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# The Relationship of Emotional Intelligence and Communicative Tendencies with Professional Burnout

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## Abstract

Currently, the nervous load on the person is a fairly common phenomenon, which is associated, first of all, with the increasing pace of life of a modern person. It is especially true for teachers who, due to the specifics of their profession, face stressful situations daily in the process of interpersonal interaction with colleagues, students, and parents. The formation of professional burnout among teachers is affected by a whole range of internal and external factors. External factors include the characteristics of the organizational (or professional) environment. Among the personal determinants of professional burnout, researchers call emotional instability, lack of desire for cooperation, low level of need for achievement. A special place among the factors of the formation of professional burnout among teachers is taken by the level of development of emotional intelligence and communicative tendencies, which are one of the components of the structure of professionally significant qualities of a teacher.

Our study aimed to study the relationship between emotional intelligence and communicative tendencies with professional burnout of teachers.

The main research methods included a survey and statistical processing of the data. The study involved 75 teachers working in schools in Rostov-on-Don, work experience from 7 to 20 years.

As a result of a study of the emotional intelligence and communicative inclinations of teachers, it was revealed that most of them are characterized by an average level of organizational and communicative inclinations; the most pronounced component of emotional intelligence among teachers is “emotional awareness”, and low indicators were identified on the scales “self-motivation”, “empathy”, “management of one’s emotions”, which indicates the insufficient level of formation of such manifestations of emotional intelligence as controlling one’s behavior, due to emotions management, understanding the emotions of other people, the ability to empathize with the current emotional state of another person, emotional longevity and emotional flexibility.

*Keywords:* burnout, emotional burnout, professional burnout, emotional intelligence, communicative tendencies, teachers’ well-being.

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## **Introduction**

Today, nervous loads are a fairly common occurrence, which is associated, first of all, with the increasing pace of life of a modern person. It is especially true for teachers who, due to the specifics of their profession, face stressful situations daily in the process of interpersonal interaction with colleagues, students, and parents. Also, the modern education system dictates new and higher requirements for teachers, for the success of their professional activities, thereby provoking their emotional stress and increasing the number of stressful situations.

Like any other personality, each of the teachers has an individual set of ways to respond and overcome difficulties in professional situations and, at the same time, tends to professional burnout. Teaching activities differ from other categories of labor in constant neuropsychic and emotional stress due to both content and working conditions. The teacher's professional activity is associated with communication because teachers experience symptoms of gradual emotional fatigue and devastation, which affects their health and leads to the formation of professional burnout.

The formation of professional burnout among teachers is affected by a whole range of internal and external factors. External factors include the features of the organizational (or professional) environment, namely: the teacher's involvement in professional activities, support from the leadership, encouragement of independence and initiative, excessive control by the leader, the orientation of the entire teaching staff to a high level of teaching activity, comfortable working conditions. Among the personal determinants of professional burnout, researchers call emotional instability, lack of desire for cooperation, low level of need for achievement. A special place among the factors of the formation of professional burnout among teachers is occupied by the level of development of emotional intelligence and communicative tendencies, which are one of the components of the structure of professionally significant qualities of a teacher.

The communicative tendencies of the teacher in the context of the implementation of the modern educational process represents competence, primarily in subject-subject communication in the solution of productive tasks. As for emotional intelligence, its development is necessary for the successful professional activities of educators. Emotional intelligence affects the activity level of productivity and the self-development of a teacher (Caruso, Mayer, & Salovey, 2002; Goleman, 1998).

Today, there is a contradiction between the relevance of the study of emotional intelligence in the personality structure of a specialist and communicative inclinations as a professionally important quality of a teacher, on the one hand, and insufficient knowledge of the relationship of emotional intelligence and

communicative inclinations with professional burnout of a specialist, on the other hand. Thus, the problems of our study are the need to conduct a thorough analysis of theoretical approaches to understanding emotional intelligence and communicative inclinations, expand ideas about the characteristics of the formation of professional burnout among teachers and determine what role the level of emotional intelligence and communicative inclinations of a specialist plays in this.

### **Purpose and objectives of the study**

Purpose of the study was to study the relationship of emotional intelligence and communicative tendencies with professional burnout of teachers.

### **Literature review**

Today in the psychological and pedagogical literature has accumulated a significant layer of research on the problems of professional burnout. Analysis of the work of both domestic researchers of professional burnout (Boyko, 2001; Vodopyanova, 2000; Orel, 2000) and foreign authors (Freudenberger, 1981; Maslach Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001; Perlman & Hartman, 1982) allowed us to conditionally distinguish three stages in the history of the study of this phenomenon.

