

Professional Factors of the Occurrence of Emotional Burnout Syndrome

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Abstract: *Objective:* The problem of creating effective labour productivity is relevant for public and private sector organisations due to market volatility and determines important in addition to the introduction of optimal tools in the working process, the creation of the favourable environment in the staff team and as a consequence of the prevention of emotional burnout among employees.

Background: In conditions of social and economic instability in the CIS countries and competition in the labour market in a wide range of specialities, it leads to the increase of competencies and requirements for employees of the industry, and as a consequence increases their responsibility to the society.

Method: A retrospective research method was applied to identify cause-and-effect relationships and patterns between all components of the phenomenon of emotional burnout in the labour process.

Results: In the course of the research, a standardised Professional Burnout questionnaire was used. Also, criteria and a grading scale were identified, the results processed using statistical methods in the SPSS 17 data processing programme.

Conclusion: On the basis of the results of the research conducted, practical recommendations were formulated, the implementation of which will help reduce the level of emotional burnout among employees of the organisation.

Keywords: Labour productivity, labour market, society, professional burnout, emotional exhaustion.

INTRODUCTION

Burnout syndrome in recent years has been of great interest among the modern professional community. According to various research regarding organising the psychological environment of the working process, the fundamental aspect in creating comfortable conditions and a favourable psychological situation in the staff team is the timely identification of signs of "burnout" among employees and the prevention of its causative factors in the early stages. The success of the organisation and the achievement of its goals largely depends on an efficiently built staff management system, which consists of the productive use of employees, their professional and social development.

The problem of creating effective labour productivity is relevant for public and private sector organisations due to market volatility. It determines importance in addition to the introduction of optimal tools in the working process, the creation of the favourable environment in the staff team and as a consequence of the prevention of emotional burnout among employees. In particular, this aspect is gaining relevance for young organisations, the instability of which can often lead to an unfavourable situation in the working process. Social workers begin to experience symptoms of emotional burnout in the first five years of their employment.

The formation of the effective working environment and a healthy culture of relations between employees of the organisation, especially at the stage of its composition, is the fundamental task. Emotional burnout adversely affects both the personal self-

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perception of the specialist and his physical well-being, and the effectiveness and culture of the organisation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The research in the field of emotional burnout and the causes of its occurrence in recent years have been studied by psychologists and specialists of related specialities, whose purpose is to find rational mechanisms to solve this problem. The causes of this syndrome are revealed in the research papers by C. Maslach [1], S.I. Kudinov [2], S.A. Babanov [3] and Yu.A. Piontkovskaya [4], and its symptoms are specified in the results of the research by V.Ye.Oriol [5] and others. The process of development of emotional burnout syndrome is noted in the research paper of I.V. Komarevtseva [6] and its age and gender causes in the research papers of A.M. Salogub [7] and others. Concerning the study, we have not discovered any efforts aimed at studying the presence of burnout syndrome among employees of young organizations involved in the process of reforming the country.

In the conditions of social and economic instability in the CIS countries and competition in the labour market in a wide range of specialities, there is the increase of competencies and requirements for employees of the industry, and as a consequence, increases their responsibility to the society and this often due to the instability of the professional environment leads to unfavourable emotional and psychological states [8].

The World Health Organization defines "emotional burnout syndrome" as physical, emotional or motivational exhaustion characterised by poor work productivity, fatigue, insomnia and exposure to somatic diseases [9]. Thus, in his research, N.I. Vлах notes that among the specialists of "helping" professions with emotional burnout syndrome to a greater extent are noted asthenoneurotic (cephalgia up to 85%, dyssomnia up to 75% and asthenia up to 100%) and (cardiac arrhythmias up to 40%, cardialgia up to 50%, arterial hypertension up to 43.3%) [10-11]. V.V. Gafarov [12], K. Holmgren [13], M. Milczarek [14] and the others noted the risk of myocardial infarction and brain stroke among professionals who have been working for a long time with people. A.V. Baratynska shares the opinion of C. Maslach who defined professional burnout as emotional exhaustion arising from the stress of interpersonal interaction (depersonalisation), the occurs of which indicates that the individual is at risk of other stress factors (reduction of personal achievements) [15].

