

The Relationship between Attachment Styles, Stress and Job Burnout among Iran Health Insurance Organization Staff in Isfahan, Iran

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Abstract

Mental health of employees is decisive factor in increasing labor productivity and consequently, providing better and effective services by each organization. The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between attachment styles and occupational stress and burnout among employees of Iran health insurance in Isfahan city during 2014-2015. In this descriptive – correlational study, 170 employees of Iran health insurance were selected through census method. Data were collected through 4 questionnaires of demographic characteristic, adult attachment style (RAAS), occupational stress (HSE) and Maslach job burnout (MBI). To analyze the data, chi-square test and Pearson correlation coefficient were used in the software environment of SPSS 19. The study results showed a negative and meaningful relationship between secure attachment styles and occupational stress and burnout ($P=0.001$). There is a positive and significant relation between avoidant and ambivalent attachment styles and occupational stress and burnout ($p=0.001$). This study proved the effective role of secure and non-secure (avoidant and ambivalent) attachment styles in occupational stress and burnout.

Keywords: Attachment Styles, Stress, Occupational burnout

Introduction

Any organization or institution to survive needs people who perform duties associated with that organization well. Manpower is considered as the most important, precious, and valuable capital and organizational resource and achieving organizational goals is impossible without efficient and capable people. Several factors affect the efficiency of staff. Some of these factors have a positive effect on performance and some others have adverse affect. Among factors that negatively affect the efficiency of staff can be pointed to the occupational stress and burnout. Today, occupational stress has become a common and costly problem in the workplace so that the United Nations called it a disease of the twentieth century and in recent years the World Health Organization has also declared it as an epidemic problem. According to the World Health Organization, more than half of workers in industrialized countries complain of job stress and in America only 11 million people suffer from occupational stress (Marzabadi, Gholami, Fesharaki, 2011). Health and Safety Executive (HSE) from 2007 to 2009 has predicted more than 13.5 million working days and annually more than 4 billion pounds damages for injuries caused by occupational stress in the world (Marzabadi, Gholami, Fesharaki, 2011). Side effects of occupational stress have refelected in the form of mental fatigue, irritability, excitability and lack of confidence. Violence in the workplace, increased accidents at workplace, absenteeism and job burnout are other effects resulting from job stress (Barzideh, Chubineh, Tabatabai, 2012). Occupational burnout Process occurs due to the chronic occupational stress and burnout (Rasoli, 2012). Occupational burnout is a kind of occupational risk which is accompanied by a mental and physical energy reduction in employees (Fedai, Mostafa, Demir, Yeter, 2009). Job burnout is important in two respects: first, it affects the mental health

which is exhibited by physical symptoms, absence from workplace and changing job and second, it reduces the production and quality of products and services. In fact, it can be said that job burnout is a painful experience for individuals and costly phenomenon for organizations (Lumbert, & LLaw, 2009). Based on the information available in Europe Union every year, 20 million euros will be allocated to the cost of job burnout. This cost is 350 million \$ in US per year. The World Health Organization has declared that 90% of the employees population are dissatisfied with their job and believe that their job is not in line with their life purposes and 75% of people because of lack of job satisfaction are seeking psychiatric assistance (Barzideh, Chubineh, & Tabatabai, 2012). Another personality trait that influences the various occupational and personal aspects of life of individuals is attachment styles (Mikulincer, & Shaver, 2005). Attachment style is one of the most important psychological structure which is originated from John Bowlby's researches. Bowlby believed that attachment has always existed and has influenced various aspects of life of individual like social and occupational relationships (Goodwin, 2007). Bowlby's attachment theory suggests that attachment styles affect people's social and labor relations, but it has not yet determined whether attachment styles make a difference in the intensity of the experience of occupational stress and burnout? With that in mind, this study aimed to investigate the relationship between attachment styles (secure, avoidant, and ambivalent) and occupational stress and burnout in staff of Iran Health Insurance Organization in city of Isfahan.

