

The relationship between happiness and vocation burnout teachers

Mina Zarnaghash*, Department of Psychology Faculty of literature and humanities Science, Lorestan University, Khoram Abad, Iran.

Fazlolah Mirderikvand, Department of Psychology Faculty of literature and humanities Science, Lorestan University, Khoram Abad, Iran.

Mohammad Ali Sepahvandi,. Department of Psychology Faculty of literature and humanities Science, Lorestan University, Khoram Abad, Iran.

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between happiness and vocation burnout teachers. The sample of this study includes 186 teachers of Shiraz. The measurement tools were Maslach job burnout inventory (2001) and Axford happiness scale (Valliant, 1993). Alpha Cronbach was calculated to determine the reliability of the questionnaires (0/80 & 0/93). Data was analyzed by regression and correlation. Result shows significant relationship between happiness and vocation burnout (Emotional Exhaustion, -0/327) (Depersonalization, -0/228) (individual performance, 0.394). Result of regression shows that happiness is a good predictor for all of three components of job burnout at $P < 0.001$.

Keywords: happiness, vocation burnout, emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, individual performance

*ADDRESS FOR CORRESPONDENCE: **Mina Zarnaghash**, Department of Psychology Faculty of literature and humanities Science, Lorestan University, Khoram Abad, Iran. *E-mail address:* mirfazlolah@yahoo.com

1. Introduction

Occupation is regarded as the most important factor shaping social identity and social relations of humans as well as the source of life. Meanwhile, it is one source of stress in humans. Stress not only reduces people's quantitative efficiency at the workplace, but it also makes a disruption in family relations and instigates a vicious cycle whose most common result is called burnout syndrome (Baboli, 2002). In recent years, psychologists have been interested in studying a phenomenon named job burnout and several studies have been done on it. Job burnout is in fact a type of burnout combined with stress and job-related tensions at the workplace (Pour Mohammadi Khales, 2011).

One personal factor influencing the prevalence of burnout is employees' happiness. Happiness refers to a feeling of sustainable luck in one's private life, being useful for oneself and the society, and fulfillment of wishes and needs of the public. A person who is happy feels fortunate and satisfied with being alive, and other people might benefit from his/her life. Happiness is not a short-term feeling; rather, it continues for long (Amir Hosseini, 2005, quoting from Pour Mohammadi Khales, 2011).

In recent years, the job burnout phenomenon has attracted the attention of many researchers and human force productivity practitioners. The exact magnitude of this phenomenon is unclear. However, it damages a wide range of work force and human resources. Since 1970 the job burnout phenomenon has been developing rapidly and our knowledge of it has significantly increased. Today, job burnout is characterized with serious symptoms and regarding its dire consequences, it leads to a decrease in life quality and this might have negative effects on family life as well as work environments (Hellesoy, & Kuitastein, 2000). Job burnout is a psychological response to stress and it can be combined with such characteristics as emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lack of personal accomplishment. Emotional exhaustion refers to a reduction of emotional power in a person, and those who are emotionally exhausted usually feel that they have lost their adaptive power and do not have enough energy to perform their tasks anymore (Hall beston, 2004).

Although human beings have always been in search of happiness, satisfaction and prosperity during their lives and have tried hard to achieve them, it has been reported that the first study on happiness was done on English students in 1912 in the years following that, some other studies were done in America about the levels of enjoyment among students. However, the studies on happiness were forgotten due to the outbreak of World Wars I and II. After the World Wars, studies were done again and they have significantly increased during recent years. However, in today's world, happiness is considered as one of the criteria for life quality and the happiness among people in societies is measured annually (Abedi, 2002).

Bauer, Stamm, Virnich, Wissing, Müller, Wirsching and Schaarschmidt (2006) In a study done on the relationship between job burnout, pathological symptoms and psychosomatics among teachers, it was concluded that job burnout among teachers had a significant relationship with their psychological symptoms including depression, anxiety and psychosomatics problems. Besides, in a research conducted among Swedish teachers, Lindblom, Linton, Fedeli, & Bryngelsson (2006) found that burnout components have a positive significant relationship with anxiety and depression.

Mohammadi (2006) In a research titled as Job Burnout and Psychological Health among High School Teachers, used Maslach Burnout Inventory and revised list of psychiatric symptoms for 137 female and 163 male teachers in Tehran and found that there was a positive, significant relationship between burnout components including emotional exhaustion and depersonalization and health variables. Garousi Farshi (2006) in his study titled as Investigating the Relationship between Personality Traits and Happiness among 396 university students, concluded that there was a positive, significant relationship between the two variables happiness and extroversion.

