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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PROFESSIONAL BURNOUT AND SATISFACTION: A CASE STUDY FOR PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHERS IN A GREEK URBAN AREA

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Abstract

The aim of the present study is two-fold. Firstly, this research investigates the relationship between the variables of professional burnout and satisfaction among physical education teachers who work in sports organizations of large municipalities in the region of Attica, Greece. Secondly, the relationship between organizational factors and the variables of professional burnout and satisfaction was examined. All the teachers who took part in the survey are occupied in a municipal program called "Sports for all". With the method of random sampling, a total of 100 questionnaires, representing 10% of the survey population, were filled out by physical education teachers, occupied in 9 municipalities of Attica (Marousi, Kifissia, Heraklion, Metamorfosi-Pefki, N. Ionia, N. Philadelphia, Ilion, Haidari). The analysis reveals that Greek physical education teachers reported low levels of professional burnout and high levels of professional satisfaction. Moreover the results confirm the existence of a relationship between organizational factors, professional burnout and satisfaction.

Keywords: burnout, professional satisfaction, physical education teachers, maslach burnout inventory, role conflict, role clarity

1. INTRODUCTION

The concept of burnout has received much attention during recent years. Many psychologists, sociologists, management and

organizational experts consider that burnout has important implications on the individual, the organization and also on the economy and production. A number of researchers have concluded that professional satisfaction

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is directly linked to professional burnout. More specifically, low level of professional burnout is correlated or even can be predicted by high level of professional satisfaction (Platsidou & Agaliotis, 2008; Platsidou, 2010; Chalikias, 2013; Chalikias et al., 2016; Tsitmideli et al., 2016; Zapantis et al., 2017). The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between professional burnout and satisfaction for the case of physical education teachers working in sports programs organized by municipal authorities. The role of local authorities in the provision of recreational and social services is important, in order to satisfy the public interest (Torkildsen, 1999). Generally, local authorities play an important role for establishing close relationships because of their proximity to the population. The municipalities in Greece have been given extended responsibilities and obligations towards society and the citizen, especially after 2010 with the application of "Kallikratis" program. The existence of a municipal sports organization in the local government states the priority which is given by the state to the municipal authority for citizens' workout in the area of Athens, Greece (Afthinos, 2001). Concerning the role of physical education teachers in the municipal programs, they are a part of the municipality human resources that can offer very good services to citizens who exercise. On the other hand, they can promote the development of sports organizations that affect positively the economic sector (Nikolaidou et al., 2014).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

For many years burnout is considered to be a critical business issue that affects job satisfaction. Several authors have attempted

to define burnout. In the field of psychology, burnout was first used by Bradley (1969) to describe a phenomenon that mostly occurs to healthcare professionals. Freudenberger (1974) defined burnout as the inability for job performance or the exhaustion caused by excessive occupational demands of energy, strength or resources. In 1980, Cherniss described professional burnout as "the disease of over commitment" (Rogers & Dodson, 1988). There are many studies that have attempted to define burnout, but the most widely accepted definition has been proposed by Maslach & Jackson (1981): "Burnout is a syndrome of emotional exhaustion and cynicism that occurs frequently among individuals who do 'people-work' of some kind". Numerous studies have argued that teaching is a stressful occupation (Bachkirova, 2005; Blase, 1986; Claxton, 1989; De Nobile & McCormick, 2005; Kyriacou, 2001). Several studies that have been carried out conclude that professional burnout is the cause of low job satisfaction rather than the opposite (Burke et al., 1984). Locke (1976) defined job satisfaction as "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences". Professional satisfaction is directly related to personal life and physical health of an employee (Balzer et al., 1990). Various researches have clearly shown that the most important factors that adversely affect employee's mental health are those of "role clarity" and "role conflict" during their professional life. Role clarity problems occur when an employee is uncertain for the role of his job, the requirements, the way to success and what the other expects from him (Kantas, 1995; Koustelios & Kousteliou, 1998; Koustelios et al., 2004). Many researchers have confirmed the view that role clarity has the

highest impact on professional satisfaction as well as the exhaustion of employees. The importance of teachers' clear role towards students' satisfaction and promotion of environmental sensitivity has been pointed out in a recent study for Greek secondary education students (Ntanos et al., 2018). Role conflict occurs when an employee interacts with different people or diverse groups of people (e.g. colleagues, friends, family) who have conflicting expectations from his behavior (Koustelios & Kousteliou, 1998; Pettinger, 1996). Low et al. (2001) argued that both role conflict and role clarity are important factors that are associated with professional burnout. Several studies have concluded that both role conflict and clarity are negatively related to job satisfaction (Jackson & Schuller's, 1985; Behrman & Perreult, 1984).

