

The Concept of Burnout in Teachers

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Abstract

Today, it is necessary to communicate face-to-face and close with people in many professions. Emotional reactions to emotional burnout are observed in those who work in areas where face-to-face communication with people is intense. Burnout is a condition that manifests itself with the feeling of exhaustion felt in physiological and emotional areas, which is observed as a result of the inability to cope with the stress experienced due to the nature of the profession, especially in those who work in occupational groups that require intensive communication with people. Research to identify the elements related to burnout shows that interpersonal relationships, motivation, excessive workload, and one's success in coping with stress are associated with burnout. The internal contradiction in the workplace and the stress caused by this contradiction make employees prone to burnout. Studies emphasizing the importance of stress and motivation in burnout indicate that employees with low motivation do not experience burnout despite high job stress. In this review, information about teachers' burnout levels is given.

Keywords: Burnout, Education, Teachers

1. Introduction

Burnout was first used in the 1970s to express the depression experienced by people working in the service sector in America" [1]. Burnout syndrome, which is one of the essential factors that negatively affect today's working life, was first described by Freudenberger in 1974 [2]. Freudenberger (1974) defined burnout as "the state of depletion of the internal resources of the individual as a result of failure, wear and tear, decrease in energy and strength or unsatisfied desires". They have defined burnout as "a syndrome that occurs when physical exhaustion, long-term fatigue, feelings of helplessness and hopelessness are reflected in individuals who are exposed to intense emotional demands due to their job and have to work face to face with other people, with negative attitudes towards work, life and other people" [3]. Cherniss burnout is seen as a process caused by the imbalance between resources and demands. In addition, Cherniss defines burnout as a reaction of the employee to excessive stress and dissatisfaction in his job [4].

Burnout is another definition: "Emotional exhaustion, developed in response to stress in the workplace, is a stress syndrome that includes desensitization of employees and low feelings of personal achievement towards clients and managers" [5]. The most important symptoms of burnout are "excessive irritability, insomnia, fatigue, anger, rigidity, depression, inability to relax, and impulsiveness. In other words, burnout is a pattern of symptoms. This symptom pattern is not a sudden occurrence, but a condition that occurs gradually over a long period " [6]. Burnout syndrome is when the expectations of the job are above the emotional and physical capacity of the person, and the person becomes aware of this. When

the expectations in the workplace are high, it becomes increasingly difficult for the person to overcome them, and this situation at work increases the person's stress. The root of this is that the person is in an emotionally and physically tricky situation due to excessive workload at work, which is caused by daily routine work. Burnout syndrome is an occupational hazard that causes negative stress simultaneously [7].

2. Dimensions of Burnout

Burnout, which is a negative experience for the individual and leads to adverse conditions, has been explained as a three-dimensional syndrome [8]. These dimensions are also sub-dimensions of Maslach's Burnout model. Detailed information on these dimensions is given below.

Emotional Burnout

Emotional exhaustion is the first stage of "burnout syndrome. It occurs as a result of the long-term exposure of the individual to the work done. It is frequently seen in occupational groups where there is more one-to-one relationship with people" [9]. Emotional exhaustion is the heart of burnout and is defined as being entirely enslaved by one's emotions, being affected by the wishes of others, and using all of one's power to meet these desires. It is stated that employees in the dimension of emotional exhaustion feel that they consume and get tired by using all their strength emotionally and physically [10]. Emotional exhaustion, which is seen as the centre of burnout syndrome, is "a situation in which the individual is in an emotionally intense work tempo, causing him to force himself more and at the same time being overwhelmed by the demands of customers or other people" [11]. Emotional exhaustion occurs when the individual feels that their emotional resources are running out [12]. Contrary to the excessive workload given to the individual for a short time, it is seen that emotional exhaustion is experienced in the continuity of exposure to excessive workload. Individuals who experience emotional burnout feel inadequate to solve other individuals' problems and find desensitization as an escape [13].

