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Social Support or Organizational Support: Which One Is More Predictive of Job Burnout in Workers?

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Social and organizational supports are effective factors closely related to job burnout and Due to the limited studies in this area on Iranian workers, this study aims to determine the predictability of social support and organizational support in job burnout for workers in Yazd.

Methods: This cross-sectional study was carried out among 200 textile workers in Yazd through stratified random sampling. The data were collected by the tools including demographic characteristics, questionnaires of social support, organizational support, and Maslach's job burnout. The data were analyzed by SPSS using the Pearson correlation coefficient and the multiple linear regressions. The Significance level of tests was considered as $p < 0.05$.

Results: There was a significant strong positive relationship between job burnout and emotional exhaustion (r= 0.88) ($p < 0.001$). There was found a significant negative correlation between job burnout and social support (r =-0.390), friend support (r= -0.401), family supoert (r= -0.218), important others support (r= - 0.283) ($p < 0.001$). Multiple linear regression analysis showed that 17.8% of the changes in job burnout were explained by friends, family, and important others support (R^2=0.178, $p<0.001$) whereas support from friends was the strongest predictor of job burnout (β= - 0.338, $p < 0.001$). Social and organizational support explained 35.9% of the changes in job burnout (R^2= 0.359, $p<0.001$) with organizational support being the strongest predictor of job burnout (β= - 0.472, $p<0.001$).

Conclusion: Given that organizational support was the most significant predictor of job burnout in workers, developing organizational interventions to increase support in workplace can be regarded as effective strategy to reduce or slow down job burnout among workers.

Keywords: Job burnout, Social support, Organizational support, Workers

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Introduction

Work-related stress is one of the social problems, which is known as job burnout. The concept of job burnout was first introduced by Frydenberger (1978) as a reaction to interpersonal and job stressors. After that, Maslach, Schaufeli and Leiter (2001) mentioned three main dimensions of job burnout including emotional exhaustion (loss of energy for doing the job), depersonalization (negative and indifferent attitudes toward the job and colleagues) and Personal competence (decrease of sense of empowerment and competence to perform tasks successfully) (1,2). Individual traits and situational factors that are highly close to job burnout include lack of social and organizational support, future job uncertainty, shift work, discrimination, low wages, monotonous and repeated work, job dissatisfaction, and workplace dissatisfaction (3-6). The variables creating job burnout are complex and multifactorial and according to different researchers, such variables include individual, organizational, and environmental factors which should be highly considered for coping with job burnout. In the theory of systems, it is believed that paying attention to the context of life in family, workplace, and social networks are important to better understand the factors causing burnout (7). Thus, it can be said that organzational support is one of the critical variables which can be effective as an approach in reducing job burnout and its dimensions by promoting respect and a sense of value to individuals. Working in a workplace where support and respect for individuals are high and negative aspects such as bureaucracy, argument, and conflict are low will not only increase motivation and realize the goals and expectations but also enhance commitment and loyalty of the individuals towards the organization (8). Social support is another effective factor in reducing psychological stress among individuals. it is considered as a barrier to the negative effects of job stress and, finally, job burnout and is also recognized as an inhibitor of job stress. People with high social support evaluate the problems as less stressful and are resistant to stressful events (9–10).

Social support involves the receiving of emotion (expressing love and affection), affirmation (awareness of proper feedback behaviors), and assistance (financial assistance and collaboration in performing tasks) from family, friends, and others. Social and organizational support systems can decrease the negative effects of stress and improve health (9). In this regard, Shirey stated that the nurses receiving less support from their colleagues experienced more stress and job burnout (11). Abualrub (2004) and Miler (2006) considered social support as a critical factor in the lives of individuals in organizations and introduced it as the best way to cope with job burnout (9, 12). In the related study, the rate of job burnout among 90% of Khuzestan Steel Company workers was reported at an average level (13). The results of the study on job burnout in Bafq mineworkers indicated that the personal incompetence for more than 70% of participants was at a high level. Additionally, a significant relationship was found between job burnout and its three dimensions (14). Due to the limited studies on the association between job burnout and social and organizational supports in workers, the present study aimed to determine the predictability of social support and organizational supports in job burnout among the workers of one of the textile industries in Yazd.

Methods

This cross-sectional study was conducted in Yazd in 2017. The sampling method was stratified random and the samples were selected from different plant units (of 9 work units). The sample size was estimated as 200 subjects based on the data of previous studies (14) and considering estimation error as 2.5, 95% confidence level, α= 0.05, d=0.05 and S=15.77 ($n = \frac{z^2 s^2}{d^2}$).

