

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Quality of Work life and Job burnout in Female staffs of public Hospitals related to Tehran University of Medical Sciences

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ABSTRACT

Job burnout is one of the most prevalent consequences of job stress. It is a factor influencing on quality of work life. If the relationship between job burnout and quality of work life is determined, managers and decision-makers will be able to provide a favorable ground for enhancement of quality of work life and increasing professional efficiency. The present study was formulated in order to evaluate the above-mentioned relationship in female staffs of public hospitals related to Tehran University of Medical Sciences. This cross-sectional research concentrated on female staffs of four public hospitals related to Tehran University of Medical Sciences in 2014. Sample size was decided to be 193 people through a stratified random sampling procedure. Data collection was performed via author-made tool for quality of work life and the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI). The collected data were subjected to descriptive and inferential analyses in SPSS 18. There is a negative and significant relationship between quality of work life and job burnout in female staffs of public hospitals related to Tehran University of Medical Sciences ($r=-0.084$; $p=0.031$). Furthermore, there are negative and significant correlations between all attributes of quality of work life, except for social dependence, and job burnout ($p<0.05$). General life atmosphere had the highest influence on the dependent variable. Female staffs of public hospitals related to Tehran University of Medical Sciences are averagely satisfied with the quality of their work life. The highest satisfaction belonged to general life atmosphere and social dependence. They also encountered lower-than-average level of job burnout.

Keywords: quality of work life, job burnout, female staffs, public hospitals, Tehran.

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INTRODUCTION

The past few decades saw a rising attention to staffs as the biggest and most important asset of any organization. Majority of alterations occurred in recent years due to the factors like disorder in management system, reduction in organizational layers, participation of staffs in decision-making process, and etc. were the results of a big change in the attitude of organizations toward workforce and abandonment of the old and flawed definition of the term after industrial revolution [10]. Improvement in performance of organization is affected by several factors, most important of which is motivation of staffs to perform their tasks. This motivation is associated with increase in mentality, job satisfaction, job security, suitable facilities, and quality of work life [6].

Approximately one-third of workforce in the world is females. In Iran, Ministry of Health and Medical Education ranks second after Ministry of Education in the number of female staffs. Females are might be under severe mental and physical pressure due to conflicts in their professional and household

responsibilities. This is even harsher in countries with traditional environments. Negligence of several roles of working women will lead to adverse effects on their physical and mental health, which targets organizational efficiency wither directly or indirectly. Therefore, it is necessary to run suitable planning for acceptable performance based on the conditions of human force strategic management [26].

Personal and professional lives in the present-day complicated world are so interlocked that the new term "quality of work life" has emerged [21]. Quality of work life is very important on account of complication and variety of organizations and workplaces and attention to human force. It is vital for all organizations in order to hire and keep staffs [24]. Quality of work life program has such attributes as work standards, equal employment opportunities, and fair salaries. It is a set of real conditions of work in any organization such as salary and bonus, facilities, health considerations, participation in decision-making, management procedure, and diversity of responsibilities. Quality of work life defines the intuition of staffs from their work [3]. In today's society, improvement of quality of work life has become one of the most important purposes of organization and staffs. Since there is a direct relationship between management of human force and quality of work life, revitalization of staffs through enhancement of quality of work life is a key of success in any organization [2].

One of the most prevalent work-related issues manifested as a reaction against occupational and organizational pressures is job burnout. It is defined as reduced ability of a person to adapt to pressurizing factors. It is known as a syndrome consisting of physical and mental exhaustion, which leads to negative self-concept, negative attitude toward the job, and lack of connectedness to clients [11].

Several studies were performed on the relationship between quality of work life and job burnout [23, 19, 15, 4]. However, no research has focused on this relationship in female staffs of public hospitals in Iran. Therefore, the aim of this study was to determine the relationship between quality of work life and job burnout in female staffs of public hospitals related to Tehran University of Medical Sciences.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The present research is a cross-sectional and descriptive-correlational study. The research population included female staffs of four public hospitals related to Tehran University of Medical Sciences in 2014. Quality of work life was the independent variable and job burnout was dependent variable. The study sample was decided according to a stratified random sampling method. For this purpose, female staffs of four public hospitals related to Tehran University of Medical Sciences were stratified into two groups, i.e. office clerk and medical clerk. Then, sampling was performed randomly from each of the groups.

Data collection was performed via an author-made tool for quality of work life according to Walton's model and the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI). This tool consists of 25 items in four subscales, namely emotional exhaustion (four items), depersonalization (five items), personal accomplishment (eight items), and cynicism (three items). The tool analyzes both frequency and intensity of the factors and the highest score is 100. Validity of the questionnaire was confirmed by experts' opinion and the tool was considered reliable as the Cronbach's α was found to be over 0.7.

