The Mental Health Status of Librarians in Shahid Sadoughi University of Medical Sciences

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Human resource is an organizational capital and its mental health is one of the most important dimensions. The mental health has a significant effect on performance of staffs. The current research aimed to examine the mental health and its dimensions in librarians of Shahid Sadoughi university in 2016. This is a descriptive-analytical study with correlational design among librarians working in libraries of Shahid Sadoughi university. Goldberg & Hiller general health questionnaire was used to evaluate general health of librarians. Data were then analyzed using descriptive statistics, independent T test, variance analysis, and Pearson correlation coefficient through SPSS software version 19. Results indicated that the mean score of librarians' general health was 22.8±10.38 which shows that participants were healthy. Furthermore, marital status was associated with health and its components so that married individuals were less healthy. Depression rate of librarians was low but most of them suffered from physical problems, anxiety, sleep disorders, and social conflicts. Therefore, librarians' authorities should consider such problems and develop strategic plans for them.

Keywords: Mental health, Librarians, CHQ28.

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Introduction

Mental health is necessary for continuous life and favorable application of life's gifts. It is inevitable to encounter psychological crises due to the problems of the world and their outcomes in terms of stress and mental stresses. Therefore, mental health is very important in today's life [1]. Studies show that after heart diseases, depression will be the second main infirmity throughout the world in 2020 [2]. The problems of general and mental health influences individuals' efficiency [3]. Individuals who have the sense of usefulness, will progress permanently thus they can protect their health [4]. According to the definition of WHO, health is not merely the absence of disease or infirmity rather, the main concept of health and wellbeing is the absence of mental, social, economic and physical problems. The health indicators are studied in four dimensions of general health including physical health, symptoms of anxiety & sleep disorder, social function disorder and signs of depression [5].

Human resource is the main organizational capital. Therefore, one of the features of a healthy organization is that mental and physical health of staffs should be as interesting as production and efficiency for managers [6] to prevent numerous costs incurred on the organizations due to staffs' absenteeism [7]. Among social institutions, libraries can meet the dynamic requirements of the staffs and clients. In university community, the empowerment of staffs and librarians can play an important role in different dimensions due to high level of the interaction between librarians and academic community [8], thus service quality of librarians has a determinant role in medical educations at universities of medical sciences [1]. In addition, regarding the nature of librarianship such as long-term activities, repetitive work environments with low variety subject staffs to many psychological and physical pressures [6].

Regarding the policy of macro managers for staffs' health in all departments of organizations, the requirement of communication factors in health for growing and educating efficient, skillful and healthy sources without paying extra costs as well as preventing turnover of human sources [9], it is necessary to conduct a research on the mental health status of librarians in libraries of medical sciences. The research aims to study the mental health of librarians who are working in Yazd University of Medical Sciences.

Methods

This descriptive-analytical cross-sectional study was conducted in 2016. The statistical population includes 30 librarians of Yazd University of Medical Science. The population was studied by census due to the small size of the population. It is noteworthy that 5 librarians (out of 30) were not ready to participate in the study. The standard questionnaire includes two parts. The first part contains demographic specifications of librarians including gender, age, marital status, education, work experience and their positions. The second part includes general health questionnaire (GHQ) which measures dimensions of physical health, anxiety, depression, social function and health status. The questionnaire was presented by Goldberg and Hillier. It contains 28 items and it has been scored by Likert scale. The questionnaire has been mostly used to measure minor mental disorders in various circumstances [10]. Moreover, the questionnaire has been normalized and standardized in Iran. The validity and reliability of the questionnaire were calculated by correlation coefficient and Cronbach' alpha (0.90), respectively [25]. The cut point of the study was as follows: the cut point of 6 was used for every dimension and scales of physical complaints, anxiety, social function disorder and depression. In general, the individuals with scores below 22 were classified in the healthy group and the individuals with scores above 23 were classified in disorder-based group. Data were analyzed by descriptive statistics, independent T test, variance analysis, Pearson correlation coefficient in SPSS 19 and significance level of 0.05. This study obtained ethics approval and was approved by the Ethical Committee of Iran University of Medical Science.

Results

Regarding the obtained results, 84% of participants were women and 68% were married. Most librarians were between 26 and 35 years old (32%) with work experience less than 5 years and 44% had M.A degree. When studying table 1, it was concluded that librarians with mean score of 22.8 were healthy but they had the separated disorders in physical health, sleep & anxiety disorder as well as social function.

