

Effectiveness of Transactional Analysis on Job Fatigue and Job Attachment of Teachers Working in Education

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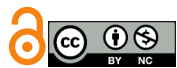
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ABSTRACT

Objective: Teaching can be very stressful, and teachers suffer more mental health problems than other workers. Job burnout occurs due to severe, continuous, and uncontrolled stress and when the work environment demands exceed the individual's abilities to adapt or succeed. Therefore, this research aimed to determine the effectiveness of transactional analysis on job fatigue and job attachment of teachers working in education.

Method: This research method was quasi-experimental and in the form of a pre-test-post-test design with an experimental group and a control group. The statistical population of the current study included all teachers (teachers and principals) of Boyer Ahmad city, from among whom 30 people were selected randomly as a sample. They were randomly divided into two groups: experimental (15 people) and control (15 people). The experimental group was trained with a transactional analysis approach, and the control group received no intervention. A researcher-made job attachment questionnaire and Vodanovich & Kass (1990) job fatigue inventory were used to collect data. The analysis of variance through SPSS-24 statistical software was used to analyze the research data.

Results: The results showed that the teaching approach based on Bern's transactional analysis was effective on the tendency of job fatigue and teachers' attachment ($P < 0.01$).

Conclusion: Considering that the present study has confirmed the positive effect of Bern's transactional analysis therapy on job fatigue and increasing personal growth, it is suggested to provide the possibility of using TA approach in career counseling centers.

Keywords: transactional analysis, fatigue for job fatigue job attachment teachers

1 Introduction

Today, the importance of the job and its decisive role in various dimensions of human life is obvious (Brown, 2007). Also, the efficiency and development of any

organization depend on the correct use of human resources (Francescato & Aber, 2015). The optimal use of human resources relies on measures that create an atmosphere in the organization so that employees with complete satisfaction and a sense of peace of mind can use maximum effort in the

optimal direction of job duties (Spreitzer et al., 2007). Over time, a satisfactory job can become a source of dissatisfaction and lead a person to *job fatigue* (Wang, Lin, & Liang, 2017). Job burnout is a constant feeling of lack of interest and difficulty concentrating on activities. These feelings cause a person to show a lot of conscious effort to maintain or return attention. Some researchers believe that attention problems are one of the main characteristics of job fatigue (Burke & El-Kot, 2010).

In psychoanalytical definitions of *fatigue*, it is focused on mental conflict (personal conflicts) or mental pressure caused by suppressing inappropriate and irrational tendencies and insufficient growth (Åkerstedt et al., 2004; Fenichel, 1951). For example, fatigue has been described as a state of instinctive tension in which instinctual goals are suppressed, but this tension is felt as fatigue (Åkerstedt et al., 2004). It is characterized by a feeling of emptiness and tension at the same time, in which the individual cannot find any satisfactory involvement in the work (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004).

According to the medical point of view of Weinberger and Muller (1974), in a qualitative cognitive phenomenon research of constant fatigue, it has been stated that one gradually becomes bored and tired after they combines their life plans with undesirable things and against his interests (Weinberger & Muller, 1974). Such people feel dual emotions because they are upset with other people involved in their daily interactions, and at the same time, they are more seriously upset with themselves (Fossati, Ergis, & Allilaire, 2003). Thus, it creates continuous chronic fatigue and continuous conflicts to overcome the adverse effects.

Although job fatigue can have many consequences and negative effects, it has not been given serious attention yet. Employees with high job fatigue due to weak emotional control and unpleasant emotions such as worry easily dominate them while doing job tasks and divert their attention from work. People with high job fatigue are not interested in pursuing things and cannot do their tasks with high job attachment (Fossati, Ergis, & Allilaire, 2003). Researchers have shown that job burnout leads to emotional responses such as depression, loneliness, anxiety and hostility, nervousness, fear, guilt, alienation, and symptoms related to physical and psychological health (Sommers & Vodanovich, 2000). A study conducted concerning job fatigue has shown that factors such as stress, personality traits, and job dissatisfaction play a decisive role in job fatigue (Wang, Lin, & Liang, 2017). In a study conducted by Akerstedt et al. (2004) on the relationship between job

fatigue and work and sleep, they concluded that sleep disturbance is the most important predictor of job fatigue in the working population (Åkerstedt et al., 2004).

