

The Prevalence of Burnout among Medical Oncology Fellows-in-Training in the Philippines: A Cross-Sectional Study

DAPHNE AISSA T. LEE MD-MBA, RAJI R. SHAMAILEH MD, FPCP, FPSMO, JOSE ROBERTO G. AMPARO MD, FPCP, FPSMO
The Medical City, Ortigas Avenue, Metro Manila, Philippines

Introduction

Burnout remains a major challenge for physicians at all stages of education and training. This negatively affects patient care, incurs added costs, and compromises the physician's own safety. In Medical Oncology, the demands entailed in caring for cancer patients may present significant challenges for both physicians and nurses, including the risk for burnout.

Numerous studies have reported on the prevalence of burnout among oncologists in other countries; however, there is limited local data regarding this topic. This study aims to determine the prevalence of burnout among Medical Oncology fellows-in-training in the Philippines.

Materials and Methods

This is a descriptive cross-sectional study evaluating the prevalence of burnout among Medical Oncology fellows-in-training using the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI). Demographic data and work-related characteristics such as age, gender, marital status, year level, and average number of hours spent at work per day were presented in tabular form as frequency and percentage. The scores for the overall Maslach Burnout score, as well as each domain, were presented using median and interquartile range. The suggested interventions obtained from the data collection forms were grouped and collated by the investigator, which were then presented using count and percentage.

Contact Information

For further questions and information, you may contact the author at daphneleemd@gmail.com

