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COMMUNICATION AT SCHOOL AND ITS INFLUENCE ON THE FEELING OF STRESS

INTRODUCTION

Stress caused by the professional situation, job overloading, difficult and very often full of strains among the workers in the organization was associated with biases environment or responsibility connected with saving human's life. Nowadays, it's commonly known that practically, there is no profession which would be secured from the stress and the work of a teacher notably is the one that fosters the appearing of stress as well as job burnout. Many inside and outside factors contribute to all of this.

Obviously, constantly changing reality has an enormous impact on that situation because teachers' requirements are higher and higher with decreasing authority of their profession. The analysis of the factors' bringing on the feeling of stress has been mentioned by the author in many articles and other publications like the book from 2006 entitled *Stres w zawodzie nauczyciela: specyfika, uwarunkowania i następstwa* (Grzegorzewska, 2006). It's a theoretical base of the article, where the idea of communication at school and its influence on the feeling of stress in the case of teachers and their job burnout is highlighted.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL INFLUENCE ON THE FEELING OF STRESS

Researches connected with stress are carried on more and more often mainly by psychologists. From a perspective of time, the concept of stress is seen as a kind of reaction for a stimulant which can be a worrying situation or work and they cause various symptoms like physiological, psychological or behavioral ones.

Stress is also described as changing independent element, a stimulant which does not depend on individual but environmental derivative. From another hand, stress as interrelated variable takes into consideration mutual effect: stimulant-reaction. The

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vital issue here is the way of reacting or perceiving of an individual to the situation in which he or she finds herself or himself.

It reflects a lack of a match between an individual and given environment (Fisher, 1986; Grzegorzewska, 2006). Nowadays attitude towards the institution of a school itself is more often perceived not only as the common weal source but also as working organization where the quality of the work depends on the mutual communication of the workers. During many years the main measure of the effectiveness of schools was the students' success, and certainly, that state still functions, however, the crucial thing is to understand the reliance between how a school is run as an educational institution and inside relations which create that particular work environment. Each of them characterizes by the basic factors influence the proper prospering which is simply communication. The inner communication has to be considered and the effect has to be defined.

Certainly, when the natural need of communication is interrupted, the person starts to be anxious, then a feeling of discomfort appears and finally, stress comes up. When someone does not understand the common rules and what is required, the work entrusted to him or her does not bring any effects. Eventually, it results in poor communication between a teacher and a student. What is more, any obstacles in that field sooner or later will bring conflicts. That is why the low job satisfaction comes up, then the stress and at the end, the job burnout appears.

The communication is the exchange of information among people engaged in the activity of one institution as well as the process of sending the message in a way that the message would have possibly the closest meaning to the sender's intention (Griffin, 1999).

The recipient registers the message by the cognitive system and reacts at the same time comparing it to his or her expectations. Meanwhile, the statement is estimated and only if the person recognize the statement as believable, the communication becomes effective. However, it is the subjective feeling is the most important element of the proper communication. So the message based on own standards and the scheme thinking according to the world of measuring which is shaped by the organization where it is functioning. In that process the dialog is inseparable element as well as willingness to carry it on with a bit of empathy.

In practice, it means that the organization can't be similar to dictatorship where the rules are set down by the leader only. For example, in case of company it would be the boss or manager and in case of school it would be the headteacher. Their role is to impose the getting the message in the communication so-called empathize, in other words to solve the problems from perspective of workers' possibilities as well as restrictions. Thus, believable communication determines the workers' self-realization what helps to identify with the organization and its goals. Moreover, it awakes and sustains inner fervor to work and it extracts their potential (Błaszak, 2011).

The believable inner communication mainly depends on if the essential aims of



the organization would be achieved and if the workers would take responsibility for their place of work. It is necessary to follow those factors:

1. All the workers must gain reliable information.
2. The superior's actions must be compatible with the information.
3. All decisions and declarations must be realized on time.

It's worth mentioning to pay attention to how the information is conveyed and reduced (Cybulska, 2016).

COMMUNICATION AT SCHOOL

It is the headmaster who is in charge of a school and at the same time, he or she fills the duties of the manager of an educational institution. The headmaster's goal is to inspire to search new creative methods and forms of pedagogical actions in the school (Gawrecki, 2002).

The communication would fill the role of a kind of bond not being the source of stress, the following elements has to be included:

- The effectiveness of the actions depends not only the right decision but also the time in which that decision has been made. It's equal to the statement that if the group of people is responsible for the result of the decision, they should be immediately properly informed.
- The moment of informing about the decision is very vital – it can't make chaos.
- The actions have to be certain and consequent.
- The important action is to define the time of making the decision.

The effectiveness of work depends on a teacher's comfort. The most effective teachers are those who quickly get the feedback concerning their work. The effective system of managing via aims is when the communication works out fast and allows to have better understanding between the employees and the headmaster (Leśniak, 2011).

