

INFLUENCE OF STRESS COPING BEHAVIOR ON THE EMOTIONAL LOAD OF TEACHERS

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Abstract: In connection with the intensification of professional activity and the acceleration of the pace of life of a modern person, the problem of the relationship between behavior to overcome stress and emotional load and the development of individual coping resources is becoming more and more relevant. There is a rather limited number of scientific works dedicated to the study of the problem of overcoming the emotional burden of teachers working with children, as well as the maintenance and development of individual coping resources. Teachers from the regional state educational institution (30 people) took part in the study. Observation, interview, and standardized testing techniques were used to diagnose teacher workload and behavioral strategies for coping with stress. Mathematical and statistical analysis methods were used to process the results.

Teachers who prefer non-constructive overcoming of professional difficulties, inadequately limit the scope and intensity of inclusion of emotions in professional communication (called „Inadequate emotional selective reaction“, which has an average value of $\bar{X}_{av.}=18.6$). They seek to ease or reduce professional responsibilities requiring emotional costs. To a greater extent, those teachers who use constructive coping are aware of the psychotraumatic factors of professional activity and experience emotional emptiness and fatigue. Positive correlations were found between non-constructive coping („aggressive actions“) and all phases of emotional burnout („tension“; „resistance“; „exhaustion“:). Aggression directed at others as a counterproductive coping strategy has been empirically shown to contribute to job frustration and job dissatisfaction and loss of professional interest. In other words, the professional stress experienced by teachers exceeds their coping resources, and the defensive-adaptive mechanism of behavior to overcome stress takes place at the level of psychological protection.

Keywords: state of stress; emotional overload of teachers working with children; strategies for coping with stress;

Field: Medical sciences

1. INTRODUCTION

In connection with the intensification of professional activity and the acceleration of the pace of life of a modern person, the problem of learning strategies to overcome various professional stresses, including emotional burnout, is becoming more and more relevant. To date, there is no generally accepted definition for it in the literature. In the psychological literature, emotional burnout is considered as a state of physical, emotional and mental exhaustion of a person caused by the relationship between a professional and his client (S. Hobfoll, 1994), and as a result of unconstructive overcoming of professional stress (Kokun O., Shamykh O., 2016). Also as a process of gradual loss of emotional, cognitive and physical resources as a result of the realization of all three stages of stress: tension, resistance and exhaustion (Boyko V.V., 1999) Professional burnout manifests itself mainly in the form of emotional fatigue and exhaustion of cognitive and physical resources, such as low self-esteem of professional competence in some professions (Bettini E.A., Cheyney K., Wang J., Leko C. Job Design, 2015) and is explained by their specific conditions and content (intensity, duration and complexity of interpersonal communication, various age groups of clients, severity of their problems, etc.). According to the resource „conservation“ model, S.E. Hobfoll and J. Freedy (1993) arises as a result of a process of constant loss of resources with the impossibility of their timely recovery (Bettini E.A., Cheyney K., Wang J., Leko C. Job Design, 2015). Some researchers believe that the stages of its development are determined by the destruction of the „resource base of resistance“, consisting of psychological resources for professional and personal development, stability and overcoming professional difficulties.

Recently, foreign studies have noted an increased interest in the emotional burnout of teachers working with children (Hobfoll S. E., Lerman M., 1989). Among the factors for its emergence N.C. Brunsting, M.A. Sreckovic, K.L. Lane, (2014) include teaching experience, student disability, role conflict, role ambiguity, lack of administrative support (Hobfoll S. E., Lerman M., 1989). The pathology of teachers with professional burnout often manifests itself as physical and verbal aggression, irritation, or they are more susceptible to them (Bettini E.A., Cheyney K., Wang J., Leko C. Job Design, 2015). They are characterized by rigidity of thinking and behavior, fewer contacts and at the same time greater dependence

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on others, difficulties in maintaining partnerships and insufficient clarity of life and professional directions (Maslach C., 1982). All this raises the issue of maintaining and developing personal coping resources and stress-resolving behaviors of burnout-prone teachers working with children.

Stress coping behavior is considered in various models (Vodopyanova N. E., 2009). In the opinion of H.E. Vodopyanova, E.S. Starchenkova (2001) presents the overcoming of stress as constructive, through the use of such productive coping strategies as: assertive actions, entering into social contact, as well as seeking social support. They define "non-constructive coping", which includes the implementation of such coping strategies as: caution, impulsivity, manipulateness (indirect methods), asociality, aggressive actions and avoidance (S. Hobfall, 1994). The "protective-adaptive" mechanism that underlies behavior to overcome stress is a model proposed by M.V. Bogdanova (2013). It is carried out in stages on four levels. At the first level, personal resources provide a basis for adaptation and resilience to minor life difficulties. At the same time, this level is already characterized by psychosomatic disorders and disorders in the form of emotional burnout. The second level - psychological protection is an increase in constructiveness, primary and secondary protection. The third level - coping, is provided by non-constructive, mixed and constructive coping. The fourth level - self-change is provided by resources of resilience, self-regulation and personal growth (Bogdanova M.V., 2013).