According to S.A. Babanov and Yu.A. Piontkovskaya, "emotional burnout syndrome" is a multidimensional constructor with a set of negative mental experiences, which lead to "exhaustion" and intenseness from their prolonged exposure, and related to personal interactions, accompanied by emotional saturation and cognitive complexity [3-4]. National Institutes of Health of the USA note that 26 and 40% of the working population indicate the presence of stress factors at work, and in Europe up to 50-60 % of all lost working days are related to professional stress [16].

MATERIALS AND METHODS

At the first stage of the research, in the literature review, a retrospective research method was applied to identify cause-and-effect relationships and patterns between all components of the phenomenon of emotional burnout in the labour process. The objects of systematic analysis were the results of several original research of such scientific international library systems as PubMed, Springer and Elsevier.

The second stage of the research aimed at confirming the hypothesis of the research, to achieve which the following methods were applied:

- *analytical*, it was referred to aggregate the obtained results of the study;
- *sociological*, it aimed at determining the level of exposure to emotional burnout of employees of the organisation.

For conducting this stage of the research, we used a standardised *Professional Burnout* questionnaire [17], which is a shortened version of the Western questionnaire *MBI-Maslach Burnout Inventory* developed based on a three-factor model of "emotional burnout syndrome" by K. Maslach and S. Jackson [1].

The evaluation system is built on a 7-point scale of measurements (from 0 – "never" to 6 points – "every day"), and determines the threshold values by three groups of statements: emotional exhaustion (low 0-15; average 16-24; high 25-54), depersonalisation (low 0-5; average 6-10; high 11-30) and professional successfulness (low 0-11; average 12-18; high 18-48). The sample (n) consisted of 64 respondents with a confidence level of 95% and $\Delta = \pm 5\%$. The average age of the respondents who participated in the evaluation was 41.6 ± 2.08 years. The research was conducted during December 2018 at the premise of the Republican State Enterprise on the right of economic

management "National Center of Expertise" of the Public Health Protection Committee of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The material of the research was the developed expert map, which was based on the adapted questionnaire of the author [1]. The results were processed using statistical methods in SPSS 17 data processing program.

When processing the results of the survey, it was used a nominal, rank scale of relations; summary statistics on individual variables; frequencies, summary statistics and graphs of an arbitrary number of variables; construction of N-dimensional conjugacy tables and obtaining measures of relation. To choose the criteria for evaluating the significance of average intergroup differences, we checked the correspondence of the sample distributions forms to the normal distribution using χ^2 criterion, as well as controlled the equality of general variances using the F-test.

All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were following the ethical standards of the institutional and national research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards. Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

Prerequisites for the Study of the Phenomenon of "Emotional Burnout Syndrome"

The classification of C. Maslach supported by many psychologists up to now [18-19] implies the grouping of symptoms into three units [20]:

- emotional exhaustion which is manifested by somatic and mental signs;
- depersonalisation which is expressed about colleagues;
- the experience of one's own failure.

In consequence, as noted in the research by A. Längle [18], these three groups of symptoms included such a group as "vital instability" which manifests itself in depression, depressed mood, excitability, anxiety and irritability. In recent years, there have emerged three approaches to the study of factors of emotional burnout syndrome: individual, interpersonal and organisational. As noted by S.I. Kudinov, with an individual's perspective, the leading causes of the occurrence of the syndrome are the dissonance

between high expectations from work and the reality with which they have to face, etc., while with interpersonal one – disharmony of relations between employees and recipients of services [2].

Individual factors include a tendency to emotional rigidity; intense perception and experience of the circumstances of professional activity; poor motivation of emotional return in professional activity; disorientation of personality [15]. V. Oriol [5] includes in the group of these factors socio-demographic particularities, age, sex, education level, marital status, work experience, personal characteristic endurance (daily high activity, control of life situations and flexibility to respond to all kinds of changes), locus of control (to evaluate one's own achievements as random or credit oneself with more merits), resistance style (ability to resist stress), level of self-esteem, anxiety and extroversion.

