

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EXISTENTIAL FULFILMENT AND JOB BURNOUT AMONG KENYA UNIVERSITIES' PROFESSIONAL COUNSELLORS

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Abstract

This article establishes the relationship between existential fulfillment and job burnout among Kenya universities professional counsellors. This has significant implications for psychological health provision in other sectors, since universities play significant role in capacity building in mental health provision profession through counselling, training, consultancy and supervision of counsellors and trainees. Studying the psychological wellness of counsellors in higher learning could therefore strengthen the endeavours aimed at combating psychological job ill-health in other settings. The study was descriptive and utilized cross-sectional survey design that targeted population of 193 professional counsellors in 75 private and public universities in Kenya. Saturated sampling technique was used to conduct a census of the respondents. Data was obtained using the Existential Fulfilment Scale (EFS) and Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI-HSS). Data collected was quantitative and descriptive statistics and inferential statistics were used in the analysis. All posited hypotheses were tested at 0.05 significant level and analysis done with aid of SPSS - 22. The response rate was 180 (94%). Existential fulfilment level was moderate (EFS = 2.57; SD = 1.08); job burnout level was moderate (MBI = 2.2; SD = 1.77). Existential fulfilment was negatively correlated to job burnout ($r = -0.084$ ($p = 0.26 > 0.05$)). Based on these findings, it was recommended that Human Resource Departments in higher learning should strengthen staff psychological support programmes to militate against job burnout. These findings have significant implications for workplace psychological health and functioning.

Key word: Existential fulfilment; work engagement; job burnout; psychological wellness; counsellors

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Introduction

Bakker and Cosa[1] argue that despite technological development the world over, the incidence of job burnout continues to raise concern for both practitioners and researchers. This is supported by the findings in a global study that was carried out in 142 countries by Gallup [2] on the state of work engagement in the work place indicates that only 13.6% of employees worldwide are engaged at work, 61.7% are disengaged and 23.3% actively disengaged. In addition, a report on trends in global work engagement by Aon-Hewitt (2014) indicates that 22% of workers globally are engaged, 39% moderately engaged, 23% passive and 16% as actively disengaged. It is not clear whether this declining work engagement is a result of the erosion of existential fulfilment, which is conceptualized as the opposite of burnout.

A review of referent literature indicates that research conducted has concentrated on the relationships between existential fulfilment and job burnout see Tomic and Tomic, [3], as well as job burnout [4] [5] while seemingly ignoring the circular causation of the variables. Three gaps are therefore apparent: first, the level of counsellor psychological wellness in Kenyan universities is not known with special reference to existential fulfilment and job burnout. Second, the interaction influence between existential fulfilment and job burnout has not been established in research among professional counsellors working in higher learning. Lastly, the contribution of existential fulfilment to job burnout among university counsellors in Kenya is also not empirically established.

The Concept of Existential Fulfilment

According to Frankl [6], the will to impart meaning in life is a primary motivation for human beings. This is supported by Brouwers and Tomic [7] who argue that existential meaning is not an extrapolation of personal needs or wishes, but a discovery of something essential that presents itself to man and imparts a purpose and a calling to everyone's life. Steger [8] also supports this by averring that man obeys this calling by accepting responsibility for his own life. In addition, Loonstra, Brouwers and Tomic [9] indicate that without this essential responsibility, man lives in an 'existential vacuum' and that this failure to achieve existential meaning in life eventually result in psychological distress.

Längle and others [10], define existential fulfillment as a way of life that is full of meaning and purpose and reveals an existential psychological approach to life. Loonstra and colleagues [11] point out that the three notions related to existential fulfillment are Self-Acceptance, self-actualization and self-transcendence which according to Yalom [12] can be interpreted as basic attitudes in pursuing existential fulfillment and overcoming the psychological conflicts caused by human limitedness. Tomic and Tomic [13] argue that individuals must overcome these psychological conflicts evoked by the existential boundaries in order to obtain a fulfilled existence. The individuals who accept themselves accept their potentialities and intrinsic limitations. When they actualize the self, they explore and develop their possibilities and potentialities for the sake of personal growth in understanding and abilities. Tomic and Tomic [14] concur that those who transcend the self-recognize the otherness of the reality beyond the self, search for respectful relationships with this reality, derive life-meaning from these relationships, feel responsible for them, feel part of a larger whole, distinguish interests that surpass self-interests, and are able to see the self in perspective of the outer reality.

