

Research Paper

The Relationship between Mental Health and Life Skills with Job Burnout of education Staff in Noor

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ARTICLE INFO

ABSTRACT

Keywords:

Mental Health,
Life Skills,
Job Burnout,
Noor



Received:

14 September 2023

Received in revised form:

20 November 2023

Accepted:

15 January 2024

Published:

01 May 2024

pp.53-65

Background and Objectives: The importance and necessity of life skills training is determined when we know that life skills training improves psycho-social abilities. The purpose of this research was the relationship between mental health and life skills with job burnout of education workers in Noor city.

Methodology: This applied research was correlational descriptive study. The statistical population of this research included all the education staff of Noor city in the academic year 2017-2018, and the size of the population was 150 people based on the inquiry from the education department of Noor city. To collect the research data, three standard questionnaires including Mslesh Job Burnout Questionnaire, Mental Health Questionnaire (GHQ) of Goldberg (1978) and Life Skills Questionnaire of Saatchi et al. were used and confirmed using Cronbach's alpha. To analyze the data, SPSS software and Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests, Sperman's correlation and regression were used.

Results: After analyzing the data, it showed that there was no relationship between mental health and life skills and job burnout according to the (0.812) and (0.149) values at the 0.05 level.

Conclusion: Considering the direct relationship between job burnout and mental health and life satisfaction, it is necessary to pay more attention to increasing employee satisfaction. Higher satisfaction can lead to the improvement of the mental health of employees, and as a result, we will have employees with better health and higher performance. Employees who are satisfied with their working conditions are not only less exposed to burnout, but because of having better mental health, they can also increase their productivity and work quality. Therefore, organizations should develop policies and programs that lead to increased satisfaction and mental health of employees, because this will not only benefit the employees, but also benefit the entire organization.

Citation Hoseini, S. Z., Hoseini Daroukoliaie, S. Z., & Fallah, V. (2024). The Relationship between Mental Health and Life Skills with Job Burnout of education Staff in Noor. *The New Approaches in Humanities*, 1(3), 53-65.

 [http:// NAHQ/NAHQ.2024.200331](http://NAHQ/NAHQ.2024.200331)

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Introduction

Mental health provides a foundation for the development of cognitive and communication skills, leading to emotional growth, flexibility, and self-esteem. Successful mental functions and the consequent ability to perform productive activities, maintain appropriate relationships with others, adapt to changes, and effectively face life's adverse events are all outcomes of having mental health (Tabatabaie, 2015). The term mental health encompasses concepts such as mental well-being, a sense of self-efficacy, competence, understanding intergenerational connections, and the ability to recognize one's potential intellectual and emotional talents. This enables an individual to recognize their abilities, adapt to common life stresses, and be productive and useful in their job (Taghizadeh, 2016). Life skills and problem-solving skills refer to a set of abilities that facilitate positive and useful behavior adaptation, enabling an individual to accept personal and social responsibilities and effectively confront daily expectations and problems in interpersonal relationships without harming themselves or others. This way, they avoid behavioral, psychological, and social harm (Bavi and Khodabakhshi Kulaie, 2015).

Health is defined as complete physical, mental, and social well-being, emphasizing the individual's ability to adapt to the external environment and life skills are essential for effective living and are relevant throughout all stages of life (childhood, adolescence, and adulthood) (Marashi, 2017). These comprehensive life skills are aimed at effective development in four dimensions of life: family, education, work, and social, and are used for preventive and corrective treatments based on a theoretical structure with general counseling and mental health objectives. Life skills components include self-management and social skills. Self-management skills encompass decision-making, problem-solving, awareness of social influences and resistance to them, coping with anxiety, anger, and frustration, self-goal setting, and self-reinforcement. Social

skills are part of life skills, including social communication, assertiveness (verbal and non-verbal), respect, and enhancing the social competence of children, adolescents, and youth (Damghanian et al., 2015).

Job burnout is one of the fundamental factors in reducing efficiency, creating physical and psychological complications, particularly in human service jobs, and leading to the loss of efficient human resources. Modern individuals must endure limitations and pressures to adapt to their social and occupational environment, leading to job burnout (Azimpour & Alilu, 2017). Job burnout is the decrease in an individual's adaptability due to stress factors, characterized by physical and emotional exhaustion symptoms. These symptoms result in a negative self-concept, a negative attitude toward the job, and a lack of connection with others, potentially leading to various mental illnesses (Attari and Fathizadeh, 2015).

