

STRESS, BURNOUT, AND SELF-CARE AMONG PEDAGOGUES

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The paper is published within the frame of grant APVV-14-0921 Self-care as a factor in coping with negative consequences of the implementation of the helping professions.

Abstract: The aim of the paper is to point out to the stress and burden that arise from pedagogical work. The paper defines the possibilities of school social work it is specifically dedicated to pedagogical staff members as a possible target group of school social workers. Attention is also given to the negative phenomenon of work - stress and burnout. Their relationship with pedagogical staff is verified in a research study. At the end of the paper, the self-care possibilities for pedagogues are presented.

Keywords: Stress. Self-care. Burnout. School social work. Pedagogues. Burden.

1 Stress and Burden

Society expectations from teachers and their profession are high, especially in the area of education and training of children and youth. Although the pedagogues have a direct impact on intellectual state of society, it is a profession that has been financially starving for a long time. Emphasis on continuous education and self-development, as well as long-term and regular contact with people, where pedagogues are expected to be professional but human too, are the key factors that can be defined as the burden of the teaching profession (Gulzar et al. 2016).

With the society development, new social problems are constantly arising. (Nová 2016). All this has an impact on the educational process and the demands placed on teachers, despite the fact, that they often exceed their competences and solution possibilities. Failure to meet these requirements and stress factors can lead to burnout and contributes to increased level of stress.

From a historical point of view, the stress was first investigated from a biological point of view. Cannon and Selye are considered to be the authors of the first theories of stress (Evans et al. 2012). Cannon is the author of the physiological theory, which is based on the principle of Sympathetic-Adrenal medullary (SAM) system - stress is seen as a particular alarm reaction of the organism in terms of attack-escape.

Selye (1978) considered stress to be the general reaction of the organism to the demands that are placed on it, a condition that manifests by a specific syndrome based on all nonspecifically induced changes in the organism. His first theories have evoked a great interest in the scientific world and, of course, contradictory opinions.

Psychological stress models developed themselves independently from biological models and are focused on the impact of psychological factors to the response to stress. The best known of these models is the transactional model developed by Lazarus and his colleagues (Lazarus, Folkman, 1987). According to this model, stress results from the interaction between man and the environment. Stress does not rise merely from the occurrence of some events, it is related to the cognitive evaluation of the event and the coping strategy that is used to solve the event and which also affects the level of stress experience (Evans et al. 2012).

Currently, the literature provides various definitions of stress as such. It is important however, to look at man as a bio-psycho-social-spiritual being in the characterization of this term. If we perceive an individual in the context of an ecological perspective, the stress definition should also focus on the external environment, which threatens the individual. From this

point of view, stress can be characterized as a specific example of burden. That is the burden case, which exceeds the rate of adaptation possibilities of the individual (Paulík 2010).

Lazarus and Folkmanová (1984) characterize the stress as a result of an imbalance between the requirements placed upon the individual and his ability to cope with these requirements.

It is possible to distinguish five basic stressful situations which threaten an individual, in general:

1. inappropriate tasks and requirements - are the most common type of stressful situations that usually cause a mental stress and puts qualitatively more claims on the individual, whose extent is not possible to handle in a given period of time,
2. problem situations – the type of burden that binds to the structure of the conditions that are imposed on the individual,
3. frustrating situations – the type of psychological burden when the individual is not able to achieve the goal or to satisfy his or her needs,
4. conflict situations – the type of stressful situation when there is a contradiction of forces and this causes emotional pressure in decision making and increased tension,
5. stressful situations – the psychological burden that affects the individual during the realization of the target activity, which makes it difficult to progress (Kredátus 2010).

