

# Burnout among Family Micro Business Owners in Mexico

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**Abstract** The main objective of this investigation is to determine if the causes that lead to the development of the stages or dimensions of Burnout Syndrome are related to the organizational variables of family-owned micro businesses. The selected sample was of 120 owners of family-owned micro businesses, chosen randomly in the town of Uman, Yucatan, Mexico. The instrument used for data recollection, referring to the presence of the Syndrome, was the Maslach Burnout Inventory, adapted to Spanish. Among the organizational variables that can be related to Burnout, it stands out that in 80% of the studied micro businesses, one to three family members were working; in 33% of the cases the type of relationship between the family members was that of spouse; 45% of the businesses were in their first generation; 56.7% of the owners dedicated their time to sales; and in 52.5% of the cases the owner used an autocratic leadership style. The obtained results allowed us to determine that Burnout is found in the selected sample in low levels in terms of affect. Inferential tests only supported the relation existing between tasks that the owner completed and Burnout Syndrome.

**Keywords** Work Stress, Burnout Syndrome, Retail, Organizational Variables, Family-Owned Micro Business

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## 1. Introduction

Burnout Syndrome is a topic that has gained great importance in many parts of the world. This phenomenon is considered a consequence of chronic work stress [13], [32], and mainly affects workers who interact with the public, meaning it is present with more frequency in people that offer some kinds of service [11].

Studies exist all over the world that try to determine the evolution this Syndrome has in different parts of the globe. In most cases, the relationship between different variables or aspects and the presence of Burnout has been studied, however these studies have been done in health centers—hospitals, clinics or schools [13], [36], [3], [7]. Research observed in private companies resulting exiguous [27] [31]. The scarcity of studies on family-owned businesses makes an investigation such as this one necessary. In specific, problems that Burnout represents in the state of Yucatan, Mexico will be examined.

The theoretical framework includes the basic concepts that are involved in this study, namely: with which theories is Burnout Syndrome explained? How does it develop and how is it measured? In addition it looks at implications—

symptoms that it could cause in economically-active people. Also, one must comprehend the characteristics of micro businesses and which factors turn them into family-owned businesses, giving them a unique and differentiating identity within a market, whether local, regional or international.

This study has the goal of determining if the causes of Burnout Syndrome in a sample of 120 family-owned micro businesses (FOMs) in the town of Uman, Yucatan, Mexico are related to aspects of the organizational variables of FOMs. Thus, the following hypothesis is posed:

- **H1:** some type of relationship exists between the organizational variables of FOMs—the total number of family members that work in the FOMs; the relationship that exists between them and the owner; the generation of the directors of the FOMs; the tasks carried out by the owner; and the style of leadership executed by the owner—and the presence of Burnout Syndrome in the owners of FOMs in the town of Uman, Yucatan, Mexico.

## 2. Burnout Syndrome

The first researcher of Burnout Syndrome was Freunderberger [5], who studied the symptoms that volunteers who worked in a clinic in New York developed. The research explained conditions among which a gradual reduction of work energy was observed, and later signs of exhaustion and anxiety. The results of his investigation led him to describe a psychological pathology that was found in

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people who offered some type of service, characterized by constant tiring as a consequence of excessive work and the constant interaction with the public in general.

The burnout phenomenon was studied in greater depth by Maslach: he used it to refer to the group of physical and psychological ailments that were present in economically-active people and which are characterized by a state of constant apathy or exhaustion, a response of the organism to the frequent presence of certain stress factors that can be found in the workplace [13] [27].

The presence of Burnout is explained through the development of different models that base their premises on different theories. For example, models that are based on the socio-cognitive Theory of the Self [17], which states that the variables of the self (self-esteem, self-confidence, self-concept, among others) are the ones that condition the types of affect that the Syndrome can cause to be experienced by the subject. From this perspective, the characteristics of personality play an important role on the resilience that each individual shows in adverse situations. In broad terms, the models that are based on this theory draw on the knowledge established by Bandura [11], and which refer to the cognitive conditions of the subject that influence, in a direct manner, what the subject thinks and does, and also the effects of these actions, along with how the experiences observed in others modify these cognitions. Also, the degree of confidence that a subject has of his own capabilities will modify the degree of tenacity put into reaching objectives. The presence of certain negative emotional reactions, like depression, stress, angst, among others, that accompany the thoughts and actions of people are also factors.

