The Association of Personality Traits and Spiritual Health with Job Burnout

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Abstract
The present survey aim is to study the association of personality traits and spiritual health with job burnout of employees. To achieve this objective, a multivariate correlative methodology is adopted. The statistical population of present study includes all employees of Management and Planning Organization and Governance of Fars Province working during 2016. In this case, accessibility sampling is adopted as the sampling method. Based on Krejcie-Morgan table for limited samples, the size of the sample is equal with 190 out of 500 participants who are included in the statistical population. Data collection is done through questionnaire distribution and collected data is analyzed through stepwise multivariate regressions in SPSS Software (version. 20). The results suggest that among five aspects of personality, extraversion, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness do not play a significant role in the prediction of employees' job burnout. However, neuroticism has a significant association with job burnout (B=0.21). In addition to neuroticism, the second step of regression analysis suggested that spiritual health and two items of religious health and existential health play a significant role in job burnout as regression coefficients of spiritual health, religious health, and existential health are -1.9, -2.77 and -1.25 respectively. Based on Beta values, one could state that total score of spiritual health (B=4.37) is the strongest predictor of job burnout. It should be noted that addition of spiritual health and its items into analysis reduces the influence of neuroticism. The reduction is due to the negative correlation of spiritual health with job burnout. Consequently, high spiritual health can reduce the effect of neuroticism on job burnout.

Keywords: Personality Traits, Spiritual Health, Job Burnout, Employees.

Introduction
Today, job burnout is regarded as a serious personal and organizational problem the ignorance of which threatens the personal, occupational and spiritual health of a person (Creedy, Sidebotham, Gamble, Pallant, & Fenwick, 2017). This is because industrial development, new technologies, and their problems add to psychological disorders and diseases such as problem caused by spiritual and occupational health (Barrett, Eason, Lazar, & Mazerolle, 2016). Job burnout is defined as a state of physical, emotional and mental fatigue developed through consistent and frequent emotional pressure wrought on a person due to long-term and intensive contact with visitors. The major symptoms of job burnout are helplessness, hopelessness, frustration and negative approach to oneself and others. Job burnout developed as demands of job setting exceed personal abilities of a person to adapt or succeed and as a person experiences consistent, severe and controlled stress (Leiter & Maslach, 2008). There are different studies concerning factors affecting job burnout directly and indirectly (Reyes et al., 2016). Although, the literature review point to the stressful aspects of job setting as the predictors of job burnout, but personality traits should be considered too (Mohammadi, 2011). A category of job burnout outcome is concerned with personality, psychological and personal aspects to which less attention has been paid in comparison with occupational and organizational factors (Raisifar & Melati, 2014). Personal factors are significant since a person experiencing job burnout believes that his/her accessible resources are not sufficient for addressing existing conditions; consequently, he/she surrenders to an existing situation. In other words, personal characteristics and psychological resources of a person drives a person toward fatigue or protects the person from job burnout as he attempts to deal with occupational and organizational requirements and difficulties.

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Personality is a set of psychological characteristics and relatively stable and organized internal mechanisms which affect interactions and compliance of a person with a social, physical and psychological setting (Larsen, Larsen, & Buss, 2005). Personality traits are among personal factors that provide the condition for job burnout and determine coping ability and style of people in facing with stressful and burnout-causing conditions (Mohammadi, 2011). Therefore, the present survey is concerned with the role of factors and five personality aspects affecting job burnout. It is probable that people with job burnout have a set of significant personality traits that take them to the path (Rössler, Hengartner, Ajdacic-Gross, & Angst, 2013). For instance, excessive neuroticism, lack of interpersonal skills, lack of humor, unrealistic idealism, and lack of flexibility and low toleration of other people’s error are some of these personality traits (Lovell & Brown, 2016). These types of sacrificing individuals do not shy away from doing a lot of work so as to fulfill their heart’s demands and they feel completely committed. Therefore, when they feel that their sacrifices do not contribute to the realization of their objectives, mental fatigue, pessimism and other symptoms of job burnout emerge in them (Rostami, Norozi, Zarei, Amiri, & Suleimani, 2008). Anderson, John, Keltner, and Kring (2001) and Judge, Erez, Bono, and Thoresen (2002) conducted their studies based on the five-factor model of personality and concluded that in people with excessive neuroticism, negative excitation (negative emotions such as aggression, hostility, and anxiety) is high and when they face with conflicts and paradoxes, they cannot put their negative emotions in check. Bettencourt, Talley, Benjamin, and Valentine (2006) suggested that personality (especially through neuroticism) is highly correlated with aggression, depression, and anxiety and susceptibility. Sharpe and Desai (2001) suggested that neuroticism and agreeableness are good measures for prediction of aggression. Conard (2006) conducted a study concerning NEO personality factors and suggested that people with low score of neuroticism have emotional stability and they are usually calm, moderate and easy. Among characteristics of people with high score of neuroticism are anxious, aggressive, depressed and susceptible.

