



# EMOTIONAL BURNOUT OF SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS: INTERPRETATION OF A SCREENING STUDY IN THE CONTEXT OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

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## Abstract

**Relevance.** The preparation of secondary school teachers for educating students with disabilities requires the development of inclusive competence, which encompasses, among other skills and strategies, proficiency in health-preserving technologies. However, the elevated demands placed on teachers in inclusive classrooms – stemming from the increasing diversity of students' special educational needs, the need to consistently allocate additional time and effort, and the emotional engagement in complex life situations – result in teacher overload, reduced effectiveness, chronic stress, and professional burnout. Understanding and interpreting teachers' current psycho-emotional state is a prerequisite for revising the structure of their professional training and providing subsequent psychological support at the community level.

**Objective:** To select and test a screening scale for assessing professional burnout among teachers of inclusive classrooms, as well as to identify and interpret the most prominent burnout symptoms.

**Methods:** A survey was conducted with 65 secondary school teachers from Zhytomyr and Zhytomyr Oblast working in inclusive settings. Data were collected via an online form (Google Forms) containing a screening scale for diagnosing professional burnout. The results were processed by calculating the sum of responses indicating specific burnout symptoms. Data analysis was performed based on three main subscales: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduction of personal accomplishment.

**Results:** The findings revealed that a significant proportion of teachers involved in inclusive education exhibit symptoms of professional burnout. The most pronounced symptoms include emotional exhaustion (feelings of fatigue and depletion by the end of the workday) and depersonalization (a desire for isolation). Additionally, a considerable number of respondents reported feeling “at the limit of their capacities,” which may be linked to the additional workload associated with supporting students with special educational needs (SEN). Nevertheless, teachers demonstrated relatively high scores on subscales reflecting their communication skills and self-efficacy beliefs.

**Conclusions:** The study results confirm the prevalence of professional burnout among secondary school teachers working in inclusive education settings. Consequently, it is advisable to incorporate a psycho-emotional self-regulation component into the content of their professional training. Furthermore, at the community level, there is a need to organize preventive and corrective measures aimed at reducing stress levels associated with teaching students with SEN and mitigating teacher burnout.

**Keywords:** *teacher's professional burnout, inclusive education, students with special educational needs, screening scale, self-regulation.*

**Introduction.** The study of the psycho-emotional state of secondary school teachers in Ukraine is driven by a number of critical factors that

directly impact the quality of the educational process, the well-being of educators, and the future of society. Ukrainian teachers operate within a

context of ongoing educational reforms, increased workloads, and often inadequate social support. The ongoing war serves as an additional stressor, affecting the psychological well-being of both students and educators, thereby requiring teachers to provide extra emotional support and adapt the educational process to challenging circumstances. In turn, a teacher's emotional state significantly influences the classroom atmosphere, students' motivation to learn, their psychological comfort, and academic performance. Teachers experiencing depression, anxiety, burnout, or other mental health disorders may exhibit reduced effectiveness in the educational process, increased propensity for conflicts with students and colleagues, and a negative impact on the overall psychological microclimate within schools. Furthermore, prolonged psycho-emotional distress contributes to professional burnout, resulting in decreased productivity, motivation, and job satisfaction.

The implementation of inclusive education places additional demands on teachers, necessitating emotional resilience, empathy, and the ability to tailor the educational process to the special needs of each child with disabilities. Insufficient training and ineffective ongoing support for educators in this domain may lead to psycho-emotional overload, burnout, and potential attrition from the profession.

Given the aforementioned considerations, it appears pertinent to investigate the mental health status of practicing teachers within the context of inclusive education, enhance their psychoeducation with respect to emotional self-regulation, establish systemic support for their mental well-being at the community level, and revise and supplement the training content for future teachers preparing for inclusive education.

**Research Sources.** This study is grounded in prior research on the structure of teachers' inclusive competence, including works by I. I. Demchenko (2016), O. I. Bezliudnyi and I. I. Demchenko (2019), O. M. Kasyanenko (2018), O. V. Martyniuk (2019), M. Chaikovsky (2012), N. S. Shcherba (2021), among others. These authors have explored and classified the methodological foundations for preparing practicing and prospective educators to work with children and youth with special educational needs (SEN). However, the issue of

supporting teachers' mental health and self-regulation of their psycho-emotional state as an integral component of professional performance remains unaddressed in these studies. To investigate and implement the psychological dimension of this research, screening scales for burnout were utilized, including those developed by V. V. Boiko; K. Maslach and S. Jackson, adapted by N. E. Vodopianova; M. Oliynyk; W. B. Schaufeli, H. De Witte, and S. Desart (2019); and O. Rukavishnikova. Additional materials from A. V. Konyakhina, I. L. Havryk, N. V. Grytsenko, D. M. Gutenko, N. M. Koropchenko, O. M. Obravyt, V. S. Poliakova, L. G. Sukhomlyn, Yu. S. Usyk, and O. I. Chornyi (2016) were also employed. A review of the scientific literature revealed no studies in which authors recommended specific scales for examining the psycho-emotional state of teachers working in inclusive education settings.

