

SPECIFICS OF EMOTIONAL BURNOUT IN OFFICE WORKERS

V.I. Dolgova* O.N. Rozhkova* A.N. Bogachev* A.V. Vorozheykina*
and L.V. Ivanova*

Abstract: To reveal the specifics of emotional burnout in office workers in dependence from the specifics of professional activity. We used the “diagnostics of emotional burnout level” technique by V.V. Boyko. Participants in the study were 52 office workers (2 groups). The phase of exhaustion was presented much less in the office workers of the second group in comparison with the respondents of the first group. Specifically, this phase had been developed in only 23% of workers of the second group, in 30% it was at the stage of development, and in 47% of the respondents the stage had not been developed. Mann-Whitney U-test revealed statistically significant differences in the emotional burnout symptoms between office workers whose professional activity is related to interaction with people (1st group) and is not related to interaction with people (2nd group). Significant differences with $p \leq 0.01$ were observed for the symptoms of “being chased into a cage”, the symptom of “expanding the field of conservation of emotions”, and the “phase of resistance”. The area of uncertainty (the value is significant with $p \leq 0.05$) includes the characteristics of the symptoms of “dissatisfaction with one self” and “emotional-moral disorientation”.

Keywords: Office workers, emotional burnout syndrome, phases of emotional burnout syndrome, organizational approach, interpersonal approach, individual-psychological approach, integrative approach, objective factors, subjective factors, interaction with people.

INTRODUCTION

Emotional burnout is defined as a specific type of professional deformation in individuals that have to interact with people during the fulfillment of their duties.

Currently, there are four approaches to studying emotional burnout: organizational, interpersonal, individual-psychological and integrative.

The representatives of individual-psychological approaches explain the mechanism of burnout emergence by the effect of internal reasons, which are rather variative (Azeem, 2008; Erickson, 2001; Ghorpade, 2007; Grandey, 2013; Henderson, 2000; Kickul, 2001; Klersy, 2007; Kuremyr, 1994; Lee, 2015; Rose, 2004; Warren, 2014; Weisberg, 1999). They include establishment and development of individual personality patterns of behavior in stress-generating conditions (Dolgova et al., 2016a), in the conditions of crisis-related change of stereotypes (Dudina & Dolgova, 2016b), in various interactions in family relationships (Dolgova et al., 2016b).

* South Ural State Humanitarian Pedagogical University, Russia, 454080, Chelyabinsk, Lenin Avenue, 69

Significant number of empirical studies within individual-psychological approach are aimed at revealing the role of personality characteristics in the processes of the development of emotional instability signs. For example, they revealed psychological qualities that prevent person's emotional burnout as a syndrome of chronic stress development; revealed clinical and psychological aspects of emotional burnout syndrome and showed a complex interaction of the syndrome in the following combinations: emotional burnout and selfishness, emotional burnout and emotional intellect and dispositional optimism, responsibility and emotional burnout; they also studied emotional burnout in creative processes.

Integrative models of emotional burnout have been proposed. They are described in the studies of myths and reality of the psychological burnout syndrome; in systematization of metaphors and actual manifestations of emotional burnout; studies of stress-generating states and emotional burnout in a profession in particular; of emotional burnout in professional activity; of emotional burnout in the process of career growth in the representatives of communicative professions (Bondarchuk, 2013); of the influence of emotional burnout on the quality of life and professional activity efficiency (Vorobyeva, 2013); of the specifics of the development of emotional burnout syndrome in the assisting professions. It was shown that emotional "burnout" is not only the result of professional relationships.

A group of external (organizational) factors includes the conditions of material environment, work content and social-psychological characteristics of activity. External factors also have to be studied and corrected. This was highlighted in the recent works – the models of psychological help in the situation of emotional burnout (Vlakh, 2015) were described, the methods of neutralizing emotional tension (Gnedko, 2014) and ways of protecting oneself from emotional burnout at work were named; the methods of fighting emotional burnout were studied; trainings aimed at decreasing the level of motivation to avoid failure as a method of increasing resistance to emotional burnout were developed. They evaluated the possibilities of psychological help for emotional burnout with existential problems in the conditions of health retreats and resorts. A training program for psychologists was developed in order to prepare them for fulfilling the professional tasks related to solving the discussed problem (Dolgova, 2016c).

However, not all personality traits have been studied sufficiently, therefore, additional studies in this field are required. Moreover, the conducted analysis of the available literature showed that, when office workers are concerned, the problem has not been explored enough and is limited by the studies of the influence of managers' personality traits on emotional burnout; however, managers cannot always be considered office workers. This further increases the relevance of the discussion presented in the article.