On the other hand, it is highly probable that there is a significant association between levels of spiritual health and job burnout. For instance, spiritual health allows us to change or improve the situation as much as possible. King, Smith, and Gracey (2009) defined spiritual health as compatibility between mental capacities premised on immaterial and transcendent aspects of reality, especially those which are dependent on nature of a person, personal meaning, transcendence and extended states of spirituality. Considering the previous studies, he pointed to four factors of critical existential thinking, personal meaning-making, transcendental consciousness and conscious state expansion as affecting spiritual health. Spiritual health might be observed in terms of following criteria: Honesty, compassion, respect to all levels of consciousness, mutual sympathy, feeling of playing a significant role in a larger whole, forgiveness, spiritual and practical charity, searching for compliance and being of the same level with nature and the whole universe, feeling at ease when alone without feeling lonely (Zohar, Marshall, & Marshall, 2000). During the review of the literature, one could find instances too. Cornah (2006) suggested that most of the previous studies use the following elements for describing spiritual health: feeling of having a target, feeling of connection with oneself, others, nature, God or any other thing, feeling of completeness, seeking hope or integration, belief in higher being(s), feeling of transcendence or feeling that there is something more than material
life and activities that give meaning to human’s life. In the present survey, it is presumed that spiritual health and personality traits are good predictors of job burnout of employees working in Management and Planning Organization and Governance of Fars Province.

**Material and Methods**

In terms of methodology, the present study is of multivariate co-relational type. The statistical population of present study includes all employees working in Management and Planning Organization and Governance of Fars Province during 2016. Accessibility sampling is the method of sampling adopted in the present study. Based on Krejcie-Morgan table for limited samples, the size of the sample was equal with 190 out of 500 participants who are included in the statistical population. Data collection is done through questionnaire distribution and collected data is analyzed through stepwise multivariate regressions and in the setting of SPSS Software (version. 20). The measure of spiritual health (Paloutzian & Ellison, 1982), the spiritual health questionnaire was developed for measuring spiritual health. The questionnaire includes 20 items developed in 6-point Likert scale (from “totally agree” to “totally disagree”). In this regard, 10 items were meant to measure religious well-being while remaining 10 questions were supposed to measure existential well-being. The values of the religious well-being (RWB) signify feeling well during the time that one addresses God. In the same vein, existential well-being measures the feeling of leading a targeted life and satisfaction with one’s life no matter what one’s religion is. The spiritual health scale is regarded as a mental tool. Higher values of the scale signify higher levels of spiritual health. The total value of the spiritual health (existential health plus existential health) could be determined. Distinct scores could be obtained for religious well-being and existential well-being. Ellison (2006) suggested this tool was designed for measuring relationship with divinity and aim of life. The validity and the reliability of the scale were reported to be acceptable in Ellison (2006) and the total coefficients of the test, as determined through test-posttest, for SWB, RWB and EWB were 0.93, 0.96 and 0.86 respectively. The internal consistency (i.e.r) between spiritual well-being (SWB) and religious well-being (RWB) was 0.90. In addition, internal consistency between spiritual well-being scale and existential well-being subscale (EWB) is equal with 0.59. For SWB, RWB and EWB, the values of internal consistency were 0.89, 0.87 and 0.86 respectively. You and Yoo (2016) suggested that the internal consistency between SWB and Cronbach’s alpha was 0.93 for pretest and 0.94 for post-test. The internal consistency between RWB and Cronbach’s alpha was 0.96 for pretest and 0.94 for post-test while values internal consistency between EWB and Cronbach’s alpha for pre-test and post-test were 0.87 and 0.89 respectively. For the whole scale and its subscale, values of internal consistency were reported to be acceptable (ibid).

NEO five-factor inventory (NEO-FFI) is a 60-item inventory used for the evaluation of 5 primary factors which affect one’s personality. The choices for answering to items of this inventory were based on Likert scale (i.e. totally disagree, disagree, no comment, agree, and totally agree). The scoring of the short form of the inventory (i.e. NEO-FFI) was not equal for all cases. This means that for scoring some items of the short form of inventory, the choices totally disagree, no comment, agree, and totally agree were scored from 4 to 0. This is while for some other items of the short inventory (i.e. items no. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 17, 20, 21, 22, 25, 26, 29, 32, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 40, 41, 43, 47, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 56, 58, and 60) were scored...
in an inverse manner. NEO-FFI inventory was used by McCrae and Costa for 208 American students at a 3-month interval. The validity coefficients of the inventory ranged from 0.75 to 0.83.