One of the variables that seems to be able to affect the level of experience of job injuries in teachers is *job attachment* and related structures. Job attachment is one of the related topics affecting the quality of work life, which has attracted the attention of many research studies in recent years. Job attachment is related to positivity, self-learning, and work. Some defined job attachment as a positive and job-related state of mind characterized by energy, dedication, and attractiveness (Wang, Lin, & Liang, 2017). Employees who are attached to their jobs have a lot of energy and have enough enthusiasm to perform their job duties. They are so focused on their work and immersed in it that they do not notice the passing of time (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Job attachment is a desirable feature. People with high job attachments are satisfied with their jobs, show a positive attitude, and express high commitment to their organization and colleagues. Such people rarely consider leaving their jobs and are expected to work for their respective organizations for many years (Brown, 2007).

On the other hand, career counseling professionals have tried to provide solutions and models to increase efficiency, including group therapy and *Transactional Analysis* (TA). TA, in addition to a simple and attractive language matching our cultural and religious values and concepts, is a theory about personality and a systematic psychotherapy method used for personal growth and changes. (Corey, 2015; Sharf, 2015). Through the TA training in the group, self-understanding can be achieved in several ways. TA groups work in the here and now, bringing issues and concerns from the past into the present. Group members facilitate their actions and tasks by reenacting the past and present of their family and career. While identifying the initial decisions and acknowledging the value of their work at those times, the group members are challenged to observe their preferences and enthusiasm for today's reality (Sharf, 2015). From One of the logical reasons for the effectiveness of TA group sessions is providing the opportunity to experience life and members can understand their problems with family, friends and other members of their society (Corey, 2015). This group therapy provides an ideal space for members to use specific ways in which they choose to play game strategies and avoid real and authentic contact. Also, be aware of the ways of thinking, feeling and selected behaviors that ultimately lead to their destruction and failure. Therefore, this research has investigated the issue of whether group

training based on TA method is effective on job fatigue and job attachment of teachers.

2 Methods and Materials

2.1 Study design and Participant

The current research is a quasi-experimental method based on a pre-test-post-test design with a control group. In this method, before being replaced in two experimental and control groups and conducting the independent variable (TA), the subjects filled out two questionnaires of job attachment and susceptibility to occupational fatigue. The statistical population of this research included all the teachers (teachers and trainers) of Boyer Ahmad City who were working in the academic year 2022-2023. Sampling in this research was done by simple random sampling. For this purpose, 90 teachers of Boyar Ahmad city were selected according to the inclusion criteria (at least one year of work experience and full-time employment) and exclusion criteria (absence of more than two sessions, family problems and job change). Then, they completed the job attachment and job fatigue questionnaire. 30 people who had obtained the highest score in the job fatigue questionnaire and the lowest score in the job attachment questionnaire and volunteered to participate in the research, 15 people in the experimental group and 15 people in the control group were randomly replaced. The experimental group was trained in TA, but the control group did not receive any training. After the sessions, a post-test was taken from both groups.

2.2 Measurements

A researcher-made job attachment questionnaire and Vodanovich & Kass (1990) job fatigue inventory were used to collect data.

2.2.1 Job fatigue inventory

Vodanovich and Kass (1990) created this 28-item questionnaire and has a 7-point answer option. Higher scores indicate greater susceptibility to job burnout. This questionnaire measures five areas of job fatigue, i.e. internal arousal, external arousal, emotional reactions, time perception and restlessness. The scoring of the questionnaire is based on a 7-point Likert scale (completely agree = 7 points and completely disagree = 1 point). The minimum possible score in this questionnaire will be 28 and the maximum score will be 196. A score between 28 and 56 means low job fatigue. A score between 56 and 113 is average job fatigue. A score higher than 113 indicates high job fatigue (Vodanovich & Kass, 1990). In terms of validity, previous studies showed that this questionnaire has a significant positive relationship with depression, loneliness and lack of motivation, impulsivity, hostility, depression and anxiety, anger and aggression, and unhappiness. Many researchers have also confirmed the internal consistency and reliability of the questionnaire (Åkerstedt et al., 2004).

