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## **The Relationship between Teachers' Instruction Procedures and Job Burnout**

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### **Abstract**

The purpose of the study was to explore the relationship between teacher instruction procedure and job burnout. The participants in this study were 140 teachers (males=87, females=53) at primary schools in Garmsar. Two instruments were used to collect data. The teachers' instruction procedure was measured by the use of the designed-researcher questionnaire (with three dimensions of instruction as direct, semi-direct and indirect). The job burnout (namely: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and decreased professional efficacy) was measured by the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI). The data were analyzed using the Pearson on product-moment correlation technique, Chi-Square test and regression. The major findings were as follows: 1) A significant relationship was found between total teachers' instruction procedure and total burnout. 2) A significantly positive relationship was found between teachers' direct instruction procedure and job burnout. 3) A significantly negative relationship was found between teachers' indirect instruction procedure and job burnout. 4) No significant relationship was found between teachers' semi-direct instruction procedure and job burnout. 5) A significantly positive relationship was determined between teachers' direct instruction procedure with each of the three dimensions of job burnout (Emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishment). 6) A significantly negative relationship was determined between teachers' direct instruction with each of the dimension of job burnout. 7) No significant relationship was found between teachers' semi-direct instruction procedure with each of the three dimensions of job burnout.

**Keywords:** Job burnout, instruction procedure, teacher, primary school.

## Introduction

The knowledge of job burnout has been considerably increased the last two decades. The rapidity with which the concept of burnout has been incorporated into everyone's life is astonishing. Burnout has been defined in a variety of ways. Freudenberger (1980) identified burnout as a "State of fatigue or frustration brought about by devotion to a cause, way of life, or relationship that field to produce the expected reward. Pines et al (1981) state that burnout is characterized by physical depletion, by feelings of helplessness and hopelessness. By emotional drain. And by the development of negative self-concept and negative attitudes toward work, life and other people although there have been a lot of studies to approach the concept of burnout, it seems that the most widely accepted definition is the one suggested by Maslach et al. (2001, P. 397): burnout is a prolonged response to chronic emotional and interpersonal stressors on the job, and its defined by the three dimensions of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishments. The first of these, emotional exhaustion, is characterized by a lack of energy and a feeling that one's emotional resources are used up (Cordes and Dougherty, 1993). This situation brings tension and frustration as workers are unable to carry out their occupational tasks and gradually lose their usual sense of responsibility towards clients and customers. The second dimension, depersonalization, is characterized by negative and inappropriate attitudes towards customers, frustration, loss of idealism, and withdrawal. A distinctive feature of depersonalization is a perception of customers as objects, rather than persons. The third dimension, reduced personal accomplishment, is characterized by a loss of efficiency and capability, low morale, and inability to cope (Maslach and Leiter, 2005). Such reduced personal accomplishment is accompanied by a decline in feelings of competence and a tendency to evaluate oneself negatively with respect to one's work and other people (Shutte et al, 2000). Maslach et al have developed and validated the Maslach burnout inventory (MBI), an instrument that assesses these three dimension. This instrument has been used in burnout research across a wide range of human environment. (Dorman, 2003). Research on burnout among teachers has recently received considerable attention (Travers and Cooper, 1993). Numerous studies have explored the specified condition that make teaching stressful (Antoniou et al, 2006). These condition can be categorized either exogenous (i.e.unfavourable occupational conditions, excessive workload, lack of collaboration, etc.) or endogenous pressures (i.e. Individual personality characteristics, disappointment and frustration that probably stem from unrealistic expectations that teachers hold, etc. In firth cozen's and Payne's (1999) review of 43 studies carried out in the us between 1979 and 1998, teachers were classified first in terms of levels of emotional exhaustion compared with other professional groups of the study. The consequences of occupational stress and burnout are particularly grave for individual who work in health and social services (Antoniou, 1999, Antoniou et al, 2003) and this has been a major concern of human service and helping professional. A considerable numeral of studies at primary and secondary level (Carlie, 1985, Cooper and Kelly, 1993) has identified the major sources of teachers' professional Burnout. These can be categorized as follows:

- ❖ Factors that directly concern the nature of teaching profession.
- ❖ Individual differences that influence teachers' vulnerability against stress.
- ❖ Administrative factors that are related to the school organization and administration.