According to Sankova [21], symptoms of emotional burnout are also divided into three groups, such as physiological, behavioural and psychological. According to the researchers in this field, the physiological symptoms include

- the vague feeling of tension in the body;
- psychosomatic disorders;
- physical reactions to stress.

Symptoms of *psychological nature* are expressed in the manifestation of depression, anger and frustration, violation of cognitive and motor functions of the body; feeling of helplessness and hopelessness; reduced level of enthusiasm, feelings of resentment, frustration, uncertainty guilt and lack of demand, irritation; suspicion; a sense of omnipotence; rigidity; inability to make a decision; distancing from colleagues; increased sense of responsibility; negative attitude to oneself, work and life in general; and self-criticism.

I.V. Komarevtseva [6] built a model of the relationship of personality features and phases of emotional burnout syndrome (Figure 1).

This model determines the mechanism of formation of emotional burnout syndrome based on personal characteristics.

which consist in the fact that every specialist has particular psycho-constitutional and subjective and personal prerequisites for the implementation of the

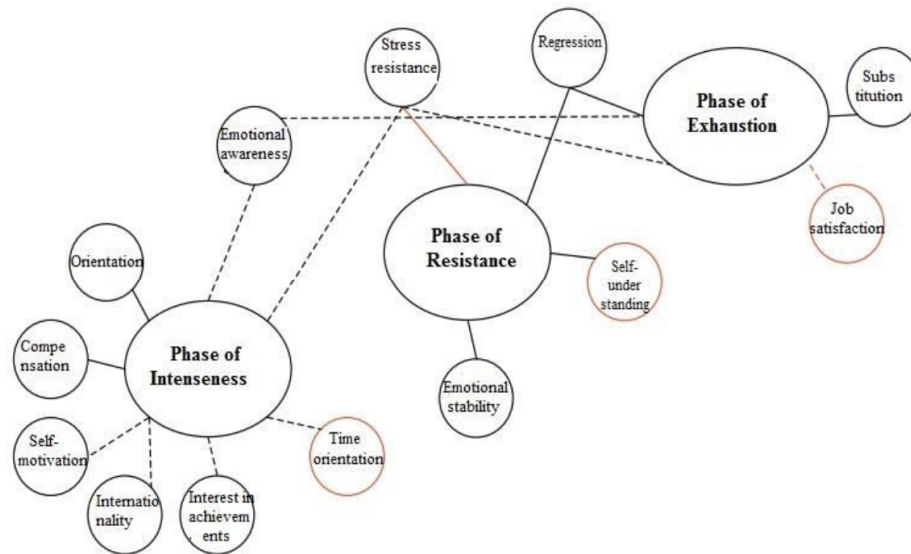


Figure 1: Model of the relationship between personality features and phases of emotional burnout syndrome.

