

Basic Psychological Needs and Flow as Important Mediators Between Life Goals And Burnout

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Abstract

This study aimed to, using Self-determination theory (SDT) as the framework, examine the relationship between life goals and burnout, and to examine if the work-related basic psychological needs (W-BPN) and flow serve as mediators between these two variables. The study involved 480 primary school teachers from different parts of Croatia. Participants had an average of 17 years of work experience and were all female. Structural modeling results have showed that extrinsic life goals are related to burnout only directly and not indirectly. On the other side, intrinsic life goals are related to burnout indirectly, through W-BPN satisfaction and flow, and are not related to burnout directly. According to SDT theory, having extrinsic life goals can be detrimental to person's well-being, and this research tries to better explain the nature of this relationship. This study showed that extrinsic life goals led to higher burnout directly, but intrinsic led indirectly through lower W-BPN satisfaction and frequent often flow experiences. Extrinsic life goals don't contribute to burnout indirectly because they don't contribute to W-BPN satisfaction. The theoretical contribution of the paper lies in explaining the connection between SDT theory and the concept of flow, and the practical contribution in understanding the factors that contribute to the teachers' well-being.

Keywords: extrinsic life goals, intrinsic life goals, teachers, well-being, work