The first studies of this phenomenon were carried out in 1974. It was this year that the term “burnout” was introduced by the American psychiatrist Freudenberger (1981). The researcher used this term to characterize the psychological state of exhaustion, exhaustion with a sense of personal uselessness of those healthy people who are in intense and close communication with other people in an emotionally loaded atmosphere.

Thus, it can be argued that the origins of the concept of “professional burnout” was stress, or rather, professional stress. This term has gained popularity thanks to the work of Selye (2010), which stress explained all cases of maladaptation of a person or negative changes in human life.

Further study of the phenomenon of professional burnout associated with the achievements of philosophy, medicine, psychology, formed in the system to this problem (Bolshakova, 2004; Borisova, 2003; Leonova, 2004; Orel, 2000). Consider burnout as a syndrome and define it as a dynamic multicomponent system that is mediated by a person’s professional activity. According to modern ideas of scientists, the result of the process of professional burnout is a system of experiences - emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, reduction of personal achievements, which develops over time and is called burnout syndrome. According to Perlman and Hartman (1982), the state of emotional burnout systematically affects all the structural

elements of a person as a system, namely the physiological, affectively cognitive and behavioral spheres of a persona.

In modern psychological science, researchers of the problem of professional burnout use, in addition to the standard concepts of the theory of stress and systemic description, also existence. So, for example, Grishina (2013) in the analysis of professional burnout applies the level of existence to describe its impact on human life. Vodopyanova (2000) believes that burnout should be considered as a special condition of a person, resulting from occupational stresses, an adequate analysis of which requires an existential level of description.

Similar views are also held by Trunov (1998). It determines professional burnout by the manifestation of the protective mechanisms of the psyche, aimed at weakening unfavorable professional factors - the consequences of changes in the motivational sphere of the specialist's personality. These research results are fully consistent with Boyko (2001), who considers professional burnout as a protective mechanism and points to its functionality and destructive consequences.

Orel (2000) defines burnout as a state of physical, emotional and mental exhaustion, which manifests itself in social professions. The scientist conducted a general overview of many classifications. Orel (2000) focused on the individual and organizational factors of the occurrence of emotional burnout.

The phenomenon of emotional burnout is relevant among the representatives of the "man-man" profession, which over the past twenty years has become global in modern society. Especially this problem concerns teachers who are in constant interaction between themselves and with other people. Admittedly, domestic experts, pedagogical activity is one of the most professionally deforming people.

The relationship of emotional intelligence and communicative tendencies in the scientific literature has received little attention. A few empirical studies describe the mechanisms of interaction of emotional intelligence and communicative tendencies at the level of the teacher's behavior (Zhulina, Zholudeva, Pankratova, Palatkina, & Smirnova, 2018). Consider some examples of such studies.

Shumilkina (2015), while studying the relationship between emotional intelligence and communicative tendencies, concludes that the attitude of communicative tendencies is precisely the emotional intelligence, which is the cognitive component of communicative abilities and is defined as the ability to adequately evaluate and understand your own behavior and behavior of other people, determines the level expressiveness of competent positions in communication and the successful implementation of the subject's communicative potential (Antonenko, Vovchenko & Iskandirova, 2011).

In the empirical study Petrova (2015) revealed the nature of the relationship between emotional intelligence and communicative competence, which, according to the author, is as follows: a) social intelligence in the process of communication is manifested in the ability to compare, evaluate, predict, draw conclusions about people's behavior and relationships; b) social intelligence acts as a means and result of the development of communicative inclinations.

In the work of Petrova (2015) established the relationship between the levels of development of emotional intelligence and communicative inclinations of teachers. In particular, the following regularity of the development of these levels is described.:

- increasing the level of emotional intelligence helps to strengthen the severity of competent positions in interpersonal interaction;
- increasing the level of emotional intelligence provides a decrease in the dependent position in communication and aggressiveness of a teacher.

Even fewer studies address the relationship between emotional intelligence and communicative tendencies, seen against the background of various levels of professional burnout of teachers. Most often, authors directly examine the relationship of emotional intelligence or communicative tendencies with professional burnout, and not the relationship of these phenomena due to a particular level of professional burnout.

For example, Larina (2016) in her study describes the relationship of communicative inclinations and professional burnout at the level of components of communicative inclinations and thereby shows how developed communicative competence is able to prevent the professional burnout of teachers.