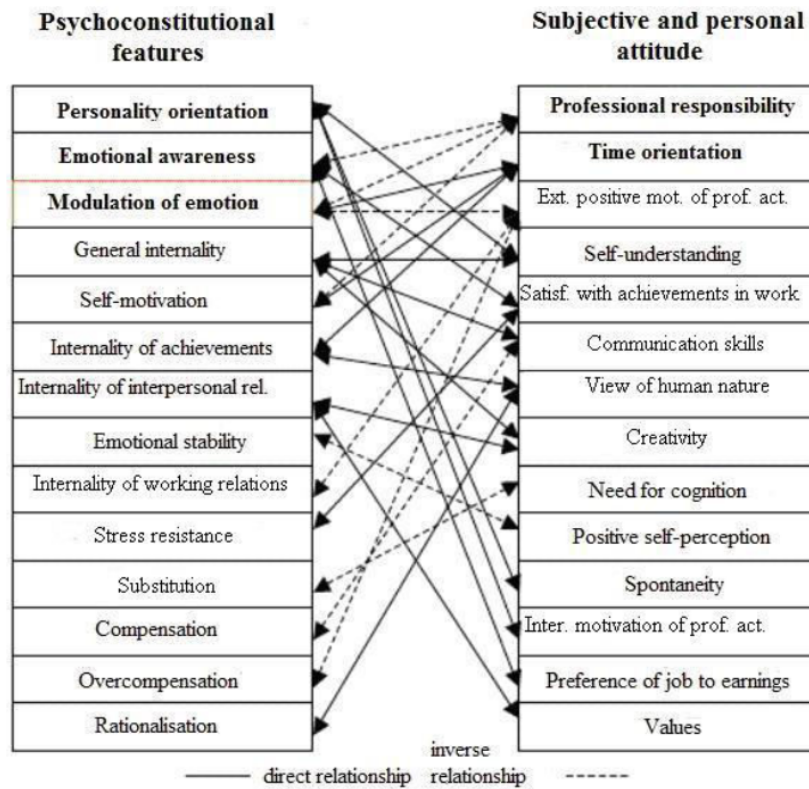


Figure 2: Model of the interrelationship of psycho-constitutional and subjective and personal features of specialists.

professional activity and, as a consequence, decrease of the level of satisfaction with results of labour (Figure 2).

Based on the proposed model of the interrelationship of psycho-constitutional and subjective and personal characteristics of specialists, I.V. Komarevtseva managed to describe the portrait of a

personality characterised by resistance to emotional burnout syndrome: this is a person who has an ambivert orientation, who understands his(her) emotional experiences, who has emotional flexibility, interval locus of control focused on the present and the future, who pays little attention to the external attributes of activity, who realises that not everything is in his(her) power and does not suffer from perfectionism [6].

Also, one should note a gender distinction of the manifestation of emotional burnout, in particular in the context of its symptoms. According to A.M. Salogub [7], men are characterised by high degree of depersonalisation and professional success that is related to the predominance of their instrumental values, and women are more prone to emotional exhaustion due to high emotional responsiveness and high loads. Thus, the occurrence and manifestation of the phenomenon of "emotional burnout" is affected by personal, interpersonal and organisational factors, on the basis of which various models in psychology are built.

The Manifestation of Emotional Burnout Syndrome in Professional Activity

As evidenced by the results of research in this field, among the professions for which emotional burnout syndrome is typical most are the specialists who perform their labour activity in the medical and educational fields, social and law enforcement sectors which are characterised by this state due to the specifics of the work and the impact of numerous factors on the environment [15, 16]. In the research of S.A. Babanov notes that health care workers are most at risk of the occurrence of emotional burnout syndrome, singling out 3 types [3]:

- "pedantic", characterised by conscientiousness elevated to the absolute, excessive, painful accuracy and the desire in any case to achieve exemplary order;
- "demonstrative", seeking to excel in everything and always be in sight;
- "emotional", consisting of impressionable and sensitive people.

According to the rating of Business Insider (National project of O * NET and the U.S. Department of Labor) which was calculated to understand how often an employee reprimanded by management staff and how effectively employees of particular speciality can cope with the emerging stress. Among the health care workers who are more at risk of the occurrence of emotional burnout syndrome there are urologists, anesthesiologists, emergency medical services workers, surgeons and obstetrics and gynaecology doctors; along with whom there are police officers and firefighters, pilots and chiefs of big organisations [22].

According to K.V. Kmit, the main causes of the occurrence of emotional burnout is the non-compliance

between the interaction of personal and situational factors [23].

- between the requirements determined by the management staff of the organisation for its specialists and the non-compliance of its professional environment;
- between the ambitions of an employee regarding greater independence in his work and not always a rational policy in the labour process organising;
- between the results of the activeness of an employee of the organisation and the rationality of their application in practice;
- between the non-compliance of the needs of specialists for remuneration and the amount of work performed.

N.Ye. Vodopianova determines the "resource security" of the labour process as an optimal mechanism for solving the problem of emotional burnout which will contribute to the reduction of the risk of the syndrome's occurrence in the organisation [17].