**Research Objective.** The purpose of this article is to select and test a screening scale for assessing professional burnout among teachers in inclusive classrooms, as well as to identify and interpret survey results within the context of their professional training and pedagogical activities.

**Research Methods.** Given that emotional burnout is not classified as a distinct disorder in the DSM-5, this study examined a range of screening scales in correlation with the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11). The following methodologies were employed:

1. *V. V. Boiko's Emotional Burnout Diagnostic Method (1994)* – This scale comprises 84 questions and a methodology for calculating results. It enables the analysis of the severity of three burnout components (tension, resistance, and exhaustion) across 12 symptoms of the syndrome, including experiencing psychotraumatic circumstances, self-dissatisfaction, feeling “trapped,” anxiety and depression, inadequate selective emotional responses, emotional-moral disorientation, expansion of emotional economization, reduction of professional duties, emotional deficit, emotional detachment, personal detachment (depersonalization), and psychosomatic and psychovegetative disorders (Strelets, 2023).

2. *Diagnosis of Professional Burnout among Teachers (K. Maslach and S. Jackson, adapted by N.*

*E. Vodopianova, 1977*) – This screening scale is designed to identify signs of emotional burnout, such as emotional exhaustion (loss of energy, feelings of depletion), depersonalization (increased psychological distancing from work, negative and pessimistic thoughts about work), and reduction of personal accomplishments (decreased professional efficacy). Maslach's conceptualization of burnout has been incorporated into the 11th revision of the ICD-11, where it is classified as an occupational phenomenon (Oliinyk, 2021). Originally developed for screening professionals working with people (e.g., teachers, healthcare workers), the scale was later adapted for other professions. The version adapted by N. E. Vodopianova, tailored for teachers, consists of 22 questions.

3. *Burnout Assessment Tool (BAT, 2019)* – Developed by W. B. Schaufeli, H. De Witte, and S. Desart, this questionnaire comprises two parts: questions identifying core symptoms (exhaustion, detachment, cognitive impairment, emotional impairment – 23 questions) and secondary symptoms (psychological complaints and psychosomatic complaints – 10 questions).

4. *O. Rukavishnikova's Mental Burnout Assessment Method (2003)* – This methodology examines professional burnout through indicators such as psycho-emotional exhaustion, personal detachment, and professional motivation across three levels: interpersonal, personal, and motivational. It includes 72 questions and is considered relatively straightforward in processing results (Konyakhina et al., 2016, p. 16).

5. *J. Gibson's Self-Potential Burnout Assessment Method* – This tool measures burnout components through 18 questions corresponding to depersonalization, personal satisfaction, and emotional exhaustion. It allows respondents to determine their burnout level as low, medium, or high (Konyakhina et al., 2016, p. 16).

6. *J. Greenberg's Burnout Syndrome Research Method* – This methodology includes 20 yes/no questions and establishes burnout levels as low (0–7 points), medium (8–14 points), or high (15–20 points) (Konyakhina et al., 2016, p. 16).

Data from these screening scales are systematized in Table 1. As noted, the analysis considers alignment with the ICD-11, given that burnout is not included in the DSM-5.

Table 1

### Characteristics of Screening Scales for Identifying Emotional Burnout

No	Scale Name	Alignment with ICD-11	Number of Questions	Features of Use
1	V. V. Boiko's Emotional Burnout Diagnostic Method	No information identified	84	Enables the assessment of the severity of 12 symptoms of the burnout syndrome.
2	Diagnosis of Professional Burnout (K. Maslach and S. Jackson, adapted by N. E. Vodopianova)	Aligned with ICD-11	22	Used to identify signs of emotional burnout in teachers, including emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduction of personal accomplishments.
3	Burnout Assessment Tool (BAT)	Aligned with ICD-11	23 core and 10 additional questions	Employed to detect both core and secondary symptoms of burnout.
4	O. Rukavishnikova's Mental Burnout Assessment Method	Aligned with ICD-11	72	Facilitates the identification of indicators such as psycho-emotional exhaustion, personal detachment, and professional motivation.
5	J. Gibson's Self-Potential Burnout Assessment Method	Aligned with ICD-11	18	Applied to detect signs of emotional burnout, including emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal satisfaction.
6	J. Greenberg's Burnout Syndrome Research Method	No information identified	20	Utilized to determine the level of burnout (low, medium, or high).

