Studying the level of job burnout of human resources of export development bank of Iran and the impact of emotional intelligence on it

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Abstract

The present investigation was aimed to study the level of job burnout of human resources of Export Development Bank of Iran and the impact of emotional intelligence on it in 2013. The investigation was practical in terms of objectives, casual-descriptive in terms of data collection and quantitative in terms of method of data collection. The population consisted of more than 1550 individuals from domestic branches, free zones, headquarter units and some of the subordinate companies of Export Development Bank of Iran, which 306 individuals were chosen as a sample size using Cochran formula and stratified random sampling method. The data collection method was conducted based on two questionnaires of Schering emotional intelligence questionnaire (1996) and Maslesh and Jackson Job burnout questionnaire (1981). The reliability of the questionnaires was calculated using Cronbach’s alpha method and composite reliability coefficient, which it was calculated more than 0.7 for the two questionnaires. Moreover, content validity and structural validity were used to check the validity of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was confirmed by the specialists in order to check the content validity, and the results obtained from the structural validity also demonstrated the validity of the measurement tool. The data obtained from the implementation of the questionnaires was analyzed using SPSS and Smart PLS 2.0 software in to parts of descriptive (frequency, average, standard deviation and range of change) and inferential (structural equation modeling). The findings indicated that the level of job burnout of the employees of Export Development Bank of Iran is a little above the average. On the other hand, the results demonstrated that emotional intelligence and its dimensions have impact on the job burnout of human resources of Export Development Bank of Iran.

Keywords: emotional intelligence, job burnout, self-awareness, self-control, export development bank

1. Introduction

Employees and especially bank employees are as sensitive and impressionable human beings in terms of job burnout and benefits, and are the main asset of any organization. Continuous care of them against occupational damages, maintaining their vitality, satisfaction and sense of belonging to the working environment, maintaining a balance between work and life and prevention of job burnout are of the most important approaches to productivity. The display of symptoms that are representative of decrease in physical and mental powers due to long-term pressure, especially in service jobs or professions that continuously deal with clients leads to performance reduction, extreme fatigue and tendency to leave work, and severe psychological norms and ethical and personality disorders in the case of lack of attention (Javadinia Azari and Majd Teimouri, 2012). Exhaustion, lethargy, weakness and laxation that are literally called job burnout are of concepts that have drawn a lot of attention in the recent years and affect job performance (Saatchi, 2008). Job burnout is of social problems of our age and results from the pressures of work and life. This problem is due to lack of emotional, mental and physical interactions and ongoing stresses. If the stress continues, the individual will lose his own motivation to continue his role in the workplace and society (Javadinia Azari and Majd Teimouri, 2012). Even a satisfactory job could become a source of discontent and lead the individual into job burnout (Zellars et al., 2009).

The term job burnout was first used by Freud Bennerger, which refers to physical and mental fatigue caused by pressures in work environment and the work itself (occupational life), and symptoms and conditions of atrophy, frustration and isolation among staff (Kraft, 2006). Moreover, Shirom and Rosenblatt defined job burnout as a
consequence of one’s ability reduction that is due to long-term deal with the stress and occupational pressures particularly (Shirom and Rosenblatt, 2005). In this regard, Maclash et al. (2001) concluded that job burnout is a multi-dimensional structure and consists of three components that are related to each other. These components are mentioned in the following.

Emotional exhaustion: it is related to the loss of one’s emotional energy.

Depersonalization: someone who has this type of burnout does not consider the clients as human beings, treats them with ruthlessness and brutality, does not care about them and does not respond to their demands.

Inefficiency: it means that the person feels his performance is associated with no success.

The first problem of the victims of work burnout is that these people suffer from physical exhaustion, have little power to work and are often tired and weak. In addition, they suffer from numerous physiological and pathological symptoms such as frequent headache, nausea, sleep disturbance and changes in eating habits. Depression, feelings of helplessness and feelings of being trapped in the job and work are some of these individuals’ emotional problems (Bahri et al., 2003).

One of the most important factors that are able to predict the occurrence of job burnout is emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence is a set of abilities and non-cognitive skills that increases a person’s ability to succeed in confronting with environmental pressures and lead to change in one’s nature and ability to excellence, development, guidance, and develop a positive sense of life (Aghayar and Sharifi, 2007). According to Goleman (1999), emotional intelligence includes both internal and external elements. Internal elements include level of self-awareness, self-concept, sense of independence and capacity, self-actualization and firmness. External elements include interpersonal relationships, ease of empathy and sense of responsibility. Moreover, emotional intelligence includes person’s capacity to accept reality, flexibility, ability to solve emotional problems, ability to cope with stress and impulses. Eventually, Siarouji (2005) stated that if you have high emotional intelligence, you could be compatible with problems and challenges to make a better life and control your emotion effectively, so you can provide necessities for your mental health enhancement and improvement. On the other side, low emotional intelligence may be a potential cause of threatening mental health. Some of the conducted researches in this field are mentioned in the following.

