Original Research

The Effectiveness of Positive Psychology on Emotional Confusion and Reducing Work-Family Conflict in Teachers

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Abstract

Background: The aim of the current research is the effectiveness of positive psychology on emotional confusion and reducing work-family conflict in teachers.

Methods: The present research method is a semi-experimental type of pre-test-post-test design with a control group. The statistical population includes working teachers who refer to counseling centers in Isfahan city, based on their acceptance to participate in the research, 30 of them were selected using the available method and randomly assigned to two groups (15 people in the experimental group and 15 people in the control group). To collect information, Rastegar Khalid's work-family conflict scale questionnaire and researcher-made questionnaire derived from the public health questionnaire were used. Positive psychology was implemented by the researcher during 8 sessions for 4 weeks and every week in two 60-minute sessions for the experimental group. During this period, the control group did not receive any intervention. After the sessions, the questions of the questionnaires were read again for the subjects as a post-test, the raw scores were calculated and recorded, and at the end, the results of the tests were calculated using SPSS software.

Results: The results of the research indicate that positive psychology has an effect on the amount of work-family conflict and reduces it significantly. Also, positive psychology affects the level of emotional confusion and reduces it significantly.

Conclusion: Positive psychology causes teachers to become more aware of their behaviors, thoughts and problems, and to organize and manage their thoughts and abilities, they pay attention to targeted programs based on cognition and thinking, as well as directing their behavior.

Keywords: Positive Psychology, Emotional Confusion, Work-Family Conflict, Positive Thinking

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Introduction

Career and family life are two integral parts of most people's lives. In fact, the secret of people's success in advancing their goals is in these two areas of life, family and work (1). If a person has a problem in her professional or family life, the consequences will not only affect the individual, but also the organizations and society at large (2). Today, a lot of research has been done on the factors influencing people's work and family life, and this is a sign of the importance and necessity of these two important components of life. At the macro level of society and especially in organizations, today researchers have become aware of the importance of human resources and realized that human resources are a valuable factor and an endless capital for the growth and development of organizations and countries, so that in one and In the past half century, a significant part of the progress of developed countries has been due to the transformation of efficient human resources. At the micro level, the family is one of the most fundamental cores of society, so the health or unhealthyness of this central core can affect all levels of society (3). If couples have problems in balancing their work and family roles, all aspects of their lives will be affected by this imbalance. Reducing marital satisfaction is one of the most important consequences of this type of conflict, especially the conflict between family and work (4). Work-family conflict is a form of friction in the role pressures in the family and work domains, which are mutually incompatible in some aspects (5). Confusions and emotional disturbances are one of the most important consequences of conflicts in the family, especially the conflict between family and work. Disturbance tolerance skills include the skill of returning attention and the skill of self-soothing; In other words, when some people suffer emotional and mental pain, they feel failure and failure and feel that these chaotic emotions will never end and there is nothing they can do. Such a problem is called disturbing excitement (6). That these people often cannot act wisely and engage in self-harming coping strategies, but the problem with such strategies is that they make the situation worse than before and the fate of these emotions ends in deep emotional pain, these strategies temporarily reduce people's pain and suffering, but in the future they cause more problems for the person (7). Tolerating emotional distress is the ability of a person to experience and tolerate a negative emotional state, which affects a person's evaluation and judgment, and is an important factor in the emergence and continuation of mental disorders, as well as in the field of prevention and treatment (8). In other words, people who have a low tolerance for emotional distress suffer intense emotional turmoil and are required to try to relieve it, while they cannot focus on another issue so, reducing the tolerance of emotional distress causes maladaptive responses to stress (9). Today, positive psychology as a new branch of psychology basically focuses on the scientific study of human strengths and happiness (10). Happiness, hope, optimism and excitement as positive thoughts can lead to the production of art and science or creative problem solving in everyday life. People with positive thinking go beyond their usual ways of thinking and acting and show more flexibility. They also become more creative and efficient (11). The goal of positive psychology is not to deny sadness and negative or unpleasant aspects of life, nor to try to see these negative aspects in life; Rather, the goal is to study and investigate ways that people can learn philanthropy and feel happy and enjoyable. In this way, healthy families and institutions can be witnessed in the society. The goal is to create factors that we know are capable of growth and evolution in humans, without denying the necessity and importance of pathology (12). Teaching positive thinking skills helps people to know themselves better and to be curious about their opinion about themselves and the world (life) (13). In teaching positive thinking skills, people are encouraged to recognize their positive and good experiences and recognize their role in increasing self-respect and self-esteem, and

