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Determining the Opinions of Teachers Participating in International Projects on Occupational Burnout Syndrome

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Abstract

Burnout is the feeling of tired and running out of energy, and becoming unable to fulfill the requirements of their job physically and emotionally when a person is disappointed by not achieving what they want after setting big goals for themselves. The feeling of burnout affects the physical, behavioral and psychological dimensions of the individual. Many national and international projects are carried out in order to ensure quality and efficiency in educational processes, to keep up with the changing world by innovating educational institutions, and to increase the motivation of educators and students to research, question and produce. The aim of this study is to determine the opinions of teachers who work in Elazig province and take part in international projects, on the components of professional burnout syndrome. In the study, analysis design, one of the qualitative research methods, was carried out. The working group consists of 20 teachers who work in Elazig and have taken part in international projects. Within the scope of the research, an interview form was applied to the participants and the participants' responses were subjected to content analysis. According to the findings of the research, taking part in international projects increases the sense of success of the participants, enables them to update themselves in their professions, and gives them universal perspectives. As a result of the research, it was revealed that taking part in international projects helped teachers to get away from their feelings of professional burnout in the dimensions of emotional exhaustion, personal failure and depersonalization. It was observed that teachers who experienced burnout after taking part in international projects felt that they did not see the value they deserved, they had problems with foreign languages, and could not provide the outputs they expected from the project.

Keywords: Burnout syndrome, international projects, teachers

Introduction

The living conditions in today's world, rapidly developing and changing work environments, the high expectations of the modern world paradigm for individuals create a high pressure element on individuals, increase their stress levels and ultimately bring individuals face to face with "burnout syndrome". When the literature on burnout is examined, it is seen that researchers agree that burnout is a psychological condition, but they cannot reach a common idea about the definition of burnout. The concept of burnout has been studied extensively for the last 30 years in relation to different occupational fields. The literature meaning of burnout was first introduced by Freudenberger in 1974 and was defined as "the state of exhaustion that occurs as a result of failure, weariness, loss of energy and power or unmet demands on human work resources" [1,2]. Burnout is defined as experiencing three syndromes as "emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and lack of personal achievement" [3,4]. On the other hand, burnout is a syndrome that includes different levels of individual dissatisfaction, physical exhaustion, feelings of helplessness, hopelessness, professional disappointment, negative self-perception, and negative feelings towards work and colleagues [5,6] can also be considered.

Burnout can be briefly explained as a person's feeling of being tired and exhausted by setting big goals for himself and not being able to achieve what he wants later on, feeling tired and exhausted, and becoming unable to fulfill the requirements of his job physically and emotionally. There are many definitions of burnout [7]. The dictionary meaning of the concept of burnout is "the exhaustion of energy, power or resources through excessive demands, fatigue, failure". Burnout is a popular term used for a state of mental and physical energy depletion that develops after chronic work-related stress situations that remain unchanged, sometimes characterized by physical ailments [8].

Burnout in the World Health Report published by the World Health Organization (1998) [9] was defined as an extreme emotional fatigue that occurs with overwork and as a result, the inability to fulfill his work and responsibilities. According to Maslach (1981) [10], burnout is defined as "the emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and low sense of personal accomplishment seen in those who have intense relationships with people due to their job" [11,12]. According to Maslach (1981), burnout is a syndrome with three subcomponents called "Emotional Exhaustion (DT), Depersonalization (D) and Low Personal Success-Personal Failure (PD)" [13,14]. These three sub-components expressing the changes in the life of the person experiencing the syndrome can be explained as follows:

- Emotional Exhaustion: It is the most clearly observable component of the burnout syndrome. It describes the state of being tired and emotionally exhausted by employees. It occurs as a lack of energy and the feeling that the emotional resources of the individual are exhausted [15].

- Depersonalization: Employees treat people they serve as objects, use derogatory words, and display a careless, sarcastic attitude. In fact, there is a sense of alienation and defense mechanism underlying these behaviors. That is, desensitization; represents the interpersonal dimension of burnout and indicates negative, rigid attitudes towards customers and being unresponsive to work [16].

- Low Feeling of Personal Success: People who are emotionally and physically exhausted, have a negative attitude towards themselves and the people they serve, have difficulty in fulfilling the demands of their jobs, and their sense of personal competence decreases. In this sense, the decrease in the sense of personal achievement is seen together with the other two structures [17,18]. Over time, a sense of inadequate self-perception in various work-related events and a sense of failure in relationships with people encountered at the workplace emerges. The waste of effort and the feeling of guilt prevent the employee from performing the necessary behaviors for success by reducing his work motivation [19].