An analysis of the data presented in Table 1 reveals that Scale 5 is the shortest, while Scale 1 is the longest in terms of the number of questions. Scale 2 has been specifically adapted to identify signs of professional burnout among teachers. Furthermore, the author of this scale, K. Maslach, developed a conceptual framework for the structure of burnout that served as the foundation for its inclusion in the ICD-11. Based on these considerations, this study employed the "Diagnosis of Professional Burnout" scale (K. Maslach and S. Jackson, adapted by N. E. Vodopianova).

**Results and Discussion.** To investigate the presence and characteristics of professional burnout, a screening study was conducted involving 65 respondents participating in professional development courses for secondary school teachers in Zhytomyr and Zhytomyr Oblast. The study took place at Ivan Franko Zhytomyr State University (2024) and focused on teachers working in inclusive classrooms. A Google Form was created for this purpose, with each statement accompanied by six response options: "never," "very rarely," "rarely," "sometimes," "often," and "very often." For the calculation of screening results, only the sum of the two highest response categories ("often" and "very often") was considered, as these indicated the presence of specific burnout symptoms among respondents.

As illustrated in Figure 1, the most pronounced symptoms of professional burnout among teachers were observed in responses to questions 2, 3, 5, 16, and 20, specifically:

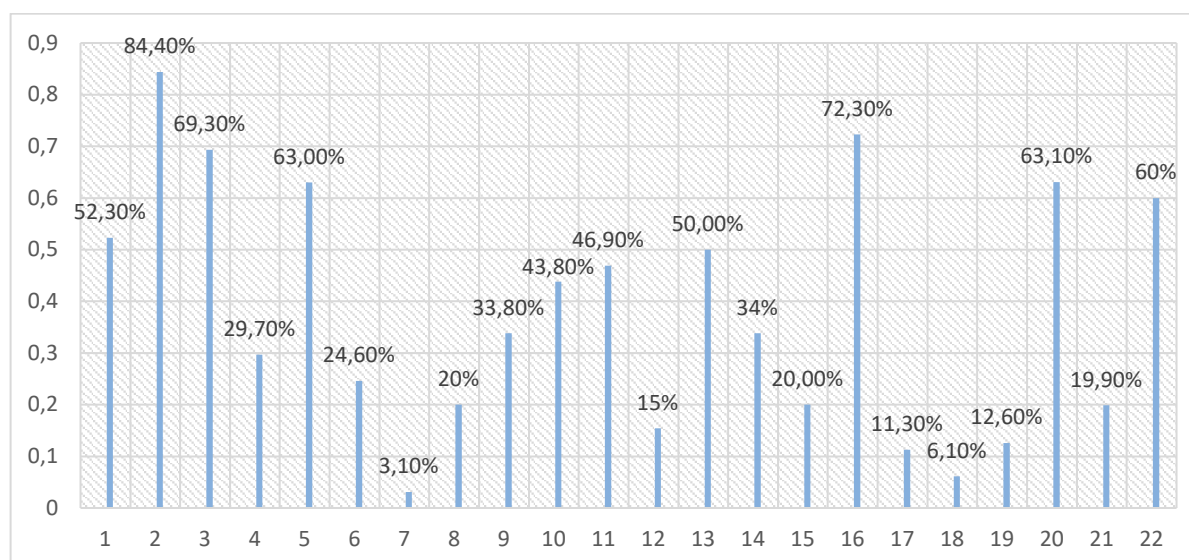
- *Question 2:* "By the end of the workday, I feel like a squeezed lemon" (84.4%);

- *Question 16:* "I want to isolate myself and rest from everything and everyone" (72.3%);
- *Question 3:* "I feel tired when I wake up in the morning and have to go to work" (69.3%);
- *Question 20:* "I feel like I'm at the limit of my capabilities" (63.1%);
- *Question 5:* "I communicate with my students/colleagues without unnecessary emotions" (63%).

These findings suggest that the majority of teachers exhibit symptoms of emotional exhaustion (Questions 2 and 3), depersonalization (Questions 16 and 5), and a reduction in personal accomplishments (Question 20). Conversely, the lowest indicators of burnout were observed in responses to questions 7, 12, 17, 18, and 19, specifically:

- *Question 7:* "I can find the right solution in conflict situations" (3.1%);
- *Question 18:* "I easily communicate with people regardless of their social status or character" (6.1%);
- *Question 17:* "I can easily create an atmosphere of friendliness and optimism during communication" (11.3%);
- *Question 19:* "I accomplish a lot during the day" (12.6%);
- *Question 12:* "I have many plans and believe in their realization" (15%).

These results indicate a relatively low prevalence of burnout symptoms related to interpersonal competence, optimism, and perceived productivity among the respondents.