In the study of Lebedintseva (2017) notes that the targeted development of emotional intelligence through a specially developed system of methods helps to reduce the severity of the “burnout” syndrome.

Summarizing the features of the studies examined and the previously established characteristics of emotional intelligence and communicative inclinations, we describe the key aspects of the relationship of these categories with the phenomenon of professional burnout of teachers:

1. Emotional intelligence and communicative competence are related concepts.
2. The relationship of emotional intelligence and communicative tendencies is manifested in interdependence: for the development of emotional competence, the teacher needs to effectively interact

with surrounding subjects, but in order for this interaction to be really effective, the teacher must understand the subject of communication on an emotional level.

3. Given the interdependence of emotional intelligence and communicative inclinations, we can conclude that this interdependence is a reference, favorable condition that stimulates the development of both areas and prevents the professional burnout of the teacher.

### **Methodology**

An empirical study was conducted among school teachers in Rostov-on-Don. The study involved 75 teachers, aged 30 to 45 years, with work experience from 7 to 20 years. Teachers with work experience of 7 years or more were selected, as a number of studies indicate that professional burnout often begins after 7 years of work.

The study used the following diagnostic tools:

1. Methodology "Emotional Intelligence (EQ)". The technique allows you to identify the ability to understand the relationship of the person, represented in emotions, and manage the emotional sphere based on decision making.
2. Methodology "Assessment of the level of sociability". This technique allows you to determine the general level of sociability, including not only the assessment of the interlocutor, the determination of his strengths and weaknesses, but also the ability to establish a friendly atmosphere, understand the problems of the interlocutor, etc.
3. "The methodology for identifying communicative and organizational inclinations". The proposed methodology makes it possible to more deeply understand the structure of organizational abilities and at the same time to identify their level of ownership.
4. The technique of "Diagnosis of emotional burnout" (Boyko, 2001). The technique allows to determine the formation of the main phases of professional burnout.

The empirical study was conducted in three stages:

Stage I was the choice of the research base, sampling and the process of systematizing information about the subjects (obtaining data on their gender, age, etc.).

At stage II, a study was conducted using the following psychodiagnostic techniques: “Emotional Intelligence”; “The level of sociability”; “Methodology for identifying communicative and organizational inclinations”; “Diagnosis of emotional burnout of a person”.

Stage III involved the qualitative and quantitative processing of data, as well as the interpretation of the results of the study. Also, at this stage, methods of mathematical statistics were used. The calculation was performed using the SPSS Statistics software (version 21.0) using the Pearson correlation coefficient (r-Pearson).

## Results

Using the Pearson correlation criterion, we have identified some interconnections of professional burnout with emotional intelligence and communicative inclinations. The analysis provided an opportunity to highlight the relationship between communicative inclinations and professional burnout, significant relationships are presented in the figure 1.

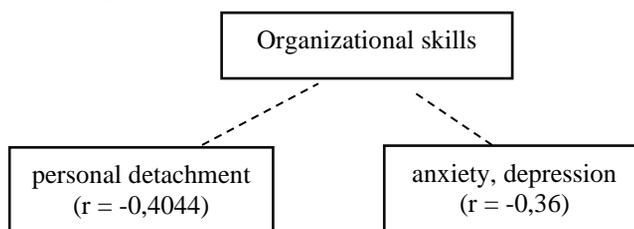


Figure 1. Significant correlation between CBS and professional burnout of teachers

Figure 1 shows the significant correlation between organizational skills and anxiety, depression ( $r = -0.36$ ). This connection is negative, which indicates feedback; the higher the anxiety and depression in the teacher, the lower the manifestation of organizational abilities and vice versa. This can be explained by the fact that organizational abilities require the teacher to have such personal qualities as decisiveness, courage, initiative and self-confidence, his knowledge and his own actions. As you know, an increased level of anxiety makes a person uncertain, fearful. And the tendency to depression makes a person passive and disinterested. That is why, the connection described above is understandable.

We also see the presence of a significant negative relationship at  $p = 0.01$  between organizational abilities and personal detachment ( $r = -0.4044$ ). This relationship indicates a trend: with high rates of organizational ability, low rates of personal detachment. Such a connection is justified, because if a person does not take part in the life of the collective, is removed from him, then he cannot manage it and organize his work, since this collective will not accept it, and, accordingly, will not perceive it as manager.

Significant links between emotional awareness and burnout are presented in Figure 2.