A second group of models finds its basis on the Social Exchange Theory. It's important to note that its premises come, in great measure, from Buunk and Schaufeli's Social Comparison Model [33], and from the Resource Conservation Theory by Hobfoll and Freedy [11]. The main premise on the origin of Burnout Syndrome here is explained by the perception of a lack of equality, i.e. a sense of always losing. The human being is immersed in a society—family, culture, work, among others—where exchange relationships are established, in which something is given and taken. When the subject feels that what they are giving is more than what they are receiving, a feeling of loss presents itself. If this feeling presents itself in a constant manner, it's very likely that the Syndrome will develop.

The third group of models is from Organizational Theory, in which the inadequate configuration of roles inside the work position, the work overload, the poverty of the role, the absence of a healthy and beneficial work atmosphere, incorrect organizational structure, the absence of a positive work culture, among others, explain the aetiology of the presence of Burnout in workers. Among the models that have been elaborated using this perspective, the following can be named: Golembiewski et al.'s model; Cox, Kuk and Leiter's model; and Winnubst's model [11].

Each model tries to establish the causes for the presence of the Syndrome from different perspectives, which are related to a subject's personality, with interactions established with the people around them or with those in the workplace.

Burnout comes from different sources known as stressors. According to Wheaton and Sandin quoted by [30], stressors are any condition or situation that can provoke stress. In order for a specific situation to be considered a stressor, a series of characteristics must be present: 1) the condition must necessarily mean a threat to the subject's homeostasis; 2) the subject must try to confront this threat; 3) the subject must be aware of the damage that this situation could cause. A situation becomes a stressor when it starts producing an excessive demand on the subject. However, the diversity in the individual capacity to react, resilience, in the end is insufficient to avoid the presence of this ailment, because despite the ability to respond, if the stressor is presented with the necessary frequency, the subject will show symptoms of the Syndrome [25].

White, Edwards and Townsend-White quoted by [36], assert that the factors that generate Burnout Syndrome are the following:

- **Individual factors:** since each subject reacts in a different manner under work pressure there are people who are more likely to cave in under the work pressure;
- **Interpersonal factors:** associated with the differences that are presented between the worker's personal resources and demands;
- **Work nature:** it is essential to consider that not all jobs are the same, i.e. some jobs demand more pressure, e.g. medics, nurses, teachers, among others, due to the interaction established between them and the people they deal with (surrounded by a tense atmosphere);
- **Organizational factors:** in many instances the workplace does not have a good organizational climate.

The symptoms that a person can suffer are varied, and become present as pressure rises or becomes more frequent. Different classifications have been established, among which we can find those made by Paine [7], in which he establishes six affect categories that gradually grow in intensity: 1) physical symptoms, e.g. fatigue, muscle pain, cardio-respiratory malaise, nervousness, anxiety, among others; 2) the start or rise in the consumption of narcotics and stimulants; 3) psychological symptoms, e.g. emotional fatigue, paranoia, depression, among others; 4) isolation and communication rejection; 5) interpersonal conflicts, i.e. becoming cold and distant with coworkers and clients; 6) change of values and beliefs, which invariably end up in a negative attitude change.

Gil-Monte's [15] proposed classification is the following:

- **Cognitive deterioration:** professional disengagement, failure, loss of interest, low personal fulfillment in the workplace, low professional efficiency, impotence, among others;
- **Affective deterioration:** formed by emotional and

physical exhaustion and fatigue;

- **Attitude deterioration:** these symptoms include insolence, depersonalization, cynicism, among others.

Burnout is considered to be a process because it starts with a series of symptoms, physical and/or psychological, that are similar to those presented when a person is under stress. The first sign of the presence of the Syndrome is evidenced when a subject feels that he or she doesn't have the will to perform a specific task, showing anxiety and a lack of energy. These symptoms present themselves in the first stage of the process: *emotional exhaustion*.

In a second phase subjects find themselves in a difficult situation, trying to get out of the problems the first phase generated. Yet instead of remedying them, the subject falls into a phase of negative conduct characterized by feelings of insensitivity, cynicism and even aggression towards colleagues and clients. This phase is known as *depersonalization*.