METHODS

We used V.V. Boyko's techniques of diagnosing the level of emotional burnout with consideration of its specifics.

Participants in the study were 52 office workers divided in two groups. The first group included office workers whose professional activity is related to interaction with people; the second group included specialists whose professional activity is not related to interaction with people.

Methods were aimed at revealing the specifics of emotional burnout in office workers in dependence from the specifics of professional activity. They were directed at solving three research tasks: to study the prevalence of emotional burnout in office workers; to develop a research program, select the techniques and conduct an empirical study of emotional burnout in office workers; to analyze and interpret the obtained results.

We used Mann-Whitney U-test in order to confirm the significance of differences in the manifestation of emotional burnout syndrome in office workers with different types of professional activity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

We revealed that, in the majority of office workers whose activity is related to frequent interaction with people, the phase of tension was at the stage of development (42%), in 31% of the respondents, the phase of tension was not developed, and a rather high percentage (27%) of office workers whose activity is related to interaction with people had the developed stage of tension.

In the office workers of the second group, the phase of tension was significantly less manifested compared with the office workers of the first group. Namely, only 8% of the respondents of the second group had developed phase of tension; the phase of tension was at the stage of development in 65% of the respondents, and it was not developed in 27% of the respondents.

The phase of resistance was developed in 39% of office workers whose professional activity is related to interaction with people. In 42%, the phase of resistance was at the stage of development, and in 19% of office workers working with people this phase was not developed.

The phase of resistance was also significantly manifested in the office workers whose professional activity is not related to interaction with clients. Namely, 39% of the sample had the developed phase, and the phase was at the stage of development in the same number of people. Office workers with non-developed phase of resistance were the minority (22%). These characteristics were almost identical to the characteristics of the office workers of the first group, whose activity was related to interaction with other people.

The phase of exhaustion was also developed in a high percent of respondents of both groups. In particular, among office workers whose professional activity is related to interaction with people, this phase was developed in 39% of the sample. In 33% of respondents of the first group, the phase of exhaustion was at the stage of development, while in 28%, this phase was not developed.

The phase of exhaustion was much less manifested in office workers of the second group compared with the respondents of the first group. Namely, this phase was developed in only 23% of the respondents of the second group; in 30% it was at the stage of development, and in 47% of respondents the phase was not developed.

Comparative analysis showed that the phase of resistance was the most manifested one both in the office workers that work with people and the office workers whose professional activity does not imply interaction with people. In the office workers, whose professional activity is related to interaction with people, the prevalence of the resistance and tension phases were at the same level.

Moreover, the characteristics of prevalence of the tension and exhaustion phases are much lower among the office workers whose professional activity is not related to interaction with people compared to the office workers that interact with people.

According to the results of statistical analysis, there are statistically significant differences in the symptoms of emotional burnout between office workers whose professional activity is related to interaction with people and office workers whose professional activity is not related to interaction with people.

CONCLUSION

The results of the study of the level of emotional burnout syndrome (according to the “diagnostics of emotional burnout level” technique by V.V. Boyko and the results of statistical analysis with Mann-Whitney U-test) revealed the following statistically significant differences in the emotional burnout symptoms between office workers whose professional activity is related to interaction with people and office workers whose professional activity is not related to interaction with people. Namely, significant differences with $p \leq 0.01$ were observed for the symptoms of “being chased into a cage”, the symptom of “expanding the field of conservation of emotions”, and the “phase of resistance”. The area of uncertainty (the value is significant with $p \leq 0.05$) includes the characteristics of the symptoms of “dissatisfaction with oneself” and “emotional-moral disorientation”.

The conducted study allows developing variative programs of psychological correction of emotional burnout in office workers.

