

Araştırma Makalesi

**Boreout Syndrome in Managers: A Qualitative Study on
Antecedents-Consequences and Solution Suggestions**

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Abstract

The aim of the research is to reveal the antecedents and consequences of boreout syndrome in managers and to develop solution suggestions. In this context, qualitative research was designed and feelings and thoughts of individuals working as managers in Karaman were consulted. The data obtained from the interviews was examined with content and descriptive techniques and analyzed with the Maxqda software. As a result, additional antecedents and consequences different from those found in the literature were identified for the factors leading to boreout syndrome in managers. Antecedents were identified as seeing the same faces all the time, working at a desk/indoors, technical disruptions, environmental pressure, and virtuality while consequences were identified as daydreaming or planning. Finally, a model was developed based on the findings, some theoretical and practical contributions were presented, and recommendations were made.

Keywords: Boreout syndrome, managers, antecedents, consequences

JEL Classification Codes: M10, M12

**Yöneticilerde Boreout Sendromu: Öncül-Ardıl ve Çözüm Önerilerine Yönelik Nitel bir
Araştırma**

Öz

Bu araştırmanın amacı boreout sendromunun öncül ve ardıllarının yöneticiler özelinde ortaya konularak çözüm önerilerinin geliştirilmesidir. Bu kapsamda nitel bir araştırma tasarlanarak Karaman'da yöneticilik görevinde bulunan bireylerin boreout sendromuna yönelik duygu ve düşüncelerine başvurulmuştur. Mülakatlardan elde edilen veriler içerik analizi ve betimsel analiz tekniği ile incelenerek Maxqda programıyla analiz edilmiştir. Analizler sonucunda yöneticilerde boreout sendromuna yol açan etmenlere, literatürde bulunandan farklı ek öncül ve ardıllar saptanmıştır. Saptanan öncüller sürekli aynı yüzleri görme, masa başı/kapalı alanda çalışma, teknik aksaklıklar, çevre baskısı ve sanallık; ardıllar ise hayal kurma/planlama olarak belirlenmiştir. Son olarak araştırmada ortaya konulan sonuçlara dayalı bir model geliştirilmiş, birtakım teorik ve pratik katkılar sunulmuş ve önerilerde bulunulmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Boreout sendromu, yöneticiler, öncüller, ardıllar

Jel Sınıflandırma Kodları: M10, M12

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1. Introduction

In today's competitive environment and technological conditions, it has become much more difficult for institutions to ensure sustainability. In this case, managers have to use the strategic resources of organizations effectively. At the very beginning of strategic resources, human resources and the concepts that determine their effectiveness come first. Among these, concepts such as burnout and boredom at work are issues that need to be researched as they are important factors in terms of employee performance and organizational outputs (Sürücü and Yıkılmaz, 2022, p. 65). Burnout is a phenomenon known to everyone and has been extensively researched, but what about boreout? Boreout is a hidden danger arising from boredom, apathy, and under-utilization of one's capacity in the workplace. Individuals who are bored or employed below their capacity experience disappointment with their work and think that the monotonous workplace routine does not provide any contribution to them. This leads to a boredom syndrome defined as Boreout. Possible consequences of Boreout are dissatisfaction, constant fatigue, loss of joy in life, etc. (Rothlin and Werder, 2007, p. 14). Therefore, it would not be wrong to say that this research is "a product of boredom".

Introduced in 2007 by Rothlin and Werder, the concept of boreout is relatively new in the management literature. Studies conducted so far and information obtained about the syndrome indicate the importance of the concept in terms of organizations. The concept, which has gained importance especially in international literature in recent years, has been studied very little in domestic literature. Limited studies conducted on the concept of boreout in the literature are either conceptual framework and measures (Rothlin and Werder, 2007; Rothlin and Werder, 2008; Snijders, 2009; Probst, 2012; Prammer, 2012), related to scale development (Poirier, Gelin, and Mikolajczak, 2021; Ramírez Quiroz and Villanueva Cueva, 2021; Sürücü and Yıkılmaz, 2022), comparing the concept of boreout with burnout (Brühlmann, 2015; LeCunff, 2020; Radka, 2021), or aimed at investigating the relationship of the syndrome with different variables (Stock, 2015; Van Hooff and Van Hooft, 2017, Karadal, Abubakar, and Erdem, 2018; Abubakar, 2019; Acosta Vergara, Plaza Gómez, and Hernández Riaño, 2021). It is seen that correlational studies are generally conducted in quantitative study design on different samples such as service sector employees (Özsungur, 2020), financial companies and bank personnel (Abubakar, 2019), workers (García-González, Villavicencio-Ayub, and García., 2018; Moris and Nedosugova, 2019; Acosta Vergara et al., 2021), office personnel (Karadal et al., 2018), public officials (Maroto, 2019), and textile workers (Merdan, Erdem, and Gümüşsoy, 2022). From these examples obtained from the literature, it is seen that the studies on boreout are mostly focused on blue-collar workers (García-González et al., 2018; Moris and Nedosugova, 2019; Özsungur, 2020; Acosta Vergara et al., 2021; Merdan et al., 2022), and rarely studied on office staff (Karadal et al., 2018; Maroto, 2019; Abubakar, 2019). However, it is considered very appropriate to examine the boreout syndrome in terms of

individuals whose jobs are routinely repetitive by nature. This information indicates that there are missing aspects of the subject in the literature. Therefore, the necessity to investigate boreout syndrome in white-collar workers constitutes the starting point of this study. There is no qualitative study found that can help to investigate the stages of the boreout syndrome in depth, nor is there any research encountered that is specific to managers and reveals the antecedents and consequences of the boreout syndrome as a whole. However, managers, just like office workers, can also be subjected to routine work, overwhelmed by bureaucracy and have more skills than the job requires. Accordingly, the main purpose of this study is to contribute to the gap in the field by making the boreout syndrome clearer through a comprehensive and in-depth examination, revealing the antecedents and consequences of the concept specific to managers who experience the syndrome, and developing solution suggestions. In addition, it is among the objectives to subject the obtained data to content analysis so that it can be analyzed in more detail. It is thought that the current gap will be closed by providing a broad perspective on the concept of boreout with the findings of the research.

Conducting this study specifically for managers in public institutions will bring a different perspective to the subject. It is thought that factors affecting the boreout levels of managers, who play an important role in the public sector today, and the sensory and mental consequences that occur as a result of these factors will be determined. On the one hand, while trying to reveal why managers are exposed to such a situation, on the other hand, explaining how they are affected by it with examples reveals the importance of the study in terms of both contributing to the literature and offering solutions by creating meaningful scientific data. Based on the findings, it is predicted that there are many factors affecting the boredom of managers.

