



## THE IMPACT OF TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS ON THE PROFESSIONAL BURNOUT SYNDROME

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### ABSTRACT

The distinctive features of teaching activity – a high level of reflection, constant interpersonal interaction as a primary work tool, and the necessity for strict self-monitoring – create a foundation for the development of professional burnout. At the same time, it should be noted that the onset and developmental mechanisms (genesis) of mental fatigue in currently professionally successful teachers remain insufficiently studied. This gap defines both the relevance and the purpose of the present study.

### INTRODUCTION

In recent years, significant efforts have been made in our country to ensure teachers' mental health, to train specialists in occupational psychology, to create favorable conditions for professional development, and to improve the material and technical base of educational institutions. In particular, a priority task has been set: to educate physically healthy, mentally and intellectually developed young people who think independently, are loyal to their country, and possess a firm life perspective.

As President Shavkat Mirziyoyev emphasized, "We see that reforms aimed at transforming society begin primarily with the education system. The foundation and cornerstone of education and upbringing is the school. And the force that makes a school truly a school is the teachers." . This, in turn, places a tremendous responsibility on teachers and underscores the necessity of preventing professional burnout by maintaining their psychosocial well-being, fostering a healthy socio-psychological environment within educational teams, and enhancing their resilience to stress.

Interest in the problem of professional burnout in psychology has intensified since the last decades of the 20th century. The introduction of market relations and the increasing intensity of human labour necessitated scientific investigation into this phenomenon. Under the term "emotional exhaustion syndrome", this issue began to be thoroughly analysed in helping professions such as teachers, psychologists, medical personnel, and social workers.

Although the problem of teachers' professional burnout is not a new phenomenon, it remains highly relevant today. For many years, scholars have studied this phenomenon within the fields of psychology, philosophy, sociology, pedagogy, and management. Scientific research has primarily focused on several directions: defining the concept of "burnout" (N.Ye. Vodopyanova, Ye.S. Starchenko), developing models of emotional exhaustion syndrome (A. Pines, K. Maslach, S. Jackson), examining professional burnout among teachers (M.V. Borisova, T.V. Formanyuk), and systematising its structure and characteristics (K. Maslach, S. Jackson).

Analysis of the scientific literature shows that there is no single approach to the concept of "emotional exhaustion", and it is interpreted in various ways:

- As a consequence of stress (G. Selye, N.V. Samoukina);
- As a crisis arising from the specific nature of professional activity, including accumulated stress and job dissatisfaction (M. Burish, T.V. Formanyuk);
- As a negative outcome of interpersonal relationships (B.G. Ananyev);
- As physical, mental, and emotional fatigue (K. Maslach, N.Ye. Vodopyanova).

Many researchers do not distinguish between the concepts of “emotional exhaustion” and “professional burnout”, using them almost interchangeably. This proximity can be explained by the fact that prolonged emotional fatigue ultimately leads to professional deformation. The term “emotional exhaustion” was first introduced into scientific discourse in 1974 by American psychologist H. Freudenberger, initially describing a state of depletion.

Teachers belong to the high-risk group for the development of professional burnout. Their work involves continuous interaction with students, and the quality of teacher–student relationships has a profound impact on the teacher’s emotional state.

The main causes of professional burnout among teachers include:

1. “Human-to-human” work system. The teaching profession requires constant interaction. Daily communication with students, addressing their problems, evaluating behaviour, and fulfilling educational responsibilities demand significant emotional effort. If students demonstrate disrespect, indifference, or disciplinary issues, teachers experience fatigue, irritability, and emotional detachment, which in turn deteriorates teacher–student relationships and intensifies burnout symptoms.

2. High demands and responsibility. Teachers simultaneously serve as knowledge providers, educators, psychologists, and supervisors. Students’ academic performance, behaviour, and outcomes often weigh heavily on teachers’ responsibility, creating constant internal stress, self-blame, and psychological pressure. Teachers are required to maintain patience, fairness, and emotional control in their interactions, which accelerates emotional exhaustion.

3. High mental workload. Pedagogical activity involves multitasking, high work volume and continuous alertness. Individual student difficulties, learning challenges, and conflict situations negatively affect teachers’ mental state. A lack of positive feedback and genuine engagement from students often results in dissatisfaction with their work and contributes to the development of professional burnout.

Professional burnout syndrome manifests in teachers’ mental state, behaviour, and health:

Psychophysiological indicators:

- Sleep disturbances;
- Headaches, migraines;
- Psychosomatic disorders such as hypertension, stomach ulcers, and asthma.

Behavioural changes:

- Coldness and indifference toward students;
- Irritability and conflict-proneness;
- Negligent execution of professional duties;
- Desire to distance oneself from one’s profession;
- Deep pessimism and a negative attitude toward life.

These conditions negatively affect teacher–student relationships. Teachers begin to understand students’ needs less, and pedagogical communication becomes formal and ineffective.



Personality types prone to burnout. Research indicates that certain personality types are more susceptible to professional burnout:

- Pedantic type – individuals striving for perfection in all tasks and intolerant of mistakes. Excessively high demands during work with students lead to rapid fatigue.
- Demonstrative type – individuals constantly seeking success and recognition. Failure to achieve expected results with students leads to strong emotional distress.
- Emotive type – highly sensitive and impressionable individuals. Negative behaviour from students affects them deeply, causing rapid emotional exhaustion.

