



# Analysis of Employee Burnout and Related Countermeasures: Taking College Teachers as Example

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**Abstract.** college teachers face the tangible pressure from research and teaching. Based on this, this study explorex the current situation of college teachers' job burnout under the new situation, comprehensively analyze the main causes of college teachers' job burnout from three dimensions of society, colleges and universities and teachers, and finally propose countermeasures to prevent job burnout, in order to provide reference for the construction practice of college teachers.

**Keywords:** Job Burnout; College Teachers; Human Resource

## 1 Introduction

Job burnout of college teachers is a common problem. There are many researches on teacher burnout from sociology, psychology and other aspects, and some suggestions are put forward to improve teachers' salary and relieve teachers' work pressure. There are also reflections from the philosophy of education. Under the background of high level college construction, colleges and universities implement dynamic detection and management, break the identity solidification and lifetime system, and form the development orientation of high-quality academic output.

### 1.1 Related Theories of Job Burnout

The concept of "Job Burnout" originated from the American clinical psychology community's assessment process of the psychological status of individuals in the helping industry, which refers to the phenomenon of extreme physical and emotional fatigue when individuals are in a state of overwork.<sup>[1]</sup> With Maslach's redefinition of the concept, the academic world has mainly adopted Maslach's concept of "job burnout", that is, the psychological syndrome formed by individuals under the influence of long-term emotional and interpersonal stressors at work, which is mainly composed of emotional exhaustion, lack of human touch and low personal accomplishment. Among them, emotional exhaustion refers to the long-term high-pressure work state leads to the individual in the psychological state of loss, no passion for work and fighting spirit; Lack of humanity refers to the individual's negative attitude towards interpersonal communication

in the workplace or work environment, and the lack of humanistic care and consideration for colleagues and other groups around the work environment; Low personal achievement means that at the value level, individuals are unable to produce a certain sense of pride and gain because of the difficulty of realizing personal value, on the contrary, they often have a low feeling. College teachers should not only perform teaching duties, but also undertake scientific research work, and the teaching and scientific research tasks often show the characteristics of large volume and heavy tasks, which makes the college teachers in an increasingly high-pressure work state, resulting in this group becoming a sensitive group of job burnout.

## 1.2 Organizational Behavior Theory

Job burnout of college teachers is a common problem. There are many researches on teacher burnout from sociology, psychology and other aspects, and some suggestions are put forward to improve teachers' salary and relieve teachers' work pressure. There are also reflections from the philosophy of education. The root cause of teacher burnout lies in the alienation of the relationship between teachers and educational activities, and the loss of their free and autonomous nature. Specific reasons include: Teachers' choice of teaching does not come from their own interests, and professional autonomy is lost in the process of education and teaching, as well as the marginalization, objectification and instrumentalization in education and teaching reform. It is proposed that to solve teacher burnout, it is necessary to start from the source of teacher recruitment and promote the professional mobility of teachers, so as to implement teachers' professional autonomy. And give play to the principal role of teachers in education and teaching reform. [2]

## 1.3 Job Burnout Scale

Beehr and Glaser et al. (2001) believe that job needs should be divided into time needs, problem solving needs and adjustment needs (requirements for adjustment of negative events). Empirical research results confirm that problem solving needs are positively correlated with mental health, while time needs and adjustment needs are positively correlated with job satisfaction. Negative correlation with turnover intention. Probst (2005) added the element of "job security" to the job demand, which not only refers to the possibility of keeping the job, but also includes some valuable things in the job, which is a subjective assessment of job stability. The empirical study concluded that job insecurity is negatively related to job satisfaction. High level of job insecurity will reduce job satisfaction, colleague satisfaction and superior satisfaction, and increase turnover intention. [3]

Breaugh (1985) developed a "job autonomy" scale, including: Autonomy of work methods (refers to the degree to which the employee has a choice of working methods to be used to complete the task), autonomy of work scheduling (refers to the degree to which the employee has control over the schedule, sequence, and timing of work activities), and autonomy of work standards (refers to the degree to which the employee has the discretion to decide or revise the performance evaluation of the task objectives).

