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BURNOUT AMONG PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHERS IN PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT:

The present investigation analyzed whether physical training instructors working in essential and auxiliary schools experience the equivalent burnout levels. Four hundred and thirty seven full-time Greek physical training instructors from essential and optional government funded schools filled in the "educator's" adaptation of Maslach Burnout Inventory. Two hundred and seven where instructing in elementary schools and 230 in optional. Multivariate investigation of difference demonstrated that physical training educators working in the grade schools announced essentially and definitively higher levels on the center burnout measurement, to be specific passionate weariness" in contrast with their associates in the auxiliary schools. In addition, the quality of relationship among the three burnout segments was more noticeable in essential physical instructors than in auxiliary. The paper demonstrates that the instruction level in which physical training educators are working speaks to a significant activity trademark that impacts burnout levels and ought to be thought about when this disorder is analyzed, in any event inside the Greek instructive framework.

KEYWORDS: *Physical education teachers, Burnout, Primary schools, Secondary schools.*

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the issue of burnout has received considerable research attention. A plethora of studies on burnout have consistently documented that this phenomenon results in significant consequences, both at work and in family life (Hellesøy et al., 2000). For example, burnout has been associated with job turnover, absenteeism, low morale and reduced feelings of job satisfaction for those suffering it. Among the various definitions that researchers have suggested for the comprehension of the burnout phenomenon, Maslach, Schaufeli and Leiter, (2001), approach seems to be accepted by the majority of the researchers. These authors conceptualized burnout as "… a tridimensional syndrome characterized by emotional exhaustion, cynicism (depersonalization), and reduced efficacy (reduced personal accomplishment)" (p.399).

Burnout has predominantly been related with the helping callings, for example, training, wellbeing, and social administrations (Alexander and Hegarty, 2000; Grunfeld, et al., 2000; Koustelios, 2001; Koustelios and Tsigilis, 2005; Tsigilis et al., 2004). To the extent instructing is concerned, it has been portrayed as a calling entirely powerless to burnout (Maslach et al., 2001).In fact, Maslach et al. (2001) reported that teachers have the highest level of emotional exhaustion, whereas the other two

components are close to average. The importance of burnout syndrome in the educational setting is even more emphasized, because apart from affecting the mental, psychosomatic and social health of educators it also decrease the quality of teaching and work performance, which in turn may negatively influences students‟ academical achievement (Blandford, 2000). Maslach and Jackson (1986) recognizing the deleterious effects of burned - out teachers on themselves, their students and finally on the learning process, and the importance of studying burnout phenomenon in the educational environment they developed the Educators‟ version of Maslach Burnout Inventory .

METHOD

Participants Four hundred and thirty seven full-time physical education teachers from primary and secondary public schools participated in the study. Two hundred and seven where teaching in primary schools and 230 in secondary schools. Primary school teachers‟ age was 40.21 years (SD = 4.19), their mean teaching experience was 11.91 years (SD = 4.85) and 44.4% (92) were women. On the other hand secondary physical education teachers were older (M = 42.57, SD = 5.89, t432 = 2.36, p < .01, n2 = .05), with more teaching experience (M = 15.44, SD = 7.81, t430 = 5.57, p < .01, n2 =.067) and had similar percentage of women (40.9%, p > .05).

INSTRUMENTS

In order to measure the perceived burnout of physical education teachers, the „educators‟ version of the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) was used (Maslach and Jackson, 1986). The MBI consists of 22 items of job-related feelings for assessing three burnout dimensions: emotional exhaustion (nine items), depersonalization (five items), and lack of feelings of personal accomplishment (eight items). Each respondent was requested to indicate the frequency of the feeling represented by each item on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 0 (never) to 6 (every day). High scores on emotional exhaustion and depersonalization denote higher degrees of experienced burnout, whereas lower scores on personal accomplishment correspond to higher degree of burnout. Prior studies have established the validity of the MBI in the Greek language (Kantas & Vassilaki, 1997; Kokkinos, 2006).

PROCEDURE

Self-completed questionnaires where administered to the participants during their presence in the school premises. Researchers informed all participants that their participation was completely voluntary and the individual responses would be held in strict confidence and will be used only for academic purposes.