In fulfilling these existential tasks, counsellors find life meaning and a fulfilled existence. Self-transcendence is considered by Frankl [15] to be the essence of human existence. This is the spiritual ability that enables an individual to make intentional contacts with the world beyond the self, such as the work place, which provides ultimate meaning to life. While Pines and Aronson [16] indicate that the inability to achieve existential goals may lead to existential vacuum which can be termed as Job burnout, Schaufeli and Bakker [17] point out that the achievement of these goals may result in work engagement through self-transcendence.

Job Burnout

Aksu and Temeloglu [18] argue that burnout syndrome is one of the major problems of the 21st century information age. However, Bakker and Cosa [19] observe that the construct of job burnout caught the attention of researchers in the last 40 years ago and has grown to be the most widely recognized construct of employee wellness in theory and practice as well as one of the most researched topics in occupational psychology. Lin [20] argues that the term job burnout came to social sciences from the language of aerospace. Freudenberger [21] was the first to coin the term as a description of a condition observed among people in the helping professions that is

characterized by overwork resulting in exhaustion and fatigue. Khamisa, Oldenburg, Peltzer and Ilic[22] view burnout as a result of prolonged exposure to stressful working environments and describe it as a state of physical and emotional depletion. It could also be viewed as a progressive and gradual process caused by the mismatch between the demands of employees and job demands. Burnout is encountered as problems threatening the working life or causing serious issues on both individuals and organizations.

In the most widely used definition which was done by Maslach[23], job burnout is described as a psychological syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment that can occur among individuals who work with other people in some capacity. Emotional exhaustion refers to the depletion of psychic energy characterized by mental, emotional and physical tiredness. Depersonalization refers to the development of negative, cynical attitudes toward their work or the recipients of their services – an extreme and therefore dysfunctional kind of detachment and loss of concern. Reduced personal accomplishment is the tendency to evaluate one's own work with recipients negatively, an evaluation that is often accompanied by feelings of insufficiency, self-doubt and poor self-esteem [24].

It therefore follows that counsellors with high levels of emotional exhaustion report feeling psychologically drained. They have little energy or motivation left to give to their clients or to their job. Individuals with high levels of depersonalization report feeling cynical, pessimistic, and apathetic towards their clients. Low levels of personal accomplishment are associated with feelings of negativity towards oneself, especially in the context of one's relationship to clients.

A broad range of occupations can experience Job burnout. Because of this, various studies have been done on different occupations such as doctor, nurse, police, teacher, librarian, manager. In these studies, many factors were found to be considerable predictors of Job burnout. In general, these factors are divided into two groups: Personal (demographics) factors and environmental (organizational and work) factors. Several studies have found that organizational factors and work features were more highly correlated with job burnout than personal factors[25, 26&27]. Some demographic characteristics, such as age, gender and marital status were found to be related to job burnout in several studies [28]. In addition, personality characteristics, such as

extraversion, neuroticism, introversion and aggression were found to be related to job burnout in several studies [29].

Consequences of Job Burnout

Job burnout has an importance in business and social life because of its effects. Firstly, job burnout has negative impacts on the psychological and physical health of individuals. Job burnout is a putative factor in the development of family discord, drug and alcohol abuse, insomnia, and fatigue [30]. In addition, job burnout is positively correlated with reports of headaches, sleep disturbances, and other somatic symptoms of stress [31]. Secondly, job burnout has an effect on job productivity and performance [32]. In general, job burnout decreases job performance, job satisfaction, job commitment and quality of service, and increases absenteeism, low morale, and job turnover [33].

Job burnout is associated with decreased job performance [34], reduced work engagement and predicts low existential fulfillment [35], and stress related problems [36]. Cherniss [37] identified that, in the process of job burnout, both attitudes and behaviours change in an unconstructive manner in response to work stress. Cedoline [38] depicted the physical and behavioural symptoms of Job burnout as the reluctance to go to work, disappointment with performance, an extension of work problems into the person's home life, and an ultimate feeling of worthlessness.