Oginsa-Bulk (2005) found in his investigation that individuals with higher emotional intelligence have less work stress and health problems. According to him, emotional intelligence has a preventive role in health problems and depression particularly. Individuals with high levels of emotional intelligence are specified by ability to cope better with stress, expressing emotions, management and better emotional control. Lee (2010) and Farmer (2004) found in their researches separately that owning higher emotional intelligence has an impact on reducing job burnout. Moreover, Pourkiani et al. (2012) demonstrated that emotional intelligence has significant and negative relationship with job burnout and mental health, and there is significant and positive relationship between mental health and job burnout. Bakhshi Sourshojani (2010) declared in his study that emotional intelligence and mental health have negative and significant relationship with job burnout.

Establishment of Export Development Bank of Iran was one of the great achievements of the Islamic Revolution, which has the role of EXIM bank of Iran. The necessity of existence of an organization in the country to cover the lack of a reliable and valid financial institution in EXIM was underestimated before the Islamic Revolution. Overcoming this shortcoming was considered by the economical authorities of Islamic Republic of Iran from the initiation of the law of banking operations without usury. Based on this, the Export Development Bank of Iran was established in July 1991 and actually started in June. Since then, the bank has served the country’s exports using qualified and experienced staff. The performance of the bank during the past years represents the fact that the bank has provided the necessity for the trust and satisfaction of its customers through paying attention to the speed and accuracy of the work procedure. In addition, it has also attracted the trust of the other banks and international institutes. Potential facilities of production and export of goods in the country can be put into practice using the financial and side services of the Export Development Bank of Iran and achieve its proper place in world markets. A glance at some of the goals and objectives of the Export Development Bank of Iran, the mission of the bank is to contribute to the development of non-oil exports and expansion of trade and economic exchanges with other countries according to the economic, social and cultural major objectives in Iran. The strategies of the Export Development Bank of Iran consisted of development and creation of diversification in banking services and innovative financial instruments, presentation of specialized advices to clients; intelligent presence in target markets and effective interaction with the related institutes; organizing financial and money structure and improvement of risk management system; continuous improvement of systems, procedures and methods and adjustment of organization structure to it; strengthening the position of employees, satisfaction and development of professional ethics; settlement knowledge
management in organizations and promotion of the capabilities of human resources; improvement of control and internal accounting systems (www.ebdi.ir).

Therefore, achieving the desired objectives and strategies of the Export Development Bank of Iran demands employees who do not suffer from job burnout and take their steps towards organizational objectives along with motivation and energy. There are many factors affecting employees job burnout, but the present investigation deals with the level of job burnout first, and evaluates the impact of emotional intelligence (as a fundamental parameter) on job burnout.

Based on the present investigation, we are looking to answer the two following fundamental questions. How much is the level of job burnout of human resources of Export Development Bank of Iran? Does the employees' emotional intelligence have impact on the job burnout of human resources of Export Development Bank of Iran? The following hypotheses are raised in this regard.

The main hypothesis (Ha): emotional intelligence has impact on the job burnout of human resources of Export Development Bank of Iran.

The first sub-hypothesis (Hb1): self-awareness has impact on the job burnout of human resources of Export Development Bank of Iran.

The second sub-hypothesis (Hb2): self-control has impact on the job burnout of human resources of Export Development Bank of Iran.

The third sub-hypothesis (Hb3): empathy has impact on the job burnout of human resources of Export Development Bank of Iran.

The fourth sub-hypothesis (Hb4): social skills have impact on the job burnout of human resources of Export Development Bank of Iran.

The fifth sub-hypothesis (Hb5): self-motivation has impact on the job burnout of human resources of Export Development Bank of Iran.

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Figure 1. Conceptual model of the research (Researcher made)

2. Methodology

The method used in the present investigation was practical in terms of objectives, casual-descriptive in terms of data collection and quantitative in terms of method of data collection. In this regard, questionnaires were distributed among the employees of Export Development Bank of Iran and the results recorded. Since a casual relationship is studied in the present investigation, the research method is of casual type in terms of the relationship between the variables, which the structural equation modeling method was used in order to study the conceptual model comprehensively. Job burnout and emotional intelligence are two main hidden variables and their dimensions are considered as observed variables.

The population consisted of more than 1550 individuals from domestic branches, free zones, headquarter units and some of the subordinate companies of Export Development Bank of Iran, which 306 individuals were
chosen as a sample size using Cochran formula and stratified random sampling method. It should be noted that 16 questionnaires were neglected due to incompleteness and the statistical operation was carried out on 290 of the participants.

Maslach and Jackson’s (MBI, 1981) job burnout questionnaire with 20 questions and dimensions of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and inefficiency and Schering’s (1996) emotional intelligence with 33 questions with the dimensions of self-awareness, self-control, empathy, social skills and self-motivation were used in the present study in order to collect data.