The questionnaire of quality of work life was designed based upon Walton's model. then, experts' ideas on the tool were taken and corrections were made and the final tool included 35 item covering eight criteria, i.e. fair and enough pay, safe and healthy workplace, direct opportunities for development and using human abilities, persistent growth and security, social solidarity in occupational organization, law obedience in job environment, job and general life condition, and social dependence in work life. In order to determine internal reliability, Cronbach's α was calculated for each attribute and then the α value was estimated for each attribute after removing each item and then compared with the total α value of the attribute. The items whose omission increased Cronbach's α for ≥ 3 percent were either edited or eliminated. After edition and/or elimination of some items, Cronbach's α for the above-mentioned criteria were found to be 0.84, 0.88, 0.80, 0.81, 0.90, 0.89, 0.76, and 0.83, respectively. The total Cronbach's α value of the questionnaire was found to be 0.93.

Statistical analyses were performed through descriptive (mean, frequency, percentage, standard deviation, minimum, and maximum) and inferential (Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and Pearson's Correlation Coefficient) statistics. All the statistical operations were performed in SPSS 18.

RESULTS

Table 1 depicts demographic information of the female staffs of public hospitals related to Tehran University of Medical Sciences responding to the questionnaires.

Table 1. Demographic information of the respondents to the questionnaires

Variables	Frequency	Percentage	
Marital status	Single	80	41.7
	Married	113	58.3
Age group	20-30 years old	90	46.6
	31-40 years old	50	25.9
	>40 years old	38	19.7
	Not answered	15	7.8
Type of job	Medical	118	60.9
	Office	75	39.1
Years of working	1-5	97	50.5
	6-10	26	13.5
	11-15	26	13.5
	16-20	15	7.3
	>20	29	15.2
Number of children	0	109	56.8
	1	59	30.2
	2	24	12.5
	3	1	0.5
Academic status	High school degree	12	6.2
	Associate degree	8	4.2
	Bachelor degree	141	72.9
	Master degree	20	10.4
	PhD	12	6.2
Academic status of husband	High school degree	8	4.2
	Associate degree	7	3.6
	Bachelor degree	59	30.7
	Master degree	26	13.5
	PhD	12	6.2
Husband's job	Others	81	41.8
	Government clerk	59	30.7
	Non-governmental	42	21.9
	Retired	8	4.2
	Others	84	43.2

Table 2 shows the descriptive results obtained from the filled questionnaires. According to the table, female staffs thought the pays were fair and sufficient, the workplace was not safe and healthy, there were limited opportunities for development of human capabilities, there were mediocre opportunities for persistent growth and security, there was social solidarity, law obedience in the organization was in an average level, and there was a mediocre level of social dependence in their work life. Furthermore, the job burnout score of the female staffs of public hospitals related to Tehran University of Medical Sciences was below the scale.

Table 2. Descriptive information of quality of work life and job burnout in female staffs of public hospitals related to Tehran University of Medical Sciences

Variables	Minimum	Maximum	Scale	Mean	Standard deviation
Quality of work life	64	104	90	86.31	9.64
Job burnout	34	265	187.5	84.81	21.38
fair and enough pay	3	11	9	7.77	2.39
safe and healthy workplace	3	15	9	7.42	2.92
direct opportunities for development and using human abilities	4	20	12	9.89	3.84
persistent growth and security	4	20	12	11.62	3.10
social solidarity in occupational organization	3	15	9	8.85	2.40
law obedience in job environment	5	25	15	14.42	3.65
job and general life condition	4	20	12	12.68	3.28
social dependence in work life	4	20	12	12.16	2.80

Table 3 summarizes the results obtained from data normality test. As the data achieved from Kolmogorov-Smirnov test indicate, all the variables have normal distributions because the significance level of the test is more than 0.05. Therefore, a parametric test (Pearson's Correlation Coefficient) was adopted to analyze the data.

Table 3. Kolmogorov-Smirnov test results for normal distribution of data

Variables	Kolmogorov-Smirnov value	Sig
Quality of work life	1.158	0.137
Job burnout	1.399	0.140
fair and enough pay	3.469	0.120
safe and healthy workplace	1.583	0.113
direct opportunities for development and using human abilities	2.171	0.230
persistent growth and security	1.996	0.121
social solidarity in occupational organization	3.103	0.123
law obedience in job environment	2.313	0.110
job and general life condition	2.585	0.131
social dependence in work life	3.107	0.140

Table 4 presents the results obtained from statistical analysis of the correlation between quality of work life and job burnout in female staffs of public hospitals related to Tehran University of Medical Sciences. According to the table, quality of work life in the staffs influences on job burnout. Furthermore, type of job, years of working, academic degree, husband's academic status, husband's job, number of children marital status, and age were found to effect on the correlation between quality of work life and job burnout in the staffs. Moreover, the results revealed that there are negative and significant correlations between job burnout and all criteria of quality of work life ($p < 0.05$) except for social dependence in work life ($p > 0.05$).