With the advent of positive psychology, it is unsurprising that positive aspects of health and wellness have gained more attention in occupational health psychology, including life skills. Having and applying life skills for growth and development can resolve many problems, frustrations, and anomalies, promoting a lively, industrious, progressive, beneficial, and constructive life (Moradi, Bagherpour, Hassanvand, & Rezapour, 2016). Health is a fundamental human need essential for sustainable development. Although initially, health was primarily seen as physical health, with scientific progress and achieving acceptable physical health levels and combating many diseases, humans have also paid attention to other health aspects, including mental health (Ashoorai, 2016).

Individuals with burnout suffer from physical and emotional fatigue, feel unproductive, and experience decreased performance. They may suffer from headaches, sleep disorders, weight loss, and similar issues. Job burnout is a fundamental factor in reducing workplace performance and negatively impacts physical and psychological health, reducing service quality to clients and causing dissatisfaction. Recognizing and preventing burnout plays a crucial role in

enhancing mental health and improving service quality and job performance (Almerdani Soumeh, 2015). Bakker and Costa (2014) showed that chronic job burnout weakens the cycle of productive work, reduces tolerance in the environment, and lowers job performance. Such individuals need support to regain their spirit and occupational health.

As previous researchers have noted, job burnout is significantly important for organizations as it reduces employees' optimal performance and may lead to resignation. Moreover, it can decrease job satisfaction and cause family issues for these individuals. Given the negative impacts and consequences of job burnout on the mental health of employees, which can have dire outcomes for education, conducting this research to find solutions to reduce job burnout among education staff is crucial. In recent decades, psychologists have found that many behavioral disorders stem from individuals' inability to accurately analyze themselves and their situations and their personal inadequacy in facing difficult situations. Therefore, preparing individuals to confront challenging situations is essential, given the increasing complexities of society.

Bavzin (2017), in her study titled "Investigating the Relationship Between Social Support Components and Social and Psychological Health Among the Elderly in Khorramabad City," stated that social support components are related to the social and psychological health of the elderly, and this relationship is statistically significant ($P < 0.001$). Moreover, the results of the independent t-test showed that the social and psychological health of the elderly differs between genders but is not statistically significant ($P > 0.05$). Based on these findings, it can be said that the more social support the elderly receive, the better their social and psychological health.

Bahrami (2017), in his study titled "Investigating the Relationship Between Spiritual Attachment and Mental Health (Case Study: School of Management, University of Tehran)," aimed to measure the relationship between spiritual attachment and mental health among students of the School of Management,

University of Tehran.

Marashi (2017), in her study titled "Prediction of Mental Health Among Students of Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz Based on Healthy and Unhealthy Guilt," highlighted that mental health is the most critical factor in the growth and development of students' talents.

Bergheim et al. (2015), in their study conducted among employees and industrial staff of a manufacturing company, concluded that hope, self-efficacy, and resilience have a positive and significant correlation with job satisfaction. These traits directly and significantly predicted and explained the job satisfaction of the subjects studied.

Peng et al. (2013), in their study titled "The Effect of Psychological Capital on Job Burnout Among a Group of Chinese Nurses: The Mediating Role of Organizational Commitment," examined 473 female Chinese nurses. The results indicated that both psychological capital and organizational commitment had a significant relationship with job burnout, and organizational commitment also played a relatively mediating role between psychological capital and job burnout.

Considering the mentioned effects of burnout on education staff and the significant role of life skills and mental health in organizational variables, this research investigates whether there is a relationship between mental health and life skills with job burnout among education staff in Noor.

Methodology:

The present study, considering its objective, was an applied research and, in terms of its nature of implementation and data collection, was a descriptive correlational study. In this study, the predictive and temporal relationships between variables were examined. The research population included the employees of the Noor Department of Education for the 2017-2018 academic year, with a population size of 150 people based on an inquiry from the Noor Department of Education. The sample size, based on the population size and using the Morgan Table, was estimated to be 105 people, selected through simple random sampling. To collect research data, standardized questionnaires were

used, including Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI), Goldberg's General Health Questionnaire (GHQ) (1978) and Saatchi et al.'s Life Skills Questionnaire (2010)

The validity of these questionnaires was confirmed using content validity, and their reliability was verified using Cronbach's alpha. Data analysis was performed using SPSS software and involved Kolmogorov-Smirnov, Spearman correlation, and regression tests. In this study, descriptive statistical methods (mean, standard deviation, frequency, etc.) and inferential methods (Pearson correlation coefficients and multiple regression analysis) were used through SPSS20 statistical software.