References

- Azeem, S.M. and Nazir, N.A. (2008). A study of job burnout among university teachers. *Psychology and Developing Societies*, 20(1): 51-64.
- Bondarchuk, A.E. (2013). *Emotsionalnoe vygoranie kak psikhologicheskaya problema karyernogo rosta predstaviteley kommunikativnykh professiy*. [Emotional burnout as a psychological problem of career growth in representatives of communicative professions]. In: Transformatsiya nauchnykh paradig i kommunikativnye praktiki v informatsionnom sotsiume. VI Vserossiyskaya nauchno-prakticheskaya konferentsiya studentov i molodykh uchenykh. Natsionalnyi issledovatel'skiy Tomskiy politekhnicheskii universitet, pp. 182-184.
- Dolgova, V.I., Mamylna, N.V., Belousova, N.A., Melnik, E.V. and Arkayeva, N.I. (2016a). Problems of mental regulation of personal behavior patterns in stressful conditions. *Man In India*, 96 (10), 57-63.
- Dolgova, V.I., Rokickaya, Y.A., Volchegorskaya, E.Y., Yemelyanova, E.E. and Uvarina, N.V. (2016b). A study of psychological readiness of parents to educate children in the foster family. *International Journal of Environmental and Science Education*, 11(15): 8592-8598.
- Dolgova, V.I., Salamatov, A.A., Potapova, M.V., Yakovleva, N.O. and Yakovlev, E.V. (2016c). The research of the personality qualities of future educational psychologists. *International Journal of Environmental & Science Education*, 11(16), 9530-9542.
- Dudina, M.N. and Dolgova, V.I. (2016a). New educational paradigm: Existentialism is a Humanism. *Man In India*, 96(10), 4043-4050.
- Dudina, M.N. and Dolgova, V.I. (2016b). The crisis of upbringing in the contemporary chronotope: potential solutions. *Man In India*, 96 (10), 75-83.
- Erickson, R.J. and Ritter, Ch. (2001). Emotional labor, burnout, and in authenticity: does gender matter? *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 64(2), 146-163.
- Ghorpade, Ja., Lackritz, J. and Singh, G. (2007). Burnout and personality. Evidence from academia. *Journal of Career Assessment*, 15(2), 240-256.
- Gnedko, P.A. (2014). *Emotsionalnoe vygoranie. Metody neytralizatsii*. [Emotional burnout. Methods of neutralization]. In: *Sovremennaya nauka: opyt, innovatsii, perspektivy. Materialy i doklady II Mezhdunarodnoy nauchno-prakticheskoy konferentsii*, pp. 33-36.
- Grandey, A., Foo, S.C., Groth, M. and Goodwin, R.E. (2013). Free to be you and me: a climate of authenticity alleviates burnout from emotional labor. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 17(1), 1-14.
- Henderson, C.W., Lopezcastillo, J. (2000). *Emotional distress, burnout common in AIDS caregivers*. *AIDS Weekly*, pp. 14.
- Kickul, J. and Posig, M. (2001). Supervisory emotional support and burnout: an explanation of reverse buffering effects. *Journal of Managerial Issues*, 13(3), 328-344.
- Klersy, C., Callegari, A., Martinelli, V., Vizzardi, V., Navino, C., Malberti, F., Tarchini, R., Montagna, G., Guastoni, C., Bellazzi, R., Rampino, T., David, S., Barbieri, C., Dal Canton, A., Politi, P. (2007). Burnout in health care providers of dialysis service in northern Italy: a multicentre study. *Nephrology Dialysis Transplantation*, 22(8), 2283.
- Kuremyr, D., Kihlgren, M. and Norberg, A. (1994). Emotional experiences, empathy and burnout among staff caring for demented patients at a collective living unit and a nursing home. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 19(4), 670-679.

- Lee, C., An, M. and Noh, Y. (2015). The effects of emotional display rules on flight attendants' emotional labor strategy, job burnout and performance. *Service Business*, 9(3), 409-425.
- Rose, D., Horne, Sh., Rose, J.L. and Hastings, R.P. (2016). Negative emotional reactions to challenging behaviour and staff burnout: Two replication studies. *Journal of Applied Research in Intellectual Disabilities*, 17(3), 219-223.
- Vlakh, N.I. (2015). Model psikhologicheskoy pomoschi pri emotsionalnom vygoranii. [Model of psychological help for emotional burnout]. *Mezhdunarodnyi nauchno-issledovatel'skiy zhurnal*, 9-4(40), 90-92.
- Vorobyeva, V. (2013). Emotsionalnoe vygoranie: vliyaet li ono na kachestvo zhizni i effektivnost professionalnoy deyatel'nosti? [Emotional burnout: does it affect quality of life and efficiency of professional activity?]. *Medsestra*, 10, 46-47.
- Warren, C.S., Schafer, K.J., Crowley, M.E.J. and Olivardia, R. (2013). Demographic and work-related correlates of job burnout in professional eating disorder treatment providers. *Psychotherapy: theory, research, practice, training*, 50(4), 553-564.
- Weisberg, J., Sagie, A. (1999). Teachers' physical, mental, and emotional burnout: Impact on intention to quit. *Journal of Psychology*, 133(3), 333-339.