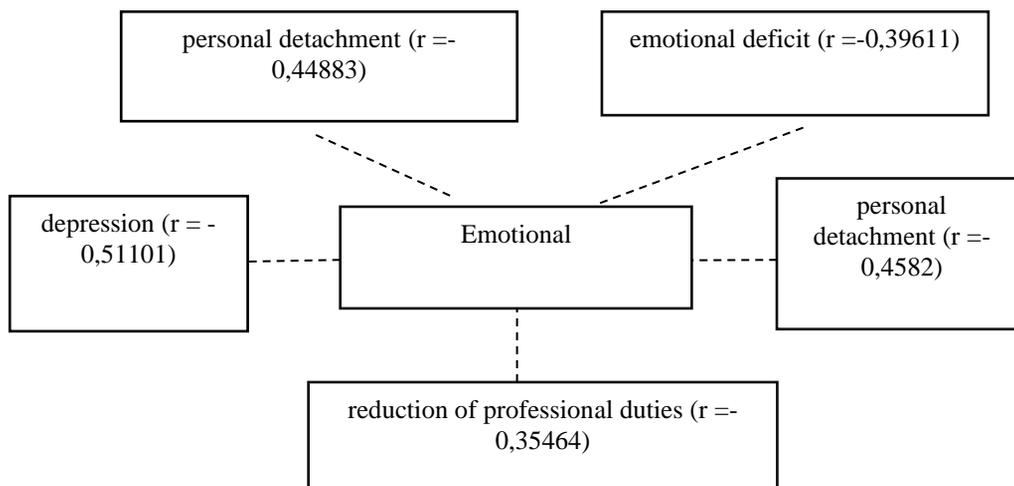


Figure 2. Significant correlation between emotional detachment and professional burnout of teachers

As we see from Figure 2, “emotional awareness” correlates with such indicators of professional burnout as “dissatisfaction with oneself” ( $r = -0.44883$ ), “anxiety and depression” ( $r = -0.51101$ ), and “reduction of professional duties” ( $r = -0.35464$ ), “emotional deficit” ( $r = -0.39611$ ), “personal detachment” ( $r = -0.4582$ ). Thus, we can say that the more educators have the ability to recognize and understand their emotions, the lower their dissatisfaction with themselves (this is because teachers are critical of themselves, and when they can understand and correctly explain their emotions, the more adequately she treats herself). With high rates of emotional awareness, the risk of developing anxiety and depression is less, since the timely recognition of negative emotional states in oneself and constant reflection, can prevent the development of negative mental states and prevent the formation of professional burnout. Also, a high level of emotional awareness reduces the teacher’s desire to reduce and facilitate their professional duties (if the teacher does not understand their emotions and cannot control them, this leads to the fact that teachers note emotional exhaustion, fatigue and therefore want to reduce the load). In addition, with an increase in emotional awareness, a decrease in emotional deficiency is observed (the teacher is more likely to display positive emotions) and the risk of a depersonalized protective emotional-volitional anti-humanistic mood is reduced. That is, the more the teacher is aware of his emotional state, the more he has a desire to interact with other people.

Now we turn to the analysis of the relationship between self-motivation and indicators of professional burnout, which are presented in Figure 3.

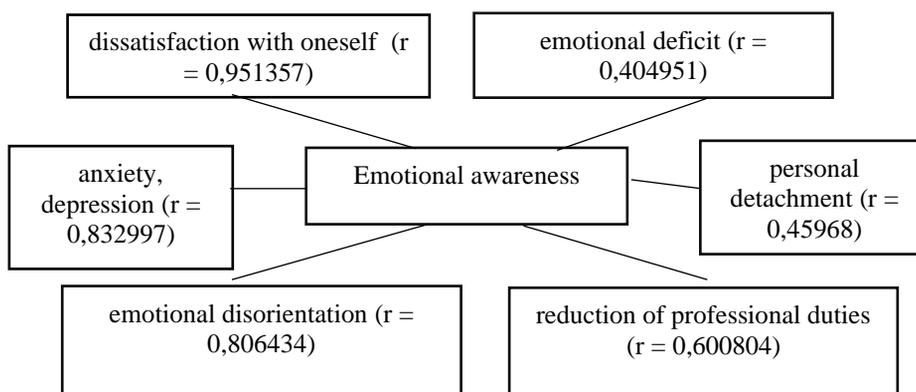


Figure 3. Significant correlation between self-motivation and professional burnout of teachers

So, according to Figure 3, we can note the presence of significant connections between the indicator of emotional intelligence - self-motivation and the following indicators of professional burnout:

- “dissatisfaction with oneself” ( $r = 0.951357$ ), that is, the higher the dissatisfaction with oneself, the more the teacher controls his behavior and restrains the manifestation of emotions;
- “anxiety and depression” ( $r = 0.832997$ ), which means that teachers over-control their behavior, leading to the development of anxiety and even the risk of depression;
- “emotional-moral disorientation” ( $r = 0.806434$ ), that is, the more the teacher controls his behavior by controlling emotions, the more often he develops inappropriate reactions to others;
- “expanding the sphere of saving emotions” ( $r = 0.69697$ ) - if the teacher overly controls his emotions, then he also begins to “save emotions” outside his professional sphere - in communicating with relatives and friends. So, a teacher who restrains his emotions at work in communication with students and colleagues often either “breaks down” at home, demonstrating aggression and temper, or, on the contrary, closes, becomes silent and overly restrained;
- “reduction of professional duties” ( $r = 0.600804$ ), that is, the higher the teacher’s level of control of his behavior by controlling emotions, the higher his desire to reduce and facilitate his professional duties;
- “emotional deficit” ( $r = 0.404951$ ) - the higher the control over behavior due to the control of one’s emotions, the higher the risk of depersonalization (the teacher shows less positive emotions, and more often negative ones), the person becomes sharper, rude, irritable and moody;

– “personal detachment” ( $r = 0.459968$ ), that is, the more the teacher controls his behavior by controlling emotions, the less interesting the pedagogical activity becomes for him, it ceases to bring him pleasure and less and less provides social value for the teacher.

Figure 4 shows the significant relationships between empathy and burnout rates.

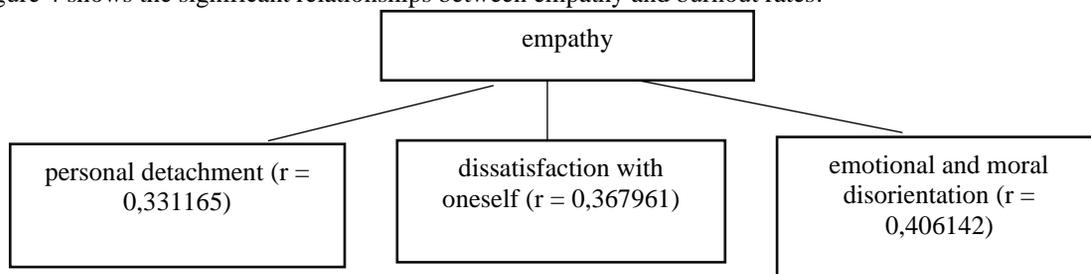


Figure 4. Significant correlation between empathy and professional burnout of teachers

So, there are three significant connections between empathy with:

- dissatisfaction with oneself ( $r = 0.367961$ ), that is, the more the teacher is not satisfied with himself, the higher his ability to empathize with the current emotional state of another person;
- emotional and moral disorientation ( $r = 0.406142$ ), which indicates that a high level of empathy can cause inappropriate reactions in the teacher towards others;
- personal detachment ( $r = 0.331165$ ), that is, the higher the teacher's sympathy for the other, the less satisfied he is with his pedagogical activity.

Thus, significant relationships were identified between emotional intelligence and professional burnout among teachers.

## Discussion

The following connections are revealed between emotional intelligence and communicative propensities for professional training of teachers, namely: in an organizational way and anxiety, depression (negative connection); organizational capabilities and personal detachment (negative connection); emotional awareness and dissatisfaction with oneself, anxiety and depression, reduction of occupational diseases, emotional deficit, personal detachment (direct connection); anxiety and depression, emotional and moral disorientation, expansion of the spheres of saving emotions, reduction of professional duties, emotional deficit, personal detachment (direct connection); empathy and dissatisfaction with oneself, emotional and moral disorientation, personal detachment (direct connection).

## Conclusion

The problem we are studying seems to be very important, since emotional burnout harms the teachers themselves, on their activity and well-being, on those who are next to them.

An analysis of the data showed that there are high risks of the formation of professional burnout among teachers. Based on the results obtained, recommendations are made on the prevention of burnout syndrome: informing educators about the causes and signs of burnout. Obligatory awareness of teachers about the causes and signs of burnout, about how to use public methods to help themselves maintain professional health and performance. It is necessary to develop the communication skills and emotional intelligence of teachers, which contributes to the adoption of themselves and their profession and reduces professional burnout.

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