The Data collection tool involved a questionnaire including four parts of demographic information, Maslach job burnout questionnaire, social support questionnaire, and organizational

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support questionnaire. The Maslach job burnout questionnaire, which includes 22 items, measures three aspects of job burnout, including emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lack of personal competence (with a total score of 0-132). Nine items were related to emotional exhaustion (0-54), five items were related to depersonalization (0-30), and eight items were related to the component of personal incompetence (0-48) with Cronbach's alpha of 0. 71 to 0.90 (15). The adapted social support questionnaire used for the present study included 12 items with a 5 point Likert scale, which measured perceived support from family (4 items), perceived support from other important people (4 items), and perceived support from friends (4 items). The range of scores on this scale was from 12 to 60 (16). Organizational support was measured through a 7 point Likert scale with nine items with a total score of 9 to 63 (17). The data were collected by interviewing the workers and analyzed by SPSS version 16 using the Pearson correlation coefficient and the multiple linear regression. The Pearson correlation coefficient was used to investigate the correlation among the job burnout and its tree aspects with social support, and its dimentions, as well as organizational support. The multiple linear regression was used to examine the relationship between job burnout and social support, and organizational support as a predictive analysis. The significance level of tests was considered as $p<0.05$.

The current study is influenced by the result of a thesis with the code of ethics IR.SSU.SPH.REC.1395.99 from the Ethics Committee of the Shahid Sadoughi University of Medical Sciences, Yazd, Iran. The researchers of this study observed the ethical considerations of gaining consent from previously informed participants and maintaining the confidentiality of information.

Results

The results revealed a relatively strong and significant positive correlation between job burnout, emotional exhaustion, and depersonalization. In this domain, the strongest significant positive relationship was identified between job burnout and emotional exhaustion ($r = 0.88$, $p<0.001$). Additionally, there was a moderate significant negative correlation between job burnout and personal competence ($r= -0.663$, $p< 0.001$). There was a significant negative correlation between job burnout and social support and all its dimensions ($p< 0.001$). In this way, the strongest correlation was observed between job burnout and friends support. ($r= -0.4$, $p< 0.001$). There was identified a significant negative correlation between organizational support and job burnout as well as its dimensions, so that the strongest relationship was observed between organizational support and job burnout ($r= -0.531$, $p<0.001$), and that the relationship between job burnout and organizational support was stronger than social support (Table 1).

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Table 1. Correlation Coefficient Between Job Burnout, Social Support, including their Dimensions and Organizational Support Among Workers

Variable	Mean	SD	Job burnout	Emotional exhaustion	Depersonalization	Personal competence	social support	Friends support	Family support	Important people support	Organizational support
Job burnout	52.20	24.88	1								
Emotional exhaustion	25.95	13.59	**0.882	1							
Depersonalization	7.71	7.63	**0.743	** 0.628	1						
Personal competence	28.48	10.66	**- 0.663	** - 0.344	** -0.254	1					
social support	44.22	8.95	**- 0.390	**-0.197	**-0.307	**0.412	1				
Friends support	12.55	3.98	** -0.401	*-0.177	**-0.324	**0.483	**0.763	1			
Family support	16.17	3.48	** -0.218	-0.088	**-0.207	**0.222	**0.754	**0.404	1		
Important people support	15.50	3.93	** - 0.283	*-0.171	*-0.179	**0.267	**0.817	**0.387	**0.547	1	
Organizational support	32.65	13.21	** - 0.531	**- .487	**-0.293	**0.446	*0.211	**0.279	0.56	0.134	1

*p≤ 0.01, **p≤ 0.001

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Based on multiple linear regression analysis for predicting job burnout in terms of social support dimensions, the R^2 value for three variables of friend support, family support, and important people support was equal to 0.178, indicating that 17.8% of changes in job burnout were explained by these three variables. The correlation coefficient value (r= 0.422) showed a moderately significant positive correlation between the above-mentioned independent variables and job burnout. Furthermore, due to the significance of the F test (F =4.19 P<0.001), it can be concluded that this regression model is significant and the set of independent variables in this model could explain the changes in job burnout score among the workers considered.

On the other hand, friends 'support with the highest standard Standardized coefficients β.

(β = -0.338) had the most significant effect on job burnout with an indirect relationship, i.e., with an increase of each unit in the standard deviation for the score of friend support, 0.338 of the standard deviation concerning job burnout score was decreased (Table 2).

Table 2. Multiple linear Regression Analysis for Predicting Job Burnout in Terms of Social Support Dimensions Among the Workers

Independent variable	R	R^2	F	P-Value	Standardized coefficients β	t	p	Dependent variable
Friends support					- 0.338	- 4.67	<0.001	
Family supporty	0.422	0.178	14.19	< 0.001	- 0.049	- 0.636	0.526	Job burnout
Important people support					- 0.115	- 1.48	0.140	

As observed in Table 3, the R^2 value equal to 0.359 showed that 35.9% of changes in job burnout were explained by social support and organizational support. The correlation coefficient r with the value of 0.599 indicated a significant positive correlation between the above-mentioned independent variables and job burnout.