- motivational resources;
- resources of the reflexive and sensual sphere;
- support resources-psychological constructs;
- resources of implementation and overcoming;
- resources of achievements and correction of actions.

As noted by T.A. Trufanova [24] in her research paper, the most optimal approach to stress management at the workplace is the variant, which consists of three-stage prevention:

- primary which involves the change of the organisation's characteristics, the roles of employees and work tasks, given the conditions of the organisation and its culture;
- secondary – the adoption of measures which weaken the impact of manifestations of stress symptoms among employees and aimed at reducing or eliminating stress;
- tertiary which aimed at providing confidential consultations to employees whose health or well-being has been affected by chronic work stress.

According to Dr N.I. Vlakh [11], a training course of stress management will be helpful for entrepreneurs, and a personal growth training course will be rational for health care workers. In contrast, for law enforcement officers, a training course of leadership qualities will be useful, and problem-oriented psychotherapy will be more optimal for teachers.

Reduction of professional achievements (from now on – RPA) expressed in the weakening of the sense of self-competence and productivity of one's work, accompanied by depression and inability to cope with the requirements of the work affects the occurrence of burnout syndrome among employees of the organisation. The research was participated in by eight employees of the NCE of the management staff of the organization, that is 72.7% of the total number of top managers. Respondents (3 persons) who did not participate in this research were on annual leave or sick leave at the time of the expert evaluation.

The average age of the respondents who participated in the evaluation was 41.6±2.08 years: the chiefs of the organisation – 47.1±0.34 years and heads of departments – 38.4±1.39 years. The primary criterion for respondents was determined by experience in this organisation and at the managerial position. Compliance of respondents with the established standards allows to testify about the qualitative component of the research and allows speaking about the expert approach to the survey process (Table 1).

RESULTS

In the framework of this stage of the research, based on the responses of chiefs and senior managers of the NCE, we have built a matrix of EB signs among employees who mark respondents among their causes (Figure 3).

The main sign by which the management staff of the organisation determines the presence of EB among employees is an unsatisfactory emotional background (41.86%), which manifests itself as the negativity of an employee in both partners, and colleagues (20.75%), and excessive emotionality to situations arising in the working process (21.11%).

The main factors are leading to EB attributed by respondents to the organisational group and related to the working conditions of employees (Table 2).

The results of the evaluation showed chiefs and top managers of the NCE reduce the definition of "emotional burnout" only to the manifestation in the behavioural aspect of the employees' attitude to the conditions of their work. In turn, it does not allow to fully identify this syndrome in the whole cohort of employees (Table 3).

The distribution of work between employees and structural departments, as we noted above, is directly correlated with the level of their professionalism, identified as a causal factor of effective labour process organising, and as a consequence, and the satisfaction of specialists with their activities. (Question: "How

Table 1: Work Experience of Respondents, the Average Value (Years)

| Criteria | Chief and deputy chiefs | Chiefs of departments | All interviewed contingent |
|--|-------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| Work experience by speciality | 26.63±0.11 | 15.7±3.77 | 21.16±1.51 |
| Work experience in the organisation | 3.5±0.7 | 3.1±0.74 | 3.3±0.79 |
| Work experience at the managerial position or as a top manager | 16.38±0.65 | 5.9±1.4 | 11.14±1.67 |

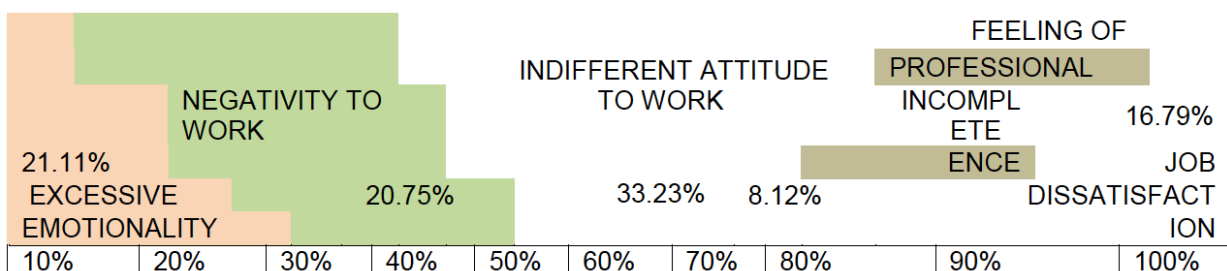


Figure 3: Matrix of EB signs among employees, %.