2.2.2 Job attachment questionnaire

This researcher-made questionnaire consists of 20 questions with a 4-point Likert scale and no subscales. The minimum score is 20 and the maximum score is 80. After the professors' approval of the validity of this questionnaire, in the present study, Cronbach's alpha method was used to check the reliability of job attachment questionnaire.

2.3 Intervention

2.3.1 Transactional analysis group session

For the members of the experimental group, the TA group therapy approach was implemented for eight 90-minute sessions as follows (Table 1):

Table 1

Brief description of TA group therapy sessions

| Session | Content |
|---------|--|
| 1 | Introducing the leader, introducing the members and explaining the rules and regulations of the group to introduce the leader and the members to each other; Statement of goals, rules and norms of the group; Asking the members to provide mutual feedback with the aim of forming communication, facilitating self-expression and self-disclosure, the goals of its formation, the description of the members' duties and the implementation of the pre-test. |
| 2 | The personality structure of parent, adult and child and the concept of TA and the benefits of this method. |
| 3 | Sub-states of the personality structure that include the supportive parent, the scolding parent, the adult, the submissive child, etc. Acquaintance of people with body postures and the changes that occur after each personality structure in the person's face and body postures. |
| 4 | Investigating the way of thinking, life situations, investigating life situations in work situations and life draft. How to evaluate stressful conditions in the workplace according to the draft of life |
| 5 | The effect of mutual relations, complementary or parallel relations, cross relations and mutual relations on reducing job stress. Familiarizing people more with the way of personal interactions and training people in order to change the type of relationships in order to achieve more satisfaction in personal communication. |
| 6 | Cross relations, bilateral relations and conflict and dispute resolution methods. Training participants to increase their ability to control their behavior and judgments, games |
| 7 | Identifying the individual differences of members. Learning different types of personalities in work environments. Review orders and counter orders. |
| 8 | Definition of caress and its types. The benefits of caressing in the organization and its positive effects in relation to the improvement of organizational relations. Examining the group process from start to finish; exploring members' feelings towards each other; Evaluation of members on the level of achievement of their goals and expectations; Taking the post-test |

2.4 Data Analysis

The analysis of variance through SPSS-24 statistical software was used to analyze the research data.

3 Findings and Results

As you can see in Table 2, the mean of job fatigue scores of the experimental group have decreased in the post-test stage compared to the pre-test. Also, the mean of scores of job attachment of the experimental group increased in the post-test phase compared to the pre-test.

Table 2

Descriptive statistics indices

| Variable | group | Pre-test | | Post-test | |
|----------------|---------|----------|------|-----------|------|
| | | Mean | SD | Mean | SD |
| Job fatigue | Exp. | 137.26 | 4.02 | 115.40 | 2.28 |
| | Control | 137.09 | 3.26 | 137.12 | 2.52 |
| Job attachment | Exp. | 46.46 | 2.99 | 59.93 | 2.52 |
| | Control | 45.53 | 1.30 | 45.86 | 1.06 |

According to the results of Table 3, because the significance level of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests in the variables of job fatigue and job attachment is greater than 0.05, then the null hypothesis (normality of data distribution) is confirmed.