In the final stage—*low personal fulfillment*—subjects find themselves highly affected by the Syndrome. One of the main characteristics of this stage is the sense of inefficiency, causing subjects to question the importance of their activities in the company and themselves. The result of this evaluation is negative and affects the self-perception of the person. However, it is common for the person to blame others for this situation, which ends up in impolite treatment and occasionally aggression towards workmates and the general public [32].

In synthesis, Burnout is a pathology that is triggered by chronic work stress, found in people that perform some type of service for the general public. Therefore, this can present itself in private companies that base their economic activities in commerce, because the tasks performed are related to some direct interaction with clients. We move on by defining the concepts that form FOMs, as well as the importance these have in local and regional economies [8].

### 3. Family-Owned Micro Business

It's possible to confuse family businesses with small and medium businesses, without knowing that many big and consolidated companies are family businesses. Small craft and commercial businesses that are established with a low level of investment and a main purpose being to serve as a way to support the family, and which can be passed on to other generations, are family businesses [29].

Small businesses are those that have less than 250 employees, whose controlling capital belongs to the family and in which at least two family members work [18].

According to the Small Business Association (SBA) a small business is "that which the owners possess in full liberty, driven autonomously and is not dominating in the sector in which it operates" [18]. Regarding the number of employees, The National Institute of Geography and Information of Mexico (INEGI in Spanish) determines that a business will be considered micro when it employs up to

15 people and the net value of its assets is up to 30,000,000 Mexican pesos in a year. Another classification is that mentioned by the Mexican Federation Official Journal, in which it's established that micro business is formed by a maximum of 10 employees [34].

We can conclude that micro businesses consist of a small number of employees—no more than 15—and that the owner controls the company. Usually, these businesses don't have an organizational structure, their location is determined randomly and they dedicate themselves to commerce.

Belausteguigoitia [4] defines a family business as an "organization controlled and operated by members of the family". The Committee for Economic Development (CAE) determined that every family business must have at least two of the following characteristics: 1) the owners of the business occupy a management position, therefore the administration is handled independently; 2) a person or small group provides the total capital of the business; 3) the geographic zone of operation is reduced to a region; 4) the size of the business in relation with the industry it belongs to is small.

In the conceptualization of the origin of the family business we can observe the existence of the interaction of two complex subsystems: the business and the family, which creates a dual system. The general theory of the system offers a wider panorama in that it's necessary to pay more attention to the interaction of the diverse components of the system, instead of analyzing them individually.

The family business is seen as a part of a wider space where its influence towards the exterior is appreciated. In other words, this way of understanding the family business from an external point of view is known as the Systemic Construction by Composition Method. In another case we can find the Systemic Construction by Functional Decomposition Method, in which the family business is visualized as a system integrated by various parts that are related in diverse and complex ways of interaction. This indicates that the system known as family business is formed by a complex net of subsystems that give it form and background. Among these subsystems one can find the faculties, resources and staff—family or not.

The family business is a system formed by two or more subsystems that interact with each other and provide each their main characteristics to form a superior entity. This situation has been the basis of a series of models with which the behavior, development and characteristics of family business are explained.

One of the best known models is that of Tagiuri and Davis [4], which receives the name of the Three Circles Model. This consists of three subsystems connected with each other and forming four areas of intersection. These areas correspond to the diverse roles that a family member may have at one time. The subsystems that form the family business, according to this model, are: business, family and property. The authors include the concept of property because they consider that the simple relationship between

family and business does not fully explain the dynamic of these companies.

From the previous definitions we can conclude that FOMs are systems where three complex subsystems converge. These provide their own characteristics, to create a superior entity characterized by: having a relatively small workforce; production factors belonging to the family; and values that unite and give form to a family. The latter means that the sense of ownership is essential, and that this is done in a voluntary manner, accepting beforehand the relationship or hierarchy established by the father or mother.

Family businesses have a great importance for the economy. In Spain they represent 85% of the total of businesses in the country and generate 70% of the GDP [20]. In the United States of America they generate 50% of the GDP and are responsible for creating half of the jobs. In Mexico it is estimated that these numbers are even higher, since it's calculated that nine out of every 10 companies are family-owned; they generate a little bit over a third of the jobs in the country [4].