Stages of professional burnout in teachers:

1. Initial stage. The teacher begins to forget some tasks. Fear of making mistakes increases self-monitoring and repeated checking of actions, causing emotional strain.
2. Stage of declining interest. Interest in work, communication, and interpersonal relationships diminishes. High levels of irritability and nervous tension emerge.
3. Complete burnout stage. Interest in professional activity and life in general disappears. This manifests as indifference, withdrawal into solitude, and restricted communication. Teachers are particularly vulnerable to professional deformation due to constant stress and high emotional strain in their work. In such situations, timely measures are necessary to prevent burnout or minimize its consequences.

The intellectual demands of pedagogical activity are linked to three main components in studies by N.V. Kuzmina, A.S. Slastenin, and V.E. Orel: pedagogical activity, pedagogical communication, and the teacher's personality.

Other researchers, such as E. Edelvich and A. Brodsky, view burnout in the context of a process of hopelessness. According to them, professional burnout is a process of losing idealism and energy caused by the discrepancy between idealistic goals and real situations.

In the model proposed by A. Pines and A. Aronson, emotional exhaustion is presented as a specific state of cognitive, physical, and emotional fatigue resulting from prolonged exposure to emotionally charged events.

Candidate of Psychological Sciences Yulia Selezneva's 2014 dissertation, "Professional Deformation among Preschool Educators," focused on this issue. The main novelty of the study lies in analysing, for the first time, the types of reliable relationships teachers maintain with colleagues, management, and parents as causes of professional deformation. The author compared groups of teachers with varying work experience and analysed how deformation changes over time.

Candidate of Psychological Sciences Lyudmila Jeldochenko's dissertation, "Psychological Characteristics of Professional Deformation among Social Shelter Educators" (2015) investigates educators working in highly complex conditions. Its main novelty is a detailed analysis of professional deformation among a specific group of teachers continuously exposed to stress and traumatic experiences. The author developed a unique structural model of deformation for social shelter educators, divided into three components: personal-ethical, individual-activity, and communicative. The study identifies professional burnout, loss of empathy, and manifestation of aggression as the main signs of deformation, while also examining how these negative changes intensify with increasing work experience.

Doctor of Psychological Sciences Roman Demyanchuk's fundamental dissertation, "Personal-Professional Development of Teachers and its Psychological Support" (2020), presents a new



concept in the field. The main innovation lies in viewing teacher development as a single, continuous process from an anthropological perspective, integrating personal and professional growth. The author proposed a theoretical concept of teachers' personal-professional development, scientifically substantiating its stages and directions. Based on this concept, a comprehensive systemic model of psychological support was developed, aimed at preventing professional burnout and managing stress among teachers.

I. Komarevtseva's candidate dissertation (2014), titled "Psychological Features of the Prevention of Emotional Burnout Syndrome among Special Education Teachers", is devoted to the problems of employees working under high psychological load. Unlike general education teachers, the study focuses on the peculiarities of burnout syndrome among special education teachers working with children with special needs. The scientific novelty lies not only in analysing the problem but also in identifying the psychological conditions necessary for its prevention. The author developed a special psychological prevention program aimed at preventing emotional burnout among special education teachers and tested it in practice. The research demonstrated that stress resistance, self-regulation skills, and the development of a positive professional "self-concept" are the main directions of preventive work. The main conclusion is that standard psychological support is insufficient for special education teachers; they require specialized preventive measures that take into account the unique characteristics of their professional activity. This dissertation serves as a practical guide for psychologists in special education institutions to maintain teachers' mental health.

M.V. Borisova's candidate dissertation (2003), "Psychological Determinants of Emotional Burnout in Teachers", is devoted to studying the fundamental psychological causes of this phenomenon. The main aim of the research was not to analyse external factors leading to burnout but to identify internal, psychological predispositions of the individual. The scientific novelty lies in the separate analysis of two main internal factors of the teacher's personality that contribute to burnout: motivational issues and emotional instability. The study demonstrated that the lack of clarity in professional goals, the discrepancy between values and job content, is a key determinant of burnout syndrome. Additionally, the inability to regulate one's emotions and to cope with the constant stress of professional activity are significant psychological factors contributing to burnout.

Research indicates that systematic work on activating personal resources and optimizing organizational (environmental) work conditions allows not only to halt the burnout process but also to transform it into productive engagement.

In Uzbekistan, this topic has also been studied by local scholars. For example:

- D. Qarshiyeva examined the psychological determinants influencing the emergence of professional stress in teachers.
- M. Kaplanova analysed ethnopsychological and social factors affecting the development of personal-professional qualities of Uzbek school teachers. .
- Sh.G.Saparov demonstrated that teachers' personal-professional characteristics are related to their age, work experience, gender, and motivation for professional activity.

He notes: "A high need for achievement is primarily manifested in teachers aged 30–35 with work experience up to 10 years. Later, as the need for achievement stabilizes in professional activity, average values tend to equalize."

In conclusion, nowadays there are numerous diagnostic tools that allow the identification of burnout syndrome symptoms. Timely use of these tools helps detect professional fatigue early, prevent its development, and mitigate its consequences. This enables teachers to take necessary measures for recovery, adequate self-perception, and the restoration of professional interest and engagement.

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