In the current research, we define as an object of research - the emotional burnout of teachers working with children, and a subject of research - the influence of behavior to overcome stress on its occurrence.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was conducted regionally on the basis of state educational institutions with teachers working with children in kindergartens and primary schools. In each group or class in the Bulgarian institutions, there are from one to three children with special educational needs. This complicates the work of the teacher in fulfilling his professional duties. 30 female teachers with an average age of 35.5 years, with professional experience from 5 to 15 years, took part in the study. The package of psychodiagnostic methods included the following questionnaires: "Emotional burnout" (Boyko V.V., 1999), "Strategic approach to coping scale (SACS)" by S. Hobfoll (1994)", both adapted to Bulgarian. Mathematical and statistical methods were used: descriptive statistics, comparative (U-Mann-Whitney test), correlation (r-Spearman) and regression analysis. All teachers were informed about the objectives of the study, confidentiality rules and gave voluntary consent to participate.

3. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The study of emotional burnout of teachers working with children was carried out using the questionnaire "Emotional burnout (BURN-OUT)" by V. V. Boyko, adapted in Bulgarian and shows the following results (table 1). The methodology allows separating the next 3 phases in the development of stress: "tension", "resistance", "exhaustion". The comparison of the points obtained for the individual phases is not valid. It does not testify to their relative role or contribution to the syndrome, since the phenomena measured in them are significantly different: reaction to internal and external factors, methods of psychological protection, state of the nervous system. Quantitative indicators can only judge how much each phase has formed, which phase has formed to a greater or lesser extent.

The obtained results show the emerging symptoms of emotional burnout of teachers, as well as its degree of formation: indicator on the scale "Final indicator of burnout": Hsv.=180.9 phases as "Tension": Xsv.=42.5; "Resistance" Xmean=72.3 and "Exhaustion": Xmean=66.1 (Table 1).

From the conversations with the respondents, it was found that they are characterized by a growing awareness of the influence of psychotraumatic factors in professional activity and an emotional lack of participation in communication with family and friends. An increase in the desire to relieve or reduce the volume of official duties associated with emotional costs, the inability to provide emotional support to children, as well as psychosomatic and psychovegetative problems.

Table 1 Mean values of the indicators of the phases of emotional burnout of teachers

Name of index	Average value obtained x	Formative stage		
		I. The phase is not formed	II. The phase is in the formative stage	III. The phase is formed
1. Voltage	42,5	to 36 points and less	from 37 to 60 points	61 points and above
2. Resistance	72,3	to 36 points and less	from 37 to 60 points	61 points and above
3. Exhaustion	66,1	to 36 points and less	from 37 to 60 points	61 points and above
Σ Final burnout index	180,9			

Source: Author

Table 2. Average values of indicators of phases of emotional burnout of teachers and number of respondents distributed by phases of BURN-OUT formation

№	Indicator	Xcp.	Number of respondents		
			I phase	II phase	III phase
1.	Tension	42,5			
1.1.	<i>Experiencing psycho-traumatic circumstances</i>	11,4	-	15	-
1.2.	<i>Dissatisfaction with yourself</i>	7,5	18	-	-
1.3.	<i>Depression</i>	7,8	22	-	-
1.4.	<i>Anxiety and depression</i>	15,8	-	21	-
2.	Resistance	72,3			
2.1.	<i>Anxiety and depression</i>	22,9	-	13	-
2.2.	<i>Emotional and moral disorientation</i>	21,5	-	-	22
2.3.	<i>Expanding the realm of economizing emotions</i>	12,3	-	10	-
2.4.	<i>Reduction of professional duties</i>	15,6	-	24	-
3.	Exhaustion	66,1			
3.1.	<i>Emotional deficit</i>	9,8	-	23	-
3.2.	<i>Emotional detachment</i>	16,5	-	9	-
3.3.	<i>Personal alienation (depersonalization)</i>	24,1	-	-	25
3.4.	<i>Psychosomatic and <u>psychovegetative</u> disorders</i>	15,7	-	10	-

Source: Author

Table 2 shows that 80% of the respondents are in the beginning phase of the development of BURN-OUT syndrome, of which 73% have "Emotional and moral disorientation", and 83% have "Emotional deficit" - "Personal alienation".