The feeling of burnout affects the physical, behavioral and psychological dimensions of the individual. While physical symptoms usually appear as fatigue, insomnia, breathing difficulties, and weight loss; behavioral symptoms are anger, aversion to work, doubt and anxiety, and low self-esteem. Psychological symptoms of burnout can be listed as family problems, sleep disorders, depression, psychological diseases [20,21]. Cherniss (1980) [22] identified eight factors that cause burnout: inadequate orientation, workload, lack of motivation, client communication space (with parents, students), unclear organizational goals/goals, lack of autonomy, leadership/supervision, and social isolation. Apart from these, three other stressful situations examined with burnout are listed as follows: Unmet expectations: Conflict and uncertainty Participation in the decision-making / making process [23]. Burnout syndrome is an important problem area that threatens all professions today. In the literature, it is stated that individuals working in occupational groups that require interaction with people are more likely to encounter this syndrome [24-26]. From this point of view, it can be said that teachers tend to experience high levels of burnout when considered in the context of their relations with people [27]. Many teachers have lost their ideals, reluctance and alienation from the profession over time due to school type, restrictive school culture, physical infrastructure and resource deficiencies, conflict with the administration, organizational characteristics, and demographic factors such as gender, educational status and age [28-31]. This suggests that teachers have a high potential for experiencing burnout syndrome.

Considering the factors that cause burnout, Maslach and Leiter (1997) [32] stated that the sources of burnout are situational rather than personal. Therefore, they mentioned that the solutions for burnout should be sought mostly in the social environment of the person [33]. The reasons such as the problems experienced by the teachers among themselves, the competitive environment, the biased attitudes and behaviors of the school administration among their teachers are the indications that burnout is situational rather than personal. While the lack of motivation of the teachers in the institutions where they work and the lack of the mission and vision of the institution create an obstacle for the teachers to reach their goals, it is thought that the parents have recently put pressure on the teachers and have authority over the teachers, making the employees uneasy in the school environment and not participating in the decision-making situations. Many teachers have lost their ideals, reluctance and alienation from the profession over time due to school type, restrictive school culture, physical infrastructure and resource deficiencies, conflict with the administration, organizational characteristics, and demographic factors such as gender, educational status and age [34-37]. This situation is expressed as burnout in teachers. Burnout is defined as experiencing three syndromes as "emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and lack of personal achievement" [38-39]. On the other hand, burnout is a syndrome that includes different levels of individual dissatisfaction, physical exhaustion, feelings of helplessness, hopelessness, professional disappointment, negative self-perception, and negative feelings towards work and colleagues [40,41] can also be considered.

Problem Status
Based on the definitions related to the concept of burnout, it can be said that burnout causes physical and mental fatigue in teachers and this negatively affects teachers' work performance and teaching activities [42-44]. For this reason, it is important to conduct research on teachers' burnout levels and the factors that cause burnout. Because the burnout experienced by teachers can affect their students, administrators and parents, and therefore all stakeholders at different levels [45].

In order to ensure quality and efficiency in educational processes, to keep up with the changing world by innovating educational institutions, to increase the motivation of educators and students to research, question and produce; projects supported by the Ministry of National Education (MEB), European Commission supported projects such as Erasmus and eTwinning, TUBITAK projects (a funding organization in Turkey), Development Agency projects are carried out. Every year, many educators and students participate in the project activities carried out at pre-school, primary, secondary and secondary education levels for educators and students in our country; it creates concrete outputs by carrying out original and innovative studies [46].

Projects carried out in educational environments are planned to achieve teaching outputs are collaborative processes carried out in cooperation with education administrators, teachers and students [47]. The project approach is a learning approach that clearly reveals the

impact of the learned subjects on daily life and maximizes the motivation for learning [48]. The importance of educational projects was first emphasized by W. Kilpatrick, a student of J. Dewey [49]. Preparing educational projects provides positive contributions to educators and students in many respects. While project processes develop students' cognitive, affective and psycho-motor skills [50]; its contributions to educators are generally related to providing professional development, increasing job satisfaction, and moving organizational motivation to higher levels [51]. In terms of teachers, the benefits of being involved in the project preparation and execution processes are generally strengthening their professional, personal and technical equipment, making it easier for them to adapt to educational innovations, accelerating their career development, gaining experience in matters such as coordination, planning, organizing, and budget preparation.

One of the benefits of taking part in the project preparation and execution processes of teachers is that their tendency to suffer from professional burnout syndrome is thought to be lower than their other colleagues. The main reason for this situation is the high perception of personal success and job satisfaction of the teachers involved in the projects. Bright (2012) [52,53] stated that teachers who take part in innovative project-based studies have high self-efficacy and low potential for occupational burnout.

Purpose of the research

Burnout is when a person sets big goals for himself and cannot achieve what he wants later on and becomes disappointed, feels tired and depleted of energy, and becomes unable to fulfill the requirements of his job physically and emotionally. Burnout is handled in the dimensions of emotional exhaustion, low sense of accomplishment and depersonalization. The feeling of burnout affects the physical, behavioral and psychological dimensions of the individual. While physical symptoms usually appear as fatigue, insomnia, breathing difficulties, and weight loss; behavioral symptoms are anger, aversion to work, doubt and anxiety, and low self-esteem. Psychological symptoms of burnout can be listed as family problems, sleep disorders, depression, and psychological diseases. Many national and international projects are carried out in order to ensure quality and efficiency in educational processes, to keep pace with the changing world by innovating educational institutions, and to increase the motivation of educators and students to research, question and produce. The aim of this study is to determine the opinions of the teachers working in the province of Elazig and taking part in international projects on the components of professional burnout syndrome.

