Investigation the Relationship between Burnout, Job Stress and Mental Health of Secondary School' Physical Educators in Iran

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ABSTRACT The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between burnout, job stress and mental health of secondary school' physical educators. The population of the study consisted of all secondary school physical educator teachers in Iran (N=12000). The sample size was determined by cluster sampling method (N=500). In this study three standard questionnaires were used: Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) developed by Maslach et al (1996), Job Stress Questionnaire developed by Kyriacou and Sutcliff (1978) and General Health Questionnaire (GHQ 12) Developed by Goldberg and Williams (1988). The validity of the above questionnaire has been proved (82%-92%). Data analyses were based on completed research instruments from 465 cases. The data was analyzed by using Pierson correlation coefficient and regression test. This result was significant in the level of P≤0.01. The result of this research showed that there was a significant and positive relation between burnout and mental health (r=0.72). Also there was a significant and negative relation between mental health and emotional exhaustion (r= -0.65), depersonalization (r=0.58) and a significant and positive relation between mental health and personal accomplishment (r=0.69).

Keywords Burnout, Stress, Mental Health.

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, attention to the quality of life and mental health has been increased. Not only the scientific communities but also general people increasingly have become aware of the profound effect of lifestyle and physical and mental health and the quality of life. In recent decades, significant advances in technology and industry have brought a wave of stress that has caused
reduction of mental health. The study of job stress by Hans Selye who is referred as the father of stress was began in 1965. He fully explained stress as a new phenomenon in its own kin (Malik, 2005). Researchers have conducted extensive studies on the effects of life’s stress events. Stress on human activities in various fields such as psychology, health and family impacts adverse affects. According to the statistics of World Health Organization, 90% of employees are dissatisfied with their jobs and believe that their job is not the one that they want in life. The National Institute for professional health and safety has introduced teaching profession in terms of stress levels a high level of stress job among thirteen jobs (Nickson & Kritsonis, 2006). Inadequate salaries, lack of parental support and administrators are considered some negative and stressful aspects for teachers. Researches has shown that professional and organizational source of stress is dependent to some factors such as the individual’s job, organizational role of the individual, organizational structure and climate, professional development flow, professional relationships or facing with job (Al-Mohannadi & Capel, 2007).

One of the segments of the community that its mental health should be considered, is physical training teachers. Teacher has very crucial and fundamental role in education and foster and development of each country and its future. To create favorable cultural conditions in which the field of thinking and research is provided and teaching and learning process performs ideally requires that teachers have a strong and vibrant spirit and they have minimal difficulties in their work and social life (Koustelios & Tsigilis, 2005). Teachers who have been battered by their profession directly affect on the students in negative form. If the adverse effects and signs of it be diagnosed in a proper time, it can be prevented and treated. Therefore, prevention, diagnosis and treatment of it are essential. In several studies there is a negative correlation between job burnout and mental health of teachers. So that by the increase in job burnout rate their mental health declined and vice versa (Evers et al., 2004; Falkum, 2006). Teachers who are suffering from job burnout are tired in terms of emotion and have low work motivation and they have low mental health (Grayson & Alvarez, 2008). Job Stress positively is associated with psychological problems and diseases (Sari, 2004). Maureen showed in his research that there was significant correlation among all the factors related to the mental health and burnout factors of the subjects (Maureen, 2006). Dorman showed that there is a significant positive correlation between job stressors and mental health of male teachers and also physical education teachers (men and women) with a higher degree and young teachers suffer more from stress factors. He showed by reviewing the results of much researches in the field of teachers' stress that extra work (work volume) and lack of time, are the most common causes of stress and their burnout (Dorman, 2003). Tatar and Horeuczyk (2003) showed in a research that stress and job burnout were associated with lower levels of teacher’s mental health. He also showed that depleted teachers significantly provide less information and reward for their students and the students rejected their opinions and has less interaction by teachers. Since job burnout in employees, such as teachers, administrators, nurses and medical professions have been studied, but in relation to job burnout, stress, mental health and physical education teachers there haven't been done such attention; therefore the purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between burnout, job stress and mental health in secondary school physical educators’ of Iran.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The method of this study is descriptive correlation which was performed by field approach. The population of the study consisted of all Physical Educators of Iran
(N=12000). The Cluster sampling method was used to select the samples. Based on, 500 physical educators were selected as subjects (N=500). For evaluation of physical educator burnout, Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) was used in this study. It includes 22 questions of 3 components (Emotional exhaustion, Depersonalization and Personal accomplishment). Job Stress Questionnaire developed by Kyriacou and Sutcliff (1978) was used for evaluation of physical educator job stress. It includes 28 questions of 6 components (Workload, Lack of professional development, Lack of social status, Relationships between staff, Factors related to student achievement and Salary). For evaluation of physical educators' mental health, General Health Questionnaire (GHQ 12) Developed by Goldberg and Williams (1988) was used. The validity of the above questionnaire has been proved (82%-92%). SPSS (Version 16) software was used to analyze the data. As to the statistical measures, descriptive statistics including frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation and tabulations were used to describe the data. Inferential statistics including Pearson correlation formula was used to test the hypotheses.