Early attempts to describes burnout emphasized their personal nature and accordingly, blamed the individual teacher. This view has been superseded by a more social view of burnout that recognizes both background personality variables of the individual and school characteristics as contributing to burnout in teachers. (Dorman, 2003). However, most studies

of burnout have focused largely on the investigation of background variables like marital status, age, years of teaching and gender as predictors of burnout (Antoniou and Iwancki, 1984, Byrne, 1991, 1994, Malik, Mueller, and Meinke, 1991, Maslach and Jackson, 1981). For example, in Iran, Yazdi (2007) found that there is a significant negatively relationship between teachers' years of teaching and job burnout. Although, Ghadimi Moghadam and et al (2006) found that there is a significant negatively relationship between Salary and job burnout. Farahmand (1998) also found that there is a significant difference between female teachers' burnout and male teachers' burnout. In fact, empirical studies involving psychosocial environment dimensions of school and classrooms an to teacher burnout are rare. One of the major factors of teachers' professional burnout is instruction procedure.

The available studies regarding the levels of occupational burnout of Iranian teachers (Mohajer, 2003; Heidary, 2000; Badri, 1995; Nazari, 2003; Mohamadi, 2007; Ghadimi, 2007) have indicated that Iranian teachers experience considerably high level of stress and psychosomatic symptoms. In order to investigate the levels of stress and burnout in the Iranian population, the present study aimed to explore the relationship between teacher instruction procedure and job burnout. One of the major factor of teachers' job burnout is instruction procedure. According to Mirlohi (2001) instructions' procedures can be categorized as follows:

- ❖ Direct procedure: In direct procedures such as: lecture method, memorizer method teachers carry out total classroom activities alone.
- ❖ In semi-direct procedures: in semi-direct procedures such as question and answer method, dialectical method was balanced classrooms' activities between teacher and pupil.
- ❖ Indirect procedures: In indirect procedures such as experimental method, exploratory method and play method teachers' role is facilitator and pupils play majors' role.

## Research hypotheses

$H_1$ : There will be a significant relationship between teachers' direct instruction Procedures and dimensions of job burnout in the primary school.

$H_2$ : There will be a significant relationship between teachers' semi-direct instruction procedures and dimensions of job burnout in the primary school.

$H_3$ : There will be a significant relationship between teachers' indirect instruction procedures and dimensions of job burnout in the primary school.

$H_4$ : Instruction procedures are predictors for teachers' job burnout in the primary school.

## Method

### Participants

The sample of the study consisted of 140 Garmsar teachers who teach in public schools in primary school. The majority of teachers were bachelor (96.4 per cent) and the majority of the sample had been teaching more than 6 years.

## Instrument

*Burnout:* A set of 24 items from the latest version of the Maslach Burnout Inventory From ES (MBI) (Maslach et al., 1996) which has been developed especially of educational institutions was used to provide a self-assessment of each teachers' perceived burnout level. The three dimension of professional burnout assessed by this tool are: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishment. The eight items in the emotional exhaustion subscale describes feelings of being emotionally overextended and exhausted by one's work. The eight items of in depersonalization subscale describe an unfeeling and impersonal response towards recipients of one's car or service. The subscale of personal accomplishment contains eight items that describe feelings of competence and successful achievement in one's work with people.

A five-point Likert responds format ranging from almost never to almost always be used to score each item.

*Instruction procedure:* A 16 item instrument which assesses teacher's perceptions of their instruction procedures was used. This instrument assessed three methods of teaching; namely: direct instruments, semi-direct instruction, and indirect instruction. All instruction procedures items employed a 5 point response format (Viz. strongly Disagree, Not sure, agree, and strongly agree).

The reliability two instruments were calculated at  $\alpha$  Cronbach. Table 1 shows result of calculations  $\alpha$  Cronbach.

**Table 1. Cronbach  $\alpha$  for subscales**

| subscale                           | N   | $\alpha$ |
|------------------------------------|-----|----------|
| Emotional exhaustion               | 140 | 0/86     |
| Depersonalization                  | 140 | 0/93     |
| Reduced personal<br>Accomplishment | 140 | 0/89     |
| Direct instruction                 | 140 | 0/87     |
| Semi-direct instruction            | 140 | 0/94     |
| Indirect instruction               | 140 | 0/96     |

## Data analysis

Data from the completed survey were entered into SPSS 11.5 (SPSS In., 2003) and product-moment correlation technique, and regression was conducted.

## Results

### *Demographic profile*

The demographic characteristics of the respondents are summarized in table 2. As can be seen from the table, 62.1 per cent of the respondents were male and 37.9 per cent were female. As much as 94.4 per cent were bachelor and 3.6 per cent were master.