Table 1. Distribution of relative and absolute frequencies and mean score of components of general health

Component	Status	Number	Percent	Mean	Standard deviation	Total status
Physical health	Healthy	8	32	7.32	4	With disorder
	Not healthy	17	68			
Signs of anxiety and sleep disorder	Healthy	7	28	6.04	3.73	With disorder
	Not healthy	18	72			
Social function disorder	Healthy	8	32	6.76	2.58	With disorder
	Not healthy	17	68			
Symptoms of depression	Healthy	21	84	2.68	3.03	Healthy
	Not healthy	4	16			
Health	Healthy	11	46	22.8	10.38	Healthy
	Not healthy	14	54			

Table 2. Determining the correlation between components of general health of librarians

		Depression	Sleep & anxiety disorder	Physical health	Social function disorder
Depression	Pearson Correlation	1	.445*	.515**	.048
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.026	.008	.819
	N	25	25	25	25
Sleep & anxiety disorder	Pearson Correlation	.445*	1	.739**	.415*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.026		.000	.039
	N	25	25	25	25
Physical health	Pearson Correlation	.515**	.739**	1	.402*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.008	.000		.047
	N	25	25	25	25
Social function disorder	Pearson Correlation	.048	.415*	.402*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.819	.039	.047	
	N	25	25	25	25

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

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

Concerning Table 2 and Pearson correlation tests for normal data, it was found that there was a direct and significant correlation between physical health and sleep & anxiety disorder (P = 0.00, r = 0.739), between physical health and depression (P = 0.008, r = 0.515), between physical health and social function disorder (P = 0.47, r = 0.402), between depression and sleep & anxiety disorder (P = 0.026, r = 0.445) and between social function disorder and sleep & anxiety disorder (P = 0.039, r = 0.415).

Moreover, one way analysis of variance and Pearson correlation tests were used to determine independency or dependency of research variables, thus they showed that there was a significant relationship between health and marital status (P = 0.019) and mean health of single (mean = 15.8)individuals was higher than that of married individuals (mean = 26). No significant relationship was found between marital status, depression (P = 0.079) and social function disorder (P = 0.620). Furthermore, the health had no significant relationship with other demographic specifications.

Discussion

The present research was conducted on librarians of Yazd University of Medical Science in 2016 and its aim was to evaluate the general health of librarians and different dimensions of health among them. Results showed that the mean mental health of librarians of medical science libraries was 22.8. Over half of librarians obtained scores higher than the cut Point of general health questionnaire, thus they did not have a healthy status. However, on average, librarians were healthy. Such result was consistent with the research of Hariri [1] on librarians of Isfahan University of Medical Science. According to the study of Sadidpour [16], it has essential standards in medical science department (z = - 0.02).

Regarding the results obtained from mean scores of scales, it was evident that librarians had more unpleasant status in terms of social conflict (6.76 ± 2.85), physical complaints (7.32 ± 4) and anxiety (6.04 ± 3.73) than depression (2.68 ± 3.03). In other words, librarians showed the highest disorder in physical health. that is why they showed the lowest disorder in depression.

Results indicated that there was a significant relationship between mental health and marital status (p = 0.019) such that mean mental health of married individuals was lower than that of single

individuals. Such results are not in line with researches of Ardian [12] and Hariri [1] who showed that the relationship between gender and mental health is not significant. Their result was in line with the research of Hariri and Yadid [1, 14].

In the present research, there was a significant relationship between sleep and mental health. The result was consistent with that of Shcatt et al [13] and Bigler [17]. The results obtained from the present research showed that librarians with higher degrees and job positions were less depressed and anxious thus they had better general health.

Conclusion

The results showed that librarians had low mental health in terms of physical health and social conflict. The mental health of librarians was average in this study, therefore, library managers should provide educational programs for their librarians to increase the librarians' mental health skills, to increase the mental health level of those who are working in libraries and informatics centers due to the importance of libraries in universities. The codification of some interventions will be very effective on improvement of librarians' mental health such as improvement of sleep status, providing sport facilities for library staff, holding counseling meetings, workshops for education of communication skills and problem-solving methods.

Acknowledgment

Conflict of Interest

Authors declare that there is not any competing interest.

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