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For data collection purposes, a survey was conducted in physical education teachers working in Kallikratian Municipalities in the Attica region (Marousi, Kifissia, Heraklion, Metamorfoosi-Pefki, N. Ionia, N. Philadelphia, Ilion, Haidari). Sample size was determined on the basis of the total population of physical education teachers. By obtaining data for the total population of 1000 teachers from the Attica municipal authority, a percentage of 10 % was selected by the method of random sampling. Approximately 100 questionnaires were filled out during personal interviews. The questionnaire consists of 24 questions, divided into three sections and responses are based on the 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree). Many studies have used this

questionnaire for different professions on private and public sector workers in Greece, such as librarians (Togia et al., 2004) and teachers (Koustelios, 2001), confirming its acceptable reliability, validity and the proposed structure. Section A of the questionnaire consisted of several questions probing for teacher's professional satisfaction. For the measurement of Section A, the Employee Satisfaction Inventory (ESI) of Koustelios & Bagiatis (1997) was used. In order to evaluate the level of professional burnout of physical education teachers, the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) was used (Maslach & Jackson, 1981, 1986) in section B. Moreover, Role Conflict and Role Ambiguity Scale were used (Rizzo, et al., 1970) in section C of the questionnaire. In the analysis, three research hypotheses have been set for the investigation of the relationship between the variables of professional satisfaction, burnout, role conflict and clarity. The statistical analysis has been carried out by using SPSS v.18 statistical software. More specifically, the statistical analysis methods include Descriptive analysis, Cronbach's alpha, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test, Bartlett's test of sphericity, Pearson correlation coefficient and stepwise linear regression models.

4. RESULTS

Sample demographics are summarized in Table 1.

Initially, the overall reliability of the questionnaire was tested (in all 4 sections of the questionnaire) and Cronbach's alpha index was found to be high (0.855), (Cronbach, 1951). Reliability analysis was also separately performed for each section of

Table 1. Demographic data of the sample

Variable	Demographics	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	50	53.8
	Female	43	46.2
Marital status	Single/Not married	25	26.9
	Married	64	68.8
	Divorced/Separated	3	3.2
	Widowed	1	1.1
Employment Contract	Fixed Term Contract	5	5.5
	Indefinite Duration	30	33
	Hourly-Paid	56	61.5
Managerial Duties	Yes	9	9.9
	No	82	90.1

the questionnaire. More specifically: Section's A reliability index (Professional Satisfaction) is 0.853, Section's B reliability (Professional Burnout) is 0.849, Section's C reliability (Role Clarity) is 0.855 and Section's D reliability (Role Conflict) is 0.774. KMO and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity also gave satisfying results (KMO = 0.783; Sig. = .000).

Table 2 presents all the hypotheses that will be examined.

For the first hypothesis, as it can be seen from Table 3, burnout has a negative correlation with role clarity (correlation coefficient = - 0.381) and a positive correlation with role conflict (correlation coefficient = 0.440). All correlations were found to be statistically significant at the

95% level of confidence (Sig. = 0.000 < 0.05). Therefore, H_{1,1} is confirmed as it is presented on Table 2.

Concerning the second hypothesis, based on the results of Table 4, a positive correlation was observed between professional satisfaction and role clarity (0.272 or 27.2%) and a negative correlation with role conflict respectively (- 0.28 or 28%). Both correlations were found to be statistically significant at the 99% level of confidence. Therefore H_{2,1} was confirmed as it is presented on Table 2.

In order to test the third research hypothesis, Pearson's correlation test was applied to examine the relationship between the variables of professional satisfaction and burnout which has three interrelated

Table 2. Research hypotheses

1st Research Hypothesis	H_{1,1}: There is a significant relationship between professional burnout and organizational factors (role clarity and role conflict).
2nd Research Hypothesis	H_{1,0}: There isn't a significant relationship between professional burnout and organizational factors (role clarity and role conflict). H _{2,1} : There is a significant relationship between professional satisfaction and organizational factors (role clarity and role conflict). H _{2,0} : There isn't a significant relationship between professional satisfaction and organizational factors (role clarity and role conflict).
3rd Research Hypothesis	H _{3,1} : There is a significant relationship between professional satisfaction and the three dimensions of burnout (emotional exhaustion, personal accomplishment and depersonalization). H _{3,0} : There isn't a significant relationship between professional satisfaction and the three dimensions of burnout (emotional exhaustion, personal accomplishment and depersonalization).