Depersonalization

Depersonalization, which is another crucial dimension of burnout syndrome, is defined as the development of negative, cynical attitudes and emotions such as numbness, inhumane behaviour and Lack of understanding towards others about emotional exhaustion [14]. Depersonalization is "exhibiting negative and cynical attitudes towards others, treating people as objects. The individual, who feels emotionally tired and weak, constantly prefers an escape route to alleviate the emotional burden he carries. In addition, deterioration in relations with the people they communicate expresses the first signs of depersonalization" [15]. Cordes and Dougherty (1993) define desensitization. It represents the interpersonal dimension of burnout and describes it as "indicating negative, rigid attitudes towards people and unresponsiveness towards work". It also suggests that due to the reduced tolerance for putting effort into a job, the person lacks the desire to perform their duties. This stage of burnout indicates that there is a separation between the person and the job. At the same time, at this stage, other people are treated as if they were just an object. Physical symptoms of insensitivity can be listed as the use of derogatory language, especially in matters related to customers, taking long breaks away from work, having long conversations with colleagues during work, increasing the use of terminology or jargon that is unusual and foreign to customers [16]

Low Sense of Personal Accomplishment

"A negative self-evaluation and a low sense of personal achievement, which Maslach and Jackson express as a lack of personal achievement, is the third part of the definition of burnout" [17]. A low

sense of personal achievement is also defined as "negative self-evaluation and lack of personal achievement" [18]. As a result, the employee's effort is wasted, and the feeling of guilt prevents the employee from performing the necessary behaviours for success by reducing his motivation [19]. It is also stated that as a result of the loss of faith in the abilities of the employees and their ability to be successful, the people around them will not have confidence in them [10]. The person may have feelings such as not being loved by those around him, being inadequate in dealing with his customers, not being able to cope with problems, not being successful in his job, and as a result, his self-esteem may decrease. For this reason, a low sense of personal achievement includes symptoms such as inadequacy, a sense of failure, low morale, reduced productivity and productivity, interpersonal conflicts, inability to cope with problems, and decreased self-confidence and self-esteem [1].

3. Factors Affecting Burnout

Burnout is a common syndrome that most employees can suffer from at some point. However, burnout is not a condition that develops suddenly. It is a condition that disrupts the mental balance of the individual and causes significant problems in his work, family, and social life after some factors feed him and develop gradually. Those who experience intense time pressure while carrying out their work, those who work in jobs that require attention and especially vital importance, and those who do jobs that require attention to detail are more prone to burnout. Regardless of the job done or the position carried out, more or less every individual can be a candidate for burnout [20]. Factors affecting burnout are examined under two headings: individual characteristics and organizational factors;

Individual Factors

In organizational environments that cause burnout, some individuals can overcome negative organizational conditions thanks to their characteristics. In contrast, others may be affected by these negativities and experience burnout [21]. Gender, age, education level, and marital status are personality traits that affect burnout.

Personality traits: Studies state that personality type is important in forming burnout. All individuals are likely to experience burnout; However, it can be said that individuals with specific characteristics have a higher risk of burnout than others. Individuals with characteristics such as being in a type A personality structure, focused on external control, lacking self-efficacy, empathy and emotional power can be considered more prone to burnout [22]. Another personality trait that is thought to affect the feeling of burnout is the concept of self-efficacy, which can be expressed as the idea that the person has self-confidence, meets his needs and has sufficient capacity to solve problems [23].

Gender: It can be said that the gender factor has a decisive effect on burnout. In the connection of burnout with Gender, Although there is more evidence that women experience burnout than men, there are also findings that men experience more burnout. In addition, research results showing that Gender does not affect burnout can be found [24].

Age: When burnout is examined in terms of age, it is seen that different results are reached in the literature. While some studies reveal that the age variable affects burnout [25, 26, 27], In some studies, it is stated that age does not affect burnout or some dimensions of burnout [28]. When we look at age as one of the factors affecting burnout; burnout is higher in young and inexperienced; It is thought that this is since the recruits spend too much energy due to the roles and responsibilities of the new job [29].