Research Problem

The problem statement of the research is as follows:
1. What are the opinions of teachers working in Elazig and participating in international projects on burnout syndrome?

The sub- problems of the research are as follows:

1.1. What are the opinions of teachers working in Elazig and participating in international projects on the emotional exhaustion component of occupational burnout syndrome?
1.2. What are the opinions of teachers working in Elazig and participating in international projects on the depersonalization component of professional burnout syndrome?
1.3. What are the opinions of teachers working in Elazig and participating in international projects on the personal failure component of professional burnout syndrome?

Research Methodology

The research was carried out according to the situation analysis pattern, which is one of the qualitative research methods. The most basic feature of the qualitative case study is the in-depth investigation of one or more cases [54]. All factors related to a situation are handled with a holistic approach, focusing on how they are affected by the relevant situation. Situation analysis is an empirical research method used in situations where the boundaries between the phenomenon and its context are not clearly defined and there is more than one source of evidence or data. Situation analysis is a qualitative research approach in which the researcher examines one or more situations in depth with the help of data collection tools and defines situations and themes related to the situation. The research is based on the cross-sectional survey model. Survey research, which is widely used in social sciences, is research that includes the opinions and attitudes of individuals about a phenomenon and event [55].

Working group

The study group of the research consists of 20 teachers working in the province of Elazig and taking part in international projects. The study group of the research was formed based on the non-probability maximum variation method. The aim here is to reflect the sample diversity created in a way that addresses the research questions in a multi-faceted manner. The aim is not to provide diversity to generalize; it is to try to find out whether there are common facts or differences between situations that vary and to reveal different dimensions of the problem according to diversity [56,57]. Before applying the interview form, necessary permissions and ethics committee report were obtained from Firat University and Elazig Provincial Directorate of National Education. The demographic distributions of the participants in the study group are as seen in Table 1.

Table 1: Demographic data on the working group

Variables	Frequency (f)	Percentage (p)
Gender		
Female	12	60
Male	8	40
School Graduate		
Pre-school	4	20
Primary school	7	35
Secondary school	4	20
High School	5	25

Seniority Year		
1- 5	4	20
6- 10	5	25
11- 15	6	30
16 years +	5	25
Number of International Projects		
1	3	15
2	3	15
3	3	15
4	2	10
5 +	9	45
Total	**20**	**100**

As seen in Table 1, 60% of the participants are female teachers and 40% are male teachers. According to the data obtained from the Strategy Development Branch of the Elazig Directorate of National Education in March 2021, the number of female teachers involved in international projects in the province of Elazig is higher than the number of male teachers; therefore, in order to reflect the universe in the research, care was taken to ensure that the number of female teachers was higher than the number of male teachers. When the distribution of the participants in the study group is examined according to the school type variable, it is seen that 20% work in pre-school, 35% in primary school, 20% in secondary school and 25% in secondary education institutions. When the distribution of the participants according to the variable of seniority is analyzed, it is seen that the highest rate belongs to the participants who worked between 11 and 15 years *(f = 6)*. Participants with a seniority of 16 years or more constitute 25% of the participants. This distribution shows that the participants are professionally experienced teachers. When the distribution of the participants regarding the number of projects they have is analyzed, it is seen that 45% of them are involved in 5 or more international projects. This shows that the majority of the participants have experience in international projects.

Data collection tool
A semi-structured interview form was used as a data collection tool. The form was developed by the researcher with the help of an expert. The most important convenience provided by the semi-structured interview technique to the researcher is that it provides more systematic and comparable information since the interview is carried out in accordance with the pre-prepared interview protocol [58]. In this study, a 5-item interview form was used to determine the opinions of teachers involved in international projects on the components of professional burnout syndrome. Interviewing is used as the shortest way to learn the knowledge, thoughts, attitudes and behaviors of individuals on various issues and their possible causes [59]. The main purpose of using an interview technique is not usually to test a hypothesis; it is trying to understand other people's experiences and how they make sense of these experiences [60]. The interview technique used in

qualitative research is to use the perspectives of the researched people, to reveal their world of meaning, and to see the world through their eyes.

Data analysis
The research data were interpreted with descriptive analysis, one of the qualitative research techniques. Interpretation is the process of giving meaning to the analyzed data. In descriptive analysis, the answers given by different people to the same questions are conveyed as quotations without changing them. Descriptive analysis consists of creating the conceptual framework, processing the data according to this framework, defining the findings and interpreting the findings. While analyzing the data, codes as K-1, K-2, etc. were given to the interview forms filled by the participants in order to ensure confidentiality and impartiality. The answers given by the sample group to the interview form questions were analyzed by categorizing them according to their problem areas. These categories were ordered according to the number of citations of the participants, and percentiles and frequencies were determined. Problem areas were strengthened by showing striking citations from the participants as examples. During the analysis of the data, categories and patterns were considered, the frequency of the variables was interpreted, the relationships between the variables were considered, and the variables were grouped according to their characteristics. The answers have been interpreted in a way that reflects the reality as it is, by establishing logical meaning chains. Because the most important problem of the research is whether the meanings and results reached are correct, valid and repeatable [61].