**Table 2. Demographic profile of respondents**

| Characteristics            | N   | $\alpha$ |
|----------------------------|-----|----------|
| <b>Gender</b>              |     |          |
| Male                       | 87  | 62.1     |
| Female                     | 53  | 37.9     |
| <b>Academic record</b>     |     |          |
| Bachelor                   | 135 | 94.4     |
| Master                     | 5   | 140      |
| <b>Teaching background</b> |     |          |
| 1-5 years                  | 52  | 37.1     |
| 6-10 years                 | 38  | 27.1     |
| 11-15 years                | 40  | 28.6     |
| > 16 years                 | 10  | 7.1      |

Table 3. Shows the means, standard deviations and minimum and maximum values for burnout (all three dimensions) and instruction procedures (all three methods)

**Table 3. Descriptive statistics**

| Variable                                  | Mean | SD   | Min  | Max  |
|---|------|------|------|------|
| <b>Emotional exhaustion</b>               | 1.20 | 0.89 | 1    | 3.88 |
| <b>Depersonalization</b>                  | 2.22 | 0.94 | 1    | 4    |
| <b>Personal accomplishment</b>            | 2.07 | 0.97 | 1    | 3.75 |
| <b>Job burnout</b>                        | 2.16 | 0.82 | 1    | 3.71 |
| <b>Direct instruction procedures</b>      | 2.99 | 0.71 | 1.20 | 4.20 |
| <b>Semi-direct instruction procedures</b> | 2.82 | 0.54 | 1    | 4    |
| <b>Indirect instruction procedures</b>    | 2.43 | 0.74 | 1    | 3.67 |

Relationships between instruction procedures and each of the three burnout dimensions were measured by Pearson's correlation coefficient. The results are shown in table 4.

**Table 4. Correlation matrix among the instruction procedures and the dimension of burnout**

| Burnout dimensions      | Direct instruction | Semi-direct instruction | Indirect instruction |
|-------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Emotional exhaustion    | 0.47               | 0.040                   | -0.377               |
| Depersonalization       | 0.447              | 0/004                   | -0.40                |
| Personal accomplishment | 0.30               | 0.095                   | -0.232               |

p<0.01

As table 4 shows there is a significant positively relationship between teachers' direct instruction procedure with each three dimensions of job burnout (Emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, reduced personal accomplishment) and there is a significant negatively relationship between indirect instruction procedures with each dimension of job burnout. No significant relationship was not observed between teachers' semi-direct instruction procedure with each three dimension of job burnout. The multiple regression analysis indicated that direct and indirect instruction procedures are significant predictors of job burnout. Table 5 shows the results of multiple regression analysis.

**Table 5. Result of multiple regression analysis**

| Model                   | unstandardized |           | standardized | t     | sig   |
|-------------------------|----------------|-----------|--------------|-------|-------|
|                         | $\beta$        | Std.error | $\beta$ eta  |       |       |
| Constant                | 2.039          | 0.529     |              | 3.85  | 0.000 |
| Direct instruction      | 0.327          | 0/105     | 0.285        | 3.103 | 0.002 |
| Semi-direct instruction | 0.007          | 0.112     | 0.004        | 0.059 | 0.953 |
| Indirect instruction    | -0.356         | 0.099     | -0.326       | -3.59 | 0.000 |

Model summary: R= 0.464,  $R^2 = 0.215$ , Adjust R = 0.72, st. error = 0.247, F = 19.19, sig = 0.000

## Discussion

In recent years several studies into teacher have been conducted (Brouwers, Evers and Tomic, 2001; Goddad and O,Brein, 2003; Tren, 1997). Some studies have been surveyed rate teachers' burnout. Some others have been compared teachers' burnout with other groups. Some studies have been studied sources of teachers' burnout. The present study showed the direct teaching method such as lecture method, explain method have significant positively relationship with three dimension of job burnout (Emotional exhaustion, Depersonalization, reduced personal accomplishment). This finding is consistent with the characteristics of direct teaching models. The other finding of this study showed that indirect teaching methods such as discovery teaching method, problem solving method, have significant negatively relationship with dimension of teachers' burnout. The results obtained from this research were in line with the current teaching theories.

To interpret these findings, we can say that in direct instructions, the teachers drop more effects, use more energy and the classroom environment is more rigid and unidirectional in comparison with other teaching methods; therefore, the teachers gradually get more exhausted and their mental energy is reduced. Accordingly, they will experience more job burnout. On the contrary, in indirect instructions, it can be observed that collaborative instruction, synergy, group efforts and multi-dimensional communication will be dominant, so the classroom and learning environment will be more fascinating and pleasant. Consequently, these teachers will feel less pessimistic and inefficient.

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