The numbers just mentioned prove the importance that these types of businesses have in creating jobs and in the GDP of countries. However, it's a fact that many family businesses rarely overcome the first year of operations, due to problems related with family dynamics—gender, number of family members, relationships, etc. [38]. This is also due to organizational conditions—absence of an organizational structure, poor responsibility assignation, leadership styles, among others. These condition the success or failure in the short term of the family business and also can create problems among people like Burnout Syndrome.

## 4. Method

The theoretical review and field observation on this research founded the following methodological decisions.

### 4.1. Type and Design

Correlational research was conducted, since it was the intention to describe the relationship between the organizational variables and the presence of Burnout Syndrome in owners of FOMs in Uman, Yucatan, Mexico [17]. The design of the study is non-experimental, transversal and descriptive, since it doesn't manipulate the variables. The data was obtained in one specific moment in time and the goal was to describe and analyze them. The investigation was sequential for which the order of the process was completed rigorously.

### 4.2. Study Variables

The organizational variables that can generate Burnout Syndrome are related. Organizational variables were defined as those that are related with the characteristics of the businesses that are run or managed by families [4]. This study considered as variables: the total number of family

members that work in the FOMs, the relationship between the owner and the family members that work in the FOMs, the generation of the directors of the FOMs, the tasks performed by the owner and the leadership styled used by the owner.

The Burnout Syndrome variable was defined as the level of global affect a study subject experienced of this Syndrome. Paring the obtained results with the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) test, it was decided, in an arbitrary manner, to locate low, medium and high Syndrome levels for the people who obtained indexes that were located in one of the previous classifications.

### 4.3. Population and Sample

The population was formed by 266 owners of FOMs, whose companies were founded under the classification 46111, which is used for companies that are dedicated to retail in grocery stores located in the town of Uman, Yucatan, Mexico [19].

The probabilistic sample was formed by 120 surveys of the owners of the FOMs that were available at the time of the field work.

### 4.4. Instrument

**Table 1.** Cronbach alpha coefficients by author and dimension of the MBI

Author	Year	Country	Cronbach alpha coefficient		
			EE*	D*	PF*
Gil-Monte and Peiró	1999a	Spain	0.720	0.870	0.570
Alvarado	2009	Costa Rica	0.860	0.590	0.760
Jélvez, Ibáñez and Olivares	2011	Chile	0.870	0.720	0.770
<i>Our research</i>	<i>2013</i>	<i>Mexico</i>	<i>0.800</i>	<i>0.715</i>	<i>0.743</i>

\*EE: *emotional exhaustion*; D: *depersonalization*; PF: *personal fulfillment*

The instrument used to gather the data was an adaptation to Spanish of the MBI, taking into account the characteristics of the area where the study took place. It contains 22 items in a Likert form, divided into three dimensions: *emotional exhaustion* (items 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 13, 14, 16 and 20), *depersonalization* (items: 5, 10, 11, 15 and 22) and *personal fulfillment* (items: 4, 7, 9, 12, 17, 18, 19 and 21). The score of the items was codified from never (0) to every day (6) [12]. To complete the investigation's objective, questions regarding general information and organizational values were added to the MBI. These were represented through multiple-choice items. The validity of the content was determined by the strict revision of three experts, who also gave recommendations regarding the hypothesis and the economic and social surroundings of the investigation.

The reliability of the adaptation of the instrument coincided with the results found by other researchers in

different countries [12], [21] which confirmed that our questionnaire was reliable enough to go ahead with this investigation. The obtained coefficients are shown in Table 1.

#### 4.5. Procedure

The way in which the information was collected was direct survey of the study subjects, in which they were asked 22 questions and had to answer in terms of which level of the scale they found themselves in.

The obtained information was statistically analyzed to know the corresponding Burnout index in each dimension. We proceeded adding the score of each item that formed a dimension, and the result of the sum was divided between the numbers of items that this dimension possessed.