According to the collected data and using Smart PLS 2.0 software, the reliability of the questionnaires was calculated. In the PLS method, the reliability is measured using Cronbach’s alpha and Composite Reliability (CR), which the reliability is acceptable when the values are more than 0.7 (Hulland, 1999). The results are reported in table 1. As it is obvious, all the values are more than 0.7 and this demonstrates a good reliability of the questionnaires.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Emotional intelligence</th>
<th>Job burnout</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Variable’s dimension</td>
<td>Self-awareness</td>
<td>Self-control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cronbach’s alpha</td>
<td>0.788</td>
<td>0.811</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CR</td>
<td>0.725</td>
<td>0.830</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The validity of the questionnaire was checked through two criteria of divergent and convergent validity, which are specifically for structural equation modelling. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) was used in convergent validity. The criterion for acceptable level of AVE is 0.5 (Hulland, 1999). According to the findings, all the values of AVE for the constructs are more than 0.5 and this depicts the acceptable convergent validity for the research questionnaires. The differences between the indices of a construct and the indices of the other constructs are compared in the divergent validity. This is done by comparing the square root of AVE for each construct with the values of correlation coefficients between the constructs. A matrix should be formed for this reason, which the values of the main diagonal of the matrix are the square root of AVE for each construct and the bottom and top values of the main diagonal are the correlation coefficients between each construct with other constructs. The findings showed that the square root of the AVE for each construct is more than the correlation coefficient of the construct with other constructs. This indicates the acceptability of divergent validity in the constructs.

3. Findings

In this phase, the level of job burnout is studied first and then, the casual relationship between emotional intelligence and job burnout is measured in the form of structural model. The average and standard deviation of the dimensions of job burnout is listed in table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Standard deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotional exhaustion</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>0.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depersonalization</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>0.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insufficiency</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>0.68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to table 2, all the average values are more than 3.5 and this indicates that the level of job burnout in this organization is more than the average level. However, the highest average is for emotional exhaustion (3.38). It means the responders believe that emotional exhaustion plays an important role in increasing the level of job burnout of human resources of Export Development Bank of Iran.

As it is obvious in figure 2, the effect of emotional intelligence and its dimensions on job burnout is significant and negative, which the coefficients are presented in the following figure.
Figure 2. Standard coefficients of the model

The output of PLS proves the research hypotheses that are in table 3. Since all the t-values are more than 1.96, all the hypotheses are confirmed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypotheses</th>
<th>Standardized coefficients</th>
<th>t-value</th>
<th>Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotional intelligence → Job burnout</td>
<td>-0.74</td>
<td>13.46</td>
<td>Confirmed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-awareness → Job burnout</td>
<td>-0.65</td>
<td>11.82</td>
<td>Confirmed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-control → Job burnout</td>
<td>-0.61</td>
<td>11.24</td>
<td>Confirmed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathy → Job burnout</td>
<td>-0.67</td>
<td>11.94</td>
<td>Confirmed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social skills → Job burnout</td>
<td>-0.73</td>
<td>13.01</td>
<td>Confirmed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-motivation → Job burnout</td>
<td>-0.70</td>
<td>12.21</td>
<td>Confirmed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Conclusion

Job burnout is known as an important factor in mental and physical damages, especially in banks, and these damages lead to decline in labor productivity, increase in absenteeism, increase in health care costs, personnel relocation, decline in the quality of services provided to patients and dissatisfaction with medical services. Therefore, recognizing and preventing job burnout have a significant role in the promotion of mental health and quality of provided services. In addition, emotions and the ways to deal with them are a part of the human beings’ personality and affect their health. In the meantime, it seems that the capability of coping with the immediate environment, which is called emotional intelligence, is very important (Pourkiani et al, 2012), thus the effect of emotional intelligence on job burnout with the mediating role of mental health was conducted in the present study. The research hypotheses are explained in the following. Therefore, according to the importance of the topic, the present investigation studied the level of job burnout and the impact of emotional intelligence on the job burnout of human resources of Export Development Bank of Iran. The research hypotheses are explained in the following.

The findings demonstrated that the level of job burnout in the human resources of Export Development Bank of Iran is a little above the average. Nevertheless, the authorities should carry out some measures in order to reduce the job burnout in the employees more. In the following, the results indicated that emotional intelligence
and its dimensions have a negative and significant impact on the job burnout of the human resources of Export Development Bank of Iran.

According to the continuous changes of the work environment, employees’ ability to adapt to these changes is very important. If the employees are unable to express their feelings in relation to the changes, they will suffer from exhaustion. Therefore, it could be stated that the key to the survival of the organizations is employees with high emotional intelligence, because employees with understanding of their feelings are less prone to job burnout, and job performance is improved in this way.

According to Sarnie (1998), individuals with higher emotional intelligence, own more happiness, joy, vitality and independence at work. Moreover, they are more optimistic about life, more resistant to stress and more successful in their life. Mayrokub described the people as someone who have innovative character, enjoy overcoming the problems, challenge the opportunities, act goal-oriented and are determined in doing assignments (Zarean et al., 2007). Generally, the results of the present investigation are in harmony with the findings of other researchers such as Lee (2010), Farmer (2004), Pourkiani et al. (2012) and Bakhshi Soroushjani (2010).

Eventually, it is proposed according to the findings that related workshops should be held for the human resources of Export Development Bank of Iran. Moreover, it is proposed to hold some workshops on negotiation skills and effective relationships.

References


