

# PROFESSIONAL BURNOUT OF TEACHERS AT HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

**Dr. Ainuru Zholchieva<sup>1</sup>**

**Eldiir Shakirov<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1,2</sup>International Ala-Too University, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan

## ABSTRACT

The study deals with the problems of emotional burnout, concerning the work of teachers in the field of education. In psychological studies, the phenomenon of emotional burnout was first mentioned at the end of the twentieth century. In 1974, Herbert J. Freudenberger first used this term. He used it to describe the negative psychological state of any psychosocial occupation - a state of demoralization, exhaustion, frustration that occurs in a healthy person, who has close contact with patients in psychological clinics and crisis centers. The methodology of «Psychological burnout questionnaire for teachers» created by V.C. Rukavishnikov and the methodology of C. D. Spielberg «Determination of level of anxiety» (adaptation of Y.L. Hanin), «Scale of psych diagnostics stress PSM-25» were applied during an investigation.

***Keywords:** burnout, stress, emotional, psychology, professional*

## INTRODUCTION

The response of our psyche and body to intensive, constantly acting work stress is called “burnout syndrome”. The phenomenon of burnout is a set of negative psychological experiences that affect a person's mental and physical condition, health, well-being and performance [8]. Such experiences lead to the same behavior. This step was taken by Herbert J. Freudenberger (1926-1999), a Jewish psychoanalyst of German origin. Immediately after the definition of such a state, scientists began to investigate the content of this phenomenon. In the 1980s, the first experimental research on emotional burnout appeared in the United States.

Firstly, it was interesting for the researchers: the study of the causes and structure underlying burnout, its symptoms and manifestations, as well as the dependence of employee well-being and activity on burnout syndrome. Several works by psychologist C. Maslach and his colleagues, released in 1981, were interesting. These studies became the basis for further research into the phenomenon of emotional burnout. The burnout model built by his team made it possible to interpret the data. These studies consider “emotional burnout as a three-component symptom complex consisting of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduction of personal achievements” [1]. Work stress has

become correlated with the concept of emotional burnout, which can be associated with work satisfaction.

In studying the problem of emotional burnout, R. Schwab (1984) argued that burnout syndrome occurs in professionals who are involved in prolonged, close, and emotionally intense contact with other people. Emotional burnout syndrome develops in working life, as Pines. A (1982) noticed. It refers to a wide range of professionals experiencing burnout syndrome - counselors, psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, police, prison staff, teachers, medical workers, etc. [2].

In the mid-90s, the study of such a phenomenon as burnout has reached a new level in the world of Western psychology. The status of the independent syndrome appeared at burnout, it is no longer reduced to the states in professional activity such as stress, fatigue and depression. Such notions as stress and burnout are similar, but they are independent phenomena that differ in that burnout is the result of long-term stress experienced by employees working with people. In Ananyev's works he discusses negative phenomena that appear in professional life related to interpersonal relationships among professionals working in human-people occupations. Only in the late 90's burnout became an independent object of scientific research. [3]

It is possible to note several approaches in understanding of the phenomenon of emotional burnout conducting the analysis of works. An interactive approach to the essence of emotional burnout was suggested by C. Maslach together with his colleagues. This team of psychologists draws attention to the importance of interpersonal contacts in the emergence of burnout. In 1981, a pair of psychologists, K. Maslach and S. Jackson defined the concept of burnout as a syndrome associated with emotional exhaustion, feelings of inefficiency in the professional sphere, acting as the body's response to chronic and interpersonal stress in the work [1]. They proposed to consider emotional burnout as a syndrome consisting of three components, which includes three types of symptoms: emotional or physical exhaustion, depersonalization and reduction of personal achievements. In order to reveal the content of these symptoms, researchers define emotional exhaustion as a feeling associated with emotional stress and emptiness, the end of their emotional resources, which appears when an employee can no longer devote himself to work with the same diligence as before. Communication with them becomes formal, faceless. The emergence of negative feelings may be latent and manifest itself in the form of restrained aggression, which over time leads to conflicts and tensions in relationships.

## **THE DEFINITION OF EMOTIONAL BURNOUT SYNDROME.**

A division of burnout into two groups was suggested by V.E. Oryol - it is a process approach and a result approach. [7]. The first one means burnout as a

process that unfolds in time, takes place during a person's professional development and proceeds in the form of phases. [6].

