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Analysis of the relationship between the emotional intelligence and professional burnout levels of teachers

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The purpose of this study is to analyze the relationship between the emotional intelligence and professional burnout levels of teachers. The nature of the study consists of high school teachers employed in city center of Kirsehir Province; 563 volunteer teachers form the nature of sampling. The statistical implementation of the study is performed using SPSS.16.0 software. T-test was applied in percentage frequency and dual groups, and One-Way Anova test was applied for the comparison of more than 2 members in a group together with Pearson Product Correlation Test. Consequently, a negative relation was found between emotional intelligence and burnout levels of teachers.

Key words: Teachers, emotional intelligence, burnout.

INTRODUCTION

We are informed that emotional intelligence is rooted in the abilities enabling individuals to understand other individuals and personality, establish relations with other individuals, conform to the surrounding environment and deal with stated environment; but this type of intelligence succeeds in providing individuals the capacity to meet the demands received from surrounding (Izard, 2001).

The teachers stand as one of the most important part of education system since they are exposed to use many social or emotional abilities with regard to the professions and social status. It is vital for teachers to use emotional abilities in relationships with students and colleagues within social lives (Adilogulları, 2011a).

The most important name in modern day among the renowned researchers of burnout is Christina Maslach, the developer of Maslach Burnout Inventory (Budak and Sürgevil, 2005). He stated that long-term professional stress causes burnout. Maslach (1976) defines personality as: "the alienation of an official from original meaning and purpose of the work and total ignorance of other

individuals receiving services" (Kacmaz, 2005). Additionally, Maslach and Jakson (1986) defined burnout as a chronic reaction against the stressed working con-ditions and a three dimensional syndrome suffered by individuals working with other individuals closely and continuously (Mikolajczak et al., 2007).

It is realized that professional employees experience the burnout syndrome recently in many professional branches and many countries. The psychological and physical damages of this syndrome stand in greater levels. It is vital to conduct the studies required especially for the teachers employed in educational fields to avoid experiencing the burnout syndrome. On the other hand, emotional intelligence started to draw attention of individuals gradually in recent years. In addition to EQ (Emotional Quotient), the importance of EI (Emotional Intelligence) is also clear for individuals in order to become happy and successful both in social and in business life. This study is important while considering the stated two concepts reflected in professional and

social lives of teachers.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Concept of emotional intelligence

Salovey and Mayer (1990) suggested that emotions are organized reactions including physiological, cognitive, motivational and experimental systems by exceeding the borders of many psychological sub-systems. According to Mayer and Salovey (1995), emotional intelligence considers the intersection between two fundamental components of personality: the cognitive and the emotional systems. Mayer and Salovey (1997) defined emotional intelligence as perceiving emotions, reaching emotions and regulating them to understand the emotions reflectively, and helping thoughts, understanding emotions and emotional knowledge to enhance emotional and intellectual development. According to Mayer and Beltz (1998), individuals should perceive the emotions in themselves and the emotions in others (for example; defining and using present emotions), understand emotional meanings and manage emotions. Ameriks et al. (2009) stated that an emotional person could feel and/or behave more intensive than others do; emotionally intelligent is an individual who defines emotions and use them produc-

Mayer and Slovey (1993) suggested that scope of emotional intelligence includes verbal and nonverbal evaluation of emotions, regulations of emotions in oneself and others, and utilizing emotions to solve problems. Bar-On (2006) emphasized that emotional intelligence, above all, bases on the ability of being aware of emotions and oneself, understanding weak and powerful aspects and expressing emotions non destructively.

There have been different models on emotional intelligence. Ability emotional intelligence model of Mayer and Salovev consists of four sub-dimensions that are perceiving emotions, supporting thoughts with emotion, understanding emotions and managing emotions (Mayer and Salovey, 1993; Yüksel, 2006; Yan, 2008; Gürbüz and Yüksel, 2008; Doğan and Şahin, 2007). The Bar-On model of emotional intelligence includes intrapersonal abilities, interpersonal abilities, adaptability, stress management and general mood dimensions (Bar-On, 2006, Yan, 2008). Cooper and Sawaf model of emotional intelligence is a mixed model because it includes mental abilities like Bar-On model and some concepts out of these. This model especially focuses on relation between emotional intelligence and leadership by examining emotional intelligence in an organizational context. This model consists of four building block including emotional literacy, emotional fitness, emotional depth and emotional alchemy. Finally, Goleman presents an emotional intelligence model based on performance. Self-awareness, managing emotions, motivation, empathy and managing

relations create the sub-dimensions of Goleman model (Goleman, 1996).