Findings
In this section, the opinions of teachers involved in international projects on professional burnout, their opinions on emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, personal failure dimensions, their general opinions on the concept of professional burnout, and their opinions on the change in professional burnout levels before and after the project are given.

Opinions of Participants in International Projects on the Dimension of Emotional Exhaustion
In the first item of the interview form used as a data collection tool in the research, "Have you encountered emotional exhaustion such as lack of energy or exhaustion after taking part in an international project? How did being involved in an international project affect you in this regard?" questions are included. With these questions, it is aimed to determine the opinions of the participants about the emotional exhaustion dimension of professional burnout. While 30% of the participants stated that they experienced emotional exhaustion after taking part in the international project *(f = 6)*, 70% of them stated that they did not experience emotional exhaustion after taking part in the international project *(f = 14)*. The opinions of the participants regarding the question in the first item are as indicated in Table 2.

Table 2: Participants' opinions on the dimension of emotional exhaustion.

Opinions	f	p
It was exhausting, but the sense of accomplishment made up for it.	7	35
I felt more energetic as opposed to fatigue.	3	15
My energy to take part in new projects increased	2	10
Meeting my colleagues working in different parts of the world increased my performance	2	10
Sometimes I felt tired because it required me to expend more energy	2	10
Positive feedback from students was taking my fatigue away.	1	5
My motivation increased	1	5
I felt tired because I had to speak a foreign language	1	5
Agreeing with my school administration about the project caused me to have low energy. TOTAL	1 **20**	5 **100**

As can be seen in Table 2, the majority of the participants experienced fatigue within the scope of emotional exhaustion, which is one of the professional burnout dimensions of being involved in an international project; however, he stated that the sense of success they achieved in the project compensated for this situation *(f = 7)*.

"It didn't make you feel emotionally tired, but it made you feel more energetic with a sense of accomplishment thanks to the achievements of the project." (K - 9)

"Fatigue happens naturally, but seeing the students involved in the project producing something and the happiness after producing it takes away your tiredness." (K - 11)

Based on the opinions of the participants coded K - 9 and K - 11, it was stated that teachers involved in international projects may experience situations such as loss of energy and exhaustion during the process; however, it can be said that this loss of energy and exhaustion did not reach the level of professional burnout thanks to the gains they achieved at the end of the project. It turns out that the positive changes that the participants have seen in themselves and their students as a result of international projects have left the feeling of fatigue to the feeling of success and happiness. Some participants stated that taking part in international projects increased their energy on the contrary to fatigue *(f = 3)*. There are participants who state that being involved in international projects encourages the participants to take part in new projects *(f = 2)* and that meeting colleagues working in different countries thanks to the projects increases the energy *(f = 2)*.

"It was very enjoyable to take part in an international project. It was an indescribable feeling to work with partners from the same country as well as foreign partners for the same purpose, to advance in line with the same common goals in different parts of the world, and to be able to observe the activities they had done. In addition to this, of course, carrying out a project, "executing an international project" can cause you to feel tired and worn out from time to time. However, as we see the outputs of the project activities and see that the project achieves its goals, this feeling leaves its place to the feeling of achievement and happiness." (K - 5)

"It is really exciting to work with teachers from different countries and different cultures and to meet on a common platform. Because no matter where we are in the world,

sharing the same feelings, the same ideas, facing different ideas, I have personally experienced the positive and energizing effects of people's personal development, and as a teacher of 18 years, I have experienced the positive and energizing effects of the work done in a school at the other side of the world. I can tell you are more motivated." (K - 17)

As stated by the K - 5 and K - 17 participants, many of the participants stated that their motivation and energy increased because they took part in an international project, so they did not feel professional burnout. Some participants stated that they had to learn a foreign language because they took part in an international project and this caused them fatigue or they had a disagreement with the school administration during the project process.

"I faced a state of emotional exhaustion such as exhaustion, especially when it comes to communication with my foreign partners. We used English as a common language because I partnered with different countries, and I had a hard time because most of my partners were not competent in the language." (K - 10)

The K-10 coded participant stated that he had difficulty in using a foreign language. Communication is a very important element in multi-partner projects and partners can only implement the project effectively if they can communicate well. In this context, the effective use of foreign language in international projects is a prerequisite that determines the level of effectiveness of the project. It has been concluded that teachers who do not know a foreign language at all or have limited foreign language knowledge may have difficulties in international projects and may encounter emotional exhaustion.

Opinions of Participants in International Projects on the Dimension of Depersonalization

In the second item of the interview form included in the research, "Have you encountered situations of unresponsiveness and depersonalization towards your profession after taking part in an international project? How did being involved in an international project affect you in this regard?" questions are included. While 75% of the participants stated that they did not encounter unresponsiveness or depersonalization; 25% stated that they experienced depersonalization. The opinions of the participants are as indicated in Table 3.

Table 3: Opinions of participants on the dimension of depersonalization.