Table 2: Professional Factors Affecting the Occurrence of EB among Employees (%)

| Factor | Chief and deputy chiefs | Chiefs of departments | Total |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Work overloads | 56.39±1.9 | 47.22±3.81 | 51.07±0.82 |
| Lack of time | 6.97±0.34 | 12.45±0.67 | 9.71±0.27 |
| Duration of the working day | - | 11.21±1.7 | 4.21±0.13 |
| Routinism of the working process | 37.12±2.17 | 31.87±1.97 | 34.5±0.87 |

Table 3: Presence of EB among Employees, %

| | Operational staff | Support staff | Total |
|----------------|-------------------|---------------|------------|
| Presence of EB | 18.19±2.02% | 6.21±0.74% | 12.5±0.17% |
| At risk of EB | 17.13±1.71% | 2.19±0.87% | 9.51±1.98% |

professional do you think the staff members of the organisation are?"). On average, level of professionalism of the NCE employees is evaluated by management at 8.09±0.24 points (on a 10-point scale) while noting a higher level of support staff (8.41±0.35 points) than in the production sector (7.12±2.14 points).

The level of professionalism is directly related to the compliance of the organisation's employees with their positions (the question is "Do you consider the employees of the NCE comply with their jobs?"), as noted in Figure 4.

To a lesser extent, chiefs and top managers point out the compliance with the professionalism of the position among the operational staff – 78.2±0.56%: chiefs – 70.5±3.07% and top managers – 87.2±0,11%.

The respondents pointed out the absence of appropriate education (higher and/or postgraduate) and relevant experience in the performed activity as the main reason for "non-compliance" of the professional qualities of the occupied position (for example, sanitary and epidemiological doctors form the purchase of medicines and monitor the timeliness of deliveries/supplies). And this often leads to irrational use of

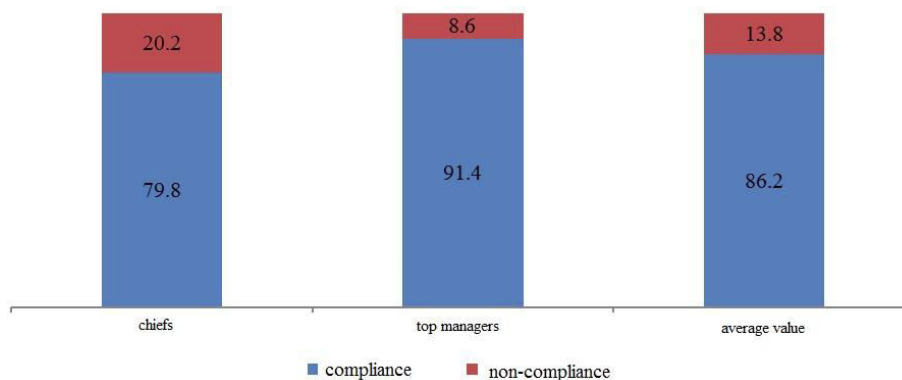


Figure 4: Compliance with the requirements of the occupied position of support staff, %.

Table 4: Need for Transformation/ Rotation of the Organisation's Staff %

| Respondents | Transformation | | | Fire | | |
|--------------|----------------|-------------------|---------------|---------------|-------------------|---------------|
| | Support staff | Operational staff | Average value | Support staff | Operational staff | Average value |
| Chiefs | 19.7±2.74 | 35.6±2.01 | 28.9±3.19 | 7.4±0.51 | 14.7±0.88 | 10.3±0.32 |
| Top managers | 11.2±1.09 | 27.4±0.42 | 18.41±1.18 | 19.6±0.31 | 14.21±0.09 | 16.9±0.76 |
| | 14.3±1.8 | 32.7±2.29 | 29.3±1.17 | 13.4±0.43 | 14.45±1.21 | 13.6±0.33 |

labour potential of the organisation's employees (Table 4).