In general, teacher stress can be defined as the long-term effect of negative emotions resulting from the work itself, which may affect the effectiveness of the teacher's work and his inappropriate treatment of students. The results of so-called "teacher stress" are serious because they can lead to low efficiency at work, frequent absences or low satisfaction with their work, which can cause burnout or depression. (Klassen 2010)

Researchers have been engaged for a long time with the issue of stress and its level, and different target groups have been investigated, among other students of helping professions (Cohen, Kamarck, Mermelstein 1983; Lesage, Berjot, Deschamps 2015; Palekar, Mokashi 2014; Rajkumar, Nehra, Arya 2014; Jacob et al. 2012) and the workers of helping professions (Lesage, Berjot, Deschamps 2015; Stauner, Konkoly 2006; Ting, Jacobson a Sanders 2011; Waszkowska, Andysz, Merez 2014).

2 Burn-out

The burnout syndrome is caused by chronic stress. While stress is the cause, burnout is a consequence. It is caused by a long-term imbalance between the burden and the idle phase, between activity and rest. According to Stock (2010), three major symptoms are included within the burnout syndrome:

1. Exhaustion. The individual feels emotionally and physically exhausted. He/she experiences feelings that are associated with depression. In particular, it is helplessness, sadness, hopelessness, feeling of emptiness, fear, loss of self-control. Physical exhaustion is associated with a lack of energy, sleep and memory disturbances, muscle tension, pain.
2. Alienation. This symptom is characterized by the fact that man has an indifferent attitude to his work and surroundings. There is not only an alienation towards colleagues and employer, but also to the working climate, the internal resignation and passivity of workers arises. Work enthusiasm starts to disappear and cynicism occurs, where clients are seen as a burden and colleagues as a source of threat. Alienation can escalate to aggressive behavior toward one's own surroundings.
3. Performance decrease. There is a loss of confidence in own abilities and the individual is deemed incompetent. This is a subjective assessment, but it significantly decreases the

labour productivity, one needs more energy and time for the work, which he used to manage without difficulty before. One feels uncertain, loses motivation, has a sense of failure, the time dedicated for the body regeneration is extended, as the vacation or long weekend are not sufficient for relax.

Kebza and Šolcová (2010, s. 1) state that: "The burnout syndrome occurs especially in certain professional groups due to a combination of factors, particularly chronic stress and a marked drop in motivation, interest in performed activity and job satisfaction". In particular, people whose job is highly demanding on communication and empathy, are at risk. This syndrome's accompaniments are also lack of appreciation from the employer, fear of job loss and frequent organizational changes. The occurrence of burnout is also linked to one of the negative factors, the frustration. The individual does not adequately meet the needs and expectations. It arises particularly where people are not able to say thank you, show respect. In this stage people do not understand the meaning of life, work and own needs. Another factor that contributes to the burnout formation includes bad interpersonal relations. These occur when the workplace is dominated by misunderstandings, conflicts and quarrels. In this case, there is a disruption of the protective social network to which the closest family and friends belong, that feeds into burnout. (Španková 2010)

Nôtová and Páleníková (2003) state that burnout is caused by the long-term existence of situations that are very emotionally demanding. It is most common in the workplaces where chronic stress occurs, that is, in helping professions and wherever the work with people is done. It is possible to observe its manifestations at three levels, namely psychological, when there is an increase in emotional effort, negativism, depressions, then physical level, which is characterized by fatigue, apathy and increased risk of addiction. The third level is the social one, where there is a reduction in sociability and empathy, an aversion to work and frequent occurrence of conflicts.

Burnout syndrome is the most common in professions where the workers are in constant contact with people, especially in helping professions. The potential source of burnout may therefore be the work-related stress, which results from the workload and requirements that are placed upon the worker. (Balogová, Lorincová 2015)

Kyriacou (1996) talks about the teacher stress, which is defined as a situation in which the teacher feels angry, frustrated, depressed, feels stress and anxiety as a result of a situation that is related to the pedagogical activity of the teacher.

For many teachers, the burden and stress result in burnout. It leads to a feeling of job dissatisfaction, decreased desire to be with children, increasing psychological stress and physical weariness. (Višňovský, Kačáni et al. 2002)

Hennig a Keller (1996) understand burnout as a consequence of long-term stress and bad coping with mental and physical burden.

