

Identifying the relationship between teacher's mental health and their burnout

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Abstract

This research aimed to identify the relationship between teachers' mental health and their burnout. The population consisted of Zanjan high school teachers (n=450). A sample of 208 teachers was selected using random sampling method. Data was collected using Goldberg's mental health questionnaire and Maslach & Jackson's burnout questionnaire. Researcher used structural equation modeling and regression analysis methods for data analysis. The results showed that there is a relationship between teachers' mental health and dimensions of burnout (emotional exhaustion, inefficiency and depersonalization and pessimism).

Keywords: Mental health, Burnout, Teachers.

1. Introduction

Mental health is necessary for society members to protect and perpetuate their social, occupational and educational functions. Mental health care is the main goal of mental health programs executing in the society [1]. Improving occupational mental health is one of the main aspects of human resource development and nowadays so many institutes including economic, didactic and industrial institutes concentrated on healthy members, both physically and mentally, to increase efficiency.[2].

As a sign of this age, mental pressure (stress) affects all society members regardless of age, gender and even social and economic class. [3]. Work-related stress is normal and a moderate level of work-related stress can lead people to creativity. But abnormal negative work-related stress will influence public health [4]. Burnout is the psychological result of long high level work-related stress [5]. Mental pressure results from imbalance between environmental demands and persons' abilities to properly response them. It is a negative experience and its continuation will end in burnout [6].

Burnout causes undesirable consequences and imposes large costs to organizations and employees, such as: job replacement, losing motivation and energy, decreasing function, increasing absences and leaves, lack of

quality and quantity, decreasing employee's mental health, stagnation and delay[7].

Education is one of the most important infrastructures of development in societies. Having direct contacts with an important group of people (students), teachers play a significant role in education. So, teachers need to be healthy, succulent and motivated [8]. High level of occupational stress causes a negative sense to service recipients and leads to lack of service quality [9]. Therefore, this study aims to identify the relationship between teachers' mental health and their burnout. Accordingly, the research hypotheses are as follows:

H 1: There is a relationship between teachers' mental health level and their burnout.

H 2: There is a relationship between teachers' mental health level and their emotional exhaustion dimension of burnout.

H 3: There is a relationship between teachers' mental health level and their inefficiency dimension of burnout.

H 4: There is a relationship between teachers' mental health level and their depersonalization and pessimism dimension of burnout.

2. Methodology

This research is a practical descriptive correlation surveying study. The population consisted of Zanjan high

school teachers (n=450). Data was collected using library resources, scientific magazines and supplies, network sites and standard questionnaires:

2.1 Maslach & Jackson's burnout questionnaire and Goldberg's mental health questionnaire: A sample of 208 teachers was selected Using Cochran formula and random sampling method to answer questions. Respondents were asked to response questions and determine the level of mental health and burnout to identify the relationship.

2.2 Public questionnaire: this questionnaire investigated demographic factors like age, gender, education, marital status, job experience and income.

2.3 Maslach & Jackson's burnout questionnaire: A questionnaire with 12 questions which investigates three dimensions of burnout: emotional exhaustion, inefficiency, depersonalization and pessimism. Answers were scored using Likert five-item spectrum. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients were used to determine the reliability of questionnaire. Coefficients were in the range of 0.71 to 0.90. Considering the coefficients higher than 0.7 for all variables, this indicates acceptable reliability of data collection tool.

2.4 Goldberg's mental health questionnaire: This questionnaire investigated five dimensions of mental health; here two dimensions have been used: 1- Physical status that influences mental health. Enjoying high level of physical health leads to high level of mental health. 2- Social function indicating decision-making ability and sense of utility. Answers were scored using Likert five-item spectrum. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.85.

Data obtained from questionnaires were analyzed using SPSS software to describe demographic information, assess normal distribution of sample, and determine the average of variables, and LISREL software to test the hypotheses using structural equation modeling and regression analysis methods. For this purpose, the structural model of research hypotheses was designed in LISREL software. Based on correlation coefficient and multiple regression equations, the relationships between variables were measured. Then, the findings were analyzed according to results of testing research hypotheses by structural equation modeling method and their outputs including fitness indices and regression coefficients of structural model.

3. Findings

3.1 Demographic findings

The sample (n=208) included 42 men (20.2%) and 166 women (79.08%). Also, most of the participants were in age range 41 to 45 years (65.4%), had bachelor degree (71.2%), were married (94.2%), had job experience more than 20 years (59.6%) and had income in the range of 10 to 15 million Rials per month. (71.2%).

3.2 Data normal distribution findings

The results of Kolmogorov-Smirnov test which evaluated distribution normality of data are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Results of Kolmogorov-Smirnov test

Structure	Number of data	Mean	Standard Deviation
Burnout	208	1.9343	0.66314
Mental health (social function)	208	2.3215	0.94908
Mental health (physical health)	208	2.9271	1.00654

The results showed that most variables were close to the mean or even more than it. So the normality of data distribution was confirmed.

