Life Meaningfulness as a Predictor of the Burn-out Syndrome

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ABSTRACT

The problem of the burn-out syndrome is connected particularly with the helping professions, in which a substantial part of the workload consists of interpersonal interaction. There are often professions in which the clients are in difficult life situations (e.g. social workers, nurses, doctors, psychologists, etc.), which can lead to extreme exhaustion of the worker not only on the emotional, but also on the psychological and the physical level. It is important that workers in the helping professions prevent occurrence of the burn-out syndrome. There are several approaches and theories dedicated to the burn-out syndrome prevention. The article deals with empirical analysis of the effects of life meaningfulness on the burn-out syndrome in helping professions. The research sample consisted of 212 respondents in helping professions (teachers, social workers, nurses). The methodological tools used included the Burn-out Syndrome Questionnaire (Maslach Burnout Inventory) and the Life Meaningfulness Scale. The objective of the research was to identify the effects of life meaningfulness on the burn-out syndrome using regression analysis. A separate regression model was elaborated for each factor of the burn-out syndrome. One of the primary results of the research was a finding out that a protective factor against emotional exhaustion and depersonalization is a high score in the cognitive and the motivation component of life meaningfulness. Protective factors against low personal performance include the cognitive and the motivation component of life meaningfulness.

Keywords: Maslach Burnout Inventor; helping professions; regression analysis; Scale of Life Meaningfulness; meaning of life;