Table 4. The correlation between quality of work life and job burnout according to demographic attributes

Variables and attributes	Pearson's correlation coefficient	Sig
Quality of work life and job burnout	-0.084	0.031
Quality of work life and job burnout based on type of job	Medical	0.090
	office	0.018
Quality of work life and job burnout based on years of working	1-5	0.080
	6-10	0.033
	11-15	0.038
	16-20	0.048
	>20	0.047
Quality of work life and job burnout based on academic status	High school degree	0.041
	Associate degree	0.003
	Bachelor degree	0.038
	Master degree	0.028
	PhD	0.047
Quality of work life and job burnout based on husband's academic status	High school degree	0.046
	Associate degree	0.036
	Bachelor degree	0.047
	Master degree	0.035
	PhD	0.048
Quality of work life and job burnout based on husband's job	Government clerk	0.047
	Non-governmental	0.035
	Retired	0.037
Quality of work life and job burnout based on number of children	0	0.045
	1	0.026
	2	0.050
Quality of work life and job burnout based on	Single	0.039
	Married	0.014

marital status			
Quality of work life and job burnout based on age group	20-30 years old	0.432	0.039
	31-40 years old	0.136	0.049
	>40 years old	0.423	0.015
fair and enough pay and job burnout		-0.463	0.045
safe and healthy workplace and job burnout		-0.030	0.048
direct opportunities for development and using human abilities and job burnout		-0.167	0.029
persistent growth and security and job burnout		-0.099	0.020
social solidarity in occupational organization and job burnout		-0.003	0.964
law obedience in job environment and job burnout		-0.523	0.041
job and general life condition and job burnout		-0.022	0.038
social dependence in work life and job burnout		-0.487	0.023

DISCUSSION

Job is one of the important parts of human life and when it conforms to one's interests, it may lead to favorable condition for the person and society [14]. Having a job for women means accepting a second responsibility and playing multiple roles; these roles may sometimes come in conflict. Majority of women will never neglect their wifehood and motherhood duties due to the moral commitments they have. Having a job might, therefore, cause a high level of mental stress and fatigue. Some sociologists believe that women employment in a job out of home will lead to unfair increase in their responsibilities [16]. On the other hand, working conditions with high quality is a prerequisite for empowering human resources. Quality of work life in every organization is necessary to hire and preserve qualified employees [8] and it is an indispensable factor to prevent job burnout.

The results of the present study indicated that majority of female staffs of public hospitals related to Tehran University of Medical Sciences reported quality of their work life to be in a mediocre level; this is in agreement with other studies on female staffs of other workplaces in Iran [13, 9, 18]. However, there were studies concluding that quality of work life in female staffs of various organizations in Iran was below the average level [7, 22].

Furthermore, the results revealed that there is a negative and significant correlation between quality of work life and job burnout in female staffs of public hospitals related to Tehran University of Medical Sciences. From the staffs' viewpoints, all attributes of quality of work life, except for social dependence, have negative and significant correlation with job burnout. In other words, the higher the quality of work life among the female staffs, the lower their job burnout. The most important attributes of quality of work life influencing on job burnout were fair and enough pay, general atmosphere of life, and development of human capabilities. These results are in agreement with those of Pardakhtchi *et al.* [23] and Farsi *et al.* [12].

The most influential attribute of quality of work life affecting job burnout in the female staffs in the present study was found to be general life condition. Having a balance between work life and other parts of life such as entertainment, education, and family life, is very essential [20, 21]. This is in accordance with the result of Bruce [5], who indicated that majority of effective factors of quality of work life are dependent on the ability of staffs in making a balance between home and workplace.

The results of the present study also revealed that there are negative and significant correlations between quality of work life and job burnout in female staffs of public hospitals related to Tehran University of Medical Sciences in terms of demographic attributes including type of job, marital status, number of children, and husband's job. The results showed that the female staffs working in medical parts reported higher effect of quality of work life on job burnout. This is conceivable since these staffs feel high responsibility as to the health and survival of their clients and therefore, they feel higher demand of quality of work life in order to prevent job burnout. From an organizational viewpoint, recognition of cause and prevention from job burnout can increase the mental health and performance of staffs leading to better efficiency of hospitals and clinics [25]. Furthermore, the results obtained about the effect of marital status and children are in agreement with those of Koohpayezadeh *et al.* [17] and Amiri *et al.* [1], respectively.

According to the results obtained from the present study, it is recommended to authorities and decision makers to consider the importance of supporting female staffs in the workplace and their multiple responsibilities both in workplace and home. Also, it is recommended to launch special programs to reduce job stresses and pressures in order to prevent job burnout among female staffs working in

hospitals and medical centers. In addition, it is suggested to run periodic job burnout assessment program in hospitals in order to discover the factors causing burnout and fatigue in female staffs. Finally, it is recommended to launch amusing and entertaining programs for female staffs and their families and also allocate more free time for these staffs in order for them to take care of their wifehood and motherhood responsibilities along with their professional duties.

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