Pines [39] reported that job burnout symptoms include, but are not limited to, fatigue, poor self-esteem, inability to concentrate on a subject, and a tendency to blame others. Maslach and colleagues [40] further asserts that individuals suffering from job burnout experience a depletion of physical and emotional resources, develop cynical attitudes, and feel a loss of professional self-efficacy. Dunham and Varma [41] stated that the most pervasive symptoms of job burnout are a noticeable lowering level of job commitment, a loss of enthusiasm and interest, and feelings of disaffection and alienation. In addition to negative effects of job burnout on individuals, organizations also face significant implications and costs associated with job burnout [42]. Among these negative impacts, organizations experience lower individual work performance, high rates of turnover, lower levels of organizational commitment, lower reported

job satisfaction, high health care costs, and decreases in creativity, problem solving and innovation [43].

Existential Fulfillment and Job Burnout

Just as with work engagement, the interest in the relationship between existential fulfillment and job burnout ensues from the view of healthy psychological functioning that has been developed by existential and humanistic psychology. Frankl[44] particular developed an existential perspective on job burnout with his psychology of meaning. He introduced the term ‘existential vacuum’ for a mode of existence without any meaning and purpose, prone to neuroticism and characterized by boredom and attempts to escape such boredom by distraction. The opposite, existential fulfillment, refers to a way of life full of meaning and purpose.

In a more and more secularized environment, work has become a frequently chosen alternative source of meaning. This happens particularly in the lives of idealistic and highly motivated individuals [45]. They work hard because they expect their work to make their lives matter in the larger scheme of things and give meaning to their existence. Pines [46], writes that the cause of job burnout lies in our need to believe that our lives are meaningful and that the things we do are useful and important. When individuals fail in these efforts, they are prone to job burnout. Job burnout emerges out of the experience of meaninglessness. In this framework Pines [47] describes Job burnout as growing out of a gradual disillusionment in a quest to derive a sense of existential significance from work.

Längle and colleagues [48] explained the genesis of Job burnout by referring to the concept of existential vacuum and fulfillment. Job burnout can be seen as a special form of existential vacuum, or as a deficit of fulfillment, which entails a loss of interest, a lack of initiative, and Emotional Exhaustion. Burned-out professionals are described as being extrinsically focused on objectives like influence, income, recognition, appreciation, and social acceptance that prevent them from freely dedicating themselves to their job and truly accepting the related responsibility.

RESULTS

The Relationship between Existential Fulfillment and Job Burnout

The objective in this study sought to determine the relationship between existential fulfillment and job burnout among Kenya universities professional counsellors. The objective was achieved by formulating a null hypothesis H_0 1: stating that at 0.05 significance level there is no statistically significant relationship between existential fulfillment and job burnout among Kenya universities professional counsellors. This hypothesis was subdivided along the lines of the three dimensions of existential fulfillment (Self-acceptance; self-actualisation and self-transcendence) as well as components of job burnout (emotional exhaustion; depersonalization and reduced professional efficacy).

Correlations between Existential Fulfillment and Job Burnout Dimensions

To achieve H_0 1: There is no statistically significant relationship between existential fulfillment and job burnout among Kenya universities professional counselors the research posited several hypotheses to test for the relationship between the related variables. Spearman's rho Correlation Coefficients were calculated and a correlation matrix generated to show how the variables and their components correlate. The findings are presented in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Correlation Coefficient between Existential Fulfillment and Job Burnout Dimensions

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.	Self-acceptance	Correlation Coefficient						
		Sig. (2-tailed)						
2.	Self-actualisation	Correlation Coefficient	-.035					
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.646					
3.	Self-transcendence	Correlation Coefficient	-.068	.449**				
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.364	.000				
4.	Overall existential fulfillment	Correlation Coefficient	.208**	.454**	.450**			
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.005	.000	.000			
5.	Emotional exhaustion	Correlation Coefficient	-.244**	-.037	-.055	-.132		
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.625	.467	.077		

6.	Reduced professional efficacy	Correlation Coefficient	-.016	-.045	-.159*	-.234**	-.203**	
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.831	.545	.033	.002	.006	
7.	Depersonalisation	Correlation Coefficient	-.146	-.140	-.281**	.021	.133	.048
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.051	.061	.000	.779	.076	.519
8.	Overall job burnout	Correlation Coefficient	-.039	-.103	-.038	-.084	.207**	.567**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.601	.169	.610	.263	.005	.000

* $p < 0.05$; $p < ** 0.01$ (2-tailed).