3 Options of school social work with

School social work is a specialized area of social work practice as such. It is based on social work with youth, which represents a professional form of action by individuals or organizations (Šiňanská 2015). The philosophy of school social work is based on four values, including the human dignity, the right to self-realization, respect for the individual's potential and individuality and the right to respect differences. (Allen-Meares 2007)

The main goal of school social work is to prevent risky behaviors among the children and youth, to strengthen the family and to ensure open communication between the school and the family (Dupper 2002). The school social workers play an important role in the educational and learning process as they provide students with opportunities and resources in order to be successful in the school environment, as well as in social life (Openshaw 2008).

Franklin, Gerlach and Chanmugam (2008) add that school social workers are equally focused on providing social and emotional support to students in the school environment through social services and advocacy. Bland a Esmalle (2012) consider school social workers as professionals designed to identify emotional and social issues that contribute to inadequate school attendance and poor school results.

The school social workers are not working alone, but as members of a school multidisciplinary team. This causes that sometimes different roles and responsibilities overlap, or ideally complement each other. (Dupper 2002) The competencies of school social workers are defined in the standards of various professional associations and organizations that cover the activities of school social workers such as the School Social Work Association of America, the National Association of Social Workers, the International Network of School Social Work.

Tab 1 Roles of school social workers

	Tasks
1. Representative	To help students design resources to achieve their needs and to develop their own proposals for solving their problems, related to their development stage and adaptation to school life, so that they can use their resources effectively.
2. Counsellor	To help students to better understand themselves and their feelings, so that they are able to solve their problems adequately their development stage, adapting to the school environment.
3. Social pedagogue	To help students and their families to develop positive social values, stances and behavior. To promote harmonic interpersonal relationships and a sense of responsibility towards society.
4. Consultant	To provide consulting services to pedagogues and to help in the sphere of social problems of students and their personality development.
5. Resource mobilizer	To locate and mobilize resources of the student, his/her family and community for the student's benefit.
6. Researcher	To evaluate own services and to collect data and information about their work in order to develop their services.
7. Advocate	To familiarize themselves with the general education system and to prepare recommendations for education improvement.
8. Mediator	To strengthen links between the student, his/her family, school and community and to promote the harmonization of these relationships.

The source: Chui, Ling (2013)

The school social work standards have been issued by the National Association of Social Workers (2012). The main objective of these standards is to specify the expectations placed on school social workers and their services, their code of ethics, procedures for defending the client's rights, and also to lay the foundations for the education of school social workers and to provide continuous education programs and materials.

The activities of school social workers in the USA are also defined by the Education Act, which defines these activities as service, which purpose is to provide assessments, diagnostics, counseling, education, therapeutic and other services in order to secure the complex needs of pupils and students (Raines 2013). The competencies of school social workers in countries where school social work is a normal part of the school system include performing systemic changes when adopting and implementing

intervention procedures to improve students' learning results (Clark, Alvarez 2010).

Kelly (2008) emphasizes that a social worker must have special knowledge and skills to ensure the complexity of social work at the micro, mezzo and macro levels. This results in the roles of school social workers (tab 1).

The intention of the previous table was to point out to the roles belonging to the school social worker profession and to highlight the role of teacher's consultant. Chui a Ling (2013) outline the basic objectives, on which the school social workers should concentrate while working with teachers:

- to help students to fully develop their potential,
- to focus on healthy personality development of children and youth,
- to help students to obtain adequate school achievements,
- to promote harmonic interpersonal relationships in school, family and community,
- to help students to solve their personal, family, interpersonal and school problems,
- to strengthen links between student, family, school and community.

The primary role of school social worker is to help students to solve their academic, social and emotional problems and to develop their possibilities and potential (Chui, Ling 2013). However, they also intervene and act preventively in the case of occurrence of any risk behavior manifestation (Textoris, Lichner, Šlosár 2014). Nevertheless, students and their families are not the only target groups of social workers working in the school environment. It is equally important to focus on pedagogues.

