

Chapter 12

The Workaholism and Psychological Exhaustion of Educators:

Exploring the Impact of Workaholism on Teaching Performance and Quality

Iulia Adelina Ghiță

Petroleum-Gas University of Ploiesti, Romania

ABSTRACT

The primary purpose of the addressed theme is to present an updated perspective on the tendency of excessive work, including the definition, causes, and effects of burnout on teachers, according to studies published in the specialized literature. The topic discussed in this context focuses on workaholism and psychological exhaustion among preschool educational staff. Workaholism refers to an obsessive preoccupation with work, often leading to an overly high investment of time and energy. Preschool educators may exhibit this attitude due to myriad pressures and demands associated with their profession, including tasks such as lesson preparation, addressing interpersonal conflicts among children, managing classroom dynamics, and engaging with various educational stakeholders. As workaholism persists, it can lead to the psychological exhaustion of teaching staff. This exhaustion is manifested through a constant lack of motivation, decreased professional performance, and even symptoms of depression.

1. INTRODUCTION

The paper provides a clear perspective on the challenges and potential solutions, thereby contributing to the cultivation of a balanced educational environment where the primary objective is to enhance the quality of teaching. The article underscores

DOI: 10.4018/979-8-3693-0956-8.ch012

the critical importance of recognizing the signs of burnout in educators, highlighting the necessity for collaborative endeavors to implement effective strategies aimed at a sustainable educational landscape. Both professionals within the field and educational institutions must unite their efforts to ensure the enduring sustainability of education.

The term “workaholic” denotes a relatively recent phenomenon used to define a mental state of exhaustion, and it is notably prevalent among teachers. Nevertheless, other professions are not immune to experiencing this phenomenon. The most common definition described in literature presents the workaholic as an individual who has a pronounced inclination to engage in various work-related activities, often disregarding the conventional allocation of time and effort. The notion of “workaholic” is a fusion of two English words, “work” and “alcoholic” representing a comparison with alcohol addiction.

The notion of a workaholic was confessed by Wayne E. Oates in 1968, stating: ‘I have concluded that I have an addiction that is far more socially acceptable than that of the alcoholic’s addiction. Certainly, it can be more financially profitable. When it comes to being a human, it can be an addiction as destructive to me as a person as any other addiction. I am addicted to work’ (Oates, 1968, 16). In 1971, Wayne E. Oates described the phenomenon as “addiction to work, the compulsive and uncontrollable need to work incessantly” (Behav, 2014).

Work as an activity is not harmful. Instead, workaholism represents a dysfunctional approach to work, characterized by individuals neglecting the balance between their personal lives and the responsibilities stemming from their work. Generally, people’s perception of a teacher’s role is limited to teaching. However, those within the education system can enumerate the diverse responsibilities associated with their position. These responsibilities encompass preparing didactic materials, creating curriculum documents, planning lessons, scheduling meetings with parents, organizing trips, coordinating methodical activities, developing strategies for children with learning difficulties, and so on.

In his work “Time and Temporality”, Constantin Cucuș frames education from two directions of analysis: being defined *as* time and *in* time. ‘The most important thing in education is not to gain time, but to lose it, to know to lose time’ (Comenius & Rousseau, 2002, 9). The significance of time becomes evident to humans when they lose it because ultimately, time “is a limited commodity, it cannot be transmitted from one person to another, stored, accumulated, or set aside. Its consumption is imperturbable and irrevocable for the human being it means life itself “(Cucuș, 2002, 63-64).

The terminology of the concept is derived from the two English words, “work” and “alcoholic”, drawing a comparison with alcohol addiction. Educators are engaged in various tasks for which they are remunerated, and work provides them with a sense of purpose. This contributes to the establishment of relationships with

24 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: www.igi-global.com/chapter/the-workaholism-and-psychological-exhaustion-of-educators/337487

Related Content

Mathematics Teacher Educators' TPACK and MKT Knowledge Domains: Designing Online Discussion Blogs

Anne Marie S. Marshall and Kadian M. Callahan (2016). *Handbook of Research on Transforming Mathematics Teacher Education in the Digital Age* (pp. 353-380).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/mathematics-teacher-educators-tpack-and-mkt-knowledge-domains/150803

Professional Support Networks in TESOL: Sociolinguistic Approaches to Professional Development in ESOL Teacher Education

Bahar Otcu-Grillman and JungKang Miller (2021). *Interdisciplinary Approaches Toward Enhancing Teacher Education* (pp. 33-49).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/professional-support-networks-in-tesol/264014

Meaningful Language and Cultural Experiences for Future Teachers in Puerto Rico

Judith Cruzado-Guerrero and Gilda Martinez-Alba (2016). *Advancing Teacher Education and Curriculum Development through Study Abroad Programs* (pp. 160-176).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/meaningful-language-and-cultural-experiences-for-future-teachers-in-puerto-rico/141075

Developing Self- and Cultural-Awareness Through Introductory Education Courses: The "Me" Semester

Heather Coffey, Susan B. Harden, Erik Jon Byker, Amy J. Good and Larry B. Fisher (2018). *Innovative Practices in Teacher Preparation and Graduate-Level Teacher Education Programs* (pp. 67-86).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/developing-self--and-cultural-awareness-through-introductory-education-courses/193354

Classroom Management in Urban Schools: The Need for Meaningful Field Experiences and Mentoring

William Kernsand Betty Porter Walls (2022). *International Journal of Teacher Education and Professional Development* (pp. 1-17).

www.irma-international.org/article/classroom-management-in-urban-schools/295542