A diagnosis of teachers' stress coping behavior was carried out using the questionnaire "Strategies for overcoming stressful situations" ("Strategic Approach to Coping Scale (SACS)" S. Hobfoll (1994) consisting of 54, (adapted to Bulgarian 2019).It determines the values of the following scales: "Assertive actions", "Introduction to social contact", "Seeking social support", "Attention", "Impulsive actions", "Avoidance", "Unacceptable actions", "Antisocial Manifestations' and 'Aggressive Actions' Maximum number of points for each scale is 30.

Table 3. Average values of indicators of diagnostic indicators stress coping behaviors of teachers working with children up to 10 years of age

№	Indicator	Average values, number of points Hsy.
1.	Assertive actions	21,5
2.	Entering into social contact	23,4
3.	Seeking social support	23,9
4.	Caution	22,8
5.	Impulsive actions	18,6
6.	Avoidance	17,9
7.	Unacceptable actions	17,3
8.	Antisocial events	18,2
9.	Aggressive actions	19,7

Source: Author

From Table 3, it can be seen that the average number of points on all indicators is elevated, especially “entering into social contact”, “seeking social support” and “attention”. All respondents are active and consistent in protecting their interests, respect the interests of the surrounding people and are ready to receive support from them. They are prone to impulsive actions, to unacceptable actions, they are aggressive and prone to antisocial behavior. They still have a desire to avoid risky and conflict situations. Thus, teachers inadequately limit the scope and intensity of including emotions in professional communication, seek to facilitate or reduce professional emotional responsibilities.

The value of “Impulsive actions” is high - an average value of 18.6 points. This indicator is also called “Inadequate emotional electoral response” in the literature.

Among the emerging symptoms among teachers is “Reduction of professional duties” phases “Tension”, “Anxiety and depression” “Emotional deficit”. From the phase “Resistance” is developed “Assertive behavior”. Thus, teachers demonstrate resistance to the impact of psychologically traumatic circumstances of professional activity: they tend to fulfill the assumed responsibility, they are dependent on the mood and subjective preferences. There is a manifestation of inadequate emotional reactions in interpersonal relations in the form of “saving” with emotions and limiting emotional reciprocity.

The results obtained are consistent with the results of previously conducted studies. quality and foreign research (Brunsting, N.C., Sreckovic, M.A., Lane K.L., 2014). Thus, the present study demonstrated the relationship between teachers’ emotional burnout and unproductive creative coping strategies in overcoming occupational stress. A.A. Kiseleva et al (2019) revealed the existence of positive correlations between relationships between “emotional exhaustion” and such unproductive coping strategies as “confrontation”, “distancing” and “depersonalization”, among experienced teachers with professional activity of up to five years (Bettini E.A., Cheyney K., Wang J., Leko C. Job Design, 2015). In such a case, their level of emotional burnout is diagnosed as remarkably low. However, in contrast to the results we obtained, teachers whose professional experience is more than five years demonstrate a high value of coping strategies - “Self-control” and “Planning when solving problems”. A new study of the relationship between coping strategies and emotional burnout in French teachers working with children in different environmental settings (regular class in regular school, specialized class in regular school and specialized institution) testifies to repeated results (Brunsting, N.C., Sreckovic, M.A., Lane K.L., 2014).

Thus, teachers in a specialized institution have “emotional exhaustion” and “depersonalization”. Here - unlike teachers of a specialized school, teachers of a profiled class of a regular school, positive correlations of emotional exhaustion were established. According to the author’s research of E. Boujut, A. Dean, A. Grouselle, E. Cappe, obtained results show that teachers of specialized schools and classes have adaptive potential due to the presence of special training (Brunsting, N.C., Sreckovic, M.A., Lane K.L., 2014).

4. CONCLUSION

It has been empirically proven that teachers working with children have productive strategies, but at the same time demonstrate a high level of emotional burnout from an early age. The occurrence of a syndrome of BURN-OUT is based on unintended actions. Apparently, available coping resources do not allow them to overcome emotional burnout, which indicates the implementation of the second

level of defensive-adaptive behavior mechanism to overcome stress. It is characterized by an increase in constructiveness and psychological protection from professional difficulties and self-change. At the same time, confrontation and overcoming emotional burnout in a professional environment is possible. Dissatisfaction with professional self-esteem can contribute to expanding abilities to cope with stress behavior, updating resources for personal growth, i.e. moving to coping with self-change.

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