Opinion	f	p
Made me love my job more instead of being insensitive	8	26,66
Working with foreign partners for the same purpose has brought sensitivity to my profession.	6	20
I updated myself professionally.	4	13,34
My ability to empathize has increased	4	13,34
It enabled me to reach educational gains more quickly.	2	6,66
Preventing professional disinformation	1	3,34
I experienced unresponsiveness because the project did not result in success.	3	10
I became desensitized because my project was not valued by the school administration.	2	6,66
TOTAL	**30**	**100**

As can be seen in Table 3, most of the participants stated that they became more sensitive to their profession and liked their profession more, rather than being insensitive to being involved in an international project *(f = 8).* The number of participants who stated that they gained sensitivity towards their profession because they work together with their colleagues from foreign countries is also substantial *(f = 6).* Participants stated that being involved in an international project increased their empathy skills *(f = 4)* and increased their level of competence by updating themselves professionally.

"No, I haven't met, on the contrary, positive feelings towards my profession have developed, and I am happy that my profession is a profession that allows such work. It made me want to take part in such projects again, if possible." (K - 4)

"The projects I carried out caused me to do my job more lovingly instead of taking me away from my profession, and the education-teaching process to be more fun and productive. The activities I carried out with the project helped me to reach the achievements and indicators that I tried to reach in the education process in a shorter time and to provide more permanent learning."(K - 9)

As can be understood from the participant statements above, the participation of the participants in an international project has led them to gain sensitivity towards their profession, to love their profession more, and to have the ability to look from different perspectives while performing their profession through the cultural merger they have realized through foreign partners. When the participant opinions are examined, it is concluded that taking part in an international project contributes positively to the depersonalization dimension, which is among the dimensions of professional burnout, and makes the teachers more sensitive to their profession. Participants, who stated that they experienced depersonalization after taking part in the international project, stated that they could not achieve the success they wanted at the end of the project *(f = 3)* and that they did not receive enough support from the school administration *(f = 2).*

"At the end of the project, I did not achieve the success I wanted and was not appreciated by the authorities. This situation made me unresponsive to projects. I take part in projects to improve myself in my profession and to be beneficial to my students, but the attitudes of the administrators sometimes cause disappointment." (K - 8)

After a long and difficult project process, teachers may want to be successful, appreciated and rewarded with certificates. However, some projects may not be completed successfully due to reasons such as the attitude of the partners, the unachievable selection of the project goals, the inconsistency of the goals and activities. It is seen that this situation may cause burnout in the dimension of depersonalization in teachers. The fact that teachers are prepared for all kinds of results when starting a project, realize that the project is an experience-based process and that they are closer to success because they have experience in their next projects, even if they are involved in a failed project, will distance themselves from the feeling of burnout. It is thought that the school administrators' supporting the teachers involved in the projects and rewarding the teachers who work diligently in the projects with representative awards will distract the teachers from the feeling of burnout.

Opinions of Participants in International Projects on Personal Failure Dimension
In the third item of the interview form applied to the participants, "Have you experienced the feeling of personal failure after taking part in an international project? How did being involved in an international project affect you in this regard?" question is included. With this question, it is aimed to determine the views of the participants in international projects on personal failure, one of the dimensions of professional burnout. While 85% of the participants stated that they did not experience personal failure after taking part in an international project *(f = 17),* only 15% stated that they experienced personal failure *(f = 3).* The opinions of the teachers on the dimension of personal failure are as shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Participants' opinions on personal failure dimension.

Opinions	f	p
I have not experienced personal failure; on the contrary, I experienced a sense of achievement.	8	24,22
I was honored with the documents I received at the end of the project	5	15,14
My self-confidence has increased	4	12,12
Gained experience to increase my personal success	4	12,12
I had the opportunity to update myself	3	9
There were times when I felt like a failure due to my inexperience at certain stages of the project.	3	9
There were times when I felt unsuccessful in foreign language	2	6
Change in students increased my sense of achievement	1	3
I felt superior to other colleagues	1	3
My motivation increased	1	3
Not getting paid for your work felt like a failure	1	3
TOTAL	**33**	**100**

When Table 4 is examined, most of the participants stated that their sense of achievement increased instead of experiencing personal failure, which is one of the dimensions of professional burnout (f=8). Based on the opinions of the participants, being involved in an international project and collaborating with project partners from foreign countries not only increases the sense of achievement of teachers, but also helps them to be honoured with various documents such as success, appreciation and thanks *(f = 5),* and increases teachers' self-confidence *(f = 4).* helps them gain experiences that increase their sense of achievement *(f = 4).*

"At the end of the project, we were honored to reward our projects with National and European quality labels. As a teacher who carries out a project, I have a different side from my other colleagues, and when we consider what our project has contributed to my students, my students' environment and me, we can see that carrying out a project has a lot of positive gains for a teacher."(K - 14)

As the participant K - 14 stated, the documents obtained at the end of the project, the changes observed in the students and the changes observed by the teachers in themselves increase the teachers' sense of achievement. When examined in this context, it can be said that international projects have an intrinsic and extrinsic motivation effect on teachers' feelings of achievement. Teachers are not only motivated by the gains they have achieved and the changes in the achievements of their students; documents, appreciation, acknowledgment and similar external motivation sources. As a matter of fact, the participant with the code K - 8 stated that he felt a failure because he did not receive any documents at the end of the project.