Table 3

Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk's normality tests

| Source | Group | Group | Statistics | | Sig. | |
|----------------|-----------|---------|------------|--------------|------|--------------|
| | | | K-S | Shapiro-Wilk | K-S | Shapiro-Wilk |
| Job fatigue | Pre-test | Exp. | 0.16 | 0.97 | 0.20 | 0.92 |
| | | Control | 0.15 | 0.95 | 0.20 | 0.61 |
| Job attachment | Post-test | Exp. | 0.17 | 0.96 | 0.20 | 0.84 |
| | | Control | 0.18 | 0.92 | 0.18 | 0.24 |

The results of the Wilks' Lambda test in Table 4 show that the effect of the group on the combination of job fatigue and job attachment is significant. The above test allows the

use of multivariate covariance analysis. In other words, there is a significant difference between the experimental and

control groups in the two variables of job fatigue and job attachment.

Table 4

The results of multivariate analysis of variance

| Effect | Value | F | Df | Df error | Sig. | Effect size |
|---------------|-------|--------|----|----------|-------|-------------|
| Wilks' Lambda | 0.03 | 439.24 | 2 | 27 | 0.000 | 0.97 |

As can be seen in the table, the value of sig is less than 0.01, and it shows the significance of the regression model;

Table 5

The results of univariate tests in multivariate analysis of variance

| Group | | Sum of squares | df | Mean square | F | Sig. | Eta square | Power |
|-------|----------------|----------------|----|-------------|--------|-------|------------|-------|
| Group | Job fatigue | 3265.63 | 1 | 3265.63 | 584.14 | 0.000 | 0.95 | 0.99 |
| | Job attachment | 1208.96 | 1 | 1208.96 | 327.65 | 0.000 | 0.92 | 0.99 |

The univariate results of multivariate analysis of variance showed a significant difference between the experimental and control groups (Table 5). F-value calculated for TA training in job fatigue and job attachment variable is greater than the critical value of F with degrees of freedom 1 and 28 and significance level $P < 0.01$. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. By rejecting the null hypothesis with 99% confidence, it can be concluded that the group intervention of TA training in the experimental group participants compared to the control group had a greater effect on reducing job fatigue and increasing job attachment. The effect of this "practical meaningfulness" was 0.95 in job fatigue and 0.92 in job attachment. That is, respectively, 95 and 92 percent of the total variance or individual differences in reducing job fatigue and improving job attachment in employees (Table 2) can be explained through the experimental variable. In addition, the high power of the statistical test in the current hypothesis indicates that the null hypothesis has been correctly rejected with a probability of 99%.

4 Discussion and Conclusion

This research aimed to determine the effectiveness of group training based on the TA method on job fatigue and job attachment of teachers working in education.

The results of the statistical analysis showed that there is a significant difference between the post-test averages (job enthusiasm and job fatigue) of the two groups after removing

that is, at least one of the predictor variables has a significant effect on the criterion variable. In this research, the value of R^2 is equal to 0.108, meaning that 10% of psychological climate can predict job performance, and the remaining 90% is related to other factors. The value of R^2_{adj} is 0.102 in this research; in other words, 10% of the psychological climate can predict job performance.

Considering the significance of the whole model, it is now necessary to check which of the coefficients is not zero, or in other words, which variable or variables have a significant effect on the model. For this purpose, the t-test is used (Table 5)

the auxiliary random variable effect; in other words, there is a significant difference between the job enthusiasm and job fatigue of the experimental group and the control group. By rejecting the null hypothesis with 99% confidence, it can be concluded that the group intervention of TA training in the experimental group participants compared to the control group had a greater effect on reducing job fatigue and increasing job attachment. These results are implicitly aligned with the results of some previous studies (Eghbali, Mousavi, & Hakima, 2021).

Because being happy is one of the ways to reduce fatigue, according to some researchers, TA is one of the most effective psychological theories that help to solve problems in human relationships and help the growing process of happiness in people. Changing the way of looking at life, taking into account the existential dimensions of oneself and others, leads to achieving a higher quality of life and ultimately to discovering a new way of life full of happiness and joy. TA can be one of the appropriate ways to take care of the mind and an effective way to promote happiness in the lives of married people (Corey, 2015; Eghbali, Mousavi, & Hakima, 2021; Sharf, 2015).