According to the stages, the procession character of burnout is clearly described in the concept of M. Burish [9] who singled out 6 phases of burnout formation. The stage-procedural character of a burnout is well described and singles out 6 phases of a burnout formation:

1. A preliminary phase, by which he meant an excessive involvement of a subject in professional activity.
2. The phase of decrease in the level of own participation in the work activity, when a specialist exhausts his resources and cannot work with the same dedication.
3. The phase of emotional reactions, when there is a loss of interest in the work performed and negative emotional feelings about work begin to emerge.
4. The destructive behavior phase, when the professional begins to protect him or herself from negative emotional experiences by walking away, avoiding the activity, distancing him or herself from clients, etc.
5. The phase of psychosomatic reactions - the peak of psych emotional and physical exhaustion.
6. The last phase - complete disappointment in the performed activity.

### **Peculiarities of emotional burnout syndrome manifestation in teachers of higher educational institutions.**

Emotional burnout syndrome is a professional phenomenon that occurs in representatives of social professions, connected with necessary intensive communication. This phenomenon is most typical for workers of such professions as teachers, kindergarten teachers, doctors, medical personnel, service workers, managers, executives, sellers. Modern scientific literature presents a sufficient number of studies showing burnout syndrome prevalence in education employees.

Borisova M. V. identifies 3 main groups of burnout factors: individual psychological: high level of neuroticism, lack of self-regulation skills, a discrepancy between significant values and activity values; social-psychological factor: emotional component; organizational factor: lack of opportunities for professional growth [4]. The professional activity of such employees is described by a high level of communicative tension. In the work of specialists of pedagogical professions, there is a large number of emotion-genic factors that contribute to constant tension and lead to burnout syndrome development. Situations of stress in the work of pedagogical workers are diverse, working conditions impose higher requirements for professional and personal qualities of people who have decided to devote themselves to this profession.

The unfavorable factors of teacher's work include: the necessary constant involvement in the process and, accordingly, a high load on the cognitive processes. We study such a group of pedagogical employees as teachers of higher educational institutions from the point of view of emotional burnout expression. The professional category is united by the specificity of professional activity, namely work with people, communicative tension, the activity of subjects of activity, multifaceted tasks and many other things. The activity of the teacher as a whole is aimed at working with people of different ages, it is manifested in the work with the personality of the person [10].

## **METHODOLOGY**

Due to the fact that burnout syndrome causes such negative consequences for a professional's life activity, the question of developing measures of prevention and correction of this syndrome arises sharply. A signal function in the development of burnout syndrome is played by symptoms that draw a worker's attention to the fact that there is a so-called failure in work relations and activity. Thus, D.G. Trunov writes that "To some extent, they are the professional's friends, helping him to know what is going on with him. The perception of these signals as enemies means the rejection of the imagined possibility of a deeper understanding of oneself and one's activity" [5]. These signals give the professional an opportunity to understand what is going on with him/her and based on the symptoms to decide what to do next, possibly to retrain or to start correcting the syndrome and its manifestations. Trunov D.G. suggests four different courses of action to fight burnout syndrome. [5]

As an example, he cites the work with psychologists-consultants:

1. To adapt oneself to work. By this action, it means the process of professional adaptation, which is expressed in the development of professional qualities of the psychologist-consultant's personality. These are the qualities as empathy, understanding of another person, empathy and improvement of one's abilities to perceive and analyze information related to another person.
2. The adaption work. This direction consists of change and reorganization of professional and organizational conditions of activity, as well as adaptation to one's own features. These changes are usually expressed externally - the place, time and conditions of work, and practically do not concern the content of the work performed.

### **Analysis of empirical data on emotional burnout of teachers in higher educational institutions.**

The research base was Ala-Too International University, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. The aim of the research: to reveal features of emotional burnout of teachers of higher educational institutions. The objectives of research:

1. To carry out the analysis of theoretical data on the problem of emotional burnout.
2. To investigate the features of emotional burnout of teachers of higher educational institutions and give qualitative and quantitative analysis of empirical data on studying teachers' emotional burnout. The hypothesis of the research: the teachers of higher educational institutions susceptible to emotional burnout may have a high level of anxiety and low level of stress resistance.

The sample: the teachers with more than three years of work experience at the age from 22 to 65 years old participated in the research. The number of respondents was 32 people. The study consisted of three stages.

### **METHODS**

In the course of the experiment, the methodology of V. Rukavishnikov «Questionnaire of psychological burn-out for teachers» was applied; the methodology of C. D. Spielberg «Determination of level of anxiety» (adaptation of Y.L. Hanin), «Scale of psychodiagnostics stress PSM-25» was used.

In the first stage, we set goals and objectives for the study. We conducted a theoretical analysis of the literature on the problem of research, selected the methodological apparatus and selected research methods. We also chose the subjects for the empirical research of the problem of emotional burnout in teachers.