It's worth mentioning that the indexes of the *personal fulfillment* dimension were considered inverse, meaning high indexes implied an absence of the Syndrome. According to what has been pointed out, if the sum of the items belonging to these dimensions is low, then the value is added to the results of the dimensions of *emotional exhaustion* and *depersonalization*. On the contrary, if the resulting value is medium or high then it is excluded from the final result, since according to revised studies [24] we consider that the subject has not fully developed the Syndrome.

Because of this, for the determination of the Burnout general index, the averages of the dimensions are added and the result is divided by the dimensions that conform to this calculation, e.g. if a subject ended with the following averages, *emotional exhaustion*: 3, *depersonalization*: 5, and *personal fulfillment*: 5, then only the first two would be added, since the third one was high, and the division would be between the first two.

The obtained results were codified with the intention of obtaining one of three possible levels. This allowed us to establish if a subject presented the Syndrome at a low, medium or high level. The considerations were as follows: indexes lower than two are considered low, indexes more than two but lower or equal to four are considered medium, and indexes higher than four are considered as high levels. This was calculated dividing the maximum quantity that a subject could respond to (six) between the total number of levels (three). The result was the amount that formed the interval (two).

The processing of the information obtained with the MBI, was done through IBM SPSS Statistics V.20 software, with which a descriptive analysis was made which consisted of a calculation of the adequate central tendency measures, since the variables that were used to establish some kind of relationship were of an ordinal and nominal scale. The same software was used for the inferential analysis, which allows the establishment of a relationship between the variables.

The Chi square coefficient was used and the contingency coefficient was calculated to determine the degree of association existing between the investigation variables.

## 5. Results

Firstly we demonstrate the obtained results showing the descriptive statistics of the investigation variables. In order to offer a clear panorama of them, we separate the results by variable, in Table 2 and then observed the results of the organizational variables. Meanwhile in Table 3, we find the results of the indexes of each dimension, as well as the total for Burnout Syndrome.

According to the obtained information we observe that only 20% (n=24) of the micro businesses studied have more than three family members in them; regarding relationships, we find that 60.9% (n=73) had a relationship with the owner related to the nuclear family—father, mother and children; also, we registered that 55% (n=66) of the FOMs were beyond their first generation; regarding the tasks performed the analyzed results showed that only 14.2% (n=17) of the owners dedicate their time in the FOMs to activities that weren't sales; and finally 97.5% (n=117) of the owners showed a leadership style other than liberal.

Burnout in owners of FOMs was presented, mostly, in low levels of affect experienced. However, we must consider that an important percentage of the population showed signs that related to a medium level (40% [n=48]). This situation led us to assert that, at the moment in which the investigation took place the Syndrome already had effects at a low level. The evidence found allowed us to confirm that Burnout was starting to develop in the studied population. Situations were even observed in which a high level already affected the study subjects.

The analysis of each dimension, separately, proves the findings, as regarding *emotional exhaustion*, *depersonalization* and *personal fulfillment*. Subjects showed behaviors similar to those evidencing presence of the Syndrome in the studied samples. Another sign that was helpful for corroborating our results was the fact that the mean of each dimension was close to the borders of the medium levels, which indicates that with the passage of time it's very probable that the selected sample would start to develop problems caused by the symptoms of the phenomenon.

The results of inferential statistics that allowed us to demonstrate the posed investigation hypothesis are shown next. It's important to note that, to determine which of the posed variables presented some sort of relation with the levels of Burnout, each of the Chi square coefficients ( $X^2$ ) was analyzed separately—with a confidence level of 0.95—as well as against the critical table Chi coefficient consulted for comparison [24].

**Table 2.** FOMs' characteristics in the town of Uman, Yucatan, Mexico

Variable		Absolute frequency	Percentage	Statistics
Number of family members working in the FOMs	1 to 3	96	80	Median: 4 to 6 Mode: 1 to 3
	4 to 6	22	18.3	
	7 to 9	2	1.7	
Relationship between the owner and the family members working in the FOMs	Father-son	14	11.7	Mode: Spouses
	Father-daughter	8	6.7	
	Mother-son	6	5	
	Mother-daughter	5	4.1	
	Siblings	24	20	
	In laws	2	1.7	
	Spouses	40	33.3	
	Structured family	6	5	
Generation of the directors of the FOMs	Three-way relationship	15	12.5	Median: 2nd Mode: 1st
	1st	54	45	
	2nd	50	41.7	
	3rd	12	10	
Tasks performed by the owner of the FOMs	4th	4	3.3	Mode: Sales
	Sales	68	56.7	
	Production	2	1.7	
	Administration	15	12.4	
Type of leadership adopted by the owner	All	35	29.2	Mode: Autocratic
	Democratic	54	45	
	Autocratic	63	52.5	
	Liberal	3	2.5	

