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**Title:** Burnout Syndrome and Mental Health in Certified Accountants: Risk Factors and Prevention Strategies

## **Abstract**

In recent years, mental health and psychological well-being have received increasing attention and importance in the professional context, given their direct influence on productivity, work quality, and personal satisfaction. Certified Accountants are subject to high levels of responsibility, strict tax deadlines, constant legislative updates, and demanding interactions with clients and public entities. These are characteristics of the profession that can contribute to greater vulnerability to burnout syndrome among its members. Despite the importance of the topic, empirical research specifically focused on Certified Accountants is still limited.

The main objective of this study is to identify the prevalence of burnout syndrome and its risk factors among Certified Accountants in Portugal. Additionally, based on the literature, the study aims to identify strategies to prevent and promote accountants' mental health.

From a methodological perspective, the study will be exploratory, framed within the positivist paradigm. It will adopt a quantitative approach, and data collection will be conducted via an online survey targeting Certified Accountants in Portugal. The instrument to assess burnout will be the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), which allows measurement of the prevalence and level of burnout and analysis of the three fundamental dimensions of the syndrome: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment. The data will subsequently be processed and statistically analyzed in order to identify burnout levels and risk factors. Open-ended questions will also be included in the survey to explore participants' suggestions for coping strategies and prevention measures. These questions will be subject to qualitative analysis.

This research is expected to contribute, firstly, to deepening the literature on burnout in the accounting profession, especially in the Portuguese context. Secondly, it aims to provide empirical evidence that can support organizations and professional bodies in defining policies and psychological support programs tailored to the specificities and needs of the accounting profession. Finally, this study, by identifying problems and suggesting mitigating strategies, aims to help in clarifying the importance of mental health in the accounting sector, thereby contributing to the well-being of professionals, the quality of services provided, and the long-term sustainability of the profession.

**Keywords:** Accounting; Burnout Syndrome; Mental health; Certified Accountants