2. Conceptual Framework

2.1. The Boreout Syndrome

The term “Boreout” was first conceptualized in 2007 by Rothlin and Werder in their work “Diagnose Boreout: Warum Unterforderung im Job krank macht”. The consequences of the concept, which is associated with being demoralized at work, are similar to the burnout syndrome but arise from different factors (Rothlin and Werder, 2007, p. 12). While burnout is associated with overload and lack of vision, boreout is more closely related to boredom. More precisely, in burnout individuals complain of a constant and excessive workload and get sick, while in boreout boredom makes them sick. As a result, both syndromes result in the same complaints. The symptoms of both syndromes disrupt the balance of the individual’s body, mind and mental health and cause disease formation (Schneider, 2018, p. 9). It has been stated that the assignment of individuals outside their capacity in the work environment, light, or low workload causes boreout syndrome on the employees. Individuals who are employed below their capacity experience

frustration about their jobs and think that the monotonous workplace routine does not contribute to them in any way (Rothlin and Werder, 2008, p. 54).

Boreout is defined as a psychological state that arises as a result of a cognitive comparison process that employees perform and that results from the fact that the demands they expect from their work exceed the demands they perceive (Stock, 2015, p. 2). It is a state of psychological strain and occurs when a task lacks mental stimuli (Abubakar, Rezapouraghdam, Behraves, and Megeirhi, 2022, p. 458). The main effects of boredom, and hence the concept of boreout, can be explained by the resource conservation theory; as loss of meaning, lack of excitement and personal growth correspond to the loss of valuable resources. The resource conservation theory was proposed by Hobfoll (Hobfoll, 2001; Hobfoll, Halbesleben, Neveu, and Westman, 2018). According to this theory, the loss of valuable resources causes mental strain (Stock, 2016, p. 4). This is because the Euro-American understanding of employment is dominated by a “culture of presence”. In this context, the question of whether employees are effective in the workplace or whether they are “sitting there” all the time comes up every time (Misun and Hudakova, 2010, p. 2). For these reasons, boredom, weariness, and depression occur in employees with stress caused by concerns such as uselessness and dismissal (Stock, 2015, p. 3).

Boreout syndrome consists of three sub-dimensions: the crisis of meaning at work, job boredom, and the crisis of growth. According to the crisis of meaning at work dimension, the employee wants to believe that the work he or she does in the workplace and the value or resource produced in relation to it should have meaning. When the employee feels a lack of meaning and worthlessness in his/her work and work output, his/her effectiveness and productivity decrease. This situation causes a crisis of meaning in employees and this creates stress in them (Stock, 2015, p. 4). In the second dimension, job boredom, it is believed that the employee’s own resources (job performance, labor, time, etc.) make significant contributions to the organization. The employer expects to be appreciated both financially and spiritually in return for these contributions. In addition, as the employee's career path and position develop, the employee has the expectation of taking part in more qualified and important tasks. In the face of this belief and expectation, this relatively low arousal that the employee experiences when given a task that does not match his/her experience, resources, possibilities, and capabilities or is far below his/her capacity will cause the employee to be bored at work (Rothlin & Werder, 2008, p. 55). The third dimension crisis of growth, is the incompatibility between the expectations of the employee from the workplace and the expectations of the environment. In this situation, the employee offers his/her valuable resources to the organization within the scope of the Resource Conservation Theory (Hobfoll, 2001, p. 338) and wants to reach new resources by being promoted within the framework of compensation for the loss of resources. In the workplace environment, when the employee perceives being unable to develop opportunities and capabilities in accordance with his/her workplace identity and role or future

career expectations; in other words, when he or she cannot develop personal and task-oriented skills, he/she enters into a growth crisis. A growth crisis causes stress in the employee and thus boredom at work (Stock, 2015, p. 5).

Boreout Syndrome, the basic elements of which are underworking, apathy, and boredom, is closely related to behavioral strategies that the employee begins to develop in order to act as if he or she is working too hard (Misun and Hudakova, 2010, p. 3). Employees who are bored at work experience chronic feelings of inadequacy because they do not internally fulfill their tasks and cannot reconcile them with their qualifications. They develop their own strategies to prevent the emergence of this feeling (Reiche, 2019, p. 17). In the first case, people do the little work they have in a short time so that they have enough time for their private affairs during work because they are underchallenged. In the second case, they feign stress, are at work early in the morning until late at night, and give the impression that they will soon collapse from all the work. And finally- in the third case- the employees sit in front of their computers in such an underwhelmed state that they simply have to make a noise from time to time in order not to be suspected of inactivity. They randomly type in a blank email or scribble useless sketches on a piece of paper with a loud pen. These are all examples of strategies that are typical for boreout (Rothlin and Werder, 2008, p. 13).

A boreout phenomenon affects anyone who is dissatisfied at work due to chronic boredom and chronic under-challenge and has developed physical and/or psychological complaints as a result. These health complaints and problems are not fundamentally different from illnesses caused by excessive demands. Some of those affected by boreout also suffer from several symptoms such as back, stomach, or headaches; irritability, dissatisfaction, tiredness, sleep disorders, tinnitus, restlessness, drive disorders, loss of zest for life or self-esteem problems, and even depression. Many of those affected are no longer as resilient as they used to be and are reluctant to go to work (Cürten, 2013, p. 475). It is also stated that boredom at work, which creates an occupational exhaustion process, causes embarrassment in the employee in addition to the problems listed above (Jordana, 2017, p. 78).

In addition to its individual effects, boredom at work has negative organizational effects. The most important effect is the decrease in the effectiveness and efficiency of the organization. Research on the organizational consequences of workplace boredom has documented that the three main dimensions of workplace boredom damage customer-oriented behaviors based on customer satisfaction and reduce the employee's creative work behaviors (Stock, 2016, p. 1). In addition to these findings, the fact that bored employees come to the agenda with attendance problems and resignations (Guglielmi, Simbula, Mazzetti, Tabanelli, and Bonfiglioli, 2013, p. 319) also puts the organization in trouble. Considering that individual experiences in the organization spread throughout the organization over

time, it is obvious that all the problems caused by boreout in the employees will also harm the organization.