Level of Education: Education and expectation are directly proportional to each other. Individuals with a high level of education have higher expectations of life and the goals they want to achieve. When the individual cannot realize these dreams, the situation can result in burnout.

Maslach states that "the relationship between education and burnout has a complex structure. In their research, they found that employees who did not complete their university education or did not have their higher education reported less burnout; university graduates, on the other hand, were more likely to suffer from depersonalization, less personal success and more emotional exhaustion than graduate graduates" [30].

Marital Status: In some studies, marital status has significantly affected burnout levels. [31, 32]. In other words, when the studies were examined, it was revealed that singles experienced more burnout than married people. Again, according to some studies [33], married individuals are more resistant to burnout. The reasons why employees with families are immune to burnout are listed as follows: First of all, the personalities of married people are more balanced, stable and psychologically more mature. Second, caring for a spouse and children makes a person more experienced. Third, the love and support of family members helps the employee cope with the emotional demands of the job. Marriage enables the individual to take more realistic and careful steps in job security, wages and earnings. In addition, the appreciation of the family reduces the support that the person expects from customers and colleagues.

Organizational Factors

The individual may have a sense of burnout caused by their characteristics, inability to fulfill their unique expectations or dreams, experiences, or Lack of pleasure at work. The individual may be exhausted due to external reasons other than internal reasons. Burnout can also be caused by the tasks assigned to the employee in the workplace environment, the lack of motivating resources, and the plans and policies implemented by the organization [29]. Workload, control, rewards, belonging, justice, values were explained as factors affecting burnout.

Workload: Workload can be expressed as "the amount of work that needs to be done at a certain quality at a given time". According to Maslach and Leiter, excessive workload damages quality, causes the deterioration of relations between employees, kills creativity, and leads to burnout. In addition, insufficient work for the individual can also cause problems. While the individual can do more work, dealing with less work can be tedious and make the individual feel worthless. However, this situation is rarely encountered [22].

Control: It is stated that the Lack of power in business life is also effective in causing burnout syndrome in individuals. Control: It is the opportunity to make choices, make decisions, solve problems and fulfil one's responsibilities over one's job [16]. Lack of control means a lack of opportunity for employees to be independent in their work, inability to participate in decisions related to their work, and not being informed about the result of their work are among the factors that cause burnout. Lack of control, which is one of the problems in the working environment, and working individuals according to the decisions taken cause stress and the person to feel unhappy in his work, thus causing burnout [34].

Belonging: Every living thing experiences a sense of belonging to a group. The feeling of belonging to a place makes the individual self-confident and gives strength to struggle with difficulties. The sense of belonging is a feature of the social environment of the organization, and individuals join groups where they achieve positive things through social support and cooperation [35]. The existence of competition within the organization, the deterioration of relations, and the emergence of conflicts will reduce the

social support received from colleagues. The decline of supportive relationships increases the tendency to burnout. In organizations where promotion opportunities are limited and competition between employees is intense, insecurity, distances, and invisible walls in communication will increase the risk of burnout [36].

Justice and Value: Justice is when all employees have the same rules. It is defined as the degree of fairness of the methods, plans and policies used in determining and measuring factors such as wages, promotions, financial opportunities, working conditions and performance evaluation [37]. Value, in its simplest form, is expressed as "shared criteria or ideas that indicate which kind of behaviours are good, correct and desirable" [38]. "Injustice also arises when procedures do not allow the parties to defend themselves equally" [39]. The value harmony between the individual and the work done is the individual's identification of the organization's mission and objectives with his own goals and missions and the effect of the organization's mission on the daily working life of the individual. The incompatibility between the individual and the work done regarding values occurs when some features in the organizational structure do not match and contradict the individual's expectations. The service provided by the organization, its interaction with the outside world, and how it behaves towards its employees can cause incompatibility. The incompatibility between the values of the individual and business life is related to the emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and personal success dimensions of burnout [1].

