

How Social Support, Interaction with Clients and Work-Family Conflict Contribute to Mental Well-Being for Employees in the Human Service System

Authors : Uwe C. Fischer

Abstract : Mental health and well-being for employees working in the human service system are getting more and more important given the increasing rate of absenteeism at work. Besides individual capacities, social and community factors seem to be important in the working setting. Starting from a demand resource framework including the classical demand control aspects, social support systems, specific demands and resources of the client work, and work-family conflict were considered in the present study. We state hypothetically, that these factors have a meaningful association with the mental quality of life of employees working in the field of social, educational and health sectors. 1140 employees, working in human service organizations (education, youth care, nursing etc.) were asked for strains and resources at work (selected scales from Salutogenetic Subjective Work Assessment SALSA and own new scales for client work), work-family conflict, and mental quality of life from the German Short Form Health Survey. Considering the complex influences of the variables, we conducted a multiple hierarchical regression analysis. One third of the whole variance of the mental quality of life can be declared by the different variables of the model. When the variables concerning social influences were included in the hierarchical regression, the influence of work related control resource decreased. Excessive workload, work-family conflict, social support by supervisors, co-workers and other persons outside work, as well as strains and resources associated with client work had significant regression coefficients. Conclusions: Social support systems are crucial in the social, educational and health related service sector, regarding the influence on mental well-being. Especially the work-family conflict focuses on the importance of the work-life balance. Also the specific strains and resources of the client work, measured with new constructed scales, showed great impact on mental health. Therefore occupational health promotion should focus more on the social factors within and outside the working place.

Keywords : client interaction, human service system, mental health, social support, work-family conflict

Conference Title : ICP 2015 : International Conference on Psychology

Conference Location : Osaka, Japan

Conference Dates : October 08-09, 2015