3. Methodology

3.1. Aim and Problem of the Research

The main purpose of the study is to determine the antecedents and consequences of Boreout syndrome in the scope of managers, and to offer solutions to prevent the occurrence of the syndrome by making use of manager's views. Subjecting the obtained data to content analysis in order to analyze them in more detail is among the sub-objectives of the research. When the relevant literature is examined, it is seen that there is a gap regarding the concept, and the focus is mostly on blue collar workers and subordinates on the basis of the sample. In this context, determining the factors that cause boreout on the basis of managers is important for the literature. Therefore, appropriate sampling was selected in line with the research problem and it was concluded that the research method supporting the purpose is qualitative research method. Within the scope of this purpose, answers to the following research questions are sought:

- Do managers experience feelings of Boreout syndrome?
- What behavioral and affective reactions do managers give to Boreout syndrome?
- What are the causes of Boreout in Managers?
- What are the consequences of Boreout for managers?
- What solutions do managers suggest to prevent Boreout syndrome?

3.2. Sample of the Study

Within the scope of the research, the purposive sampling method was utilized. In this context, interviews were conducted with 17 managers working in government institutions. In the sample selection, managers working in small units such as district directorates, which are considered to have the lowest work intensity, were preferred. Within the scope of determining the sample size, two basic factors such as data saturation (new data contributing low to existing information or not having any effect) and data sufficiency (the data obtained should be at a level that would be useful in answering the research problem) were taken into consideration (Baş and Akturan, 2017, p. 233). Within the scope of the research, 21 managers were reached, but 4 participants were excluded from the analysis as appropriate responses to the research could not be obtained due to their busy work life. Table 1 provides detailed information about the participants.

Table 1. Personal Information of the Participants in the Study (N: 17)

Gender	Age	Marital Status	Education al Status	Period of Managemen t	Management Department
Woman (4)	38-48 (7)	Married (14)	Associate Degree (1)	1-5 years (3)	HR Manager (2) School Principal (2) School Deputy Principal (1)
Man (13)	49-56 (10)	Single (3)	Bachelor (12)	6-9 years (9)	Town Clerk (1) Social Services Director (1) Finance Manager (1)
			Master's Degree (4)	10-16 years (5)	Accounting Manager (2) Financial Affairs Manager (1) Registrar (2) Population Director (1) Highways Chief (1) Land Registry Manager (1) Prison Director (1)

To determine the antecedents and consequences of the boreout syndrome experienced by managers, 4 of the participants interviewed were female and 13 were male. The ages of the participants varied between 38 and 56, and 14 of them were married, and 3 were single. The education levels were mainly at the undergraduate level (12), 1 of them was an associate degree, and 4 of them were graduates. The interviewed participants had between 1 to 16 years of managerial experience. In addition, the participants were working in relatively quiet and monotonous directorates of public offices.

3.3. Research Method

After determining the research problem and questions, it was decided that the most appropriate research design for the study was qualitative research. The phenomenology approach was used in the research because the results were reached by using the experiences of the participants. Thus, the semi-structured interview technique, which is an important data collection tool in qualitative research, was used and face-to-face interviews were conducted. At the stage of preparing the interview form, the literature and existing studies were examined and created with care to reflect multiple points of view. Thus, emotions, thoughts, and experiences of the participants towards the syndrome were tried to be determined in detail (Cürten, 2013; Brühlmann, 2015; Karadal et al., 2018; Karatepe and Kim, 2020; Tekindal and Uğuz Arsu, 2020). In addition, by taking the opinions of academicians who are experts in this field, care was taken to determine the appropriate questions for the purpose of the research and to direct them to the participants. The interview

form consists of 6 demographic questions, including gender, age, marital status, educational status, period of management, and management department, which determine the qualifications of the participants; and 9 open-ended questions about boreout syndrome. To determine the antecedents and consequences of the boreout syndrome in managerial dimension and to develop solution proposals, there were questions related to issues accepted as components of the syndrome and that may be useful for in-depth research on the subject. The interview questions directed to the participants are given below:

- What does your job mean to you?
- What kind of improvement opportunities do your job offer you?
- What are the factors that cause you to get bored at work?
- What are your thoughts and feelings when you are bored at work?
- What are your attitudes and behaviors when you are bored at work?
- What do you do to reduce boredom at work?
- Have you been experiencing health problems recently?
- What are your solutions to reduce boredom at work?
- What are your strategies to overcome the chronic feeling of inadequacy that can develop when you feel that your job is incompatible with your qualifications, or that you are intrinsically unable to fulfill your task?

Before starting the interviews, an application was made to Karamanoğlu Mehmetbey University Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee. It was determined that the research was in accordance with scientific research and publication ethics in the decision held on 24.03.2023, meeting numbered 06-2023/73. Before the interviews, an appointment was made with each participant and the interviews were conducted in their offices. Data obtained from the interviews were collected and transcribed between 28.04.2023 and 30.05.2023. The interviews lasted about 30 minutes on average. Care was taken to ensure that the interviewees voluntarily participated in the research, and due to the lack of consent of the participants, they were written down without using a voice recorder.

3.4. Data Analysis

To conduct a more detailed methodological analysis, the data obtained were subjected to content analysis and descriptive analysis, and for this purpose, the Maxqda program, which is one of the qualitative software programs, was used. Within the scope of content analysis, it was primarily aimed at conceptualizing the data obtained within the scope of the research, creating themes suitable for the concepts, and revealing the findings (Yıldırım and Şimşek, 2018, p. 162-163). Descriptive analysis, on the other hand, is the categorization of the obtained data according to the previously given themes. The framework for descriptive analysis consists of processing data according to the thematic framework, defining, and interpreting findings. (Maxwell, 2008, p. 608; Denzin and Lincoln, 2008, p. 394). Within this framework, the data obtained by keeping one-to-one notes in the

analysis of the research were examined in detail and clear codes were created in accordance with the purpose of the research. Following the explicit coding, main categories and subcategories were created and related codes were brought together. The data were subjected to selective coding and the sub-codes were narrowed down to be compatible with the main categories. In the last stage, research findings were interpreted and conclusions were expressed.

3.5. Validity and Reliability

As in every scientific research, it is expected that validity and reliability are high in qualitative research. In order to ensure validity and reliability in qualitative research, “credibility”, “transferability”, “consistency” and “confirmability” are important (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013, p. 257). The fact that the findings obtained as a result of the research are meaningful and consistent, that the findings are compatible with the conceptual framework, and that the generalizations made on the basis of the research findings are compatible with the data means that internal validity (credibility) is ensured. In addition, the fact that the research results are generalizable means that external validity (transferability) is high and it is possible to generalize indirectly in the research. To ensure the reliability of the research, the methodology was discussed in detail and the findings were reported in a manner free from assumptions and prejudices. In addition, the fact that the results of the research were compatible with the data, detailed data were accessed and unrealistic data were not included contributed to both internal reliability (consistency) and external reliability (confirmability) of the research (Merriam, 2018, p. 165; Creswell, 2018, p. 245).