Probst (2005) added an element of participation in decision making (PDM) into work control, arguing that participation in decision making is a form of employee control. The empirical study concluded that participation in decision making is positively correlated with employees' job full degree and negatively correlated with turnover intention. [4]

## **2 Reasons for Job Burnout of College Teachers**

### **2.1 Lack of Career Development Prospects**

One of the reasons is that the current performance salary system is implemented in colleges and universities, and the composition of teacher salary specifically covers factors such as position, salary scale and performance. Among them, the post salary is divided into four categories, including primary, intermediate, deputy senior and senior, and the salary scale is divided into 65 levels, and both the post and the salary scale are closely related to the title. [5] In order to evaluate professional titles, teachers need to constantly apply for projects and write papers, which leads to greater pressure. Taking the universities investigated by the author as an example, the promotion of professional titles implements the entry system and the difference system. Taking the promotion of professor titles as an example, the entry requirements are as follows: under the age of 40, you need to be a doctor, you need to preside over 1 national project or 2 provincial or ministerial level teaching and research projects, and you need to publish more than 2 SCI (SSCI) papers or more than 5 class 4 papers (including 2 Class 3 or CSSCI papers). After entry, the participating personnel in the teacher series, except counselors, organizers, ideological and political teachers, should be grouped according to the discipline, undergraduate major and master's talent training, and compete in the same group according to the total score of the review. The main items examined in the evaluation of professional titles include five parts: grass-roots evaluation, teaching effect, teaching, scientific research and defense. Among them, teaching and scientific research performance are quantified and scored according to the declared types (teaching oriented, teaching and research balanced, research oriented) in a percentage system.. The personnel department of the university will summarize the scores of the participants according to the weight of delegation, calculate the final scores and sort them, and then determine the list of candidates to be hired from high to low according to the distribution of the school's job appointment indicators.

### **2.2 Lack of Healthy Psychological Adjustment**

The reward of work is out of proportion to effort. The imbalance between the work reward and effort ratio of college teachers is mainly manifested in two aspects. One is external imbalances. The respondents said that the general public thinks that college teachers work idle, only 10 to 20 class hours a week, but they do not notice other contributions of college teachers. College teachers work 10 to 20 hours a day in name, but the actual work time is far more than class hours, before each class need to prepare lessons, collect cases, make and modify courseware, curriculum design, thinking about

teaching reform, a lot of rest time is used in writing bid, issuing papers, concluding research work. Therefore, from the perspective of the ratio of work return to effort, the salary level of college teachers is far less than that of other professions. The other is internal imbalance. Young college teachers think that their work reward and effort are out of balance. The main reason is that young teachers undertake more teaching and student training work, and their salaries and bonuses are far different from those of senior teachers, so they feel that the return of work is unbalanced.

### **2.3 Big Pressure under the Strict Promotion Mechanism**

The pressure of professional title promotion is the biggest source of pressure for college teachers. Generally speaking, teachers in colleges and universities can only be recognized by the academic community and the industry if they have the corresponding title, which undoubtedly leads to the continuous struggle of senior title teachers in colleges and universities. Since 2014, the entry requirements for professional title evaluation and recruitment have been improved year by year, such as increasing academic requirements, increasing work experience requirements as counselors, and increasing teaching and scientific research performance requirements. The difference system mainly implements the difference elimination in the evaluation of professional titles, and the difference ratio is about 50%.<sup>[5]</sup>This title evaluation and employment system and salary system make teachers with primary and intermediate titles face multiple pressures, such as the pressure of teaching, the pressure of professional title promotion, and the pressure of family.

University courses emphasize the advanced, innovative and challenging nature, and gradually deepen the exploration of the theoretical frontier and theoretical depth. Influenced by this, college teachers need to constantly strengthen the study of cutting-edge theories to ensure the quality of daily teaching. As a result, the already heavy teaching tasks of college teachers are becoming more difficult, generating more tension. In addition, in the context of network teaching in the information age, the difficult problems of learning and applying information technology that teachers are faced with are also haunting their minds all the time. As a result, new pressures and learning tasks appear, especially the requirements of realizing the homogeneity and equivalence of online teaching and offline teaching proposed in recent years, which require teachers to master a large number of methods of using online teaching tools. Compared with traditional teaching mode, online teaching requires teachers to reconstruct teaching content and redesign teaching. In online teaching, due to the lack of tools and conditions to communicate emotions with students in traditional classroom teaching and obtain teacher role identification, teachers need to pay more attention to students' sense of presence, which requires teachers to improve their teaching organization ability and control ability.<sup>[6]</sup>

### **3 Personnel Management Countermeasures for College Teachers' Job Burnout**

#### **3.1 Clear Career Planning and Actively Self-Adjust**

Teachers in colleges and universities will face certain difficulties and pressures in their career, and experience certain doubt period and low period, and job burnout is a kind of career problem that is difficult to avoid. The solution to the burnout of college teachers is not a simple problem, but a systemic problem. Only by integrating the forces of individuals, families, colleges and society, that is, the society forms a good atmosphere of valuing teachers and education, colleges and universities provide channels for teachers to improve their comprehensive quality and ability, families continue to give teachers understanding and help, and teachers establish a lofty sense of professional honor and value. In order to help teachers better out of the burnout period. The value recognition of college teachers' work is an important way to deal with job burnout. Re-establish achievable goals and realisable meanings for the work of college teachers, so that teachers can realize each person's self-safety, belonging, self-esteem and self-realization through the work of teachers, so that most college teachers can avoid long-term burnout. It is essential to create a good teaching and research environment so that college teachers can concentrate more energy on teaching and research work, and not be or be less disturbed or hindered by various unnecessary other affairs. Innovative policies encourage teachers to introduce social resources from outside the school or to enter the society to participate in competition, and use social resources to motivate teachers to achieve the common development of individuals and schools.