At the second stage of the research, the diagnostics of the level of emotional burnout, anxiety and stress expression in the teachers of comprehensive higher educational institutions was carried out with the help of the research methods chosen by us. The third stage was devoted to the analysis and interpretation of the data we obtained, mathematical processing of the data using the Spearman rank correlation method. Also, at the third stage we developed a number of recommendations for correction of the emotional burnout level.

**Comparative analysis of the data obtained using “Spearman rank correlation method”.**

At the third stage of our study, we also conducted a correlation analysis of the dependence of the variables using the "Spearman rank correlation method". This method is designed to identify the existence of a relationship between 2 or more random variables, as well as its strength. The empirical value was calculated using the formula:

$$p = 1 - \frac{\sum d^2}{n^3 - n}$$

where  $d^2$  is the squares of the differences between the ranks;  $N$  is the number of traits involved in the ranking.

From our analysis of two techniques, we can say, that the connection between a trait  $Y$  (situational anxiety) and a factor  $X$  (burnout) is weak and direct. That is the higher the anxiety, the higher the level of teachers' burnout.

In order to test the null hypothesis at significance level  $\alpha$  the Spearman general correlation rank correlation coefficient is equal to zero under the competing hypothesis  $H_1$ .  $p \neq 0$ , we calculated the critical point:

$$T_{kp} = t(\alpha, k) \sqrt{\frac{1 - p^2}{n - 2}}$$

where  $n$  is the sample size;  $p$  is the sample Spearman rank correlation coefficient:  $t(\alpha, k)$  is the critical point of the two-sided critical region, which is found from the Student's distribution critical points table, by the significance level  $\alpha$  and the number of degrees of freedom  $k = n - 2$ . There is a significant rank correlation between qualitative traits.

Using Student's table we found  $t(\alpha/2, k) = (0.05/2; 30) = 2.042$

$$T_{kp} = 2.042 \sqrt{\frac{1 - 0.116^2}{32 - 2}} = 0.37$$

Since  $T_{kp} > p$ , we accepted the hypothesis that Spearman's rank correlation coefficient is 0. We can say that the rank correlation coefficient is statistically - insignificant and the rank correlation relationship between the scores of the two tests is insignificant. From this we conclude that our hypothesis that teachers of higher educational institutions have a high level of anxiety was partially confirmed. Teachers do have anxiety, but in our sample, this factor does not depend on the degree of burnout of particular teachers.

Next, in the third stage of our study, we identified a correlation between the level of teachers' burnout and their level of stress. The data obtained by Spearman correlation analysis in relation to two techniques: "Mental Burnout Questionnaire for Teachers" and "Psychological Stress Scale PSM-25".

From our analysis of the two techniques, we can say that the relationship between feature Y (stress level) and factor X (burnout) is weak and inverse. That is the lower the stress level, the higher the level of teachers' burnout.

In order to test the null hypothesis at the significance level  $\alpha$  the Spearman's general correlation rank correlation coefficient is equal to zero under the competing hypothesis  $H_1: \rho \neq 0$ , we calculated the critical point:

$$T_{kp} = t(\alpha, k) \sqrt{\frac{1-p^2}{n-2}}$$

where  $n$  is the sample size;  $p$  is the sample Spearman rank correlation coefficient:  $t(\alpha, k)$  is the critical point of the two-sided critical region, which is found from the Student's distribution critical points table, by the significance level  $\alpha$  and the number of degrees of freedom  $k = n-2$ .

Using Student's table we found  $t(\alpha/2, k) = (0.05/2; 30) = 2.042$

Since  $T_{kp} > p$ , we accept the hypothesis that the Spearman rank correlation coefficient is 0. In other words, the rank correlation coefficient is statistically insignificant and the rank correlation relationship between the scores of the two tests is insignificant.

## CONCLUSION

Emotional burnout is directly connected with the health preservation, mental stability, reliability and professional longevity of the specialists involved in long-term interpersonal communications. Emotional burnout is an acquired stereotype of emotional, most often professional behavior. As a result of diagnostics of a level of professional burnout among teachers, the following was revealed:

In the group of teachers, the average level of emotional burnout symptoms expression was revealed. These are such symptoms as: psycho-emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and self-assessment of professional efficiency. The absence of a high level of burnout showed that in teachers the influence of stressogenic factors is lower than in other social professions, but in spite of this high level of stress was detected in teachers from rapidly changing demands at work. We got an average level of anxiety and a high level of stress, depending on many factors such as extensive experience, inability to change the situation, humility and detachment from the work situation.

Thus, the hypothesis that: the teachers of higher educational institutions are subjected to emotional burnout syndrome has a high level of anxiety and elevated stress level was partially confirmed. The received data can also depend on the chosen research base: specific teachers and administration.

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