"It's nice to take part in the project, yes, but as a result, the pressure from the environment, not being appreciated and not getting a reward for the work makes people tired." (K - 8)

Based on the opinions of the participant coded K - 8, it is revealed that teachers need to be appreciated after the project they are involved in. At this point, the institutions

and organizations that support the projects may not appreciate every teacher; however, the sensitivity of school administrators to the subject and the commendation of teachers by using incentives such as documents and plaques will create a source of motivation for new projects to be carried out by teachers and increase the sense of personal achievement.

Some participants stated that they had to use a foreign language because they were involved in an international project and that they were faced with a feeling of failure because they did not have the desired level of knowledge of the language used *(f = 2).* Some participants have doubts about being successful in foreign language; however, they stated that they found various solutions to this issue.

"Before, there was a fear of whether I could do it or not because of the language problem, but then I was able to handle this situation with various translation programs. At the end of the project, I saw that I was very successful." (K - 12)

As the K - 12 coded participant stated, thanks to technological tools such as digital dictionaries and translation programs, foreign language problems can be solved to a certain extent. However, it is thought that it will be beneficial for teachers involved in international projects to receive training to improve their foreign language knowledge so that they can communicate more healthily and effectively with their project partners and contribute to their personal sense of achievement.

General Opinions of Participants in International Projects on Occupational Burnout

In the fourth item of the interview form used in the research, the participants were asked, "How do you think taking part in an international project affects the professional burnout situation in general?" question was posed. With this question, it was aimed to determine the general views of the participants about the relationship between the variables of professional burnout and taking part in an international project. The answers of the participants are given in Table 5.

Table 5: Opinions of participants on occupational burnout.

Opinions	f	p
Helped me recover from professional burnout	7	29,13
It led to my professional renewal	6	25
Driven to development and learning	1	4,16
Varies depending on the partners involved in the project	1	4,16
It has helped me to transcend the borders by becoming universal in my profession.	4	16,63
Varies depending on the results of the project	1	4,16
I survived professional deformation	1	4,16
It was very difficult to divide the work with the partners	1	4,16
Not being rewarded at the end of the project caused burnout	1	4,16
Self-improving teacher does not experience professional burnout	1	4,16
TOTAL	**24**	**100**

As seen in Table 5, the opinions of the participants on the effects of being involved in an international project on professional burnout vary. While some of the teachers stated that taking part in an international project helped them get rid of professional burnout *(f = 7)*, they did not experience burnout because they had the opportunity to develop themselves *(f = 6)*, and they gained a cross-border perspective in their profession *(f = 4)*; some participants stated that the relationship between the international project and professional burnout dimensions changed depending on the partners and the results, and they experienced professional burnout because they were not rewarded.

"It reverses occupational burnout. Especially in the teaching profession, the teacher needs to constantly update and develop himself. In this respect, these projects add professional vitality and productivity. In general, thanks to the projects, I feel more active, more productive, more useful and more productive professionally." (K - 6)

"It is a very tiring process, yes, despite the effort made by Mem after this process, at least not receiving any concrete documents, such as a certificate of success, against pressure from the environment, leads to burnout." (K - 19)

As seen above, while teachers who could get the desired result from the project stated that they got rid of professional burnout; participants who do not get the desired result from the project or who believe that they do not see the value they deserve may experience professional burnout. There are also participants who stated that this situation depends on the project partners or the result achieved in the project. From this point of view, it is thought that the opinions on taking part in an international project and professional burnout syndrome vary according to the perspective of the teacher who carried out the project, the project partners, the division of labor, the implementation processes, the managerial attitudes and the outputs obtained as a result of the project.

Opinions of Participants on Occupational Burnout After the International Project

The last question posed to the participants within the scope of the research was "How would you evaluate your professional burnout status before and after taking part in an international project?" has been. With this question, it is aimed that the participants evaluate their professional burnout in two stages, before and after the international project process. In this way, the participants were expected to make a general assessment by analyzing the effect of their participation in the international project on their professional burnout. Table 6 was prepared in line with the findings obtained from the answers of the participants.

Table 6: Opinions of participants on occupational burnout after the ınternational project.

Opinions	f	p
My professional competence has increased	6	20
My self-confidence has increased	5	16,66
I felt renewed	4	13,34
My mental peace has increased	3	10
I'm free from routine	2	6,66
I was proud to see the change in myself.	2	6,66
Thanks to the project, I will not experience professional burnout for many years.	2	6,66
I learned to work goal-oriented.	2	6,66
Before I got involved in the project, I was more enthusiastic about doing the project.	1	3,34
Not getting paid for my labor caused burnout	1	3,34
I suffered from burnout because I couldn't take time for myself	1	3,34
After the project, my sense of burnout turned into a sense of achievement because I learned a foreign language.	1	3,34
TOTAL	**30**	**100**

When Table 6 is examined, the participants generally stated that their professional qualifications increased *(f = 6)*, their self-confidence increased *(f = 5)* and their spiritual peace increased *(f = 5)* after taking part in an international project.