4. Teachers' Burnout Levels

Teacher burnout is "an educational problem that affects not only teachers but also students and the employer institution. The stress and burnout experienced by teachers have significant effects on families, administrators, students, and parents, that is, on the entire society, and is directly or indirectly reflected on the whole society" [40]. Reasons for teacher burnout; "low pay, inability to devote time to themselves, lack of time to rest between working hours are also listed as disciplinary problems of students" [41]. It has been stated that students' motivation, problem behaviours, age, Lack of interest of students, excessive requests from their parents, Lack of support from the administration, excessive bureaucratic work and involuntary assignments can also create burnout in teachers [8]. It can be stated that the emergence and spread of burnout in teachers is due to the philosophy and studies of education, which can change in parallel with various social, economic and technological developments. Until 30-40 years ago, educators were a dominant element in the decisions taken regarding education and training activities and received support from society. Mainly since the mid-seventies, some differences have emerged, and the effectiveness of educators has decreased [42].

5. Consequences of Burnout

Consequences of burnout: They are grouped under three headings: the negative effects of burnout on the individual, the negative impact of burnout on working life, and the adverse effects of burnout on family life. Detailed information on these topics is given below.

Adverse Effects of Burnout on the Individual

Burnout syndrome, which is a form of stress, affects individuals in many ways—the individual's experiences due to burnout cause him to become physically tired and worn out. Among the individual effects of burnout are physical effects such as headaches, back and neck pains, fatigue, frequent illnesses, prolonged illnesses, malnutrition, and insomnia; psychological effects such as reluctance,

scepticism, emotional exhaustion, anxiety and depression, indifference, cynical and negative behaviour towards people, family, It causes behavioural effects such as constant unrest with colleagues and the people they serve [43]. An individual experiencing burnout begins to experience a feeling of emotional fatigue. This emotional fatigue also brings physical fatigue. The individual feels a great emptiness, starts the day tired and tense, and experiences sleep problems, chronic fatigue, a deepening psychological state, and insomnia, making the individual more vulnerable to diseases. "It has been shown that people under burnout cannot recover from minor ailments like colds and headaches for long periods. The decline in health can often be due to wrong eating habits. People under emotional pressure may skip meals or spend their meal breaks trying to catch up on work. Some people develop psychosomatic symptoms. "Ulcers may occur, and neck and back pain problems are common." Feelings of hopelessness, sadness, helplessness and disappointment; Sudden bursts of nerves and sensitivity accompany it. The individual is in great mental and physical fatigue and exhaustion [44].

Adverse Effects of Burnout on Working Life

Burnout, a reaction to stressful situations of organizational origin, destroys individuals' energy resources. The consequences of an individual who loses morale and health under stress reflected on the organization are decreased professional success, absenteeism, desire to change jobs, decreased organizational commitment, poor performance or alienation [22]. The situation where burnout has the most significant impact is a decrease in an individual's success in business life. This decline occurs in the nature and quality of the work. As a result, the individual's motivation decreases, irritability increases, and impulsive behaviours arise. They cannot make accurate decisions. Burned-out people do not feel the need to renew themselves and are not innovative. This situation pushes service providers to be psychologically shy and to establish relationships with people at the lowest level. The individual acts as if there is no one around him. He rarely makes eye contact and answers questions with a hum. It avoids physical contact (such as shaking hands). In some cases, he prefers tasks that are not directly related to people [45].

Adverse Effects of Burnout on Family Life

"Burnout negatively affects people's business life as well as their home life" [46]. According to Maslach and Zimbaro (1982), burnout not only harms the individual's working life but also can have negative consequences in family life. Although the reasons that lead an individual to emotional exhaustion arise from work, its effects can continue to affect family members. An individual who feels emotionally exhausted will come home tense, angry, sad and psychologically tired. An employee who brings all the problems that work imposes on him home will not have the energy to spend quality time with family members. The individual worked hard all day and dealt with many people's problems. For this reason, he cannot handle the problems of his family, the most essential individuals in his life. For this reason, family members may experience jealousy, get hurt, and become unable to share things. Another reason the employee experiences unrest with their family is that the employee receives phone calls at inappropriate times in their private life or is even forced to work. Quarrels between spouses arising from such situations may lead to divorce [47].

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