RESULTS

After distributing the survey questionnaires, finally 465 (95%) questionnaires were returned. Investigation of data from the demographic questionnaire showed that 81 percent of teachers in physical education are in age groups older than 30 years and 60.5% of them were female teachers, and 39.5% were male teachers. Educational certificate of 41.2% of teachers was bachelor or higher and 46.5% of teachers had experience between 11 to 20 years. The results showed that average of women in two dimensions of emotional burnout and depersonalization were higher than men, and in the individual success were lower than men which represents more burnout in women. In general it can be concluded that the overall rate of burnout in teachers (male and female) is the average level. The results of this study in the review of obtained scores from GHQ-28 questionnaire showed that the average of total scores from this scale was 20.59 ± 13.54 and in total, by means of cutoff point of 23 tests 20.5% of subjects were suspected for psychological disorders. The average of teachers' scores in physical scales were 3.01± 4.58, the anxiety scale 4.09 ± 4.23, the scale of social conflict 10.25 ± 3.05 and the depression scale 1.53 ± 3.05 respectively. There is a significant negative relationship between emotional burnout and depersonalization with mental health of teachers and there was a significant positive correlation with the individual success. In other words, by reduction in burnout and increase of the success rate in physical training teacher their mental health will increase.

Table1. Correlation between physical educators' burnout and mental health.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Correlation Quotient</th>
<th>P-Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotional exhaustion</td>
<td>465</td>
<td>-0.64</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depersonalization</td>
<td>465</td>
<td>-0.58</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal accomplishment</td>
<td>465</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table2. Correlation between physical educators' stress and mental health.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Correlation Quotient</th>
<th>P-Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workload</td>
<td>465</td>
<td>-0.40</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of professional development</td>
<td>465</td>
<td>-0.29</td>
<td>0.016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of social status</td>
<td>465</td>
<td>-0.44</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationships between staff</td>
<td>465</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Factors related to student</td>
<td>465</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary</td>
<td>465</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Investigation of the relationship between job burnout, stress with mental health, it has been showed that there is a negative and significant relationship between these two variables. So by increase in the amount of job burnout and stress the scores of mental health will be reduced that these findings are consistent by the research results (Koustelios & Tsigilis, 2005). High job burnout causes reducing in individual adaptation against stress factors and this can lead to behavioral and physical problems which endanger mental health. When teachers feel their efforts at the school are effective and efficient and are in consideration for others and appreciated, it causes that they place in a desirable mental health. Depersonalization is another important variable in explaining the mental health of teachers. According to the point that depersonalization has different effects on a person's mentality and emotional buildup, so this factor will have a huge impact on the mental health of a person. The obtained results based on that there is a negative correlation between depersonalization and mental health of teachers show that mental stress resulted from work have important impact on physical and mental health of people and these results are consistent with the findings of Dorman (2003).

Grayson and Alvarez (2008) evaluate the causes, symptoms and how to prevent stress and job burnout in teacher and stated that stress can lead to fatigue, exhaustion, physical fitness and susceptibility to disease. Woods also argues that stress in teachers causes problems including poor mental health (depression and anxiety), physical problems (insomnia, headaches) and lower levels of performance (job dissatisfaction, absenteeism, lost of productivity and reduced quality of work). It is clear that having a support such as friends and relatives have great role in compatibility mode of people. Indeed, the role that social support plays in helping individuals to cope with the problems has been likened to support shield. This means that the stressor factors in people who have more social support have fewer negative effects. The fewer negative impacts on the people shows that such people have a strong support system in their environment. Thus, social support can protect individuals against the potential adverse effects of stressors, especially if this support be from the chiefs and the people above us (Nickson & Kritsonis, 2006; Malik, 2005).

By regarding to the importance of job burnout and its deleterious effects on physical and mental health of teachers, psychologists have proposed various solutions to alleviate the symptoms of job burnout. Among the different solutions that can be applied by individual are cases such as changes in favorable and unfavorable working conditions, not accepting improper responsibilities, use of relaxation techniques, exercise, proper diet and the use of time management programs.

Acknowledgement

At the end, we appreciate and thank of all subjects that participated in this study.

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