"…Thanks to the projects, I learned to use the beauties of technology better. It was a real honor for me to see how self-confident and how far my professional experience has progressed." (K - 1)

"Before I took part in such projects, the teaching profession had become a routine for me. Thanks to the projects, a completely different atmosphere came. Relationships with students have changed a lot. Doing a project with a student I hadn't even taken a class with, creating products with them and exhibiting this product added a completely different atmosphere to the education environment for both me and them." (K - 3)

Based on the statements of K - 1 and K - 3 coded participants, it can be said that after taking part in international projects, teachers enjoy their profession, move away from professional deformation, and enrich their routines with new experiences. Many of the participants stated that their self-confidence increased and they gained new competencies after the project. Occupational burnout is a situation faced by employees who are bored with their profession, emotionally distant, and think that they cannot get efficiency from their profession. In this context, it is thought that taking part in projects will add vitality and energy to the profession of teachers. The fact that this project is an international project provides teachers with new perspectives and helps them to realize their profession in a global way; this situation increases teachers' sense of achievement and self-confidence. Among the participants, there are participants who stated that they lost their enthusiasm for doing projects and that they experienced burnout because they could not achieve the desired result. This situation suggests that some teachers may not show the necessary patience to be successful or they may experience intimidation as a result of their failure. However, in some cases, success is a result of failures, and in order to achieve the desired result, it is necessary to endure all kinds of difficulties, make sacrifices and show persistence.

Results

Opinions of Participants in International Projects on the Dimension of Emotional Exhaustion

According to the results; 30% of the participants stated that they experienced emotional exhaustion after taking part in the international project *(f = 6)*, 70% of them stated that they did not experience emotional exhaustion after taking part in the international project *(f = 14)*. Some participants stated that taking part in international projects increased their energy on the contrary to fatigue *(f = 3)*. There are participants who state that being involved in international projects encourages the participants to take part in new projects *(f = 2)* and that meeting colleagues working in different countries thanks to the projects increases the energy *(f = 2)*.

Opinions of Participants in International Projects on the Dimension of Depersonalization

When we examine the opinions of the participants on the dimension of depersonalization it is found that while 75% of the participants stated that they did not encounter unresponsiveness or depersonalization; 25% stated that they experienced depersonalization. most of the participants stated that they became more sensitive to their profession and liked their profession more, rather than being insensitive to being involved in an international project *(f = 8)*. The number of participants who stated that they gained sensitivity towards their profession because they work together with their colleagues from foreign countries is also substantial *(f = 6)*. Participants stated that being involved in an international project increased their empathy skills *(f = 4)*.

Opinions of Participants in International Projects on Personal Failure Dimension

According to the results of the study, it is found that while 85% of the participants stated that they did not experience personal failure after taking part in an international project *(f = 17)*, only 15% stated that they experienced personal failure *(f = 3)*. Most of the participants stated that their sense of achievement increased instead of experiencing personal failure, which is one of the dimensions of professional burnout (f=8). Based on the opinions of the participants, being involved in an international project and collaborating with project partners from foreign countries not only increases the sense of achievement of teachers, but also helps them to be honoured with various documents such as success, appreciation and thanks *(f = 5)*, and increases teachers' self-confidence *(f = 4)*. helps them gain experiences that increase their sense of achievement *(f = 4)*.

General Opinions of Participants in International Projects on Occupational Burnout

It is seen that while some of the teachers stated that taking part in an international project helped them get rid of professional burnout *(f = 7)*, they did not experience burnout because they had the opportunity to develop themselves *(f = 6)*, and they gained a cross-border perspective in their profession *(f = 4)*; some participants stated that the relationship between the international project and professional burnout dimensions changed depending on the partners and the results, and they experienced professional burnout because they were not rewarded.

Opinions of Participants on Occupational Burnout After the International Project

The participants generally stated that their professional qualifications increased *(f = 6)*, their self-confidence increased *(f = 5)* and their spiritual peace increased *(f = 5)* after taking part in an international project.

Discussion

In the study, which examines the opinions of teachers involved in international projects on professional burnout in the dimensions of emotional exhaustion, personal failure,

and depersonalization, the relationship between teachers' participation in international projects and their opinions on professional burnout has been tried to be determined.

Within the scope of emotional exhaustion, which is one of the dimensions of professional burnout, it has been concluded that teachers develop a positive attitude towards their profession, meet their colleagues from different countries, start to look at their profession from different perspectives emotionally, increase their motivation and become more attached to their profession with positive feedback from their students. The findings are similar to the results of the study carried out by Ertürk and Keçecioğlu (2012) [62]. In the study conducted by Ertürk and Keçecioğlu (2012) [63], there is a highly correlated negative correlation between teachers' motivation levels and attitudes towards their profession and their professional burnout levels. In the study conducted by Diri and Kıral (2016) [64], it was concluded that teachers' attitudes towards their profession and job satisfaction have an effect on the dimension of emotional exhaustion. According to the results of the research, the problems that the teachers have with the school administration during the international project execution process and the efforts of the teachers with insufficient foreign language knowledge in communication can cause emotional exhaustion.