Burnout syndrome

Maslach and Leiter (2005) suggested that burnout is a chronic condition about being inconsistent with job and can be an important crisis in our lives by emphasizing it is more than being upset or having a bad day. Burnout is an array of deterioration between what people do and what they actually want to do. Corrosion occurs in values and desires. This corrosion is the corrosion of human spirit. This condition is an illness that spreads gradually and continually in time by causing people to have psychological depression from which is difficult to recover (Maslach and Leiter, 1997). It has symptom like other psychological illness. Discomforting exhaustion, disappointment, anger and cynicism, sense of ineffectiveness. and failure factors constitute main characteristics. This condition shatters both personal and social functioning (Goldberg and Masclah, 1998).

Emotional Exhaustion is the first sub-dimension of burnout. When people feel that they are emotionally exhausted, they do not want to do anything; they feel exhausted both physically and emotionally. Individuals do not want to face different work and do not want to start for new one (Maslach and Leiter, 1997).

Depersonalization/Cynicism is another sub-dimension of burnout. When depersonalization, defined by Maslach and Leiter (1997) as cynicism occurs, people having this situation maintain a cold and distal attitude towards their colleagues. Individuals having depersonalization give up their future ideals. Working abilities of people showing negative manner because of depersonalization come to harm seriously.

Reduced Personal Accomplishment is the last subdimension of burnout. People feel inefficacious and accordingly an increasing sense of inefficaciousness occurs. This condition causes a loss in confidence to make difference (Maslach and Leiter, 1997).

METHOD

563 volunteer teachers working in various branches in Kirsehir District have participated in the study.

The original scale refers to the scale consisting of 12 clauses developed by the study of Schutte and colleagues (1998) including 33 clauses. The answers have been graded in 5 point likert scale (1 = definitely not agree, 5 = definitely agree). The same scale has been applied by Aslan and Ozata (2008) for medical officials. In Chan's study (2004; 2006), it has been realized that the survey form prepared in total of 4 dimensions is considered in 12 clauses and 4 dimensions as it is included in the original form by the end of factor analysis. In our study, Cronbach's alpha was found as 0.86.

The Maslach Burnout Scale (Maslach Burnout Inventory – MBI) including 22 clauses and developed by Maslach and Jackson (1981) shall be used for the burnout levels of participants. The burnout scale consisting of 22 clauses is assessed in three sub-

Standard deviation **Emotional Intelligence** Burnout Mean r 1 -0.28 **Emotional** 4.07 0.64 р 0.00 Intelligence 563 Ν 563 -0.28 1 r 0.00 **Burnout** 2.41 0.55 563 р Ν 563

Table 1. The relationship of emotional intelligence of teachers with the burnout level.

*P<0.05.

dimensions as Emotional Exhaustion (EE), Depersonalization (D) and Personal Accomplishment (PA). The Turkish revision of MBI has been performed by Ergin (1992) whereas the validity and credibility analysis of scale in sampling of teachers was conducted first by Girgin (1995) together with Sucuoglu and Kuloglu (1996) separately. Inventory's Cronbach's alpha was found as 0.80.

In the assessment of findings collected from the study, SPSS.16 is used for statistical analyses. On the other hand, the definitive statistical methods (Frequency, Percentage, Mean and Standard Deviation), T-test and One-Way Anova tests are applied in the assessment of study data. Pearson Correlation analysis is used to determine the interrelations of scales. The results are graded in dual size as 95% credibility range and p<0.05 relevance level.

RESULTS

The distribution of age range is as follows: 20-25 ages (n=63, 11.3%), 26-31 ages (n=142, 25.2%), 32-37 ages (n=132, 23.4%), 38-43 ages (n=131, 23.3%), 44-49 ages (n=61, 10.8%) and 50 ages and over (n=34, 6%). The ratio of female participants is (n=229, % 40.7) and male participants are (n=334, % 59.3); whereas the ratio of married teachers is (n=361, % 64.1) and single teachers are (n=202, % 35.9). The professional burnout mean of teachers is M=2.41 and the emotional intelligence mean is M=4.07.

DISCUSSION

As it is seen in Table 1, the adverse difference (r=-0.28, p<0.05) in relations between the emotional intelligence and burnout levels has appeared in our study. Güllüce (2006) and Aslan et al. (2008) stand in parallel with our study due to reaching adverse difference. It is realized that the professional burnout levels decrease as the emotional intelligence level of teachers increases. The professional burnout level of teachers shall be expected to decrease as the teachers use their emotions positively in work places, perform emphatic personalization, balance the emotional assessments and manage emotions in positive respect since it is included in literature that the emotional intelligence and its sub-dimensions shall contribute to peace and happiness of individuals in social and professional manners.