In the context of the defined issue, it seems to be necessary to work with the teachers as well and to guide them to better use of self-care with an emphasis on burnout prevention. The same is pointed out by Openshaw (2008), who states that the competence of school social workers include performing the intervention between children and parents as well as the counseling to members of the pedagogical school team and assistance in programs development (prevention, projects, etc.).

Jarolmen (2014) points out that an individual adapts to his/her environment, as well as the environment adapts to the individual. They are constantly changing systems. It follows that the role of a school social worker should be to identify the problems that cause the obstacles in the performance of teachers's profession and to help him/her with solving these problems. The appropriate method is social counseling for teaching staff of the school and providing consultation.

Bland, Esmalle (2012) appeal to the need to be aware of the broader context of relations between the school and the family of the student, which may affect the teachers's performance and can have an impact on his/her career. In the context of described problematics, the role of school social workers should be:

- to understand school organization and its subsystems,
- to understand the impacts of the institution on the teachers's social functioning,
- to gain insight about the teacher from different sources and to systematize them,
- to identify the effects involved in the teacher's burnout,
- to ensure complex interventions at all levels,
- to focus the attention on the interaction and teacher-environment transaction.

4 Self-care among pedagogues

Social work in the school environment can be divided into three levels to simplify its understanding:

- work with students,
- work with teachers,
- work with parents.

This second level allows the ideal use of self-care models for pedagogues. The fundamentals of social work in the school environment have a great potential and possibilities for the successful application of self-care programs among pedagogues, who belong in the terms of the occurrence of negative phenomena in work, to the most risk occupations of all.

Self-care has been in a center of research interest for a long time. Health care has been perceived as a bearing area of self-care. In this connections, it has been investigated in the context of various diseases and disorders. It is currently a multidimensionally perceived concept that deals with various disciplines. Each of these uses evaluates and examines self-care from their perspective.

The pioneer in the self-care topic is Dorothea Oremová, who introduced the Deficit Theory of Self-Care (Oremová 2001). According to her theory, it is the realization of activities carried out within certain time. The deficiency lies in the fact that there are situations in man's life where the increased attention to self-care is essential. The basis is to support and sustain well-being, healthy functioning, and continuing development throughout the life. The very important piece of knowledge resulting from this theory is the fact that self-care is the result of learning. Oremová (1991) uses the term "self-care agency," which represents a certain ability of the individual or the potential to care for himself/herself.

Self-care currently covers various fields and represents a complex of performed activities - that is the essence of it. Its goal is to maintain physical and mental well-being and it is carried on the individual's own initiative. In the past, the factor of health care dominated in the self-care. Godfrey et al. (2010) analyzed 139 definition of self-care, outlining seven of the main aspects that most often appeared in the examined definitions and that were related to the health area, pursuit of purposeful actions or preventive activities.

Today the situation is different and although health care is still one of the most important domains of this issue, it is supplemented by additional components, for example psychological (Rehwaldt et al., 2009) and spiritual (Ellisová, 2000). From social work perspective, four components are usually distinguished in terms of the activities carried out (Figley, 2002; Newell, Nelson-Gardell, 2014; Moore et al., 2011; Aguilar, 1997): physical, psychological, social, spiritual.

In Slovakia, only a few authors are concerned with the self-care problematics. Some of them focus on the creation and verification of methodologies - measurement tools to capture the perception of self-care requirements in the professional life of helping professionals, the actual realization of individual activities as well as their effectivity (Lovaš, Hricová 2015; Hricová, Janečková 2015; Lichner, Lovaš 2016; Halachová, Lovaš 2015, Mesárošová 2017). Part of them deals with the relationship between self-care and the various negative phenomena among workers in helping professions (Hricová, Vargová 2014; Ráczová, Vasková 2015, Köverová, Ráczová 2017a; Köverová, Ráczová 2017b; Mesárošová 2014), but even among students - future helping professionals (Mesárošová 2016).

5 Pilot study

The aim of the research was to investigate the correlation between stress and burnout in the pedagogical profession. Two questionnaires have been used: PSS 10 and MBI.