Teachers' opinions on the dimension of depersonalization are generally in the direction that international projects give them professional sensitivity. Participants stated that after taking part in the international project, they updated themselves professionally, their empathy skills increased and they liked their profession more. Although the research findings are similar to the research results of Kırılmaz, Çelen, and Sarp (2000) [65], it has been revealed that the working environment, the attitude of the school administrators, and the teachers' updating themselves professionally will positively affect professional burnout. Some participants stated that they experienced depersonalization due to the attitude of the school administration and the fact that their projects did not result as they wanted. In the study carried out by Gold and Roth (2013) [66], it was stated that teachers' high expectations and setting unattainable goals will increase their feelings of burnout. This is consistent with the research findings. High targets set for the project and hard-to-realize expectations can cause teachers to feel burnout.

In the personal failure dimension of professional burnout, it was concluded that the participants experienced a sense of achievement, increased their self-confidence, gained experience and felt superior to their colleagues. Participants who did not receive documents at the end of the project, were not appreciated, and had problems with foreign language, thought that they experienced personal failure. The research results are consistent with the results of the study conducted by Cemaloğlu and Şahin (2007) [67]. In the study of Cemaloğlu and Şahin (2007) [68], teachers' appreciation and spiritual satisfaction are among the factors that reduce the level of burnout. Similarly, teachers who do not receive the appreciation

expected from school administrators feel burnout. Similarly, in the study conducted by Fernet, Guay, Seńecal, and Austin (2012) [69], it was revealed that teachers' self-confidence, their professional experience, and the positive relationship between them and the school administration will affect the level of burnout.

In the research, it was tried to determine the general opinions of the teachers involved in international projects on professional burnout. According to the results of the research, it is seen that the teachers involved in international projects generally do not experience professional burnout, and they develop positive attitudes towards their profession by renewing and improving themselves. Some participants stated that they experienced professional burnout because they had difficulties in the division of labor with their foreign partners and could not achieve the expected results in the project. In the study carried out by Tuğrul and Çelik (2002) [70], it was revealed that meeting the expectations of teachers, reaching the desired job results and the division of labor between them and their colleagues affect burnout. In the study carried out by Dick and Wagner (2001) [71], it was determined that giving teachers credit, praising them and rewarding them with various awards eliminates the feeling of burnout.

The opinions of the participants on the understanding of professional burnout after the international project were examined. The participants stated that after taking part in the international project, their professional competence increased, their self-confidence and spiritual peace increased, they got rid of the routine and they started to work with a focus. There are also participants who stated that they experience burnout because it is tiring to take part in an international project and they cannot spare time for themselves and cannot get the reward of their efforts. Similarly, in the study of Izgar (2001) [72], it was concluded that self-renewal, professional satisfaction and peace at work reduce the feeling of burnout.

According to the results of the research, suggestions for practitioners and researchers were developed.

Recommendations for Practitioners:

1. Teachers involved in international projects go through a difficult and arduous process. At the end of the projects, some teachers are awarded with certificates of achievement, certificates of appreciation or thanks, and representative awards such as plaques, while some teachers receive any award. These application differences are caused by school administrations or senior management institutions. School administrators' support for teachers' projects and rewarding them with representative documents will not only help teachers feel valuable and get rid of professional burnout, but also encourage other teachers to take part in similar projects.

2. International projects compare schools, teachers and students with a universal platform, provide new perspectives and raise awareness about educational

activities carried out around the world. In international projects, English language is generally used so that all partners can establish a healthy communication. It is seen that teachers who do not have foreign language knowledge or cannot use the foreign language at the desired level have difficulties in international projects and experience burnout in the dimensions of personal failure and emotional exhaustion. In-service courses can be opened to improve the English knowledge of teachers involved in international projects, and live language lessons can be given over online platforms. It is thought that it would be beneficial for teachers who cannot reach these opportunities to get help from English teachers working in their schools.

3. In international projects, there are participants who experience burnout due to the division of labor between the partners. One of the most important decision-based processes in projects is the distribution of responsibilities, the realization of the division of labor and the preparation of the work schedule accordingly. In order for the partners not to have any problems in this process, it is necessary to organize a meeting to be held with the participation of all partners in a conciliatory opinion, to determine the responsibilities of each partner clearly and regularly, and to monitor the level of fulfillment of these responsibilities on a regular basis. Since project activities that cannot be carried out in a planned and systematic way will cause burnout on the partners, it is recommended that all decisions be taken in a democratic way and that the partners should act in a team spirit and use control and auto-control mechanisms effectively.

Recommendations for Researchers:

1. Due to the use of qualitative research methods in this study, a small study group was employed. A quantitative research on the subject will provide access to large sample groups and increase the generalizability of the findings.

2. Only the participants in international projects were included in the study. It is thought that the comparative analysis of the opinion levels of the sample group involved in national and international projects on occupational burnout will contribute to the field of educational sciences.

Statement of Research and Publication Ethics

Throughout the research process, the researchers acted in accordance with all necessary ethical rules. During the reporting of the study, the principles of research ethics were taken as the basis. Before applying the interview form, necessary permissions and ethics committee report were obtained from Firat University and Elazig Provincial Directorate of National Education. In accordance with the circular numbered 2020/2 on Research, Competition and Social Activity Permits of the Ministry of National Education, it was deemed appropriate to apply the data collection tool to all teachers working in the city center. The research was carried out in line with the Governor's Approval dated

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