The research generated a null hypothesis H_{01a_i} : which posited that at 0.05 significance level, there is no statistically significant relationship between existential fulfillment dimension self-acceptance and the job burnout dimension emotional exhaustion. A Spearman's Rank Order correlation coefficient was calculated to test this hypothesis. It was observed that the weak negative correlation coefficient of 0.244 with a 2-tailed significance of 0.00, which was less than the 0.05 and therefore statistically significant. Accordingly, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis H_{11a_i} which posited that at 0.05 significance level, there is a statistically significant relationship between existential fulfillment dimension self-acceptance and the job burnout dimension emotional exhaustion was adopted. It was concluded that higher existential fulfillment dimension of self-acceptance predicted lower job burnout dimension of emotional exhaustion among Kenya universities professional counsellors. These findings support Loonstra, Brouwers & Tomic [49] research findings that established that there was a significant negative relationship between self-acceptance and emotional exhaustion.

The second null hypothesis $H_{01a_{ii}}$: which posited that at 0.05 significance level, there is no statistically significant relationship between existential fulfillment dimension of self-acceptance and the job burnout dimension of depersonalization? The observed correlation coefficient of 0.146 ($p = 0.05 \leq 0.05$) showed that the observed p-value lay at the threshold and therefore statistically significant. This led to the decision to reject the null hypothesis and adopt the alternative hypothesis $H_{11a_{ii}}$: which posited that at 0.05 significance level, there is a statistically significant relationship between existential fulfillment dimension self-acceptance and the job

burnout dimension of depersonalisation. It was inferred that higher levels of existential fulfillment dimension of self-acceptance predicted higher levels of depersonalisation among Kenya university professional counsellors. These observations also contradicted the findings of a study by Loonstra, Brouwers and Tomic[50] where the observed relationship studied showed a significant negative correlation. However, both studies established that the correlation was significant.

The third null hypothesis $H_{01a_{iii}}$: posited that at 0.05 significance level, there is no statistically significant relationship between existential fulfillment dimension self-acceptance and the job burnout dimension of reduced professional efficacy. An observed weak negative correlation coefficient of $-0.016(p = 0.83 > 0.05)$ had an observed p-value greater than the critical α -value of 0.05 and therefore not statistically significant. The null hypothesis was not rejected and it was inferred that self-acceptance could not be used to predict reduced professional efficacy among Kenya universities professional counsellors. However, considering that the job burnout dimension was presented as reverse scores to mean reduced professional efficacy, it was inferred that the correlation with reduced efficacy for this study was positive. The magnitude of correlation in this study was in agreement with the findings of the study by Loonstra, Brouwers and Tomic[51]. However, whereas this study presented non-significant relationship, the study by Loonstra and colleagues established significant correlations.

Lastly, a null hypothesis $H_{01a_{iv}}$: posited that at 0.05 significance level, there is no statistically significant relationship between existential fulfillment dimension self-acceptance and overall job burnout. The statistical test yielded a Spearman's rank order correlation coefficient of $-0.039(p = 0.6 > 0.05)$ whose observed p-value was greater than 0.05 and therefore not statistically significant. This led to decision not to reject the null hypothesis. It was inferred that the negative correlation coefficient indicated that higher self-acceptance levels did not significantly predict higher job burnout levels among Kenya universities professional counsellors.

The second level of hypotheses included the existential fulfillment dimension self-actualisation and the job burnout components of emotional exhaustion; depersonalization and reduced professional efficacy. The first null hypothesis H_{01b_1} : posited that at 0.05 significance level, there

is no statistically significant relationship between existential fulfillment dimension self-actualization and the job burnout dimension of emotional exhaustion. The statistical test yielded a weak negative correlation coefficient of -0.037 with a 2-tailed significance value of 0.63, which was greater than the 0.05 and therefore not statistically significant. The null hypothesis was therefore not rejected and it was concluded that the existential fulfillment dimension self-actualisation could not be used to predict emotional exhaustion among Kenya universities professional counsellors. These findings support the findings of a study by Loonstra and others [52] study where the correlation between self-actualisation and emotional exhaustion was negative. However, whereas the study by Loonstra and colleagues yielded significant relationships the correlations in this study was not statistically significant.