Given that the personnel policy plays the main role in the functioning of the organisation, in terms of this stage of the research, we studied the recruitment process. We determined the principles according to which the management staff of the NCE involves new employees (the question is "What do you follow when hiring staff?") (Table 5).

Table 5: Criteria for the Selection of Specialists in the NCE

| Name of criterion | % |
|--|------|
| Expertise | 87.5 |
| Personal qualities (punctuality, responsibility, etc.) | 87.5 |
| Experience in the relevant field | 75.0 |
| Striving for self-development | 25.0 |
| Physical appearance | 12.5 |
| Place of birth | 12.5 |
| Marital status | 12.5 |

And although such a criterion as "place of birth" was not pointed out by all respondents, more than 1/2 of all chiefs and top managers noted the presence of a "tribalism" factor in the organisation (the question "Is there a tribalism factor in your organisation?") (Figure 5).

The difference of the picture among the interviewed top managers who to a greater extent note the presence of this factor, connecting this fact with the cultural particularity of the selection process characteristic of most organisations in the country. Besides, given the short period of the organisation's existence, the formation of personnel often occurred on the recommendation of other employees or specialists of the industry (at the moment, a "tribalism" factor is manifested) and this led to the occurrence of possible "regionality" of employees.

Another significant factor that leads to the occurrence of EB among employees is the absence of favourable relations in the staff team of the organisation. The socio-psychological climate plays a primary role in the formation of psychological and functional comfort in the professional activity of the person. Satisfaction with the working atmosphere (the question is "What percentage of employees are loyal to the organisation?") (Figure 6).

The opinions of the respondents regarding the loyalty of the organisation's specialists to their management staff were divided (the question is "What percentage of employees are loyal to you as the management staff of the organisation?") (Figure 7).

DISCUSSION

Given that the level of loyalty to managers is affected not only by relations but also the effectiveness

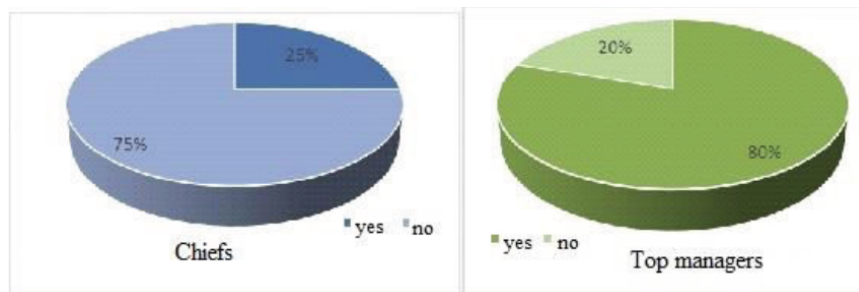


Figure 5: Presence of "tribalism" in the organisation.

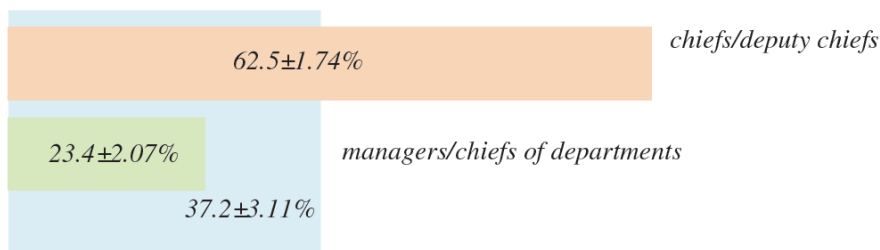


Figure 6: Employee loyalty to the organisation (%).



Figure 7: Specialist loyalty to the management staff of the organisation (%).