The long-term validity of the inventory was assessed too. A long-term study taking 6 years was conducting on scales of neuroticism, extroversion, and openness to experience and conscientiousness reported validity coefficients ranging from 0.68 to 0.83 in their personal reports and in paired reports. The validity coefficients for two factors of agreeableness and conscientiousness for 2-year interval were 0.63 and 0.79 respectively (McCrae & Costa, 1987).

The 22-item Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) was introduced in 1981. The inventory is concerned with measuring the emotional exhaustion and addressing the phenomena of depersonalization and lack of personal achievement within the framework of professional activities. Scoring of items of this questionnaire is done based on a 7-point scale. The final result is developed in terms of one total score and three secondary scores (Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 2006).

The 22-item Maslach-Jackson Burnout Inventory (MBI) was introduced in 2006. In the inventory, 9 items are regarding emotional exhaustion, 5 items are concerned with depersonalization and items are related to the feeling of sufficiency. The reliability coefficient of the questionnaire was reported to be 0.90 (Maslach et al., 2006). As an instance, one of the items states, “I feel that work is driving me out”. The choices were developed in seven-point Likert scale. The validity of this test (i.e. 0.64) was obtained through correlation of scores of test items with a total score at the alpha coefficient of p=0.001. Raisifar and Melati (2014) reported activity vector analysis (AVA) and reliability of the inventory were 0.83 and 0.94 respectively.

**Results**

Research Hypothesis:H.1-Personality traits and spiritual health are predictors of employees’ burnout.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion Variable</th>
<th>Prediction Steps</th>
<th>Regression</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job Personality Aspects</td>
<td>Regression</td>
<td>4505.405</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>750.901</td>
<td>.30³</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>2.99</td>
<td>0.10³</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burnout Personality Aspects and Spiritual Health</td>
<td>Regression</td>
<td>9431.724</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1047.969</td>
<td>0.43³</td>
<td>0.184</td>
<td>4.47</td>
<td>0.000³</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Remaining</td>
<td>46810.446</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>257.200</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Regression</td>
<td>51315.852</td>
<td>188</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Remaining</td>
<td>41884.128</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>233.990</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>51315.852</td>
<td>188</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a- Predictors: Personality aspects (neuroticism, extroversion, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness).

b- Predictors: Five aspects of personality and spiritual health.

As shown in the above table, the first step in addressing the association between personality aspects and job burnout is using stepwise regression analysis. The results suggest that correlation coefficient between aspects of personality and job burnout is 0.30 which signifies that the correlation can explain 9 percent variance of job burnout (R²=0.09). The result of F-test for evaluation of the effect of variance (F=2.99) suggests the significant influence of personality aspects on job burnout at the level p≤0.010.
In the second step, prediction power of personality aspects and spiritual health for job burnout was analyzed and the results of multivariate regression analysis suggested that there is a significant association ($R=0.43$) between predictor variables and criterion (i.e. job burnout). The predictor variables are able to explain the significant variance of job burnout ($R^2=0.18$). In this step, the resulting $F$-scale ($F=4.47$) is significant as it suggests the significant and concurrent role of personality aspects and the spiritual health in job burnout. In order to determine the role of each variable and component, beta and regression coefficients as shown in the following table were used.

**Table 2. Results of Multivariate Regression Coefficients of Job Burnout based on Personality Aspects and Spiritual Health.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion Variable</th>
<th>Prediction Steps</th>
<th>Predictor Variables</th>
<th>Regression Coefficient</th>
<th>Beta Coefficient</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job Burnout</td>
<td>Effect Value</td>
<td>Neuroticism</td>
<td>0.562</td>
<td>0.205</td>
<td>2.876</td>
<td>0.005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personality Aspects</td>
<td>Extroversion</td>
<td>0.206</td>
<td>0.057</td>
<td>0.704</td>
<td>0.482</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agreeableness</td>
<td>0.585</td>
<td>0.132</td>
<td>1.809</td>
<td>0.072</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conscientiousness</td>
<td>-0.247</td>
<td>-0.068</td>
<td>-0.928</td>
<td>0.355</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Effect Value</td>
<td>Neuroticism</td>
<td>0.457</td>
<td>0.166</td>
<td>2.426</td>
<td>0.016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personality Aspect</td>
<td>Extroversion</td>
<td>0.133</td>
<td>0.037</td>
<td>0.469</td>
<td>0.640</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agreeableness</td>
<td>0.490</td>
<td>0.111</td>
<td>1.568</td>
<td>0.119</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conscientiousness</td>
<td>-0.354</td>
<td>-0.098</td>
<td>-1.383</td>
<td>0.168</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spiritual Health</td>
<td>-1.903</td>
<td>-1.671</td>
<td>-4.374</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Religious Health</td>
<td>-2.775</td>
<td>-1.208</td>
<td>-4.093</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Existential Health</td>
<td>-1.256</td>
<td>-0.606</td>
<td>-3.715</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Significance at $P<0.01$  **Significance at $P<0.05$.