4. Findings

Within the scope of the findings, the evaluations of the managers of public institutions regarding the perspectives and experiences of the boreout syndrome were described. The obtained data were analyzed with the Maxqda software program and the results of the analysis were given in detail with the help of figures, then a model was proposed for the antecedents and consequences of the boreout syndrome in particular for managers. Before interpreting the findings, demographic information was presented first. In accordance with ethical principles, sharing the names of the participants was not considered appropriate and each participant was coded as P1, P2, P3 ... P17. The data obtained from the participants were subjected to descriptive analysis. In order to present the analysis in a systematic way, main themes, sub-themes and codes for the concept of boreout were created based on the data obtained. It was tried to increase the comprehensibility of the analysis by giving explanations of the determined themes. The frequencies for each theme on the code system were shown and the themes on which the participants spoke the longest/shortest were identified through document portrait analysis. Based on this information, the data were interpreted and the participants' views on the themes were included. As a matter of fact, the Maxqda software program facilitated the

scientific, systematic, and detailed analysis of the data obtained. The code system determined within the scope of the research is given in Figure 1.

Code System	106
● Routine Work	0
● Recurring tasks for long periods	8
● Innovation barriers	4
● Working Under Capacity	0
● Low workload	4
● Easy work	7
● Early completion of work	6
● Socializing Issues	0
● Virtual activities	1
● Lone working	2
● Job Boredom	0
● Bored indoors	3
● Bored of desk job	1
● Bored with colleagues	8
● Technical Issues	0
● Complication and prolongation of work	2
● Lack of equipment	3
● Ethical Issues	0
● Criticism and judgement	1
● Interventions of politicians	1
● Mobbing	2
● Negative Emotions	0
● Feeling depressed	8
● Agitation	4
● Introversion	3
● Acceptance	4
● Psychosomatic Disorders	0
● Headache	2
● Intestinal problems	5
● Fatigue	2
● Sleep disorders	2
● Workplace Issues	0
● Low motivation/performance	6
● Alienation	8
● Desensitization	2
● Daydreaming and planning	2
● Low self-esteem	5

Figure 1: Code System for Boreout Syndrome Experienced by Managers

As can be seen in the code system above, regarding the antecedents of Boreout syndrome: The *Routine Work* main theme consists of the sub-themes Recurring tasks for long periods and Innovation barriers; *Working Under Capacity* consists of the sub-themes Low workload, Easy work, and Early completion of work. The main theme of *Socialization Issues* consists of the sub-themes of Virtual activities and Lone working; *Workplace Boredom* consists of the sub-themes of Bored indoors, Bored of desk job, Bored with colleagues; *Technical Issues* consists of the sub-themes of Complication and prolongation of work, Lack of equipment; and *Ethical Issues* consists of the sub-themes of Criticism and judgement, Interventions of politicians, and Mobbing. The main themes related to the consecutive items are *Negative Emotions* with Feeling depressed, Agitation, Introversion, Acceptance sub-themes; *Psychosomatic Disorders* with Headache, Intestinal problems, Fatigue, Sleep disorders; and *Workplace Issues* with Low motivation/performance, Alienation, Desensitization, Daydreaming and planning, Low self-esteem. Thus, the code system consists of 9 main themes, 28 sub-themes and 106 codes. Explanations about the themes are given in Table 2.

Table 2. Explanations on Themes Created to Identify the Antecedents and Consequences of Boreout Syndrome in Managers

Antecedents	
Routine Work	
Recurring tasks for long periods	It is stated that managers are bored because they have been in the same profession and job description for many years, and have been doing the same jobs and operations for a long time.
Innovation barriers	It is stated that managers are bored due to the inability to access new and up-to-date information and the inability to generate new and up-to-date ideas due to their constant routine work.
Working Beyond Capacity	
Low workload	It is stated that managers are tired of working with insufficient workload and low responsibility.
Easy work	It is stated that managers are bored because they do their job without difficulty and without mental stimuli.
Early completion of work	It is stated that managers finish the job early due to insufficient workload, and so they get bored in the remaining time.
Socializing Issues	
Virtual activities	It is stated that managers are bored because the seminars, workshops, and trainings they attend are conducted virtually.
Lone working	It is stated that managers are bored because they work alone in the office and sometimes even in the department.
Job Boredom	
Bored indoors	It is expressed that managers are bored of working indoors all the time.
Bored of desk job	It is expressed that managers are bored of working at a desk all the time.
Bored with colleagues	It is stated that managers are bored with problems such as constantly seeing the same individuals, dealing with too many individuals and working with unskilled employees.
Technical Issues	
Complication and prolongation of work	It is expressed that managers get bored of unnecessary complexity and prolongation of work.
Lack of equipment	It is expressed that managers are bored of waiting while carrying out their work due to lack of equipment.
Ethical Issues	
Criticism and judgement	It is stated that managers are bored with the criticism and judgments of those around them.
Interventions of politicians	It is expressed that managers are bored with the interventions of politicians.
Mobbing	It is expressed that managers are bored of the mobbing they receive from their superiors.

Table 2. Explanations on Themes Created to Identify the Antecedents and Consequences of Boreout Syndrome in Managers (continued)

Consequences	
Negative Emotions	
Feeling depressed	It is stated that managers feel constricted, distressed, bored excessively, depressed, and sometimes feel the need to breathe. Managers are said to be unhappy, unable to enjoy life, resentful, sensitive, and vulnerable.
Agitation	It is stated that managers are restless, anxious, aggressive, and nervous.
Introversion	It is stated that managers become silent and stop communicating with people.
Acceptance	It is stated that managers are initially uneasy about the low workload but accept it in time.
Psychosomatic Disorders	
Headache	It is stated that managers suffer from headaches from time to time.
Intestinal problems	It is stated that managers experience intestinal problems.
Fatigue	It is stated that managers suffer from chronic fatigue, and physical malaise.
Sleep disorders	It is stated that managers suffer from insomnia, oversleep, or grind their teeth at night.
Workplace Issues	
Low motivation/performance	It is stated that managers are not motivated at work and experience low performance.
Alienation	It is stated that managers are distancing themselves from their career goals and coworkers, they think that they are atrophying in their profession, think about a change of position at the workplace, or even a change of profession.
Desensitization	It is stated that managers no longer care about work-related issues.
Daydreaming and planning	It is stated that managers think about their private jobs and future plans during working hours.
Low self-esteem	It is stated that managers see themselves as redundant because they are idle at work, think that they do not deserve the received money, and feel guilty.

Explanations regarding the themes determined within the scope of the research were included and the elements to be expressed with each theme were clearly stated. Then, it was deemed appropriate to show separately the document portraits of the antecedents and consequences of the boreout syndrome experienced by the managers. Document portraits of the antecedents and consequences of the Boreout syndrome experienced by the managers are given in Figure 2 below.

