

A STUDY OF THE EMOTIONAL BURNOUT SYNDROME IN WORKERS OF INDUSTRIAL ESTABLISHMENT

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Abstract: *The article deals with the problems related to the emotional burnout syndrome in professional activities of employees at industrial enterprises. The authors present the results of empirical research of emotional burnout. The study was conducted employing three methodologies: Methodology for diagnostics of emotional burnout level according to V.V. Boyko, MBI methodology (questionnaire) for identification of emotional burnout (adapted by N.E. Vodopyanova), and E. Howard's questionnaire "How much are you exposed to stress". Based on conducted study, the conclusion is drawn that this category of workers is characterized by low level of emaciation phase (77%). They lack nervous tension (anxiety) since emotional burnout formation mechanisms are not activated. Thus, employees are satisfied with their jobs.*

Keywords: *Emotional burnout, symptoms, emaciation, tension, stress, diagnostics, correction, emotional stability.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Emotional burnout is credited with the status of a symptom of our time. It is identical to the state of emaciation, causes paralysis of power, feeling the sense of loss of life satisfaction. In these latter days, the syndromes of burnout are manifested increasingly frequently. This conclusion is made not only with regard to the social professions, which have announced about the development of this syndrome before the rest, but also with regard to other professions, as well as the personal life of the people. Circulation of the syndrome is caused by the epoch, its achievements, consumption, new materialism, entertainment and getting pleasure from life. Contemporaries not only exploit all the resources, but also allow exploitation with regard to themselves [16].

Highly dynamic pace of life, the rush, the variety of professional alternatives, business and personal competition, conflict with the absence of relations, lack of commitment, and pragmatism. Probably, we pay a burnout syndrome for aloofness and remoteness from real life to please the call of the times in terms

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of our professional competence. Professional activity has complicated negative impacts of interpersonal working communication process, which form the basis for "professional burnout". All researchers note the depressed state, feeling of helpless and meaningless living, as well as low self-esteem of personal professional competencies that correspond to this syndrome. This affects the working efficiency, reduces professional activity, leads to professional burnout, and ultimately affects wages and future pension provision [12].

The intense rhythm of contemporary life is caused by the relentless increase of requirements to the person in order to achieve full actualization of a person in his personal and professional sphere. It is clear that professional activity is full with all sorts of obligations, different regulators and rules. Hence, more attention is paid to the syndrome of emotional burnout of personality in terms of his professional activity [1, 4, 18]. Under emotional burnout we understand the set of mechanisms of psychological protection of the personality expressed in the form of full or partial elimination of the emotions in response to a specific psycho-traumatic exposure. Emotional burnout is characterized by certain acquired stereotypes of the emotional and professional patterns of behavior, which negatively affect the performance of job duties and communication activities [9, 17, 19].

Refer to the history of the concept formation, which reveals "emotional burnout syndrome". For the first time ever, the term "burnout" was introduced into scientific circulation by American psychiatrist H.J. Freudenberger in 1974. He interpreted this concept as psychological condition of the healthy person, who is involved in the intensive communication process with partners, characterized by intense emotional manifestations, in the course of providing professional services. First, this term was used to mean emaciation, exhaustion associated with sensations of own useless actions [5].

In 1981, Ch. Maslach specified this phenomenon as a certain state consisting of emotional emaciation, exhaustion, dehumanization, depersonalization, a negative self-perception, while in professional activities – the loss of professional success [6, 21].

Syndrome of emotional burnout can be called mechanisms of psychological protection, developed by personality, with full or partial loss of emotional response to particular impacts. Emotional burnout complements professional deformation of the employee [2].

At that, emotional burnout shows a complex psycho-physiological phenomenology of emotional, mental and physical emaciation that occurs as a reaction to prolonged emotional stress, developing in accordance with three levels – individual, interpersonal and organizational [8, 10, 11].

Similarly, the syndrome of professional burnout is defined as a set of persistent symptoms, manifested in negative emotional experiences and attitudes concerning personal work (profession), personal achievements and the subjects of business communication [7, 13, 14].

Emotional burnout develops in three stages, each having its own peculiarities [20].

The first stage is characterized by the emotional and physical emaciation, complaints of a headache and other pains of various localization, as well as cold.

The second stage is distinguished by two symptomatic groups: negative, cynical, impersonal relationships with clients and negative self-esteem due to feelings arising from such relationships. Avoiding these negative feelings, the worker performs only a minimal portion of the responsibilities and seeks to avoid conflicts and quarrels. The indications of each group can be manifested both independently and in combination. The final stage is full emotional burnout, which is not seen often, and is manifested in complete alienation and aversion to everything around.