As shown in the above table, the results of stepwise multivariate regression model suggested that the coefficients of predictor variables of job burnout should be noted. This means that neuroticism and spiritual health with respective regression coefficients of $B=0.56$ and $B=1.90$ could properly predict job burnout. Based on beta coefficients, one could suggest that the group of personality aspects (except for neuroticism) does not play a significant role in job burnout ($p \leq 0.868$). In other words, among personality aspects, four items of extroversion, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness do not play a significant role in the prediction of employees’ job burnout but neuroticism with a beta coefficient of $B=0.21$ shows a significant association. In the second step, the results suggest that in addition to neuroticism the variable of spiritual health and its two items (i.e. religious health and existential health) play a significant role in job burnout. The regression coefficients of spiritual health, religious health, and existential health were respectively -1.9, -2.77, and -1.25. Based on the beta values shown in the above table, one could state that the total score of spiritual health ($b=4.37$) is the strongest predictor variable of job burnout. It should be noted that adding spiritual health and its elements
to analysis results in reduced effectiveness of neuroticism. The reason behind the reduction is negative correlation between the spiritual health and job burnout. As a result, high spiritual health could reduce the effect of neuroticism on job burnout.

Discussion
The present survey aims to study the predictive role of personality aspects and spiritual health in job burnout of employees of Management and Planning Organization and Governance of Fars Province. To address the hypothesis of the present survey, as results of the stepwise multivariate regression model (table 1) suggest neurotic personality has a significant association with job burnout. The correlation between neuroticism and job burnout is supported by results of previous studies such as Reyes et al. (2016), Doyle (2014), and Reichl, Wach, Spinath, Brünken, and Karbach (2014). This is while other aspects do not play a significant predictive role in job burnout of employees working in Management and Planning Organization and Governance of Fars Province.

Insignificant role of personality in job burnout is supported by results of previous studies such as Manuel and Arias (2007) reported that there is no association between personality aspects and feeling of job efficiency. The finding implies that certain personality traits such as extroversion and openness to experience in planning organizations are highly sensitive but do not play a significant role in job burnout. In addition, conscientiousness and/or dutifulness of employees working in subsidiaries of Governance does not play a significant role in the development of job burnout. In addition, a significant discipline of such organization causes loss of effect of personality on employees’ burnout. In the present survey, there was an insignificant association between the discipline and job burnout. This is against results of Raisifar and Melati (2014) that found out most personality aspects have a negative correlative with job burnout.

The results of the present survey on the association between spiritual health and job burnout suggest that spiritual health and its elements are positively correlated with job burnout. The finding is supported by Kennedy, Abbott, and Rosenberg (2002) who suggested that the satisfaction of transcendent requirements of employees should be done through spirituality model.

To sum up, one should note that fundamental changes in job settings are developing and spirituality is one of the basic issues. There are many reasons for the justification of the study of the association between spirituality and management such as the influence of spirituality on managerial behavior and perspective of meaningful work. Developing spiritual health in job has significant advantages for managers, employees, and organization. Spirituality changes the nature of the job. People are seeking meaning in their job. They search for a way to connect their professional life to their spiritual life and go for an objective other than money. Spirituality empowers people to do their jobs properly. Consequently, they can associate all aspects of their lives with Divinity. As nature of job changes, the association between managers and employees changes too. Previously, managers ordered tasks to be done and they played no role in the personal development of their own employees. Today, managers act as a guide who contributes to the development of meaning and objective for their colleagues. When enjoying from spirituality, managers will be able to improve their efficiency in the job setting or the organization where they work. More importantly, the managers could attain ease of mind,
personal satisfaction, and long-term happiness. They could make a setting where their colleagues and friends enjoy and become satisfied.

References


Doyle, A. (2014). *Person-Job Fit: Do Job Characteristics Moderate the Relationship of Personality with Burnout, Job Satisfaction, and Organizational Commitment?*