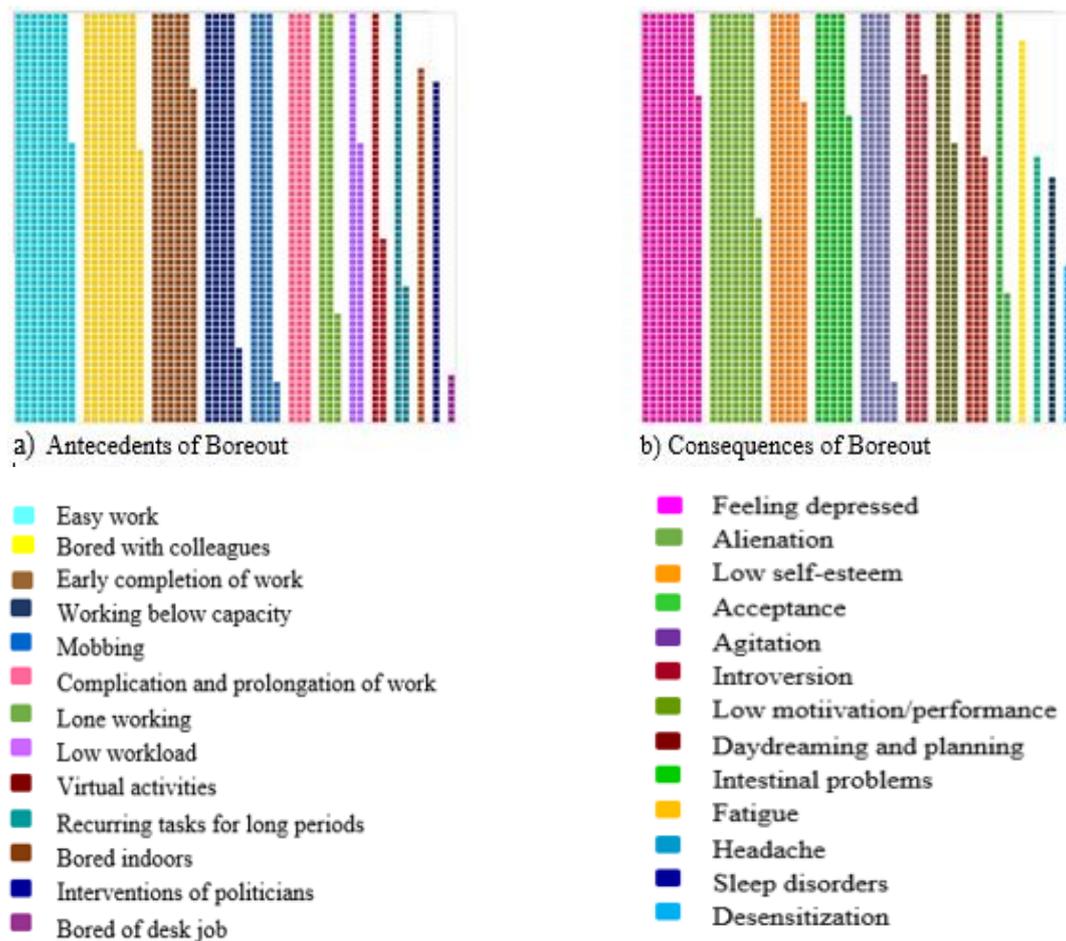


Figure 2: Document Portrait of the Antecedents and Consequences of the Boreout Syndrome Experienced by Managers

Unlike other analyses, the document portrait identifies the sub-themes that participants mentioned the longest. In the document portrait, all sub-themes are visualized in different colors and appear as square boxes. The length of the square boxes is directly related to the length of the participants' mentions of the sub-themes. The longest-mentioned sub-themes are shown with the most boxes. Therefore, in Figure 2, the sub-themes are sorted according to their length and visualized from the longest-mentioned sub-theme to the shortest-mentioned sub-theme. As a result of the answers given to the questions asked in the interview, among the antecedents, the sub-themes of *easy work*, *bored with colleagues* and *early completion of work* were mentioned for the longest time. *Easy work* and *early completion of work* were coded under the main theme of *working below capacity*, while *bored with colleagues* was coded under the main theme of *job boredom*. *Working below capacity* was also the most coded main theme in the antecedents category in the code system. Participant views on the theme are given below:

“If there were a few more of the same job, I could do it easily. My work is so easy that I can do it immediately and I am free early. Of course, this is because I handle the file of a single unit.” (P-6)

“Our work here is standardized, so the work is not intensive and remains simple, that is, working below capacity bores me, I think I remain passive because of this situation.” (P-9)

“I don’t think that my job improves me, on the contrary, I’m just standing still because the work I do doesn’t challenge me, it’s all easy and quick to do. Unfortunately, my work does not exceed my capacity. It ends immediately, and this time I am idle until the evening.” (P-10)

The participants stated that the work they do is quite easy and does not challenge them at all, and that their work is finished in the first hours of the shift due to the low workload. In addition, the participants stated that they could not develop themselves due to the simple and routine work, so they remained passive and could not produce innovative ideas.

Participant views on the *bored with colleagues* sub-theme, which is also among the longest-mentioned ones, are given below. *Bored with colleagues* is also among the most frequently coded sub-themes in the code system. Participant views on the subject are as follows:

“The human factor makes me bored, I think it’s best to stay away from people, too many crowds are not for me.” (P-4)

“Seeing the same people all the time is really boring after a while.” (P-8)

“My work environment and colleagues are boring. We don’t share much with them. It’s like everyone is bored with each other, people are hostile to each other. At every moment you have to watch out if someone has set a trap. That’s why we are in fake relationships and distant with our colleagues, our social relations are limited. This is one of the main reasons why I get bored in the workplace.” (P-12)

Participants expressed that they had to constantly deal with the same individuals at work and expressed their discomfort with this situation. Some of the participants, who spent every weekday with the same individuals, stated that they developed insincere and distant relationships with their colleagues and that they were bored at work due to insufficient social relations in the work environment.

The sub-themes mentioned in the shortest time are *bored of desk job*, *interventions of politicians*, and *bored indoors*, respectively. *Bored of desk job* and *bored indoors* are again included under the main theme of job boredom, while *interventions of politicians* is under the main theme of *ethical issues*. Sample participant views on the subject are as follows:

“Staying indoors is boring. We are always working indoors. Unfortunately, we don’t have field activities.” (P-17)

“We are always at the desk, it is boring to be indoors and at the desk all the time.” (P-18)

Although the majority of the participants mentioned that they were able to be flexible in the course of their duties and that they were able to move around, a few participants expressed that they were bored with doing desk work and staying indoors. This theme was reported to be particularly relevant for unfavorable weather conditions or for participants who isolated themselves from the environment. *Bored of desk job, bored indoors, and interventions of politicians* sub-themes are among the least coded sub-themes in the code system. This shows that the least common situations were also not mentioned for a very long time.