In explaining the obtained results, the process of TA group meetings can be mentioned. In these sessions for a task force related to re-decision-making to increase job enthusiasm and reduce job burnout, members were repeatedly brought back to scenes from their childhood that had led them to self-limiting decisions. The leader facilitates

this process by asking one of these questions: 1- What images are coming to your mind right now? 2- Does your discussion now remind you of your cookie days? 3- What images come to your mind right now?

Moreover, TA emphasizes behavioral and cognitive dimensions, especially the ability to be aware of the decisions that support our behavior and the capacity to make new decisions that inherit change and create passion and dependence. In the TA group therapy, the members are informed about the decisions taken in response to the orders and counter-orders of the parents and learn to imagine these initial decisions in their minds and make new decisions. In other words, the members were informed about the decisions and orders behind them and helped to check whether these decisions were still appropriate. Have these decisions served a purpose so far? if the decisions are not appropriate, by examining them, a person will find a desire to change in different areas, especially jobs. In this regard, members were helped to get what they wanted (Eghbali, Mousavi, & Hakima, 2021).

The teachers who participated in this research also had problems in their relationships. When faced with mental pressure and work fatigue resulting from it, they resorted to the state of a negative child or authoritarian parent and closed the door to adult realism. Therefore, after teaching me-state as well as types of mutual relationships and identifying psychological games that unconsciously controlled their behavior, they were taught to use parental blockers or adult reinforcement when necessary. When teachers faced psychological pressure, they analyzed their state instead of going to the states of a child or a parent that caused avoidance or rushed behaviors. They chose mature behaviors in these situations by correcting their thoughts and self states. Members gained mastery over their behavior by establishing appropriate relationships. The method of TA can lead to improving self-health in interpersonal relationships, such as improving self-functioning and stress tolerance, awareness of triggers that trigger irrational behavior and thoughts, awareness of the type of life disrupted based on dysfunctional scripts, letting go of dysfunctional and commanding scripts, and correcting self-destructive scripts.

Moreover, TA group therapy allows members to analyze: The positions they often adopt, the games they play both in the group and in their daily lives, and the role these positions and games play in causing job burnout (such as lack of appropriate emotional reactions) (Corey, 2015). As a result, the participants in the group gain the capacity to take some

initial steps towards breaking self-destructive patterns. Group members begin a continuous movement toward autonomy and re-establishment of their personal capabilities.

In another explanation of the stability of the results related to job fatigue, we can mention the support of the group leader to the members and the support of the members to each other. When decisions are made again based on the childhood me state, support is provided for members who begin to feel and behave in this new frame. The group members are encouraged to mention a new story in the group and replace it with the previous story and, from now on, take steps in line with the new story. The leader and other members give him unconditional verbal and non-verbal caresses to support the person's new decision in terms of better time perception, lack of restlessness and appropriate emotional reactions.

In another explanation, we should mention the final stage of TA group therapy: challenging the members to transfer the changes learned in the therapeutic situation to their daily lives and then supporting them in the path of change. Before doing anything, members must visualize how some of these changes might lead to other changes. Group members prepare to face the new situations they will face as they leave the group. Members also provide support systems in the TA group to help them successfully deal with new challenging situations that come their way.

5 Limitations

Like any other scientific research, the current research has faced obstacles and limitations in practice. Some of these restrictions include the internal and some external aspects of the problem, and financial, administrative, and executive restrictions can be mentioned among these restrictions. One of the limitations of this study was that the control group did not have a regular group counseling session in order to eliminate the effect of waiting for group therapy, which was not possible due to time constraints and lack of facilities.

6 Suggestions and Applications

Considering that the current research has confirmed the positive effect of TA courses on job fatigue and reducing it, it is suggested to provide the possibility of using the TA approach in career counseling centers. It is also suggested that in future research, the responsibility of conducting group therapy sessions should be assigned to a professional therapist (TA).

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Declaration of Interest**References**

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The authors of this article declared no conflict of interest.

Ethics principles

In this research, ethical standards including obtaining informed consent, ensuring privacy and confidentiality were observed.