Due to the significance level of the F test (P = 0.54.07, P <0.001), it can be concluded that this regression model was significant and social support and organizational support in this model could explain the changes in job burnout score among the sparticipants. On the other hand, organizational support with the highest Standardized coefficients β (β = -0.472) was the most significant predictior of job burnout with an inverse relationship, i.e., for one unit of increase in the standard deviation of organizational support score, there was a decrease of 0.472 of the standard deviation for the score on job burnout.

Table 3. Multiple linear Regression Analysis for Predicting Job Burnout in Terms of the Type of Support Among the Participants

Independent variable	R	R^2	F	P-Value	Standardized coefficients β	t	P-Value	Dependent variable
Social support	0.599	0.359	54.07	< 0.001	- 0.283	-4.80	< 0.001	Job burnout
Organizational support					- 0.472	-8	< 0.001	

Discussion

One of the most common occupational issues typically noticed in reaction to occupational in reaction to occupational and organizational pressures among the human resources is the phenomenon of job burnout, which is related to a reduction in the ability to adapt to stressors.

It is a syndrome that includes physical and emotional exhaustion and leads to negative self-concept, a negative attitude towards job, and a lack of communication with clients during working hours. The results indicated that 44% of employees do not see any kind of emotional empathy and relationship between themselves and top managers in the organization they work in. In the same line,

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another study indicated that the two phenomena of personal life and working life work both have interactive and intensifying effects on each other. A person who has many problems in his family and personal life is certainly affected by them, causes distraction in his concentration, job satisfaction, productivity, and vitality in the workplace (18). Based on the results of the present study, a significant negative relationship was found between social support and organizational support with job burnout, which was being consistent with the results of similar studies (10, 19- 20). Similarly, a study conducted by ZargarShirazi and colleagues (2017) revealed that there was a significant negative relationship between perceived social support and job burnout in female nurses (19). Furthermore, the research by Chang et al. (2006) revealed that support in the workplace was one of the significant predictors of mental health in the Australian Nurses workplace (10).

Based on the findings of the present study, the two variables of social support and organizational support could explain the changes in the score for job burnout among the studied workers. On the other hand, organizational support had the most significant effect on job burnout that is consistent with the results of other studies (18-25). The social support of workers in this research was relatively good, particularly in the area of family support, which can influence the reduction of job burnout and has also been confirmed by many studies (26-27). The results of the present study are similar to other studies indicating a significant inverse correlation between job burnout and emotional exhaustion on the one hand , and depersonalization with social support and its dimension on the other (26, 25, 14, 28). In the study of carried out by Demir et al, (2003), a significant relationship has been found between receiving support in house chores and depersonalization (28). In the present research, a strong direct correlation between personal competence and social support has been observed, which is consistent with the results of the study of Vaezfar et al, 2014 (29). The researchers explained that social support was significantly correlated with burnout subscales of personal accomplishment of nurses (29). However, inconsistent results were found in the study of Rezaei Ronaghi and colleagues (2016), no significant relationship was established between support from family, friends, and other important people with personal competence among the personnel engaged in the department of medical urgency (30). Similarly, the study conducted by Demir et al. (2003) showed no significant relationship between receiving support in doing house chores and personal competence levels in nurses (28). This result may be attributed to the nature of the work and the context in which the work is performed.

The current study revealed that the support of friends and colleagues was at the average level. This finding is consistent with the results of research by Jamali et al. (2013) which claimed that the social support the nurses received from their colleagues and supervisors was at a moderate level (31).

Measuring organizational support and social support, together, is one of the strengths of this study.It is necessary to mention that the workers self-report on the pereception of social and organizational support as well as burnout, were among the limitations of the study.

Conclusion

Given that organizational support was the most significant predictior of job burnout in workers, designing intervention to Increase organizational supports can reduce job burnout among workers. Therefore creating and strenthing support networks in workplace such as the support networks of friends, colleagues and managers can be considered as the strategies to reduce or slow down job burnout in workplace.

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Conflict of interest

The authors declared that there is no Conflict interest.

Author contribution

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S.S.M. and F.S. devised the project, the main conceptual ideas and proof outline. F.S. performed the data gathering and entered data to SPSS. M.A. and A.D. performed the data analysis. M.A. and F.S. contributed to the interpretation of the results. F.S. wrote the manuscript in consultation with M.A and S.S.M. All authors discussed the results and commented on the manuscript.

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