In the consequences, *feeling depressed* under the main theme of *negative emotions* and *alienation* and *low self-esteem* sub-themes under the main theme of *workplace issues* were mentioned the longest. Participant views on the theme of *feeling depressed* are given below:

“Coming here especially in the summer is very unpleasant, I become unhappy and vulnerable at work, especially as I get older, I can’t smile.” (P-1)

“My joy of life decreases, my enthusiasm and desire to work decreases, I don’t feel like doing anything, the longer one is idle, the lazier one becomes, the lazier one becomes, the more one can’t do anything, the more one doesn’t feel like doing anything, the more aimless and wasted one becomes.” (P-12)

In the sub-theme of *alienation*, the statements of the participants’ views are short but frequently repeated. Participants’ opinions are as follows:

“I wish I was a civil servant instead of an administrator. At least I could spend my time at home comfortably during the summer.” (P-1)

“Being at this position alienates me from my job, I get distant from my job and my work environment.” (P-3)

“The thought arises that I should take a leave and not come back for a week and get away from work.” (P-6)

“My desire to work decreases, I look for a different and more colorful working environment.” (P-11)

“I don’t know why I chose this job; I am completely distant from my profession. I want a job transfer; I am constantly looking for a job transition. This can be within the organization or also in a different organization.” (P-15)

Most of the participants expressed a common view on the sub-theme of *alienation*. Managers expressed that they have become disenchanted with their jobs and want to move away. Some of them seek the solution by taking a leave of absence and

temporarily moving away, while others seek to move between units, statuses, or even institutions.

Participants' views under the sub-theme of *low self-esteem* mostly reflect the guilty conscience that managers feel about the salary they receive due to idleness or underworking. Participants expressed their views on this issue as follows:

"I landed in a comfortable job after an intense work schedule. Therefore, I felt like I was in a gap. I feel like I am redundant here, after that pace, it is not for me to stay idle, I try to keep myself busy, I try to find different jobs so that I deserve the money I get." (P-5)

"Many times, I feel guilty about why I am idle. I think I don't deserve the salary I get. That's why I try to produce projects. As I research and produce something, I mentally feel relieved that I have fulfilled my duty." (P-9)

In the category of consequences, *headache* and *sleep disorders* under the main theme of psychosomatic disorders; and desensitization under the main theme of workplace issues were mentioned for the shortest period of time and were also among the least coded in the code system in direct relation. The majority of the participants mentioned that they did not have any health problems. In the *desensitization* sub-theme, the participants who had a guilty conscience due to being idle or underworked stated that they became sensitive and resentful as a result of this situation.

Since the concept of boreout is relatively new in the literature and is being evaluated by more and more researchers, it was deemed appropriate to propose a model for the antecedents and consequences of the syndrome experienced by managers within the scope of the study. A model proposal was designed to develop and test the syndrome in line with the antecedents and consequences obtained in the study. It is thought that the developed model will enable researchers to test the concept of boreout more clearly. In addition, the model will also reveal the missing aspects of the boreout concept. The model developed within the scope of antecedents and consequences of the boreout syndrome in managers is given in detail in Figure 3.

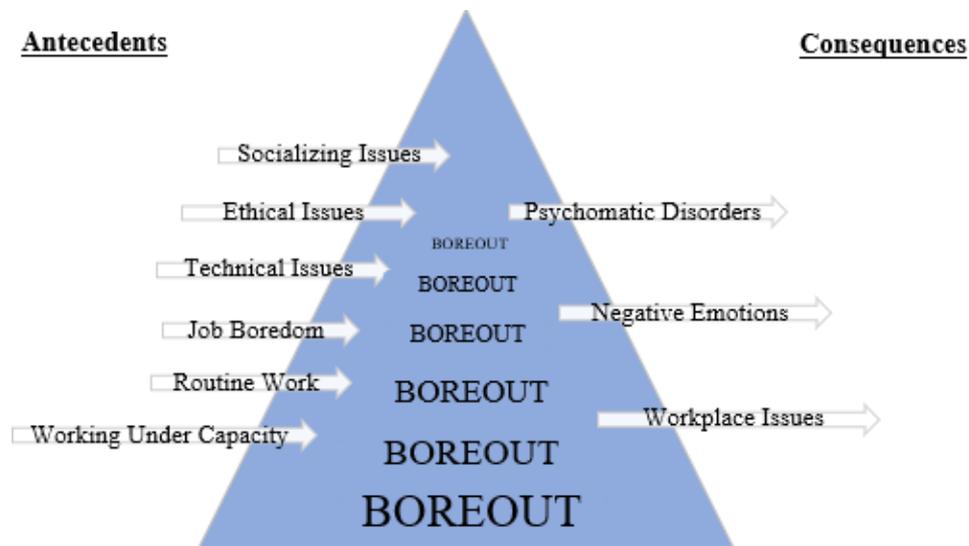


Figure 3: Model Proposal for the Antecedents and Consequences of the Boreout Syndrome Experienced by Managers
Source: Created by the author.

Looking at the figure, the triangle in the center represents the boreout syndrome. The wide base of the triangle is the area where boreout is felt intensely, as is the size of the letters on it. As moved upwards on the triangle, the boreout is felt less, just as the size of the letters gets smaller and the area narrows. Therefore, according to the responses received by the interviewees, the most coded main themes are at the bottom, and the coding of the themes decreases as moved up. The arrows drawn in one direction from the left of the figure to the concept of boreout represent the antecedents of boreout. These are respectively *Working Under Capacity* (17), *Routine Work* (12), *Job Boredom* (12), *Technical Issues* (5), *Ethical Issues* (4), and *Socializing Issues* (3). The one-way arrows drawn from the boreout triangle to the right of the figure represent the consequences of the syndrome. These are *Workplace Issues* (23), *Negative Emotions* (19), and *Psychomatic Disorders* (11). This model will allow researchers to gain a better understanding and explanation of the causes and consequences of boreout.

5. Conclusion, Discussion, and Recommendations

In the research, a comprehensive and in-depth examination was carried out to make the boreout concept understandable by examining the antecedents and consequences of the syndrome in terms of managers. For this purpose, the data obtained from the managers of public institutions, who have a relatively low workload in the districts of Karaman, were subjected to content analysis and descriptive analysis for detailed examination. Results of this study, which provides a different perspective on managers and the boreout syndrome, have been handled

and discussed in the light of theoretical and practical contributions, and solutions have been developed.