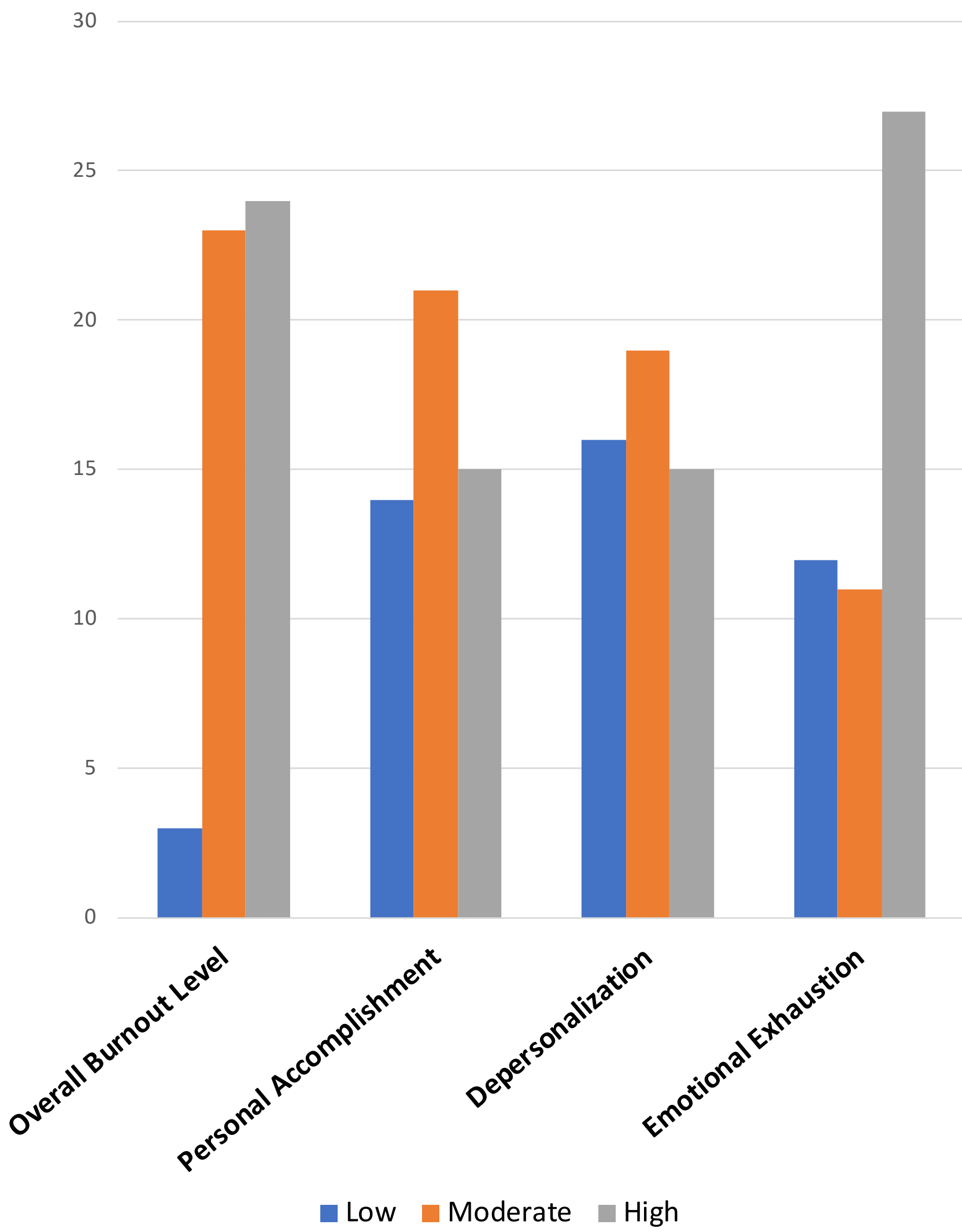
Results

Most of the fellows-in-training were experiencing some degree of burnout during the conduct of the study. Fifty four percent (27) felt a high level of emotional exhaustion, while 38% (19) and 42% (21) felt a moderate level of burnout in the depersonalization and personal accomplishment domains respectively. Overall, 94% of respondents had a moderate to high level of burnout.

Table 1. Demographic and Work-Related Characteristics

Characteristic	N (%)
Gender	
Male	15 (30%)
Female	35 (70%)
Age	
≤30 years old	4 (8%)
31-34 years old	32 (64%)
≥35 years old	14 (28%)
Marital Status	
Single	37 (74%)
Married	12 (24%)
Separated	1 (2%)
Year Level in Training	
1	22 (44%)
2	13 (26%)
3	15 (30%)
Average Number of Working Hours	
≤8 hours	4 (8%)
9-12 hours	37 (74%)
>12 hours	9 (18%)
Institution	
PGH	7 (14%)
NKTI	5 (10%)
SLMC	12 (24%)
USTH	2 (4%)
JRMMC	4 (8%)
TMC	5 (10%)
MMC	4 (8%)
VMMC	3 (6%)
Chong Hua	2 (4%)
SPMC	6 (12%)

Fig 1. Prevalence of Burnout Based on Each Domain of the Maslach Burnout Inventory



Respondents were given the option to provide suggestions on how to reduce physician burnout. A number of respondents believed that having a greater amount of free time would be beneficial in reducing the prevalence of burnout among the population.

Table 5. Suggested Interventions to Reduce Burnout among Medical Oncology Trainees

Suggested Interventions	N (%)
Extracurricular or recreational activities	5 (20%)
Mandatory leaves	5 (20%)
Decreased work hours, have weekends off	5 (20%)
Fixed working hours per day, limit work to work hours	3 (12%)
Wellness activities	2 (8%)
Less paperwork	2 (8%)
Mandatory therapy	1 (3%)
Limit number of consults	1 (3%)
Provide a more conducive and welcoming learning environment	1 (3%)
Improve patient access to healthcare	1 (3%)

Conclusions

Physician burnout remains a considerable problem among Medical Oncology fellows-in-training in the Philippines. Majority of respondents experienced a moderate to high level of burnout, most commonly in the emotional exhaustion domain.

It is imperative that this phenomenon be given more attention in order to prevent early burnout among Medical Oncology practitioners.

Vacation leaves, recreational and wellness activities, and decreased work hours are some of the interventions cited to help reduce physician burnout.

Disclosures

The presenter has no conflict of interest to report in relation to this presentation

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