**Table 3.** Burnout central tendency and dispersion measures by dimensions

	<i>Emotional exhaustion</i>	<i>Depersonalization</i>	<i>Personal fulfillment</i>	Total Burnout
Mean	2.2657	1.7667	3.9780	1.9867
Median	2.00	1.60	4.00	1.73
Mode	1.00	1.00	4.00	1.00
Standard Dev.	1.1496	0.9816	0.7994	0.8587
Range	5.44	5.60	4.00	4.04
Minimum	0.44	0.20	1.63	0.52
Maximum	5.89	5.80	5.63	4.56

**Table 4.** Number and percentage distribution of owners of FOMs by dimension and level of Burnout

	Low	Medium	High	Total
<i>Emotional exhaustion</i>	63 (52.5%)	46 (38.3%)	11 (9.2%)	120 (100%)
<i>Depersonalization</i>	84 (70%)	34 (28.3%)	2 (1.7%)	120 (100%)
<i>Personal fulfillment</i>	3 (2.5%)	61 (50.8%)	56 (46.7%)	120 (100%)
Burnout	69 (57.5%)	48 (40.0%)	3 (2.5%)	120 (100%)

In Table 5 we observed the obtained results in to prove the posed hypothesis, regarding the number of family members that work in the FOMs, the relationship between them and the owner of the FOMs, the generation of the directors of the FOMs and the type of leadership style adopted by the owner. The Chi square ( $X^2$ ) index registers that were compared with their respective critical

homologues led us to reject the investigation hypothesis; therefore we declare that between the aforementioned variables and the Burnout levels there is no relation.

The existing relationship between the tasks performed by the owner of the FOMs and the levels of Burnout was proven thanks to the Chi squared coefficient ( $X^2=11.416$ ) results being higher than the table critical Chi ( $X^2$  crit.=7.815). This situation allowed us to make the alternative hypothesis valid and to reject the null hypothesis. The relation had a weak positive association value, with a higher tendency toward medium. The presence of Burnout Syndrome is moderately conditioned by the tasks performed by the owners in their companies.

## 6. Discussion

The objective of this investigation was to establish which of the organizational variables of the FOMs had some relation to the presence of Burnout Syndrome, measured through the adaptation of the MBI test [12]. At the same time, we meant to establish a methodology that can be used in Yucatan, Mexico, and that allows us to know a general level of the Syndrome—measured through the statistical use of indexes that form different dimensions. Because of this, the obtained information analysis necessarily led us to consult the results of other investigations that took place in Spanish-speaking countries/areas: in Spain [35], [32]; in Latin America [6], [15], [31], [37]; in Mexico [1], [2]; and in Yucatan [22], [26], [28], [39]. These studies prove the interest generated by the topic. Evidence was even found of the presence of this affliction in workers that belong to departments with main activities that are not related to direct public attention [22], [26], [28].

**Table 5.** Chi square coefficient ( $\chi^2$ ) values and accepted hypothesis by studied variable

	$\chi^2$ *	Liberty degrees	$\chi^2$ Table critic.	Contingency coefficient	Accepted hypothesis
Number of family members working in the FOMs	3.047	2	5.991	0.157	Null
Relationship between the owner and the family members working in the FOMs	10.045	8	15.507	0.278	Null
Generation of the directors of the FOMs	5.716	3	7.815	0.213	Null
Tasks performed by the owner of the FOMs	11.416	3	7.815	0.213	Alternative
Type of leadership adopted by the owner	0.713	2	5.991	0.077	Null