Table 3. Correlation between professional burnout, role clarity and conflict

		Burnout	Role Clarity	Role Conflict
Role Clarity	Pearson Correlation	-.381 **	1	-.379 **
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
Role Conflict	Pearson Correlation	.440 **	-.379 **	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

dimensions, as proposed by Maslach (1981). The results in Table 5 ($r = -0.446$; $p < 0.01$) show a moderate negative correlation between emotional exhaustion and professional satisfaction, compatible with the research of Evans & Fischer (1993).

These results mean that as professional satisfaction increases, emotional exhaustion decreases and the opposite. Also, by looking Sig. (2-tailed) = 0.000, the correlation is considered statistically significant at the 0.01 level. Also a weak positive correlation ($r =$

0.176) was found between the dimensions of professional satisfaction and personal accomplishment. This correlation is rejected at 95%, but is accepted at the 90% level of confidence (Asymp. Sig. = 0.09 < 0.10). However, the correlation between depersonalization and professional satisfaction hasn't been confirmed (Sig. = 0.894 > 0.05). The analysis of correlations emphasized the influence of the three dimensions of burnout on professional satisfaction. To identify the most effective

Table 4. Correlation between professional satisfaction, role clarity and conflict

		Satisfaction	Role Clarity	Role Conflict
Role Clarity	Pearson Correlation	.272 **	1	-.379 **
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.007		.000
	N	98	98	98
Role Conflict	Pearson Correlation	-.280 **	-.379 **	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.005	.000	
	N	98	98	98

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 5. Correlation between professional satisfaction and the three dimensions of burnout

		Emotional Exhaustion	Personal Accomplishment	Depersonalization
Emotional Exhaustion	Pearson Correlation	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)			
	N	94		
Personal Accomplishment	Pearson Correlation	-.479**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		
	N	94	94	
Depersonalization	Pearson Correlation	.533**	-.465**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	94	94	94
Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	-.446**	.176	-0,14
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.091	.894
	N	94	94	94

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 6. Linear Regression Model

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.446 a	.199	.190	.42190
2	.518 b	.269	.253	.40527

1. Predictors: (Constant), Emotional Exhaustion, 2. Predictors: (Constant), Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization, 3. Dependent Variable: Professional Satisfaction

model for estimating the professional satisfaction, a multiple linear regression with the stepwise method was conducted. Multiple linear regression models were developed to estimate professional satisfaction with the variables of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization.

The linear regression analysis results presented in Table 6 show that for the professional satisfaction (dependent variable) two predictive models were statistically significant. The best predictive model is model 2. For the model 2, Adjusted R Square = 0.253 (Table 6) and this means that this model explain 25% of the variance of teachers' professional satisfaction.

The coefficient signs indicated that "emotional exhaustion" was negatively related with "professional satisfaction", while "depersonalization" was positively related with "professional satisfaction". Multifactor linear regression model is described by the equation: $y = a_0 + a_1x_1 + a_2x_2$.

The model of multiple linear regression can be represent as:

$$Professional\ Satisfaction = - 0.534 \times Emotional\ Exhaustion + 0.260 \times Depersonalization + 4.158 \quad (1)$$

where:

y = Response variable (Professional Satisfaction)

a₀ = Constant variable

a₁ = Coefficient of first control variable, x₁

a₂ = Coefficient of second control variable, x₂

x₁ = Controlled variable (Emotional Exhaustion)

x₂ = Controlled variable (Depersonalization)

The resulted model shows that the

Table 7. The results of multiple regression analysis regarding the prediction of teachers' professional satisfaction based on the two dimensions of burnout

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	4.269	.170		25.126	.000
	Emotional Exhaustion	-389	.081	-.446	-4.776	.000
2	(Constant)	4.158	.168		24.821	.000
	Emotional Exhaustion	-534	.092	-.612	-5.779	.000
	Depersonalization	.260	.088	.313	2.950	.004

a. Dependent Variable: Professional Satisfaction

estimation of the degree of professional satisfaction can be predicted by using emotional exhaustion and depersonalization (values from 1 to 5). It is concluded that H_{3.1} is only confirmed for the two dimensions of burnout (emotional exhaustion and depersonalization).