The staff of majority of contemporary organizations, which is professionally involved in the implementation of the emotionally intense contacts one way or another prone to burnout syndrome [3, 15, 19]. Thus, the study of these processes is extremely relevant.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The empirical study involved 44 employees of “Plastics Plant” JSC (“Zavod Plastmass”) situated in the city of Kopeysk, the Chelyabinsk Region.

The study was conducted from 2014 to 2016.

At the first exploratory and preparatory stage we studied theoretical background and identified a conceptual and research framework.

At the second pilot and experimental stage we defined the research framework, held a meeting with employees of the enterprise, selected package of research methodologies appropriate to the work objectives, prepared forms, and conducted first psychognostic survey. Initial results helped creating an experimental group of participants in the corrective interaction.

At the third controlling and resumptive stage, repeated psychognostic survey was conducted in the control and experimental groups, the generalization of findings was carried out, and the conclusions and recommendations were formulated for the company employees.

The staff of “Plastics Plant” in Kopeysk is characterized by stable personnel, most of which have a high level of professional skills due to many years of work experience.

The plant management consists of 11 departments. The employees of the payroll department, finance division, economic planning department, accounting department, and the office of the chief technologist took part in the tests conducted in the framework of the current research. Nine people from the first four divisions and eight people from the department of chief technologist were involved in the test. In total, the study involved 44 employees - women aged from 27 to 60 years with an average work experience of 30 years.

In the course of our studies we used 3 methodologies:

1. Methodology for diagnostics of emotional burnout level according to V.V. Boyko;
2. MBI methodology (questionnaire) for the identification of emotional burnout (adapted by N.E. Vodopyanova); and
3. E. Howard’s questionnaire “How much are you exposed to stress”.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Conduct analysis of array of information obtained using diagnostics of emotional burnout level according to V.V. Boyko, which is presented in Figure 1.

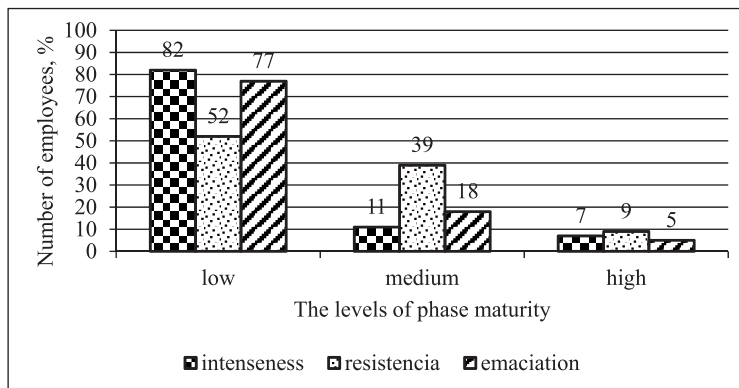


Figure 1: Distribution of research results obtained using diagnostics of emotional burnout level according to V.V. Boyko at the summative stage

Figure 1 shows that 36 employees (82%) have shown the low level of maturity of intensesness phase; 5 employees (11%) have shown the medium level, while just 3 employees (7%) revealed high level of maturity.

Respondents with a high level of intenseness phase maturity experience psycho-traumatic emotional stress, self-dissatisfaction, frustration, anxiety and depression.

Low level of maturity of intenseness phase was shown by 23 employees (52%), because they were easily adapted to a mild and short-lived stresses; the average level was detected in 17 employees (39%), while high level - in 4 employees (9%).

Testees, who have developed a high level of maturity, show stuck patterns of inadequate selective emotional response, emotional and moral disorientation, narrowing of emotional responses, and reduction of professional activity.

Low level of maturity of emaciation phase was revealed in 34 employees (77%), the average level - in 8 employees (18%), while high level - in 2 employees (5%). The testees with a high level of emaciation phase suffer from emotional deficit, emotional out-of-body experience (depersonalization), psychosomatic and vegetal manifestations. Analysis of the research results, obtained using mentioned methodology, leads to the conclusion that many of the employees have low level of maturity with regard to emotional burnout phase, they lack nervous tension (anxiety), the formation mechanism of emotional burnout is not activated, employees are satisfied with their jobs.