5.1. Theoretical Contributions

Within the scope of the research, the concept of boreout experienced by managers of public institutions was addressed and the antecedents and consequences of the syndrome were identified in the field of managers. When the literature is reviewed, it is seen that the studies on boreout are mostly conducted on employees. Therefore, it is thought that the greatest theoretical contribution of this research is to determine the antecedents and consequences of boreout syndrome in managers. The antecedents of the boreout syndrome experienced by managers are determined as *Working Under Capacity* (Low workload, Easy work, Early completion of work), *Routine Work* (Recurring tasks for long periods, Innovation barriers), *Job Boredom* (bored indoors, bored of desk job, bored with colleagues), *Technical Issues* (Complication and prolongation of work, Lack of equipment), *Ethical Issues* (Criticism and judgement, Interventions of politicians, Mobbing), and *Socializing Issues* (virtual activities, lone working) respectively, according to the coding frequency. The consequences of boreout syndrome experienced by managers are identified as *Workplace Issues* (Low motivation/performance, Alienation, Desensitization, Daydreaming and planning, Low self-esteem), *Negative Emotions* (Feeling depressed, Agitation, Introversion, Acceptance), and *Psychomatic Disorders* (Headache, Intestinal problems, Fatigue, Sleep disorders). These findings are in accordance with the results of general studies that define and explain the concept of boreout in the literature (Rothlin & Werder, 2007; Rothlin & Werder, 2008; Snijders, 2009; Probst, 2012; Prammer, 2012; Cürten, 2013; Stock, 2016; Karadal et al., 2018; García-González et al., 2018; Moris and Nedosugova, 2019; Karadal and Erdem, 2019; Özsungur, 2020; LeCunff, 2020; Radka, 2021; Acosta Vergara et al., 2021; Merdan et al., 2022).

When compared with studies in the literature, the similarities can be seen more closely. For example, Barmack (1938) explained boredom in a study as the continuation of the current situation and the desire to get rid of this tendency, which has become unpleasant, as an inadequate physiological result due to insufficient motivation. This definition overlaps with the concept of low motivation obtained as a consequence of boreout in the study. Also, in a study on mobbing, service innovation performance, and boreout; Özsungur's (2020) findings revealed that boreout and job boredom were positively associated with mobbing. This finding overlaps with the concept of mobbing, which was obtained as an antecedent of the boreout syndrome in the study. Cürten (2013) states that the triggering factors for the formation of boredom at work in the organizational environment are assigning tasks to employees below or outside of the education they receive, lack of developmental training, closed management style, and disapproval of the use of initiative and devolution. In the research on its antecedents, Cürten (2013) revealed

that individuals' pessimistic perception of their careers and their career incompatibility increase the boreout syndrome. These findings also coincide with the antecedent of *Innovation barriers* and the inability to improve oneself obtained in the study; and the consequence of *Alienation*, in which managers are alienated by the idea that they are moving away from their career goals and becoming atrophied in the profession. Again, Lyngdoh et al. (2021) referred to the concept of boreout among their findings in a study on negative psychological states within the organisation. In addition, Karadal et al.'s (2018) finding that being bored at work affects career compatibility negatively, and Karadal and Erdem's (2019) finding that being bored at work affects career optimism negatively and causes depression, stress, and anxiety in employees supports this information. Similar findings were stated by LeCunff (2020) in a comparative study between burnout and boreout. According to the findings, both syndromes cause demotivation, exhaustion, emptiness, low self-esteem, anxiety, depression, sadness, lesser creativity, unproductivity, a crisis of social identity, and conflict between work and life demands. All factors except a crisis of social identity and conflict between work and life demands are largely consistent with the findings of this study, so it can be said that almost all factors are consistent with each other.

Another important theoretical contribution of the study is that additional findings different from the findings in the literature were obtained. Information obtained from some participants indicated that managers were bored of seeing the same colleagues, working at a desk and working indoors. Again, the managers stated that they were bored due to the prolongation of work caused by technical problems and deficiencies, the judgment-criticism and pressure of stakeholders, and virtual activities. Therefore, it is thought that new antecedents have been identified in addition to the existing antecedents of the boreout syndrome. In the category of consequences of boreout syndrome, it can be said that the concept of *daydreaming and planning* is a newly identified successor. Some of the participants in the study stated that when they were bored at the workplace, they daydreamed about their private lives or made business plans for the following days. When the literature was reviewed, no consequences of daydreaming and planning were found among the consequences of boreout syndrome. In summary, it is seen that the results obtained in this study are consistent with the results of similar studies, and additional results that contribute to the literature are also revealed.

Another important contribution of the research is the proposal of a model that enables researchers to better understand and explain the factors and consequences of boreout syndrome in managers. The proposed model will play a guiding role for future research by providing a basis for developing new concepts, linkages and assessments of the causes and consequences of boreout syndrome in managers, as well as a basis for road mapping, scale development, and hypotheses for predicting future events or processes. To summarize, it is clear that although the concept of boreout has been emphasized, defined, and researched for about 16 years, there is

a lack of research in different disciplines and with different variables. The aforementioned contributions of this research will enable a better understanding and evaluation of the boreout syndrome in different aspects.

5.2. Practical Contributions

In addition to the theoretical contributions of this research, which identifies the antecedents and consequences of the boreout syndrome for managers, it also has practical contributions. Investigating the antecedents and consequences of Boreout syndrome can increase managers' awareness of this issue. Having information about symptoms such as workload, lack of interest, and low motivation can help managers to better understand the situation of employees as well as themselves and to develop methods to cope with its negative effects. In addition, by recognizing the early signs of Boreout syndrome, management can develop early prevention and intervention strategies in the workplace. In this way, the progression of boreout syndrome can be prevented or its effects can be minimized. Again, understanding the antecedents and consequences of the syndrome can help to make the necessary adjustments to increase productivity and performance in the workplace, thereby contributing to the identification of problems in the workplace and taking measures to improve the work environment. Finally, managers experiencing boreout syndrome may require a review of management strategies in organizations. It is assumed that research on this issue will provide guidance for reorganizing the duties and responsibilities of managers and providing them with appropriate incentives.

5.3. Solution Suggestions for Boreout Syndrome

During the interviews conducted within the scope of the study, in which the antecedents and consequences of Boreout syndrome as well as the solution suggestions were investigated, the managers were asked the question "What are your solution suggestions to reduce boredom at work?". Various recommendations were received from the participants that could prevent both managers and employees from being bored at work. Inspired by the answers obtained, the solution suggestions that can be used in practice are summarized under the headings below.