As it is seen in Table 2, the considerable difference (p<0.05) is found in the emotional intelligence level of teachers with regard to the age variable. The emotional intelligence level increases in parallel with the age level. Birol (2009), Lane et al. (2009), Serdengecti (2003), Ulucan (2012), Adilogulları (2011b), Kum and colleagues (2011), Gürbüz and Yüksel (2008) and Canbulat (2007) reached similar results in their studies. According to the professional years variable in Table 4, the considerable difference (p<0.05) is realized in emotional intelligence manner. It is also realized the emotional intelligence level increases in parallel with the increase of professional years. Ozan (2009) and Dolunay and Piyal (2003) reached similar results in the studies applied to teachers.

It is known the experiences gained in social and professional lives as a result of growing up as well as learning lessons by mistakes enable the individuals and teachers to reach maturity to assess incidents in various viewpoints and behaviors. Therefore, it shall be assumed the emotional intelligence to be influenced by this process in positive respect. By positive emotions management, the improvements in empathic ability and emotional assessment shall be realized as well as the assessment of emotions in accurate manner. The improvements in stated skills shall provide advantages for teachers in professional and social lives.

As it is seen in Table 3, the considerable difference (p<0.05) appears in emotional intelligence level of teachers with regard to the gender variable. The emotional intelligence of female teachers is in greater value than the male teachers. It is shown in Table 3 that women have higher scores than men in terms of all the sub-dimensions of emotional intelligence; there is significant difference between men and women in emphatic sensitivity. In the literature, different results have been found in terms of gender differences of emotional intelligence. While some research suggested that men have higher emotional intelligence score, some propounded exact opposite. It is not possible to comment on this issue. Findings of ArII et al. (2011) and Börekci (2002) are parallel with our results.

The analysis of the status of professional burnout level of teachers who participated in the study with regard to the professional working period variable is seen in Table

Table 2. The status of emotional intelligence level of teachers with regard to the age variable.

	Age	N	Mean	SD	F	р
	20- 25	63	3.96	0.64		
	26-31	142	4.07	0.68		
	32-37	132	4.00	0.82		
	38-43	131	4.13	0.72		
Emotional Assessment	44-49	61	4.04	0.84	1.21	0.30
	50 and over	34	4.27	0.69	1.21	
	20- 25	63	4.09	0.54		
	26-31	142	4.16	0.73		
	32-37	132	4.03	0.77		
	38-43	131	4.14	0.69		
Emphatic Sensitivity	44-49	61	3.97	0.84	1.00	0.41
	50 and over	34	4.17	0.55		
	20- 25	63	3.81	0.76		
	26-31	142	3.93	0.69		
Positive Emotions	32-37	132	3.94	0.72		
	38-43	131	3.97	0.71		
Management	44-49	4-49 61 3.87 0.85 1.05	1.05	0.38		
	50 and over	34	4.13	0.53		
	20- 25	63	4.06	0.72		
	26-31	142	4.21	0.69		
	32-37	132	4.14	0.74		
Positive Usage of	38-43	131	4.25	0.69		
Emotions	44-49	61	4.03	0.98	2.437	0.03*

^{*}P< .05 **P< .01.

Table 3. The status of emotional intelligence level of teachers with regard to the gender variable.

	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t	р
	Female	229	4.08	0.71	0.27	0.70
Emotional Assessment	Male	334	4.05	0.76	0.37	
	Female	229	4.18	0.69	2.14	0.03*
Emphatic Sensitivity	Male	334	4.04	0.73		
Positive Emotions	Female	229	3.94	0.73	0.18	0.85
Management	Male	334	3.93	0.72		
Positive Usage of Emotions	Female	229	4.21	0.69	0.64	0.51
Fositive Osage of Emotions	Male	334	4.17	0.78		

^{*}P< .05 **P< .01.

4. It is seen that there is significant difference between sub-dimensions of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization (p<0.05). According to this analysis, teachers

working for 4-9 years feel emotionally exhausted than those working for 15 years or more. Similarly, teacher working for 5-9 years feel more desensitized than

Table 4. The status of professional burnout level of teachers participated in the study with regard to the professional working period variable.