The second null hypothesis $H_{01b_{ii}}$: posited that at 0.05 significance level, there is no statistically significant relationship between existential fulfillment dimension self-actualization and the job burnout dimension of depersonalisation. The statistical test yielded a weak negative correlation coefficient of -0.14 ($p = 0.06 > 0.05$) that was not statistically significant. The null hypothesis was therefore not rejected and it was inferred that the existential fulfillment dimension self-actualisation could not be used to predict depersonalisation among Kenya universities professional counsellors. These findings contradicted observation of the study by Loonstra and others [53] where self-actualisation was found to be significantly negatively related to depersonalisation.

The third null hypothesis $h_{01b_{iii}}$: posited that at 0.05 significance level, there is no statistically significant relationship between existential fulfillment dimension self-actualization and the job burnout dimension of reduced professional efficacy. A weak negative correlation coefficient of -0.045 ($p = 0.55 > 0.05$) which was not statistically significant. The null hypothesis was therefore not rejected and it was concluded that the existential fulfillment dimension self-actualisation could not be used to significantly predict reduced professional efficacy among Kenya universities professional counsellors. These findings seem to contradict the observations in the study by with Loonstra and colleagues [54] study where self-actualisation was observed to be significantly correlated to efficacy, but both studies established the two dimensions were positively related.

H₀1b_{iv}: posited that at 0.05 significance level, there is no statistically significant relationship between existential fulfillment dimension self-actualization and overall job burnout. Statistical test yielded a weak negative correlation coefficient of $-0.103(p = 0.17 > 0.05)$ which was not statistically significant. The null hypothesis was therefore not rejected and a conclusion was made that the existential fulfillment dimension self-actualisation could not be used to predict overall job burnout among Kenya universities professional counsellors.

At the third level, null hypotheses were generated with regard to the existential fulfillment dimension self-transcendence and the three job burnout dimensions (emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and reduced professional efficacy) as well as overall job burnout. H₀1c_i: posited that at 0.05 significance level, there is no statistically significant relationship between existential fulfillment dimension self-transcendence and the job burnout dimension of emotional exhaustion. A weak negative correlation coefficient of $-0.055(p = 0.47 > 0.05)$ was observed. The null hypothesis was not rejected because the correlation coefficient was not statistically significant. It was inferred that the existential fulfillment dimension self-transcendence could not be used to predict reduced emotional exhaustion among Kenya universities professional counsellors. Loonstra, Brouwers and Tomic[55] conducted a study that established that self-transcendence was not statistically significantly correlated with emotional exhaustion, which is the case in this study. However, these findings are not in agreement with the observations in a study by Tomic, Evers and Brouwers[56] on existential fulfillment and teacher burnout where self-transcendence and emotional exhaustion had a weak negative correlation coefficient of -0.33 ($n = 215$) which was statistically significant at 0.01 significance level.

H₀1b_{ii}: posited that at 0.05 significance level, there is no statistically significant relationship between existential fulfillment dimension self-actualization and the job burnout dimension of depersonalisation. Statistical tests yielded a weak negative correlation coefficient of $-0.281(p = 0.00 < 0.05)$. The correlation was significant and therefore the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis H₁1c_{ii}: posited that at 0.05 significance level, there is a statistically significant relationship between existential fulfillment dimension self-transcendence and the job burnout dimension of depersonalisation. It was inferred that higher levels of existential

fulfillment dimension self-transcendence predicted lower levels of job burnout dimension of depersonalisation among professional counsellors in Kenyan universities. These findings agreed with the study by Loonstra and others [57] where the correlation between self-transcendence and depersonalisation was significant and negative. A study by Tomic and Tomic[58] where $n = 514$ principals and 215 teachers established that self-transcendence was significantly negatively related to the job burnout dimension of depersonalisation ($\beta = -0.23(p = 0.00)$). The findings the current study support these observations in Tomic and Tomic[59]research. The findings in this study also support observations on a study by Tomic, Evers and Brouwers (2004) on existential fulfillment and teacher burnout that established that self-transcendence and depersonalisation had a weak negative correlation coefficient of -0.45 ($n = 215$) which was statistically significant at 0.01 significance level.