Teacher has to know precisely what sort of actions he or she has to take to be consistent. Certainly, from one hand teachers' success is connected with their personal predispositions and emotional intelligence but from the other hand, they have to cooperate, not to realize their own vision. Nevertheless, for the common weal of the school it is important to define mutual social values and principles of taking actions.

The effectiveness of school functioning depends on the way of organizing the system of inner communication at school which defines the information flow and the way of how the workers communicate what has a great impact on the atmosphere at the place of work and if they are satisfied or appreciated for their work. Good com-





munication at school depends on what style of leadership prefers the headmaster and what style the teachers accept.

The inner communication is a particular social process relates to two subjects of education in the school environment. It appears in a specific social context which determines the number and the features of the character of participants – so it has to be adjusted to individual school and its habits. What is more, this creative process not only is to ingest the information or knowledge but also it forms new concepts. Its dynamic character relies on getting, understanding and interpreting information because all members of the school community receive instructions, tasks and other messages which guides their actions.

The inner communication the same as general communication causes the specific relations between both sides of the information. It is the interactive process. Everything depends on how the process proceeds and what is the style of the communication or if the relations are more based on partnership or maybe more dominant ones.

CONNECTIONS BETWEEN COMMUNICATION, STRESS, AND BURNOUT

A teacher understands his/her role when he/she takes part in the effective process of communication. It is an essential term in the modern concept of human behavior in the organization. From the theoretical point of view, the whole process of attributing a role for a central person concerns all members of this organization who have significant impact on his/her behavior.

A typical process of attributing in organization concerns directly not only a superior and a boss but also some subordinates and collaborators, members of the same working group and people hired in the same workplace who are formed other working groups. They communicate with each other (Grzegorzewska, 2006). Communication between a school and superior institutions is also important. Undoubtedly, one of the essential sources of stress, which is presented by teachers, is the fact that they do not obtain understandable messages related to the realization of assumptions of other reforms. If communication is uneasy, a teacher cannot understand his/her role while expectations, due to the concept of effective communication and the process of attributing, should be clear, legible and based on direct commands and instructions. The teacher has to have full information in order to fulfill his/her role in the organization. All these informations and requirements given to a receiver role was named a given role.

Each transmission act of role requirements regardless of its form in order to obtain an intended result, as a behavior of the owner of the role, has to be received (noticed). The sum of noticed and recognized role requirements creates a received role. Between the received and passed role there are some discrepancies. They are usually caused by disturbances of the process of role requirements. Each owner of the role





has particular attitudes and opinions that show what he/she can or cannot do when he/she occupies the position.

The process of transmission role requirements or expectations is vulnerable to different disturbances. It happens because this process appears during mutual interactions. On the one hand we face a role sender and his/her requirements and on the other hand a participant of the organization as a role recipient with his/her opportunities, current aspirations, and a personal value system.

A role conflict, its ambiguity and role overloading (Grzegorzewska, 2006) are basic forms of disturbances of the process of transmission role (organizational stressful situations).

A role conflict is a stress factor (stressor). It is defined as the simultaneous appearance of two or more role transmission (requirements) where the adoption and realization one of them impede the realization of the second one or the others and where the realization of one of the role transmission excludes the realization of the other one in extreme conditions (Borucki, 1988).

There are two basic forms of the role conflict: external role conflict and internal role conflict. Both of them treat the influence of contradictory messages, in terms of internal communication, as essential.

As far as a conflict as a role – personality is concerned, requirements presented by role senders are the source. Its content and form differ from the needs, opinions or values of a typical employee.

Ambiguity is a second form of disturbances in the process of role transmission. It can be defined as a disturbance of the process of role transmission which concerns an incorrect transmission, distortion, ambiguity or lack of information needed to an adequate reception of the role requirements and its accomplishment (Borucki, 1988).

The other form is role overloading (Borucki, 1988) by giving tasks, requirements, stimulus. It is a strong stress factor and concerns disturbing the transmission system when a role recipient gives requirements to its owner which are received (noticed) but not accomplished on time with the use of available resources. Role overloading appears in basic forms like:

- overloading of the number of tasks (quantitative overloading);
- overloading of the difficulty of tasks (qualitative overloading);
- overloading of time limit (time pressure);
- overloading of responsibility for other people.

Overloading of the number of tasks means that role senders give the recipient a lot of requirements. Overloading of time limit concerns the difficulty of accomplishing a task in specified, often short time. Overloading of responsibility usually relates to a leadership function and monitoring work of other employees by a recipient. It can also concern material responsibility (financial).