5.3.1. Solution Suggestions for Managers

The regulation of boreout syndrome, which is not revealed much or cannot be expressed specifically for managers nowadays, again falls on managers themselves or employers. Employers should be informed about the Boreout syndrome, managers should raise awareness about it, and necessary measures should be taken personally and administratively in advance. Solution suggestions of boreout syndrome specific to managers can be listed as follows.

Challenge and Autonomy: Managers should be given more control over their tasks and projects, allowing them to make decisions and exercise creativity. Autonomy and challenging projects can keep them engaged and interested in their work.

Rotate Responsibilities: Managers should be encouraged to take on new responsibilities or rotate tasks periodically. This can prevent monotony and provide opportunities to learn new skills.

Professional Development: Investment should be made in training and development programs that help managers expand their knowledge and skillset. Providing growth opportunities can make work more stimulating and exciting.

Encourage Innovation: A working culture should be created that values and rewards innovative thinking. Encouraging managers to come up with new ideas and implement them can keep them motivated and interested in their roles.

Recognize and Appreciate: The efforts and achievements of managers should be recognized and appreciated. Recognition can boost morale and make them feel valued, reducing the chances of boredom setting in.

Cross-functional Collaboration: Cooperation should be made with other departments or teams. Interacting with different colleagues and working on diverse projects can break the routine and add variety to work.

Flexible Work Environment: Whenever possible, flexibility should be offered in working hours or remote working options. A more flexible environment can help managers manage their work-life balance and reduce burnout.

Promote Open Communication: Open and honest communication should be encouraged within the organization. Managers should feel comfortable discussing their challenges and interests, leading to potential adjustments in their roles.

Support Work-Life Balance: It is necessary to make sure that managers are not overwhelmed with excessive workload. A balanced workload allows them to have time for personal interests outside of work, which can prevent boredom and burnout.

Organize Team-Building Activities: Team-building events and outings to foster camaraderie and create a positive work environment should be arranged. Building strong team dynamics can make work more enjoyable and fulfilling.

Regular Feedback and Evaluation: Managers should be provided with regular feedback on their performance. Constructive feedback helps them stay focused and continuously improve their skills.

Encourage Time for Creativity: Managers should be given time to brainstorm and explore new ideas. Having dedicated “innovation time” can inspire fresh thinking and enthusiasm for their work.

By implementing these solutions, organizations can help reduce managers' boredom at work and create a more engaged and productive workforce. It's crucial

to recognize that every manager's preferences and interests are unique, so it's essential to communicate openly and cater to individual needs whenever possible.

5.3.2. Solution Suggestions for Employees

Boreout is a low-stress but disruptive behavior in organizations that necessitates managerial intervention. It is a concealed threat to both employees on an individual level and employers on an organizational level (Abubakar, 2019, p. 68). As a result, a better understanding of the causes, mechanisms, results, and contextual variables surrounding boredom is required, allowing managers to rethink and/or reform their human resources policies and organize work in a more sustainable way to avoid undesirable job outcomes. Possible solutions for employee boreout are listed below.

Task Variety: Job rotation or task swapping among team members be encouraged. This allows employees to experience different aspects of their roles and prevents monotony.

Goal Setting: Clear and challenging goals for employees should be set. Having meaningful objectives can add a sense of purpose and motivation to their work.

Professional Development: Opportunities for training and skill development should be offered. Learning new skills or taking on new challenges can keep employees engaged and interested in their work.

Autonomy: Employees should be empowered by giving them some degree of autonomy in how they approach their tasks. Autonomy fosters creativity and a sense of ownership over their work.

Team Projects: Collaboration on team projects should be encouraged. Working together on interesting and meaningful initiatives can boost morale and reduce boredom.

Breaks and Flexible Scheduling: Regular breaks to refresh the mind should be encouraged. Additionally, offering flexible scheduling to allow employees to manage their work-life balance effectively should be considered.

Incentives and Rewards: a recognition and reward system to acknowledge employees' efforts and achievements should be implemented. Positive reinforcement can increase job satisfaction and reduce boredom.

Gamification: Gamification elements can be added to specific tasks or projects. This can make mundane tasks more enjoyable and create a sense of achievement through rewards and friendly competition.

Well-Designed Workspace: a pleasant and stimulating work environment should be created. An aesthetically pleasing workspace with natural light and comfortable furniture can improve mood and motivation.

Open Communication: A culture of open communication, where employees can share their ideas, concerns, and feedback should be fostered. Feeling heard and valued can enhance job satisfaction.

Encourage Hobbies and Interests: Employees should be allowed to pursue their hobbies or interests during breaks or after work. This can serve as a mental refresher and keep them motivated.

Employee Engagement Activities: Team-building events, workshops, or fun activities should be organized to break the routine and strengthen team bonds.

Meaningful Work: Employees should be helped to understand how their work contributes to the big picture and how it impacts the organization and its customers.

Wellness Programs: Wellness programs such as yoga, meditation, or mindfulness sessions should be offered to support mental well-being and reduce stress.

Rotation of Responsibilities: In order to avoid long-term monotony within the team, tasks or responsibilities should change periodically.

To summarize, based on the results of the study, it can be suggested that human resources should act jointly with employees and employers by providing job descriptions according to the qualifications of the employee, considering that it will be more efficient for both and the organization. It can be said that managers can strengthen employees' feelings of commitment and reduce their feelings of boreout by paying more attention to employees' personal needs.

5.4. Limitations of the Study and Recommendations for Future Research

The main limitation of the research is that while obtaining the data, the field research was limited to public directorates operating in the district centers of Karaman province. Therefore, the evaluations to be made could be considered valid on the scale of Karaman districts. Again, not all managers addressed could be included in the study because they were not suitable for the investigation of boreout syndrome. However, the results reveal important findings in terms of being conducted in areas with low work intensity and routine working life. As a result of the stated limitations, it is advisable to conduct larger and more comprehensive studies by collecting data in different provinces and districts and including employees of other organizations in the research population. It can be suggested to determine the causes of the effects of different variables such as job performance and job commitment on employees due to boreout syndrome. In addition, it is recommended that researchers who will study boreout should make comparisons regarding the perceptions of boreout of managers and employees in different sectors. As a matter of fact, it is seen that there are not enough studies in the literature on boreout syndrome and especially on the antecedents and consequences of the issue, so it is suggested that more comprehensive and deep research should be conducted. Finally, considering that boreout syndrome may have negative

consequences for the organization and its employees, it is recommended that multidimensional research should be conducted in every aspect.

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