3.3 The results of research hypothesis

The results of testing first hypothesis (considering the regression significant (-0.55) of relationship among variables) shows that the level of mental health has an independent linear combination with teachers' burnout and there is a middle reverse relationship between mental health and burnout. And this relationship is significant at 99%. In other words, 30% of variance of burnout can be explained by mental health.

The results obtained from testing second hypothesis (the relationship between mental health and emotional exhaustion) according to path analysis, standard coefficient of independent variable (mental health) to dependent variable (emotional exhaustion) is -0.38 and ($t=-5.60$), there is no reason to reject third hypothesis and it is confirmed with a possibility of 99%. So there is a relationship between mental health and emotional exhaustion. The results of third hypothesis (the relationship between mental health and inefficiency) according to path analysis, standard coefficient of independent variable (mental health) to dependent variable (inefficiency) is -0.37 and ($t=-6.12$), there is no reason to reject hypothesis and it is confirmed with a possibility of 99%.

The results of forth hypothesis (the relationship between mental health and depersonalization and pessimism) according to path analysis, standard coefficient of independent variable (mental health) to dependent variable (depersonalization and pessimism) is -0.29 and ($t=-4.69$), there is no reason to reject hypothesis and it is confirmed with a possibility of 99%.

Table 2: Some important fit indicators of graphical model

Indicator	Amount	Acceptable range
Chi-Square	53	Chi-Square > 5%
GFI	0.95	GFI > 90%
AGFI	0.92	AGFI > 90%
RMR	0.06	RMR > 0.08
NNFI	0.92	NNFI > 90%
NFI	0.90	NFI > 90%
CFI	0.92	GFI > 90%
RFI	0.91	RFI > 90%
IFI	0.90	RFI > 90%
PNFI	0.71	PNFI > 50%
RMSEA	0.044	RMSEA < 10%

Table 3: Summary of results

Hypothesis	Relationship	Type of relationship	Test results
H1	Mental health to burnout	Significant	Confirmed
H2	Mental health to emotional exhaustion	Significant	Confirmed
H3	Mental health to inefficiency	Significant	Confirmed
H4	Mental health to depersonalization and pessimism	Significant	Confirmed

Table 4: Ranking of variables due to effectiveness

Arrangement of variables regardless of the type of variables (dependent/ independent/ mediator)	Coefficient	Rank
Mental health to emotional exhaustion	-0.38	1
Mental health to inefficiency	-0.37	2
Mental health to depersonalization and pessimism	-0.29	3
Mental health to burnout	-0.29	4

Descriptive indicators of teachers' burnout show that there is a significant relationship between gender and burnout and 11% variances of burn out can be explained by gender.

4. Discussion and conclusion

Research findings confirmed that there is a reverse significant relationship between teacher's mental health and their burnout. In other words with increasing level of teachers' mental health, their burnout decreases. This argument is consistent with research results of Bakhshi Sorshejani [3], Ghaltash *et al* [8], Hamid *et al* [10], Khoshouei and Bahrami [11], Ekerman [9] and Iqbal *et al* [12].

Mental health is a form of welfare by which every person can know his/her capacities to manage and control natural pressures of daily life, work effective and participate in community. Mental health is different from physical health. It is the central core of health and all relations depend on mental health. Mental health is considered as individual's compatible psychological skills. The World Health Organization experts believe that mental health has a great relationship with individuals' ability to have a compatible well-balanced engagement with others, improve personal and social environment, solve conflicts and control personal leanings logically. This argument is consistent with research results of Saberi [13], Ehiakonande [14], Arizi *et al* [16].

Burnout is one of the results of stress and appears in the form of psychological symptoms like depression and inability to compromise. Because of burnout, the person is not able to communicate with others properly and becomes involve in behavioral-social disorders. Burn out is a state of physical, emotional and mental fatigue which is generated as a result of direct long communications with different people under difficult overwhelming emotional circumstances. A syndrome that causes a feeling of aversion or wasting life and makes people confused about their job and their own influencing. So they feel inefficiency and lose their interest and motivation.[14]

Examining relationship between teacher's mental health and their burnout shows the greatest impact is concerned with the relationship between Mental health and emotional exhaustion.. Also the fewest impact is concerned with the relationship between Mental health and burnout. This argument somewhat matches with research results of Ehiakonande *et al* [15], Beirami *et al* [17], Khoshouei and Bahrami [11].

Lateral findings of research states that burnout in male teachers is more than female teachers. Finally the main result of study is determining variable affecting burnout and its dimensions. Knowing this point is very important for education senior executives and enables them to plan appropriate programs in order to decrease burnout and increase teachers' efficiency.

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