2.4 Statistical analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences. Descriptive statistics, correlation analysis and multivariate analysis of variance were chosen as the most appropriate methods for purposes of this study. Moreover, meaningfulness of differences was assessed with eta-square. Olejnik and Algina, (2000) suggested that n2 values of .01-.03, .06-.09 and above .14 indicate a small, medium and large effect, respectively.

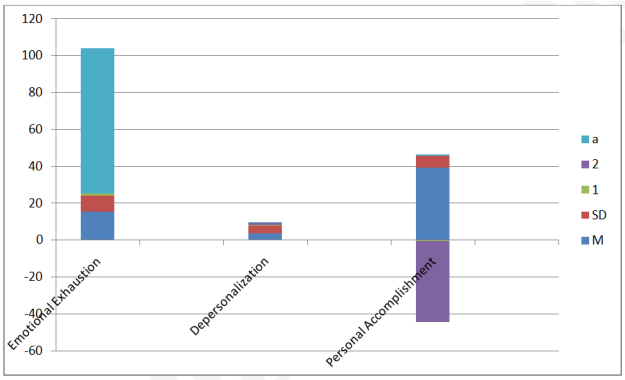
RESULTS

Means, standard deviations, Pearson correlation coefficients and internal consistency of the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) subscales for the total sample are presented in Table 1, and across the education level are presented in Table 2. Cronbach‟s α coefficient were above the conventionally accepted value of .70. All correlation coefficients were statistically significant either at .01 level. Inspection of table 2 showed that the pattern of relationships among the three burnout dimensions was stronger for physical education teachers

Table 1. Means, standard deviations, internal consistency and correlation matrix for the three burnout dimensions.

	M	SD	1	2	A
Emotional Exhaustion	15.44	8.67	1.		79
Depersonalization	3.6	4.11	.5	1.0	.70
Personal Accomplishment	39.34	6.42	-.35	-44	.75

Note: * p < .01



In their study Kantas and Vassilaki (1997) reported teachers‟ burnout levels separately for primary and secondary schools. Comparisons of the present findings with those of Kantas and Vassilaki (1997) revealed significant differences only in the secondary education1. In particular, physical education teachers had lower scores of emotional exhaustion (p < .001) and depersonalization (p = .008) and higher scores of personal accomplishment (p = .015). One-way multivariate analysis of variance indicated an overall significant difference (F3, 360 = 6.75, p < .001, n2 = .053) between physical educators of primary schools and physical educators of secondary schools. Follow up univariate ANOVAs showed significant differences for the emotional exhaustion (F1, 362 = 18.10, p < .001, n2 = .048) and personal accomplishment variable (F3, 362 = 4.35, p < .038, n2 = .012). Examination of the mean values (table 2) revealed that primary physical educators had higher scores on emotional exhaustion and lower scores on personal accomplishment than their secondary colleagues.

DISCUSSION

The present study was designed to examine whether physical education teachers experience different levels of burnout in relation to the education level in which they are working. Our findings suggest that physical education teachers in primary schools are more emotionally depleted in comparison to their secondary schools peers. This difference apart from statistically significant was also meaningful as indicated by the eta-square value. Similar findings have been reported for (Tatar & Horenczyk, 2003) teachers (Kokkinos, 2006). Thus, it seems that in certain cultural and education settings outside Northern America the education level in which a teacher is working represents an important job factor that affects burnout levels and should be taken into consideration when that syndrome is studied. It should be noted that according to the proposed cut-off points (Maslach et al., 1996) physical education teachers, experienced lower levels of emotional exhaustion, had fewer symptoms of depersonalization and more feelings of personal accomplishment.

This finding was not unexpected because introduction of physical education in the primary education as a separate subject, which is teaching by a specialized educator, has been realized in the last

ten years. Thus the younger age and the less teaching years of primary physical educators might have influence their levels of experienced emotional exhaustion. All in all, the present investigation found that the training level in which physical instruction educator is working speaks to a significant activity trademark that impacts the center component of burnout disorder, in particular passionate depletion. The higher scores of essential physical teachers on enthusiastic depletion in contrast with their auxiliary associates may be credited to the distinctive working conditions as well as to the more youthful age and to the less expert experience. Besides the quality of relationship among the three burnout segments was more conspicuous in essential physical instructors than in optional. In addition primary physical education teachers‟ levels of burnout were similar to their colleagues in the primary education teaching other subjects. Thus if an intervention program is to be implemented it should focus in those physical education teachers working in the primary schools.

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