

The consequences of ignoring the factors that lead to higher job burnout could result in

work disruption, inflated administrative and training costs, and reduced productivity (Barber,

1986). When this situation occurs, the interpreters, those they serve, and those who employ them

receive diminished returns on their investment in time, money, and other resources. Those who employ interpreters for the Deaf play a critical role in promoting happiness and satisfaction among interpreters.

As demonstrated by this study, the nature of interpreting can be varied, ranging from a succinctly defined staff role, to that of an independent contractor interpreter. In all positions there is often a lack of supervision by a person familiar with the field, and the requirements of interpreting (Hurwitz, 1995).

This study emphasizes the effects that increased autonomy, role conflict and workload have on interpreters for the Deaf. These findings support the concept that while interpreters enjoy their freedom and independence, they also value support systems that can help them deal with stressors that arise from role conflict and workload that is perceived as excessive. Informal training, that which is work-based, was not examined as a variable influencing job burnout.
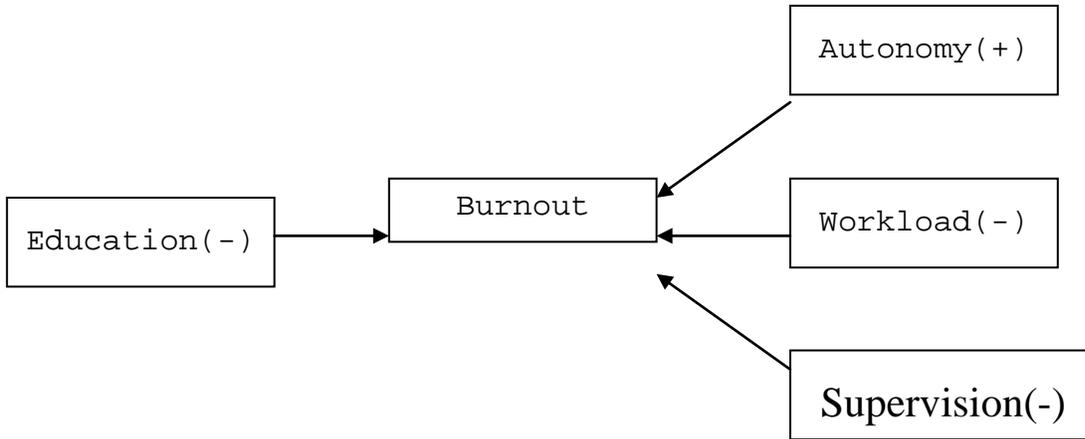
The nature of interpreting, providing services to Deaf and hearing people alike, usually takes the interpreter away from a static work environment. Interpreters are constantly traveling from one assignment to another, be it across town or across a college campus. While autonomy has been demonstrated by this study as being a significant correlate to job satisfaction (Swartz, in press), it should not be concluded that interpreters should be left without supervision and effective interactions at the workplace. Interpreters, if left to function with total independence, and without necessary support, may experience a loss of satisfaction over time.

Implications for Interpreter Policy Practice

This study had two major findings that have implications for interpreter policy practice. The first finding is related to the predictors of job satisfaction, and the second is the significant

differences between staff, independent contractor, and dependent contractor interpreters in job

satisfaction and other job-related factors.

Figure 1. Diagram of the Predictors of Job Satisfaction


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                                         ┌──────────────────┐
                                         │   Autonomy(+)    │
                                         └──────────────────┘

                    ┌──────────────┐     ┌──────────────────┐
   ┌─────────────┐  │   Burnout    │     │   Workload(-)    │
   │ Education(-)│─▶│              │◀───│                  │
   └─────────────┘  └──────────────┘     └──────────────────┘

                                         ┌──────────────────┐
                                         │  Supervision(-)  │
                                         └──────────────────┘
```

Note: Education was found to be the most significant predictor of overall job satisfaction.

Lessening Interpreters' Burnout

The diagram presented in Figure 2 shows the importance of understanding the extent of increased autonomy, less workload, less supervision, and less education for predicting levels of burnout among interpreters for the deaf throughout the U.S. and Canada. The findings suggest that as long as interpreters do not experience adequate independence, have an excessive workload, experience close and competent supervision, and have received more college training, they are likely to experience some degree of burnout.

The consequences of ignoring the factors that lead to higher burnout could result in work disruption, inflated administrative and training costs, and reduced productivity (Barber, 1986). When this situation occurs, the interpreters, those they serve, and those who employ them receive diminished returns on their investment in time, money, and other resources. Those who employ interpreters for the deaf play a critical role in promoting happiness and satisfaction among interpreters.

Recommendations for Future Research

The findings from this study illustrate the importance of a number of personal- and job-related factors in predicting job satisfaction among interpreters for the deaf. Therefore, replication is an important step to cross-validate the findings and to establish generalizability of the findings for all interpreters in the United States and Canada and, perhaps, in other countries. Further research similar to the present study should examine the differing effects of personal- and job-related variables on job satisfaction between Anglo Americans and minority groups in the United States and Canada. Because interpreters are highly mobile and autonomous workers,

it is suggested that the variables of support, transportation, and workspace (private designated work area, as interpreters who work in the field rarely have an office or work area that they can call their own) be examined in future research.

This study examined the effect of 11 independent factors (Table 8) on job satisfaction. The results of multiple regression analysis (Table 12) show that only 1 of the 11 independent factors was a significant predictor of job satisfaction, accounting for 26% of the variance. The remaining 74% is still unexplained and should be examined.

Finally, autonomy and workload emerged as significant correlates of job satisfaction. It would be appropriate to perform cost-benefit analyses on implementation of programs that emphasize these factors. As earlier suggested, mentoring programs deserve attention and should be considered as a viable alternative to formal training. Further research in which job satisfaction, performed pre-program and post-program implementation, is recommended.

In conclusion, the results of this study should be considered a preliminary examination of job satisfaction among interpreters for the deaf. The intent was to establish correlates of job satisfaction, as well as a model that best predicts job satisfaction among interpreters. Further research is required to establish appropriate inferences to workers in the profession. Of prime concern are the influences of the factors of education and workload. These factors, as well as others that may emerge as significant correlates or predictors of job satisfaction, must be examined in depth. The global goal should always be the improvement of job satisfaction among interpreters for the deaf.

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