Materials and methods

This descriptive- correlational study was done to investigate the relationship between attachment styles (secure, avoidant, and ambivalent) and occupational stress and burnout. For this purpose, 170 contractual or full-time formal employees of Iran Health Insurance Organization of city of Isfahan with at least 5 years of work experience were selected by census method. In this study, four questionnaires were used for collecting data which including demographic characteristics, adult attachment styles, occupational stress and job burnout. Demographic characteristics questionnaire has items such as age, sex, marital status, education level, income rate, work experience and organization post. Adult Attachment Styles questionnaire of Collins Verid contains 18 phrases which measure dependency, closeness and anxiety scales by five-item Likert scale. Subjects based on the obtained results were placed in one of three groups of secure attachment style, avoidant attachment style and ambivalent attachment style. Content validity of the questionnaire was obtained 77% in each three sub-scales by considering the agreement coefficient among five specialists. Also, the reliability of the questionnaire by using Cronbach's alpha coefficient was obtained 75% for the total scale (Pakdaman, 2006). Job Stress Questionnaire of Martinson (2001) is composed of 35 phrases. This questionnaire consists of seven subscales of demand, control, managerial support, peer support, relationships, role and changes that measure variables with a five-item Likert scale. Scoring in sub-scale of demand was done in reverse form (never 1 and always 5) and grades are scored as low stress (116 and less), moderate stress (140-117) and high stress (141 and above). Content validity of the questionnaire was confirmed by experts. Convergent validity revealed high correlation of the questions of each subscale with each other (0.56 to 0.73). The reliability of the questionnaire is also achieved 78% for whole questionnaire by using Cronbach's alpha coefficient (Marzabadi, Gholami, & Fesharaki, 2011). Maslach and Jackson Job Burnout questionnaire is composed of 22 phrases that measure job burnout in three dimensions including emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and lack of personal accomplishment by 6-item Likert scale. In dimension of emotional exhaustion, scores of 27 or more indicates emotional exhaustion at high level, in dimension of depersonalization, scores of 13 or more demonstrates high-level of depersonalization and in dimension of lack of personal accomplishment, scores of 31 or less

suggests success in low level. Total scores obtained from job burnout questionnaire were classified into three parts: low, medium and high. Content validity of the questionnaire with consideration of agreement coefficient among 10 faculty members of Kerman was obtained 89% and its reliability by using Cronbach's alpha coefficient was obtained 92% (Barzideh, Chubineh, & Tabatabai, 2012). To analyze the data, descriptive statistics was used for demographic characteristic and Chi-square test and Pearson correlation coefficient were used to examine the relationships between variables. Research hypotheses were tested at the alpha level of 0.05.

Findings

70.6% of participants were male and 29.4% were female. In terms of age, 48.2 % of them were between 40-30 years old and 5.3% of them were aged over 50 years. In terms of education level, diploma has allocated 2.9% to itself and license 49.4% of research participants. In terms of marital status, 87.1% of the participants was married and 12.9% was single. Regarding work experience, 64.7% of subjects had 10-20 years of work experience and 12.4% had 20-30 years of work experience. In terms of organizational post, 68.2% of studied units were experts and 1.8% were directors. 62.9% of them had an income between 1.5-2.5 million and 12.9% of them had an income between 1-1.5 million. Findings show that studied units based on attachment styles, for secure attachment style was 62.4%, for avoidance attachment style was 21.2% and for ambivalent attachment style was 16.5%. 96.5% of the studied units had moderate job stress and 3.5% had low job stress. 52.9% of studied unit had high job burnout and 16.5% of them had low job burnout rate. Table 1 shows the relationship between attachment styles and job stress among employees of Iran Health Insurance. This table shows that the largest percentage (79.8%) of the studied units that had moderate job stress have had ambivalent attachment style and the lowest percent (19.2%) of the subjects that had low job stress have had secure attachment styles. Chi-square test indicated a significant relationship between attachment styles and job stress ($p < 0.05$), so that avoidant and ambivalent attachment styles were a stronger predictor of job stress.