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at the same time, gain the ability to recognize the positive aspects of others (14). In their research, Seyyed Ebrahimi and Yazdakhasti (2022) investigated the effect of positivity group training on women's psychological well-being and marital satisfaction. The results showed that positivity training had a positive effect on the marital satisfaction scores of married women and this effect remained stable in the follow-up phase. However, positivity training has not affected the psychological well-being scores of married women; Therefore, it is suggested that therapists in marriage counseling centers take advantage of this educational program to improve the marital satisfaction of clients (15). Najjarpourian et al. (2020) in a research compared the effectiveness of positive couple therapy and short-term solution-oriented therapy on psychological well-being and improving marital adjustment in families living in Shiraz. The results showed that both treatment approaches had an effect on psychological well-being and improving marital adjustment in families; however, no significant difference was observed between the effectiveness of the two intervention methods. The findings of the present research provide acceptable empirical support for the effectiveness of the solution-oriented approach and positive couple therapy (16). Baharloo et al. (2019) conducted a research titled comparing the effectiveness of positive-oriented couple therapy and integrated behavioral couple therapy on marital adjustment. The findings showed that both methods of couple therapy were effective on marital adjustment, and in the follow-up phase, the effect of both methods was permanent. Also, the results showed that in the post-test and follow-up stages, the two treatment methods had no significant difference in terms of the effect on marital adjustment. Therefore, considering the effectiveness of both methods of positivist couple therapy and integrated behavioral couple therapy, these two methods can be used to improve the marital compatibility of couples. However, due to the lack of research in the field of positive-oriented couple therapy and the newness of this method, more research should be done in this field (17).

Amonoo et al. (2019) discussed the effect of positive intervention and its results in health and stated that using techniques of enjoyable exercises such as saying thanks, writing letters of appreciation, which are positive psychological structures, leads to improvement in positive relationships with others. In fact, positive thinking skills help people to do better in controlling and changing negative or incorrect thoughts, and the main goal of this treatment is that people get the best results even from the worst conditions (18).

In his study, Dilater (2016) examined the role of positive thinking in reducing the anxiety of anxious and non-anxious students. The statistical population of his research consisted of 1100 anxious and healthy students who referred to the university clinic center. He found that he did not know a particular schema related to the anxiety factor, he came to the conclusion that positive thinking training had an effect on reducing the anxiety of anxious students (19).

Methods

The present research method is a semi-experimental type of pre-test-post-test design with a control group. The statistical population of this research includes working teachers who refer to counseling centers in Isfahan city, based on their acceptance to participate in the research, of which 30 people were selected according to the available method (non-generalizable) and according to demographic variables such as age, selection and they were assigned randomly in two groups (15 people in the experimental group and 15 people in the control group). The following questionnaires **were used to collect information:**

The researcher-made questionnaire derived from the general health questionnaire: Goldberg (1972) has introduced this questionnaire as a "screen questionnaire" based on the self-report method, which is used in the clinical set with the aim of tracking those who have a mental disorder. In order to evaluate the validity of the general health questionnaire for its Persian version, Palahang

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(1995) estimated its validity to the extent of 91% on a group of 80 people with a retest method with a time interval of 7 to 10 days, which is significant at the error level of one thousandth. The reliability of this questionnaire was obtained by the method of internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha) for the scales of physical symptoms 0.85, anxiety and insomnia 0.78, impairment in social functioning 0.79 and severe depression 0.91 and the whole questionnaire 0.85. 20). The reliability of the questionnaire in this research was obtained through Cronbach's alpha of 0.73.

Rastegar Khalid's work-family conflict scale: this questionnaire was developed and standardized by Mr. Rastegar Khalid. The work-family conflict scale consists of 17 items, 8 of which measure work-family conflict and the other 9 items measure family-work conflict. The options of the questions are: I strongly agree, I agree, I have no opinion, I disagree and I strongly disagree. In the preliminary examination, all items of the scale have a relatively good coefficient and in no case the correlation coefficient of any of the items to the whole scale is less than 0.3. In the final analysis, only the coefficients of two items are equal to 0.27 and 0.24, and the rest of the items have relatively acceptable coefficients. In the survey conducted by Mr. Rastegar Khalid on a sample of 644 couples, both working in 22 districts of Tehran, the results showed that the alpha of this scale is 0.90 in the preliminary survey and 0.87 in the final survey, both of which are within the limits of are relatively high (21). Positive psychology was implemented by the researcher during 8 sessions for 4 weeks and every week in two 60-minute sessions for the experimental group. During this period, the control group did not receive any intervention.

After the sessions, the questions of the questionnaires were read again for the subjects as a post-test, the raw scores were calculated and recorded, and at the end, the results of the tests were calculated using SPSS software.

Results

Levine's test was used to check the Presumption of normality of the variable distribution.

The results show that in the two experimental and control groups, the condition of equality of variance is acceptable from the point of view of the research variables. Based on the descriptive findings, the dispersion indices and central tendency of the research variables by group and test type are shown in Tables 2 and 3.

The obtained results show that the average scores of emotional confusion and work-family conflict in the control and experimental groups are almost equal, and the results show that the experimental and control groups do not differ much from each other.

The findings of the table show that the average scores of the variables in the experimental group are lower than the control group. In other words, positive psychology has reduced the average scores in emotional confusion and work-family conflict variables, while no significant difference was observed in the control group.