The following array of information, presented in Figure 2, is obtained according to the MBI methodology (questionnaire) for the identification of emotional burnout;

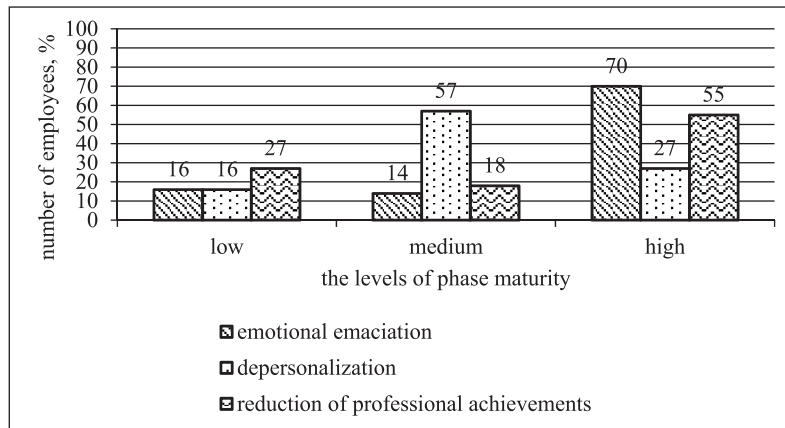


Figure 2: The distribution of the research outcomes obtained according to the MBI methodology

The following conclusions can be drawn based on the distribution of emotion burnout levels presented in Figure 2:

- with regard to the emotional emaciation phase: 7 employees (16%) have low level (happy mood, high emotional background); 6 employees (14%) have the

medium level (sometimes indifferent, sometimes in a bad mood); 31 employees (70%) have the highest level (show indifference, emotional saturation, they have reduced emotional background);

- with regard to depersonalization phase: 7 employees (16%) have low level (favorable relations with colleagues); 25 employees (57%) have medium level (they have both positive and negative qualities, when communicating with colleagues); 12 employees (27%) have high level (relationships with others are distorted, initially latent form of negative attitudes accumulates the wave of internal repressed annoying effects, which can and should be withdrawn once out and lead to conflict);
- with regard to the phase of reduction of professional achievements, 12 employees (27%) have low level (reasonable self-esteem, a positive attitude to success); 8 employees (18%) have medium level (sometimes overrate their capabilities, exhibit a negative attitude towards colleagues); 24 employees (55%) have high level (there is a tendency for negative self-esteem, lowering own professional achievements and successes, negativity toward career and its possibilities, down to the belittling self-esteem, opportunities and responsibilities).

According to the third methodology (E. Howard's questionnaire "How much are you exposed to stress"), we also got some interesting information, which is presented in Figure 3.

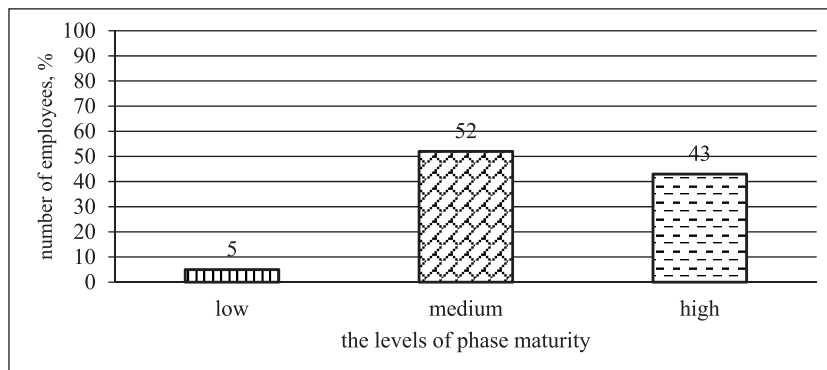


Figure 3: The distribution of the stress diagnostic results according to E. Howard questionnaire "How much are you exposed to stress".

As is obvious from Figure 3, low level of stress resistance was revealed in 2 employees (5%) (mental stress is so great due to the causes leading to stress that the person is completely disoriented in time and space); the medium level was shown in 19 employees (52%); while high level was detected in 23 employees (43%) (characterized by emotional stability, low anxiety, high level of self-adjustment, and psychological readiness for stress).

4. CONCLUSIONS

The studied category of workers of an industrial enterprise is distinguished by low level of emaciation phase (77%). This category of workers lacks nervous tension (anxiety), their emotional burnout forming mechanisms are not actuating, and employees are satisfied with their jobs. Almost every second worker is emotionally stable, has a low level of anxiety, high level of self-adjustment, and is psychologically ready to stress.

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