Not only role overloading can have potential stress factor but also role under loading (Borucki, 1988). It can be connected with a some small number of professional tasks and the necessity of doing actions with a small impact of the role owner's opportunities and abilities. Of course, a stressful situation with disturbances of the process of role transmission is not the only source of stress in a job. Other non-organizational stressors can be rooted in physical working conditions, disturbances of the process of a professional career, bad relations with a boss, collaborators or clients. All stressful situations, both organizational and non organizational, are described as professional stressors.

Sometimes there are situations where two or three forms of disturbances of the process of role transmission (noticed role conflict) appear simultaneously. This situation causes a stronger power of role stress.

Disturbed communication affects on a physiological, psychological and behavioral system. They are basic elements of stress. Physiological elements consist of a higher pulse and blood pressure, higher electrical conductivity of the skin, muscle tension, faster breath, increased sweat secretion, changes in skin temperature, dilated pupils. A psychological element is the increase of emotional excitement, at the beginning as a general emotional one and then as specific emotions. The most common emotions are anxiety, fear, and dread and in terms of strong danger, it is panic and consternation. We can also observe irritation, anger and spite. Finally, changes in behavior appear (behavioral component). The whole series of these changes has three stages: mobilization, detuning and destruction (Reykowski, 1986).

In the mobilization stage, a person tries to accomplish tasks using all his/her opportunities (verbal, motion, intellectual resources). Noticed danger motivates to take actions. However, direct actions geared toward controlling stressful situations end with failure and a person describes this situation as dangerous. The system of changes – detuning stage appears in his/her behavior. It is characterized by a decrease in efficiency in accomplishing psychical actions and lack of consistency in tasks. A person takes different defensive activities. If these attempts end with failure, an employee claims that he/she got damaged. It concerns the increase in negative emotions, at the beginning as a strong fear or anger and then as resignation, helplessness, and guiltiness. These emotions go with a stage of changes in behavior described as a destructive stage. In this stage indicative and intellectual processes are disturbed. A person loses almost the whole control on his/her actions.

Psychological stress occurs as temporary one (as a result of a disposable and short change in the environment described by a person as danger) or long (a person is under the influence of external factors described as danger).

Nowadays, it is stated that both a very strong temporary stress and a long one cause many disturbances in psychological, social and physiological functioning. The most important factors which make that stress leads to these types of troubles are:

- a high intensity of stress caused by a strong danger of basic needs and values;



- the appearance of stressors which are difficult to eliminate despite many attempts of actions on its causes;
- inappropriate defensive methods against negative emotions caused by dangerous situations;
- a low level of individual resistance to psychological stress.

The awareness of the role of internal communication is very important in terms of the analysis of stress and teachers' burnout. Meanwhile, in this context, it demands more attention.

CONCLUSIONS

The analysis, conclusions about stress and results elaborated by authors of different concepts allow to claiming that concentration can definitely reduce negative factors in terms of interactions between internal communication in a school and teachers' stress level and their burnout. Knowledge about types of stress, its causes and mechanisms which create appropriate internal communication is needed. It seems that appropriate training, directed at the development of competences – personal and collective – in the domain of interpersonal contacts and communication in the organization rather than the development of subject knowledge, is helpful.

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Keywords: internal communication; a school; a teacher; stress; burnout

Abstract: Stress is a term analyzed from different perspectives in terms of its influence on job effectiveness. We put not enough attention to the way of its interaction with teachers' environment. Meanwhile it is necessary because a school changes and it has to be understandable for people who direct this institution. It is essential if it is a place which educates next generations. The article, which bases on experience and scientific achievement of the author in this domain, refers her conclusions and research material about stress to a very important but still not emphasized theme- internal communication in a school. It shows that interactions between this communication and theories concerning stress in order to reduce it and eliminate pedagogues' burnout are necessary to reveal.

KOMUNIKACJA W SZKOLE I JEJ ZNACZENIE DLA ODCZUWANIA STRESU

Słowa kluczowe: wewnętrzna komunikacja, szkoła, nauczyciel, stres, wypalenie zawodowe

Streszczenie: Stres jest analizowany z wielu perspektyw w związku z jego wpływem na efektywność pracy. Zbyt mało uwagi poświęca się stresowi w środowisku nauczycielskim. Tymczasem jest to bardzo ważne, przede wszystkim dla kadry zarządzającej szkołą – miejscem, w którym zmiany postępują bardzo szybko. To kluczowe zagadnienie – także w związku z tym, że szkoła jest miejscem kształtowania kolejnych pokoleń. Artykuł odnosi się do zainteresowań i doświadczenia autorki, prezentuje wnioski na temat stresu zależnego od wewnętrznej komunikacji w szkole. To jeszcze dość rzadko podejmowane zagadnienie. Ukazano, że niezwykle istotne jest zwrócenie uwagi na to, iż niewłaściwa komunikacja może w istotny sposób wpływać zarówno na stres, jak i wypalenie zawodowe nauczycieli.