5. CONCLUSIONS

The above analysis has shown that teachers of physical education have a low degree of burnout and a high level of professional satisfaction, for the case of Attica, Greece. The results are compatible with the literature since other studies also report low burnout levels for the case of Greek teachers (Kantas, 1996; Koustelios & Kousteliou, 2001; Kokkinos, 2006; Amarantidou & Koustelios, 2009). Concerning the research hypotheses, a negative correlation was indicated between professional burnout and the two dimensions of professional satisfaction (role clarity and role conflict). More specifically, a decrease in role clarity leads to increased burnout. Also, as role conflict increases, burnout increases respectively. These results are also supported by literature, since similar studies have pointed out that both role conflict and role clarity are important factors that are associated with professional burnout (Low et al., 2001). Also statistical significant correlation was found between two of the organizational factors (role clarity and conflict) and professional satisfaction. More specifically, there is a positive correlation between professional satisfaction and role clarity and a negative correlation between professional satisfaction and role conflict. These findings are consistent with a body of

literature supporting that role clarity and conflict are two of the characteristics of organizational environment that adversely affect employee's professional satisfaction (Koustelios & Kousteliou, 1998; Koustelios et al., 2004; Wood et al., 1998; Rizo et al., 1970). Another research hypothesis investigated the correlation between professional satisfaction and the three dimensions of professional burnout (emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and personal accomplishment. According to the results, Pearson's correlation coefficient between emotional exhaustion and job satisfaction was -0,446, which depicts a moderate negative correlation between the two variables. These findings are consistent with various studies estimating a moderate to high correlation between the variables of emotional exhaustion and professional satisfaction in various occupations (Pisanti et al., 2003; Bhana & Haffeejee, 1996; Dolan, 1987; Koeske & Kirk, 1994; Pines et al., 1980; Evans & Fischer, 1993). Finally, by using linear regression method it has been concluded that emotional exhaustion and depersonalization (2 of the 3 dimensions of burnout according to Maslach) are statistically significant in predicting the individual's degree of professional satisfaction. Therefore, the structure and organization of municipalities in all service sectors should be governed by administrative consistency and supported by scientific committees. One of the priorities of municipal sports programs is the attention to applying management and marketing techniques in order to improve their image, increase public acceptance and improve employee's understanding of the organizational structure since this can be beneficial for all stakeholders as in the case of Greek small private enterprises (Ntanos

and Ntanos, 2014). The existence of a well organized structured with defined role duties and the provision of information to employees about the organizational structure and strategy should be of high importance in the effort to minimize the burnout syndrome.

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ОДНОС ИЗМЕЂУ ПРЕЗАСИЋЕЊА И ЗАДОВОЉСТВА ПОСЛОМ: СТУДИЈА СЛУЧАЈА НАСТАВНИКА ФИЗИЧКОГ ВАСПИТАЊА У УРБАНОЈ ОБЛАСТИ У ГРЧКОЈ

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Извод

Ово истраживање је имало два циља. У почетку, истраживање испитује однос између променљивих презасићења на раду и задовољства на раду, међу наставницима физичког васпитања који раде у спортским организацијама великих општина у региону Атике у Грчкој. Друго, испитује се однос између организационих фактора и променљивих презасићење и задовољство на раду. Сви наставници који су учествовали у истраживању су ангажовани у општинском програму под називом "Спорт за све". Методом случајног узорковања прикупљено је укупно 100 упитника које су попунили наставници физичког васпитања запослени у 9 општина Атике (Мароуси, Кифиссиа, Хераклион, Метаморфоси-Пефки, Н. Иониа, Н. Филадельфија, Илион, Хаидари) и представљају 10% од укупног броје испитиване популације. Анализа показује да грчки наставници физичког имају низак степен презасићења и висок ниво задовољства радом. Штавише, резултати потврђују постојање везе између организационих фактора, презасићења и задовољења посла.

Кључне речи: презасићење, професионално задовољство, наставници физичког васпитања, "Maslach Burnout Inventory", улога конфликта, разумевање делегираних улога

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