The Perceived Stress Scale methodology measures the extent to which an individual considers life situations as stress (Cohen, Kamarck, Mermelstein 1983). The name, resp. the content of this scale is most commonly referred to as the "level of perceived stress". The questionnaire consisted of 10 questions focused on feelings and thoughts that respondents experienced during the last month. Respondents responded to each item in the questionnaire through a 5-point scale. 1 meant that they had

never met with the feelings and thoughts during the month. 2 represented that they almost never felt those feelings and ideas. 3 meant that respondents sometimes met with these feelings and ideas. 4 represented the answer that respondents often encounter these feelings and ideas. 5 presented the response that respondents encountered these feelings and ideas very often.

The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) questionnaire is the best known for tracking burnout in helping professions (Maslach, Jackson, Leiter 1996). It consists of three factors. The first two factors are focused on emotional exhaustion and depersonalization. The third factor means personal job satisfaction. The questions 6, 8, 13, 16 and 20 represented the factor of emotional exhaustion. The second factor, depersonalization, was displayed by questions 5, 10, 11, 15 and 22. The area of personal job satisfaction was formed by 8 questions, namely 4, 7, 9, 12, 17, 18, 19 and 21. The questionnaire consisted of 22 statements focused on how often the respondents felt the specific feelings. For each item in the questionnaire respondents answered through 6-point scale. 0 meant that the feelings of the respondents never occurred. 1 presented the occurrence of those feelings several times a year. 2 meant an answer that indicated that feelings among respondents occurred once a month. 3 meant the occurrence of reported emotions several times a month. 4 was the response of the respondents, who experienced the feelings once a week. 5 represented the occurrence of these feelings several times a week. 6 corresponded to the answer of respondents experiencing these feelings on a daily basis.

5.1 Research sample

The research sample consisted of elementary school teachers. Occasional selections has been used. The respondents were elementary school teachers aged 24-62. Of the 100 addressed elementary school teachers, 74 completed questionnaires were returned. The research sample consisted of 62 women and 12 men.

5.2 Results

Tab 1 Correlation MBI-SPSS

MBI	Spearman's correlation coefficient	SPSS
personal job satisfaction	r	-0,358**
	p(α)	0,002
depersonalisation	r	0,333**
	p(α)	0,004
emotional exhaustion	r	0,340**
	p(α)	0,003

Significant relationships have been confirmed between the level of stress and the individual burnout areas in the observed sample of pedagogues. For depersonalization and emotional exhaustion, there was a positive correlation, thus it can be concluded that respondents who experience higher levels of stress, have higher scores in depersonalization and emotional exhaustion. It has been also confirmed that a positively oriented area - job satisfaction will negatively correlate with the level of perceived stress.

6 Discussion and conclusion

Kolibárová (2012) conducted a research in Kosice and Presov, which was attended by 70 gymnasium teachers. She stated that teachers with longer practice achieve higher levels of burnout in the personal performance dimension. Antoniou, Ploumpi and Ntalla in a survey conducted in Greece in 2013 on a sample of 388 teachers states, that women who perform the profession shorter, endure higher level of burden and stress. Yavuz, in his research conducted in Turkey in 2009 on the sample of 280 elementary school teachers stated that the level of depersonalization is higher in men than in women.

Mendez and Lira (2015) in their research in Spain on a sample of 28 teachers found, that 85.7% of the teachers feel burdened by their work. As the main cause of stress they reported their students, especially those who are confused or pose a threat to the teacher, teacher role stress, school organizational conditions and professional role. In the dimension of depersonalization, teachers experienced negative attitudes, cynicism and insensitivity. Hannelová and Preisingerová (2013) conducted research on gymnasium on the research sample of 55 teachers. The results of the research indicate that depersonalization was higher in men than in women.

It can therefore be concluded that in general it is confirmed that stress is one of the basic factors associated with burnout and its severity. One of the ways to eliminate both of these phenomena is self-care, which possibilities are described above. This paper presented a pilot study of a bigger research design, the next step being the verification of relationships between the self-care and work-related negative phenomena.

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Primary Paper Section: A

Secondary Paper Section: AN