2. Method

The present study is a correlation type and the population included the teachers working in elementary schools, junior and senior high schools of Shiraz education department. Among them 186 teachers were selected through cluster sampling method and were studied as the ones constituting the sample group. The instruments used in this study were two questionnaires: Maslesh Burnout (2001) which had 22 articles and measured three aspects of burnout including emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and individual performance. In order to confirm the reliability of this questionnaire, the test-retest method was applied and the reliability coefficient was obtained 0.88. In addition, the Oxford Happiness Test (1898) was used which has 29 articles and five areas including satisfaction, positive creation, health, efficiency and self-esteem. The obtained alpha coefficient is shown in the table below.

Table 1. Cronbach's alpha for reliability of the happiness questionnaire

	satisfaction	positive creation	health	efficiency	self-esteem
alpha	0.90	0.88	0.85	0.70	0.61

3. Findings

The mean and standard deviation of the components of job burnout can be seen in the table.

Table 2. Mean and standard deviation of the components of job burnout

Variables		emotional exhaustion	depersonalization	individual performance
M	Mean	11.42	34.94	3.01
	SD	7.82	8.86	3.58
F	Mean	10.74	34.71	2.44
	SD	6.52	9.04	3.14
Total	Mean	11.16	34.85	9.79
	SD	7.34	7.77	3.42

In order to investigate the relationship between happiness and job burnout, Pearson correlation coefficient method was applied. The results are shown in the table3.

Table 3. Correlation Matrix for variables and its dimensions

Variables	1.	2.	3.	4.
1.Happiness	1			
2.Emotional exhaustion	-0.327 **	1		
3.Individual performance	0.39 **	-0.16 *	1	
4.Depersonalization	-0.22 **	0.48 **	-0.13	1

* P<0.05 ** P<0.01

As can be seen in the table 3, all components of the teachers' burnout (exhaustion, a feeling of personal accomplishment, and depersonalization) had a significant relationship with their happiness. Happiness had a reverse relationship with emotional exhaustion and depersonalization but it had a direct relationship with, a feeling of personal accomplishment.

The regression analysis was used in order to investigate whether happiness is capable of prediction job burnout components. Results can be observed in table 4, 5, 6.

Table 4. The predictability level of Happiness for Emotional exhaustion

Variable	t	B	Sig	R	R2	F	Sig
Emotional exhaustion	-.423	-0.20	0.000	0.327	0.107	17.9	0.000

Table 5. The predictability level of Happiness for individual performance

Variable	t	B	Sig	R	R2	F	Sig
Individual performance	5.25	0.308	0.000	0.327	0.107	17.9	0.000

Table 6. The predictability level of Happiness for depersonalization

Variable	t	B	Sig	R	R2	F	Sig
Depersonalization	-2.874	-0.07	0.005	0.22	0.05	8.052	0.005

Regarding the obtained results shown in the tables above, it might be concluded that happiness can predict all three components of job burnout at P<001 level.

3. Discussion & Conclusion

The relationship between the components may be due to the reason that many factors influencing the creation of human beings are environmental and situational, and if a person is not satisfied with his/her working conditions, his/her mood will be affected and his/her feeling of happiness will be reduced. It is especially pointed that job is one important aspect of people's lives which generally affect their mental health. Stress and dissatisfaction in one's workplace influence not only his/her happiness level but also different aspects of his/her life. In addition, it is probable that other factors and variables including personality traits, financial and economic issues, and interpersonal and social skills might affect these variables. This study has not dealt with them.

Findings of the present study are consistent with previous results Jan and Josef (2005), Yaghoubinia (2008), Khoshkonesh (2006), Moqanlou (2009) which found that there was a direct relationship between happiness and job satisfaction. However, regarding happiness and burnout components, it was found that the existence of positive emotions in life and the lack of negative emotions, especially depression, anxiety and inferiority complex were the main personality traits that help increasing positive mood and happiness, and this would result in job satisfaction. Hence, it can be said that happiness is considered as an important factor to predict job burnout. In other words, more happiness will bring about less burnout. Findings of this study are consistent with those of Lindblom (2006), Abedi (2002) and Shirvani (2009).

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