\* Level of significance  $p < 0.05$

The obtained results in this investigation prove that almost half of the studied subjects presented risk situations in the *emotional exhaustion* subscale, meaning 38.3% (n=46) of the owners of FOMs that were surveyed showed low levels of affect experienced, while 9.2% (n=11) were in the high levels. Taken together, this shows that 47.5% (n=57) of the studied subjects were in grave affect conditions; a situation also observed in the works mentioned at the beginning of this paper, in which the levels on this subscale showed similar behaviors. This differs from the works of Parra [28], León [22], and Worbis [39], in which a high level stood out in the sample selected by those authors. What the evidence found in this investigation, supported by the other investigations, suggests is that the owners of FOMs from the town of Uman, Yucatan were starting to feel in a state in which their energy was spent, shown in a lack of strength and will power to make more efforts for their businesses. This type of situation was proven through analysis to be of the following stage of Burnout Syndrome: *depersonalization*.

In the second dimension, *emotional exhaustion*, we observed that 28.3% (n=34) were in the middle level of affect and that 1.7% (n=2) showed signs of suffering affect from the high level. Together it was observed that 30% (n=36) of the subjects already showed signs of having completely lost positive feelings towards the people they worked with and towards customers. These results are evidence that Burnout was already presenting itself in an important manner in the study sample, but still in a weak way. The results match those of Alvarado *et al.* [1], and Aldrete *et al.* [2], and are different from the results obtained by Parra [28], León [22], Mex [26] and Worbis [39], in which the found levels of *depersonalization* were noticeably high.

The last stage or dimension, *personal fulfillment*, that the Maslach and Jackson model establishes, refers to the loss of esteem for one's own work, affecting self-concept, self-esteem and without a doubt, causing a poor relationship with others. It was observed through the analysis of obtained results that 58.8%, or 61 owners of FOMs were located in the mid-levels of affect, while 2.5% (n=3) were already in the lower levels of the dimension. The addition of both levels gave 53.3% [n=64] of the studied subjects. These results coincide with those proposed by [32], [31], [6], [37], [1], [22]. The mid and low levels suggest behavior patterns that make

economical task performance difficult, causing affective bonds that need to exist for an ideal organizational environment in successful companies to break down.

The indexes for determining the level of Burnout presence in the owners of FOMs from the town of Uman, Yucatan resulted in the following: 40% (n=48) of the sample showed a medium level, while 2.5% (n=3) had a high presence level. This suggests that this ailment already causes rising negative effects on both people's health and the well-being of the companies in the studied area. The obtained results are in agreement with those obtained by Gil-Monte *et al.* [15], Torres & Guarino [37] and Mex [26], who found evidence that the presence of Burnout was in a medium stage of development, therefore the absence of a swift response to it could present further problems for subjects that form these authors' samples. On the contrary results from Díaz *et al.* [6], Parra [28], León [22], and Worbis [29], differ from the results of our study, because in their investigations the high Burnout level was dominant. The study subjects were said to suffer the most extreme consequences that this affliction produces.

After making the statistical calculations to establish the possible relationship between the study variables, it was concluded that the activity performed by the owner of the FOMs was the only variable that presented some kind of relationship with an associated degree that was weakly positive with a greater tendency toward medium. This led us to assume that the owners who dedicate their time to performing activities that are exclusive to sales within the company were more likely to suffer Burnout than those who performed different types of activities.

The analysis of the results shows evidence of a clear start of the Burnout Syndrome process in the subjects that form the sample; the development of this investigation was close to the methodologies used in countries different from Mexico and especially the state of Yucatan. In our investigation we took the statistical use of the scores that formed the codification scales for Burnout determining the correct distribution of the Syndrome indexes in the three levels of affect. If we take into account what was established in the literature, i.e. that low levels of Burnout are more likely to be prevalent in people who perform some service related to healthcare or teaching, then it's plausible to believe that the level of affect will be lower in people who are

dedicated to commerce, especially if it's retail.

Following our investigation, strategies can be established to combat Burnout Syndrome in its initial stages from various approaches. For example, we can note the importance professional investigation offers, as an alternative to the absence of information that exists in our region regarding this problem. If modernization of the means of communication is evident, there still exists a certain level of caution in the effectiveness of these means to communicate the social problems that affect the communities that are far from the main urban districts. Also, we must do research of a longitudinal type to accurately measure the development that this phenomenon may present in a study setting. Burnout Syndrome is an ailment that gradually affects the health of the economically-active population around the world.

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