*Fig. 1. Results of the Survey of Secondary School Teachers Using the Professional Burnout Diagnostic Scale (K. Maslach and S. Jackson, adapted by N. E. Vodopianova)*

The conducted study indicates the presence of varying degrees of professional burnout among teachers of inclusive classrooms. According to Yu. D. Boychuk, O. S. Borodina, K. I. Vasylieva, and N. P. Khrebtova (2013), the inclusive competence of a future teacher represents an integrative personal construct that enables the performance of professional functions within the framework of inclusive education. This involves addressing the diverse educational needs of students with limited health capacities, facilitating their integration into the general educational environment, creating conditions for their development and self-development, and promoting full socialization through the direct mastery of health-preserving technologies. However, the screening results suggest that teachers either do not apply this knowledge for emotional self-regulation or lack sufficient knowledge in this area.

**Conclusions.** Traditionally, secondary school teachers are regarded as providers of educational services and educators. However, the development of emotional self-regulation skills is not considered an essential component of their professional training (I. I. Demchenko, 2016; O. I. Bezliudnyi & I. I. Demchenko, 2019; O. M.

Kasyanenko, 2018; O. V. Martyniuk, 2019; M. Chaikovsky, 2012; N. S. Shcherba, 2021). The psychological study conducted confirms that teachers – particularly those involved in inclusive education – require enhanced psychoeducation regarding effective emotion management strategies and concrete support at the community level. Such support could include art therapy sessions, systematic psychological seminars or webinars, the establishment of psychological support or mutual aid groups, and collaboration with relevant programs and services. These measures would enable teachers to restore their capacity to work and stabilize their psycho-emotional state. These initiatives should become as integral to professional pedagogical practice as professional development courses, aligning with the requirements of the current Professional Standard for fostering teachers' health-preserving competence.

In light of the above, a promising direction for further research appears to be the development of specific components for training programs for future educators and support systems for practicing teachers of inclusive classrooms. These components should aim to optimize emotional self-regulation and enhance psychological resilience.



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# ЕМОЦІЙНЕ ВИГОРАННЯ ВЧИТЕЛІВ ЗЗСО: ІНТЕРПРЕТАЦІЯ СКРИНІНГОВОГО ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ В КОНТЕКСТІ ІНКЛЮЗИВНОЇ ОСВІТИ

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## Реферат:

**Актуальність:** Підготовка вчителів ЗЗСО до навчання учнів з інвалідністю передбачає формування в них інклюзивної компетентності, яка включає серед інших умінь і стратегій володіння здоров'язбережувальними технологіями. Водночас, високі вимоги до вчителя інклюзивного класу (зростання різноманітності особливих освітніх потреб учнів, необхідність регулярно приділяти додатковий час і зусилля, емоційно залучатись у складні життєві ситуації) призводять до їх перенавантаження, зниження ефективності, хронічного стресу та професійного вигорання. Розуміння та інтерпретація наявного психоемоційного стану педагогів є передумовою перегляду структури їх професійної підготовки та подальшої психологічної підтримки на рівні громад.

**Мета:** обрати та апробувати скринінгову шкалу професійного вигорання вчителів інклюзивних класів, визначити та інтерпретувати найбільш виражені симптоми вигорання.

**Методи:** опитування 65 вчителів ЗЗСО м. Житомира та Житомирської області, які працюють в умовах інклюзії, за допомогою онлайн-форми (Google Forms), що містила скринінгову шкалу діагностики професійного вигорання. Результати оброблялися шляхом підрахунку суми відповідей, що вказували на наявність специфічних симптомів вигорання. Аналіз даних здійснювався з урахуванням трьох основних шкал: емоційне виснаження, деперсоналізація та редукція особистих досягнень.

**Результати:** Виявлено, що значна частина вчителів, залучених до інклюзивного навчання, відчуває симптоми професійного вигорання. Найбільш вираженими є симптоми емоційного виснаження (відчуття втоми, виснаження наприкінці робочого дня) та деперсоналізації (бажання усамітнитись). Також значна частина респондентів відчуває себе «на межі можливостей», що може бути пов'язано з додатковим навантаженням, пов'язаним з роботою з учнями з особливими освітніми потребами (ООП). Водночас, вчителі демонструють відносно високі показники за шкалами, що відображають їхні комунікативні вміння та віру у власні сили.

**Висновки:** Результати дослідження підтверджують наявність проблеми професійного вигорання у вчителів ЗЗСО, які працюють в умовах інклюзивної освіти. Тому до змісту їх професійної підготовки доцільно включити компонент психоемоційної саморегуляції. Також на рівні громад необхідна організація заходів профілактики та корекції емоційного вигорання вчителів, спрямованих на зниження рівня стресу, пов'язаного з роботою з учнями з ООП.

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**Ключові слова:** професійне вигорання вчителів, інклюзивна освіта, учні з особливими освітніми потребами, скринінгова шкала, саморегуляція.

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