Table 1: absolute and relative frequency of attachment styles in terms of job stress

| Attachment Styles | Secure | Avoidance | Ambivalent |
|-------------------------|--------|-----------|------------|
| Job stress | % | % | % |
| Low | 19.5 | 28.8 | 3.5 |
| Moderate | 8.8 | 71.2 | 79.8 |
| Chi-square test = 8.160 | | | |
| P= 0.001 | | | |

Table 2 shows the relationship between attachment styles and job burnout among employees of Iran Health Insurance. This table represents that the highest percent (60.4%) of the studied units that have high job burnout have had ambivalent attachment style and the lowest percent (12.3%) of the subjects that have low burnout have had secure attachment style.

Table 2: Absolute and relative frequency of attachment styles in terms of job burnout

| Attachment Styles | Secure | Avoidance | Ambivalent |
|-------------------------|--------|-----------|------------|
| Job stress | % | % | % |
| Low | 12.3 | 19.4 | 18.6 |
| Moderate | 27.4 | 33.3 | 31.7 |
| High | 32.1 | 47.2 | 60.4 |
| Chi-square test = 8.581 | | | |
| P= 0.001 | | | |

Chi-square test indicated significant relation between attachment styles and job burnout ($p < 0.05$), so that ambivalent and avoidance attachment style were stronger predictor of job burnout.

Discussion and Conclusion

Findings of this study showed that 96.5% of employees have moderate job stress, 3.5% low job stress low, and 52.9% have high job burnout and 16.5% have low job burnout. Also, 62.4% of employees have secure attachment styles, 21.2% have avoidant attachment style and 16.5% have ambivalent attachment style. Research findings of Rahimian and colleagues (2007) also showed that the average score of secure attachment style of nurses working in public hospitals of Isfahan city was 11.1 with a standard deviation of 5, avoidant attachment style was 9 with a standard deviation of 4.2 and ambivalent was 8.1 with the standard deviation of 4.4 (Rahimian, Nori, Arizi, Maulvi, & Foroghi Mobarakeh, 2007). The findings of Ahmadi et al (2013) showed that 76% of nurses working in Educational - Health centers of Hamadan city have secure attachment style, 12.7% have avoidant attachment style and 11% have ambivalent attachment style. The findings of the present study also showed that attachment styles have a significant effect on job stress. Especially, insecure attachment styles (avoidant and ambivalent) were a stronger predictor of job stress in working environments (Ahmadi, 2013). This study results are consistent with study results of Rahimian et al (2009). The results showed a significant relationship between job stress and scores of secure and avoidant attachment styles (Rahimian, Nori, Arizi, Maulvi, & Foroghi Mobarakeh, 2009). The results also showed a significant relationship between attachment styles and job burnout. These findings are consistent with findings of Kokkonen et al (2013). The results showed a positive and meaningful relationship between insecure attachment styles (avoidant and ambivalent) and job burnout. Namely, by increasing insecure attachment style scores, job burnout scores are also increased (Kokkonen, Cheston, Dallos, & Smart, 2013). It is important to note that in today's world, empowerment, welfare and economic power of each country depends on the efficient use of facilities, manpower and human resources of that country and manpower has had a key role in organization and leads to the development of the country in various political, economic and social areas. Therefore, competent and efficient human resources play a key role in the organization. Thus, the presents study's results can be applied in areas of management, education, research and clinic. It seems that conducting further researches in this area with title of the impact of all effective factors on occupational burnout and stress is essential.

Acknowledgments

This article is taken from the master's thesis. We appreciate the authorities of Islamic Azad University of Medical Sciences of Tehran Branch and staff of Iran Health Insurance Organization of Isfahan city and teachers who cooperate in this study.

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