$H_{01c_{iii}}$: posited that at 0.05 significance level, there is no statistically significant relationship between existential fulfillment dimension self-transcendence and the job burnout dimension of reduced professional efficacy. the statistical test yielded a weak negative correlation coefficient of $-0.159(p = 0.03 < 0.05)$ that indicated the correlation was statistically significant and therefore the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis $H_{11c_{iii}}$: posited that at 0.05 significance level, there is a statistically significant relationship between existential fulfillment dimension self-transcendence and the job burnout dimension of reduced professional efficacy was posited. It was inferred that the higher existential fulfillment dimension self-transcendence statistically predicted higher levels of job burnout dimension of reduced professional efficacy. This implied that since this dimension job burnout is reverse scored so that it is designated professional inefficacy, it was adduced that higher levels of self-transcendence led to lower levels of inefficacy among Kenya universities professional counsellors.

The findings also agreed with the study by Loonstra and others [60] where the correlation between self-transcendence and efficacy was significant and positive. The findings in this study are in agreement with the observations in a study by Tomic, Evers and Brouwers[61] on existential fulfillment and teacher burnout where self-transcendence and professional efficacy had a weak positive correlation coefficient of 0.40 ($n = 215$) which was statistically significant at 0.01 significance level. Since this study reverse coded professional efficacy to reflect reduced

accomplishment, the magnitude of the relationship does not contradict that of the study by Tomic and colleagues.

H_{01civ}: posited that at 0.05 significance level, there is no statistically significant relationship between existential fulfillment dimension self-transcendence and overall job burnout. It was observed that there was a weak negative correlation coefficient of -0.038($p = 0.61 > 0.05$) which was not statistically significant and the null hypothesis was therefore not rejected. It was inferred that higher levels of the existential fulfillment dimension self-transcendence did not statistically predict lower levels of overall job burnout among Kenya universities professional counsellors.

At the fourth level, null hypotheses were generated with regard to the overall existential fulfillment and the three job burnout dimensions (emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and reduced professional efficacy) as well as overall job burnout. H_{01d_i}: posited that at 0.05 significance level, there is no statistically significant relationship between overall existential fulfillment and the job burnout dimension of emotional exhaustion. A spearman's rank order correlation coefficient was conducted to test this hypothesis. It was observed that the weak negative correlation coefficient of -0.132($p = 0.08 > 0.05$) that was not statistically significant. Accordingly, the hypothesis was not rejected and it was inferred that high levels of existential fulfillment did not statistically predict high levels of emotional exhaustion among Kenya universities professional counselors.

H_{01d_{ii}}: posited that at 0.05 significance level, there is no statistically significant relationship between overall existential fulfillment and the job burnout dimension of depersonalization. The observed weak negative correlation coefficient of -0.021($p = 0.78 > 0.05$) which was not statistically significant and led to the decision not to reject the null hypothesis. It was inferred that overall existential fulfillment could not be used to statistically predict higher levels of depersonalization among Kenya universities professional counselors.

H_{01d_{iii}}: posited that at 0.05 significance level, there is no statistically significant relationship between overall existential fulfillment and the job burnout dimension of reduced professional efficacy. An observed weak negative correlation coefficient of -0.234($p = 0.00 < 0.05$) that was

statistically significant ensured that the null hypothesis was rejected. The alternative hypothesis $H_{1d_{iii}}$: which posited that at 0.05 significance level, there is a statistically significant relationship between overall existential fulfillment and the job burnout dimension of reduced professional efficacy was adopted. Inferentially, high rates of overall existential fulfillment statistically predicted high levels of professional efficacy among Kenya universities professional counselors. This implies that when professional counselors are existentially fulfilled, there would be fewer cases presenting professional inefficacy and therefore productivity would be significantly enhanced.

