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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

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# Burnout syndrome and its prevalence in primary care nursing: a systematic review and meta-analysis

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**Background:** burnout syndrome is a significant problem in nursing professionals. Although, the unit where nurses work may influence burnout development, Nurses that work in primary care units may be at higher risk of burnout. The aim of the study was to estimate the prevalence of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and low personal accomplishment in primary care nurses.

**Methods:** We performed a meta-analysis. We searched Pubmed, CINAHL, Scopus, Scielo, Proquest, CUIDEN and LILACS databases up to September 2017 to identify cross-sectional studies assessing primary care nurses' burnout with the Maslach Burnout Inventory were included. The search was done in September 2017.

**Results:** After the search process,  $n = 8$  studies were included in the meta-analysis, representing a total sample of  $n = 1110$  primary care nurses. High emotional exhaustion prevalence was 28% (95% Confidence Interval = 22–34%), high depersonalization was 15% (95% Confidence Interval = 9–23%) and 31% (95% Confidence Interval = 6–66%) for low personal accomplishment.

**Conclusions:** Problems such as emotional exhaustion and low personal accomplishment are very common among primary care nurses, while depersonalization is less prevalent. Primary care nurses are a burnout risk group.

**Keywords:** Burnout, Primary care nursing, Nursing, Family nursing, Meta-analysis, Epidemiology, Prevalence

**Background**

The development of burnout among healthcare professionals has been widely studied in recent years, since the large number of stress-inducing factors in the hospital environment heightens the risk of presenting burnout syndrome [1–3]. In addition, relationships and continued contact with patients and their families can be difficult, which fosters the development of chronic stress that can provoke burnout among healthcare staff [4].

The burnout syndrome has been extensively studied, even though the most widely accepted definition of burnout is that proposed by Maslach & Jackson [5], who identified it as a three-dimensional syndrome involving

emotional exhaustion (EE), cynical treatment and negative thoughts towards patients and the healthcare team (or depersonalisation, DP), and a low degree of personal accomplishment (PA) regarding the own work performed. The study of burnout is important because its negative effects can impact both on the professional who suffers it, causing different signs and symptoms [6], and also on the health institution itself, by increasing staff absenteeism, and on the quality of care provided by increasing medical errors and diminishing patient safety [7, 8].

In hospital settings, nurses are among the professionals most affected by burnout [9] and for this reason numerous studies have been conducted to identify protective factors and elements of risk. For example, some sociodemographic factors such as age, gender or marital status and its influence have been assessed [10, 11]. Psychological factors like the big five personality traits [12]

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## EMOTIONAL AND ACADEMIC BURNOUT OF STUDENTS COMBINING EDUCATION AND WORK

O. Koropets<sup>1</sup>, A. Fedorova<sup>1</sup>, I. Kacane<sup>2</sup><sup>1</sup>Ural Federal University (RUSSIAN FEDERATION)<sup>2</sup>Daugavpils University (LATVIA)**Abstract**

The article is devoted to the problem of emotional and academic burnout of working students of higher educational establishments. Theoretical and empirical research has revealed that academic burnout, as a particular case of emotional burnout, is accompanied by a sense of emotional and physical exhaustion, decreased motivation for studying, a negative attitude towards teachers and groupmates and, eventually, low academic performance. The diagnosis of the emotional burnout syndrome has been performed by a method of psychological questionnaire for working students. The study was conducted in the time period of two years (2017–2018) in one of the state universities of Russian Federation. A comparative analysis of the development of students' academic burnout phases among depending on the length of their combining work and studies has been carried out. Based on the results of the study, the causal relationships between the severity of the symptoms of burnout and the duration of the period of combining work and studies have been revealed. The life aspects of the "work – study" continuum, causing the greatest concern among working students, have been determined. The limitations of the presented study are stipulated by a small number of the respondents sample set. Further research is aimed at building a model of academic burnout of working students, the development and adaptation of tools for its diagnosis and prevention measures.

**Keywords:** emotional burnout syndrome, academic burnout, emotional exhaustion, determinants of burnout, self-efficacy.

**1 INTRODUCTION**

The issue of emotional burnout in university students is currently focused on by researchers in the field of psychology, pedagogy, and medicine for a number of reasons:

- emotional burnout adversely affects the students' physical and mental well-being;
- students experiencing academic burnout lose interest in learning; as a result, their academic performance deteriorates, which may lead to their expulsion from the higher education institution;
- academic burnout at the beginning of professional development during university studies may contribute to this syndrome further developing in subsequent career stages when trying to master the profession;
- academic burnout inevitably disrupts the system of the student's interpersonal relations, which leads to an increased number of conflicts in the student environment, and to inadequate reactions to teachers' requirements.

The above reasons determine the importance of timely prevention and diagnostics of academic burnout in students, and identifying factors contributing to its development. Despite the relevance of researching the burnout syndrome, the number of studies focusing on the causes of academic burnout in students, on the factors and preventive measures, is still relatively limited.

The purpose of this research is theoretical and empirical study of environmental factors associated with the syndrome of emotional burnout in full-time students who combine work and studies.

The American psychiatrist G. Freidenberg was the first to focus on the issue of emotional burnout in 1974 and to attract attention to it. He attributed it to emotional exhaustion, leading to profound personal changes in interpersonal communication [1]. Those most prone to burnout are people working in the "person-person" sphere, especially those whose work involves emotional empathy and increased responsibility (doctors, teachers, social workers, etc.). Recently, however, burnout has increasingly been identified in representatives of various professional spheres, students, and even the unemployed.







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