#### **3.2 Provide Mental Health Support for College Teachers**

The school and college union is going to start an employee support program. Specific training in stress management, career planning and other aspects can be carried out in order to couple the psychological and emotional problems of college teachers in teaching work, help them form good emotional management ability and avoid job burnout. In addition, not only can the adaptive ability of college teachers be cultivated through cognitive reconstruction, but also the self-adjustment ability of college teachers in stressful working environment can be enhanced through relaxation training, so as to help college teachers actively prevent and get out of job burnout

First, strengthen the social support of leaders and colleagues. It can be learned from the interview that young teachers attach great importance to the recognition and support of leaders and teaching supervisors, such as the recognition of their teaching level and working ability. Therefore, colleges and universities should establish a system and mechanism of teachers' teaching and research assistance, promote the timely feedback and treatment of key and difficult problems in teaching, and provide training for teaching design, curriculum ideology and politics, and courseware production. Form teams in scientific research to help teachers relieve work pressure. Secondly, strengthen the construction of psychological care for teachers. Colleges and universities can carry out psychological care services through mental health centers, and provide teachers with

lectures and activities on marriage and family, baby rearing, investment and financial management, stress handling, parent-child relationship, cognition, etc. Finally, the school trade union and the college trade union organized recreational activities to relax the tension of teachers. Relevant studies have shown that participation in some leisure sports can alleviate the job burnout of college teachers to a certain extent. Therefore, colleges and universities can organize some physical fitness activities such as brisk walking, skipping rope and fun games to enhance teachers' awareness of physical exercise and thus regulate their job burnout level. [6]

### **3.3 Deepen the Reform of the Promotion System in Colleges**

It is necessary to pay attention to the dual assessment of teachers' work process and work results. The result assessment is mainly a comprehensive assessment of the teaching workload and scientific research workload completed during the assessment period, as well as the improvement of teaching level and the academic value of scientific research achievements. At the same time, it is necessary to take into account the characteristics of teachers' academic research work and the cycle of producing results in different disciplines and different development stages, that is, it is necessary to formulate different assessment index systems for teachers in different disciplines. In the process assessment, attention should be paid to the assessment of teachers' "peripheral performance", that is, in addition to the assessment of teaching and scientific research workload, attention should also be paid to the assessment of other "peripheral performance", such as student service, student employment rate, postgraduate entrance examination rate, party building work, curriculum ideology and politics, and organization and publicity. Through the assessment of these "peripheral performance", teachers can be promoted to unite and cooperate to jointly cope with heavy teaching tasks. That is, the teaching and scientific research work to take the way of "doing subtraction" to improve work efficiency, and this is an indispensable part of enhancing the competitiveness of the school. Taking the above content as an indispensable part of teacher title evaluation, job promotion, evaluation and award is conducive to the rationalization, scientific and humanization of the evaluation mechanism. Practice has proved that non-economic compensation will also play an incentive role for employees, and this incentive role will last longer. Therefore, colleges and universities should adopt the mode of combining non-economic salary and teaching work to promote each other, so as to encourage teachers to work actively in daily teaching, so as to achieve material and spiritual satisfaction, so as to produce the corresponding sense of belonging and gain. For example, on the basis of students' evaluation of teachers' love of teaching, whether they have learned knowledge and improved skills, the management department should give teachers certain titles, such as the most responsible teacher and the most popular teacher, etc. The significance of titles is to make teachers know that their efforts have been recognized by students and increase their sense of accomplishment. Thus generating the motivation to continue to work hard.

## 4 Conclusion

The root cause of teacher burnout lies in the alienation of the relationship between teachers and educational activities, and the loss of their free and autonomous nature. Specific reasons include: Teachers' choice of teaching does not come from their own interests, and professional autonomy is lost in the process of education and teaching, as well as the marginalization, objectification and instrumentalization in education and teaching reform. It is proposed that "to solve teacher burnout, it is necessary to start from the source of teacher recruitment and promote the professional mobility of teachers, so as to implement teachers' professional autonomy, and give play to the principal role of teachers in education and teaching reform.

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