The results of the first hypothesis test that "positive psychology has an effect on the level of work-family conflict" are presented as follows:

According to the obtained results, after adjusting the pre-test scores, there is a significant effect in the factor between the subjects of the group (F=33.46, P=0.001). The scores show that the average of the experimental group who were exposed to counseling has decreased significantly. Therefore, it can be concluded that positive psychology has an effect on the level of work-family conflict and increases it significantly. Therefore, the first hypothesis of the research is confirmed.

The results of the second hypothesis test that "positive psychology has an effect on emotional confusion" are presented in Table 6. The obtained results show that after adjusting the pre-test scores, there is a significant effect in the factor between the subjects of the group (F=14.42, P=0.001). The scores show that the average of the experimental group who were exposed to

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counseling has decreased significantly. Therefore, it can be concluded that positive psychology has an effect on emotional confusion and increases it significantly. Therefore, the second hypothesis of the research is confirmed.

Discussion

The purpose of this research is to investigate the effectiveness of positive psychology on emotional confusion and reducing work-family conflict in teachers. The results obtained from the hypothesis test are as follows:

- Positive psychology has an effect on the amount of work-family conflict and reduces it significantly. Therefore, the first hypothesis of the research is confirmed.
- Positive psychology has an effect on emotional confusion and reduces it significantly. Therefore, the second hypothesis of the research is confirmed.

Positive psychology with a positive view of human nature, especially in educational environments, is important in creating a positive academic self-concept in learners. In fact, due to attention to positive emotions, positive characteristics of people and positive institutions and organizations, this approach will help to arouse happiness, hope, educational optimism, positive relationships and as a result positive change and internal motivation of people. When there is a lot of psychological pressure and inappropriate thoughts on a person, it is feared that the routine of his normal life will fall apart and he will suffer some kind of emotional or mental disorder. Negative thoughts in front of psychological pressures and being vulnerable in work-family conflict threaten teachers. The cause of these people's inconsistencies are mainly unpleasant thoughts that affect their emotions and behaviors in the form of cognitive errors. The characteristic of healthy personalities is that they can identify these dysfunctional thoughts and deal with them. Using these counseling methods of positive thinking can be effective in treating many problems and mental disorders. In addition to teaching negative thoughts management, the positive psychology program also emphasizes the skills related to preventing the appearance of inappropriate thoughts and correcting the situation. Also, the parts of this program that are related to expansion of attention, cognitive assessment, response modification and evaluation and application are related to psychological problems and reduce them.

Conclusion

Positive psychology causes teachers to become more aware of their behaviors, thoughts and problems, and to organize and manage their thoughts and abilities, they pay attention to targeted programs based on cognition and thinking, as well as directing their behavior. One of the limitations of the research is the lack of proper cooperation of the statistical community due to the length of the counseling sessions. Also, the limited sample size is one of the most important limitations of this research, which makes it difficult to generalize the results. In order to carry out future research, it is suggested that the relationship between personality traits (big five personality factors) with work-family conflict and emotional confusion should also be investigated. Also, a similar research has been conducted in other statistical societies and compared with these findings.

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Authors Contributions:

MM, RR conceptualized the study objectives and design. MM, RR are infectious disease specialists who contributed to data collection from patients along with MM, RR drafted the study design protocols to be submitted to research centers. Data were was analyzed by MM, RR. Manuscript was drafted by MM, RR. All authors contributed in revisions.

Ethical Consideration:

None

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Tables:

Table 1. Presumption of normality of distribution of variables

Group	N	Mean ± SD	Levin	
		Age		
experiment	15	1.523± 4.65	Emotional confusion	Work-family conflict
Control	15	1.523±4.65	0.152	0.285

Table 2. Mean and standard deviation of variables before positive psychology in two experimental and control groups

Variables	Mean ± SD Examination Group	Mean ± SD Control Group
Emotional confusion	(2.20) 73.17	(2.80) 74.24
Work-family conflict	(2.04) 24/51	(1.70) 23.31

Table 3. Mean and standard deviation of variables after positive psychology in two experimental and control groups

Variables	mean (SD) examination Group	mean (SD) control group
Emotional confusion	(2.62) 67.84	(4.01) 73.91
Work-family conflict	(2.04) 19.37	(1.26) 23.71

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Table 4. Univariate covariance analysis on the pre-test-post-test scores of the work-family conflict variable

Source of changes	sum of squares	Degrees of freedom	mean square	F	Significance level
pre-test	۱۹.۰۱	۱	۱۹.۰۱	۷.۰۰	۰.۰۵
group	۱۰۲.۰۷	۱	۱۰۲.۰۷	۳۳.٤٦	۰.۰۰۱
error	۹٦.74	۲۷	۲.۷۲		
Total	۲۰۸۰۹.۰	۳۰			

Table 5. Univariate covariance analysis on pre-test-post-test scores of emotional confusion variable

Source of changes	sum of squares	Degrees of freedom	mean square	F	Significance level
Pre-test	٦.۵۷	۱	٦.57	۰.51	۰.۳۵
Group	۱۲۷.39	۱	۱۲۷.۳۹	۱٤.٤۲	۰.۰۰۱
Error	۳۱۰.97	۲۷	۱۱.٤۰		
Total	۱۳٦٤۱۷.12	۳۰			

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