Table 6: Evaluation of the Rationality of the Chosen Managerial Approach in Decision-Making by the Management Staff of the Organisation (Points)

| Category of respondents | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| Chief of organisation | | | | | | | | | | |
| Deputy chief | 6.41±1.02 | | | | | | | | | |
| Top manager | 7.24±0.27 | | | | | | | | | |
| Deputy chiefs of organisation | | | | | | | | | | |
| Chief of organisation | 7.01±0.37 | | | | | | | | | |
| Top manager | 3.74±0.67 | | | | | | | | | |

of management activities that directly reflect the productivity of the labour process, in the framework of the research, we evaluated the rationality of the selected managerial approaches in decision-making. (Question: "Could you evaluate managerial decision-making?") on a 10-point scale (Table 6).

The optimisation of the chosen ways, when making decisions also affects the approaches the top managers, use when organising work in their departments, as well as in achieving the tasks set before them. (Question: "Do you consider that the directors of departments perform their tasks effectively and within the prescribed time frame?") (Table 7).

As an optimal tool that can improve the quality of work and its efficiency, the chiefs of the organisation note the need to improve the system of hiring employees which are focused on qualification selection (Question: "What tool do you think can improve the quality of work and effectiveness?"). Despite the fact

that the existing system in the organisation implies compliance with the principles of,

"upbringing of corporate spirit" (holding corporate events, allocation of financing for sports, recreational activities, etc.),

"motivation increase" (quarterly incentives, holiday bonuses and salary increase based on employee contributions),

"capacity/knowledge and skills development" (training regularly on professional issues) and,

"labour process structuring" (decrease of cases of "delay" at work after the established working time, eliminating the need to go to work at the weekend, etc.).

These approaches do not serve as an engine for increasing the interest of employees in a great return and their contribution to the work (Table 8).

Table 7: Timeliness and Rationality of Performing Out the Set Tasks by Management Staff, Point

| | Average value | Top managers | |
|--------------|---------------|--------------|-------------|
| | | Support | Operational |
| Chief | 5.7±0.33 | 7.4±0.28 | 4.3±0.16 |
| Deputy chief | 5.2±0.49 | 6.2±0.51 | 4.8±0.23 |

Table 8: Tools to Improve the Performance of the Organisation %

| Tools | Chiefs | | Top managers | | Total | |
|--|--------------------|------|--------------------|----|--------------------|------|
| | Absolute indicator | % | Absolute indicator | % | Absolute indicator | % |
| Qualification selection of employees | 3 | 100 | 3 | 60 | 6 | 75 |
| Motivational mechanisms | 2 | 66.6 | 2 | 40 | 4 | 50 |
| Creation of comfortable conditions for increasing the capacity | 3 | 100 | 3 | 60 | 6 | 75 |
| Effective working conditions | 1 | 33.3 | 4 | 80 | 5 | 62.5 |
| Independence in the implementation of activities | 1 | 33.3 | 3 | 60 | 4 | 50 |

An important aspect (according to 1/2 respondents) is the provision of greater freedom to employees of the organisation, and this will allow them to rationalise resources for an effective working process. In addition, tools for improving the psycho-emotional well-being of the staff team are the improvement of the mechanisms of selection of employees in the organisation, the transformation of existing mechanisms of motivation and creation of optimal working conditions for them itself.

CONCLUSIONS

The working environment has a large number of tools to help solve the problems related to the risk of emotional burnout among employees, the selection of which depends on the resources and culture of the organisation. Main factors are leading the employees to emotional burnout as defined as work overloads, working time deficit, duration of the working day, including the need to work at the weekend and routinism of the working process.

To reduce the emotional burnout among the employees of the organization is necessary to optimise the working conditions of the institution by applying effective methods in the organisation about the working process and structure the approach to the process of distribution of tasks by the management staff.

And introduce a "mentoring" programme for the adaptation of new specialists to the existing "working culture" that will contribute to increasing of productivity, creation of a "healthy" emotional background in the staff team. Moreover, it will increase the realisation by every employee of his own importance as a specialist for the organisation, and that he has the opportunity to resort, to the help of experienced employees to implement the tasks set before him.

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