$H_{0d_{iv}}$: posited that at 0.05 significance level, there is no statistically significant relationship between overall existential fulfillment and overall job burnout. The statistical test yielded a Spearman's Rank Order correlation coefficient of $-0.084 (p = 0.26 > 0.05)$ which was not statistically significant led to decision not to reject the null hypothesis. It was inferred that the positive correlation coefficient indicated that higher existential fulfillment levels did not statistically predict higher job burnout levels. This was contrary to the expectations of the study. It was expected that the correlation [62] (2011); Tomic and Tomic[63]; Tomic, Evers and Brouwers[64]. The difference in the findings could be explained on the account of the observed moderate levels of existential fulfillment (Table 4.2) which corresponded with moderate levels of job burnout (Table 4.4). Although job burnout scores indicated that Kenya universities professional counsellors were moderately burnt out, it was expected that the higher mean index of existential fulfillment would negatively correlate with lower mean on job burnout.

As observed in the correlation matrix, the existential fulfillment dimension of self-actualisation and self-transcendence were negatively correlated with self-acceptance and positively related to each other. All existential fulfillment dimensions in this research were positively correlated to overall existential fulfillment. Similarly, it was observed that all job burnout dimensions were positively interrelated as well as with overall job burnout. These findings agree with observations in the study by Loonstra and Brouwers[65] that established that self-acceptance was negatively correlated to self-transcendence but significantly and positively related to self-actualisation. The same study established that all existential fulfillment dimensions were positively correlated to overall existential fulfillment.

In their research on the relationship between existential fulfillment and job burnout (the opposite of work engagement) Hunnibell [66] and Hunnibell and others [67] found a significant negative correlation between self-transcendence and all three dimensions of job burnout. Längle and colleagues [68] also viewed job burnout as a special vacuum or as deficit of existential fulfillment, which entails loss of interest, a lack of initiative and emotional exhaustion.

The Relationship between Existential Fulfillment and Job Burnout

To examine the relationship between existential fulfillment and job burnout, non-parametric test which included chi-square, Friedman and Kendall's coefficient of concordance tests were carried out for the two variables as confirmatory test for the significance of relationship. All tests were very significant for and it was therefore concluded that the two variables were diametrically opposed and that higher existential fulfillment scores predicted lower job burnout levels.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

From the findings, it was established that all dimensions of existential fulfillment were negatively correlated to job burnout dimension. Since overall existential fulfillment was negatively but not statistically significantly related to job burnout, it was concluded that existential fulfillment and job burnout cancelled each other among Kenya universities professional counsellors. The summary was as follows:

- i. The overall existential fulfillment levels among Kenya universities professional counsellors observed to be moderate based on the mean index for responses on the EFS (2.57; $sd = 1.08$). Among individual professional counsellors, 89% of respondents reported moderate levels of existential fulfillment.
- ii. Overall job burnout among Kenya universities professional counsellors derived from the mean index of responses on the MBI-HSS was 2.2 ($sd = 1.77$) and therefore moderate. Among respondents, 76% registered moderate job burnout levels.
- iii. Self-acceptance positively correlated with emotional exhaustion ($-0.244(p = 0.00 < 0.05)$), professional efficacy ($-0.016(p = 0.83 < 0.05)$), depersonalisation ($-0.146(p = 0.05 \leq 0.05)$) overall job burnout ($-0.039(p = 0.6 > 0.05)$).

- iv. The existential fulfillment dimension self-actualisation correlated with job burnout dimension emotional exhaustion $-0.037(p = 0.63 > 0.05)$ professional efficacy $-0.045(p = 0.55 > 0.05)$ depersonalisation $-0.14(p = 0.6 > 0.05)$ and overall job burnout $(-0.103(p = 0.17 > 0.05))$ among university professional counsellors.
- v. Existential fulfillment dimension self-transcendence was correlated with job burnout dimensions emotional exhaustion $-0.055(p = 0.48 > 0.05)$ professional efficacy $-0.159(p = 0.03 < 0.05)$ depersonalisation $-0.281(p = 0.00 < 0.05)$ and overall job burnout $(-0.038(p = 0.61 > 0.05))$ among university professional counsellors.
- vi. Overall existential fulfillment was correlated with job burnout dimensions emotional exhaustion $-0.132(p = 0.08 > 0.05)$ professional efficacy $-0.234(p = 0.00 < 0.05)$ depersonalisation $-0.021(p = 0.78 > 0.05)$ and overall job burnout $0.084(p = 0.26 > 0.05)$ among university professional counsellors

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