Results:

In the descriptive findings based on gender, the study included all employees of the Noor County Department of Education. Out of the 105 distributed questionnaires, 26 respondents (24.8%) were women and 79 respondents (75.2%) were men. The sampling was done using a simple random method. Regarding the marital status of the respondents, 19 individuals (18.1%) reported being single, and 86 individuals (81.9%) reported being married. The age distribution of the respondents was as follows. 26 respondents were aged 20 to 30 years, 28 respondents were aged 30 to 40 years, 49 respondents were aged 40 to 50 years, and 2 respondents were over 50 years old. To analyze the data and select the appropriate tests, it was essential first to examine the normality of the variables. If the distribution of the variables is normal, parametric tests can be used; otherwise, non-parametric tests should be employed.

Statistical Statement:

- H_0H_0 : The data distribution is normal. $\text{Sig.} \geq 0.05$
- H_1H_1 : The data distribution is not normal. $\text{Sig.} < 0.05$

Table 1. Examination of Normal Distribution of Data

Variables	Kolmogorov-Smirnov Statistic	Significance Level	Status
Life Skills	0.162	0.000	Non-normal
General Health	0.188	0.000	Non-normal
Job Burnout	0.102	0.010	Non-normal

As reported in Table 1, the significance level of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for the research variables is less than 0.05. Thus, at a 95% confidence level, we see that the observations strongly reject the null hypothesis (H_0), indicating that the research variables do not follow a normal distribution. Therefore, for hypothesis testing in this study, non-parametric tests were used.

Main Hypothesis: There is a relationship between mental health and life skills with job burnout among the employees of the Noor County Department of Education.

H₀: There is no relationship between mental health and life skills with job burnout among the employees of the Department of Education.

H₁: There is a relationship between mental health and life skills with job burnout among the employees of the Department of Education.

Table 2. Spearman Correlation Coefficient

Variables	N	Correlation Coefficient	Significance Level
Mental Health and Job Burnout	105	-0.024	0.812
Life Skills and Job Burnout	105	0.045	0.149

The correlation coefficient is significant at the level of less than 0.05. Based on the findings shown in the table, the probability statistic (0.812) is greater than 0.05. Hence, considering the significance level, it is observed that there is no relationship between mental health and job burnout among the employees of the Department of Education. Therefore, it can be concluded that the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted.

Regarding the relationship between life skills and job burnout, the probability statistic for life skills (0.149) is also greater than 0.05. Thus, it is observed that there is

no significant relationship between life skills and job burnout among the employees of the Noor Department of Education.

Discussion and Conclusion:

In the main hypothesis, which states that there is a relationship between mental health and job burnout among the employees of the Noor County Department of Education, the probability statistic (0.812) was obtained at a significance level greater than 0.05. This result indicates that there is no relationship between mental health and job burnout among the employees of the Department of Education. Regarding the relationship between life skills and job burnout, the probability statistic for the life skills variable (0.149) was obtained at a significance level less than 0.05. This result also indicates that there is no significant relationship between life skills and job burnout among the employees of the Noor Department of Education. The result of the study research is consistent with the studies conducted by Bavzin (2017), Biglu et al. (2014), Bergim et al. (2015), and Peng et al. (2013).

Suggestion and Recommendation:

Regarding the applications of the results of this study, it can be suggested to managers that, given the correlation between burnout, mental health, and life satisfaction, they should pay more attention to employee satisfaction. Higher satisfaction can lead to improved mental health among employees, resulting in healthier and more efficient employees. On the other hand, reducing factors that lead to employee burnout can further enhance employee health, reduce healthcare costs for the organization, and improve employee performance in the long run.

Continuous growth opportunities should be created for teachers by implementing measures such as enabling employees to pursue further education and equipping

the Department of Education with the latest facilities, including the internet.

More and better attention should be paid to improving the physical and psychological work environment, as this significantly contributes to reducing job burnout.

Sources of stress and pressure must be properly identified to reduce the pressure on individuals, and with appropriate organizational support, performance-based rewards, and positive attention to employees, minimize the effects and consequences of job burnout as much as possible.

Workshops on life skills, stress management, effective communication, anger control, etc., should be held to enhance the mental health of employees and their families.

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