	Prof. W. Period	N	Mean	SD	f	р
	1-4 years	87	2.62	0.71		
	5-9 years	107	2.82	0.83		
	10-14 years	203	2.74	0.86	2.93	0.03
Emotional Exhaustion	15 years and more	166	2.55	0.79		
	1-4 years	87	2.22	0.80		
	5-9 years	107	2.36	0.84		
	10-14 years	203	2.20	0.84	4.40	0.00*
Depersonalization	15 years and more	166	2.01	0.72		
	1-4 years	87	2.42	0.58		
	5-9 years	107	2.42	0.69	0.65	0.58
Daraanal	10-14 years	203	2.33	0.62		
Personal Accomplishment	15 years and more	166	2.35	0.67		

*P< .05 **P< .01.

Table 5. The distribution of burnout level of teachers participated in the study with regard to the marital status variable.

	Mar. Status	N	Mean	SD	t	р
Emotional	Married	361	2.64	0.84	-1.49	0.13
Exhaustion	Single	202	2.75	0.77		
Deperagnalization	Married	361	2.08	0.79	-3.62	0.00*
Depersonalization	Single	202	2.34	0.82		
Personal	Married	361	2.35	0.64	-0.78	0.43
Accomplishment	Single	202	2.39	0.64		

*P< .05 **P< .01.

teachers working for 15 years or more.

Conclusion

Teachers begin their working life with great dreams and idealistically. They work harder, decisively and single-mindedly to live out their dreams. This situation may initially have a positive impact on their success feelings (Adilogulları, 2013). However, with the anxiety of being unable to reach their goals, teachers can have a period of stagnation because of environmental, social and economical factors. It can be said that this situation starts to be normal in the last period of working life, and the level of having emotional burnout becomes lower as they gain experiences. Danylchuk (1993), Pastore and Judd

(1993), Yılmaz and Karahan (2009) found no differences between professional working period and burnout level.

As it is seen in Table 5, the considerable difference (p<0.05) is found in the burnout level of teachers with regard to the marital status variable. It is realized single teachers suffer burnout more. Similarly, the studies of Özdogan (2008) and Cemaloglu and Erdemoğlu (2007) stand in parallel with our study. The profession of teaching is really challenging. The problems in social life challenge teachers in addition to the professional problems. It is assumed married teachers have lower burnout levels due to overcoming problems in professional and social life by gaining support from spouses. The teachers overcome this negative process through gaining support from their spouses in case they reach burnout by the challenging periods of profession.

It can be seen that research into emotional intelligence concept shows that there are positive impacts of emotional intelligence in working life. When relation between emotional intelligence and burnout is considered, programs concerning emotional intelligence development of teachers should be designed and teachers should be prevented to have burnout. These must be done in public institutions and non-governmental organizations should implement them.

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Appendix

Maslach burnout inventory items of english version

- 1) I feel emotionally drained from my work
- 2) I feel used up at the end of the day
- 3) I feel tired when I get up in the morning and have to face another day at work
- 4) I can easily understand how clients feel about things
- 5) I feel I treat some clients as if they were impersonal objects.
- 6) Working with people all day is a real strain for me
- 7) I deal effectively with the problems of clients
- 8) I feel burned out from my work
- 9) I feel I am positively influencing other peoples' lives through my work
- 10) I have become more callous toward people since I took this job
- 11) I worry that this job is hardening me emotionally
- 12) I feel very energetic
- 13) I feel frustrated by my job
- 14) I feel I am working too hard on my job
- 15) I don't really care what happens to some clients
- 16) Working with people directly puts too much stress on me
- 17) I can easily create a relaxed atmosphere with clients
- 18) I feel exhilarated after working closely with clients
- 19) I have accomplished many worthwhile things in this job
- 20) I feel like I am at the end of my tether
- 21) In my work, I deal with emotional problems very calmly
- 22) I feel clients blame me for some of their problems

SCHUTTE EMOTIONAL INTELLGENCE SCALE SHORT VERSION ADAPTED BY DAVID CHAN

- 1. Recognize emotions from facial expressions
- 2. Know what others feel by looking
- Aware of others non-verbal messages
- 4. Use good moods to keep trying
- 5. Know how to make a positive emotion last
- 6. Expect good things to happen
- 7. New ideas when in a positive mood
- 8. See new possibilities when mood changes
- 9. Problem solving is easy when in a positive mood
- 10. Aware of emotions as experienced
- 11. Emotions make life worth living
- 12. Easily recognize emotions as experienced

Note: Turkish versions of these scales were used and it was mentioned in method section.