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BURNOUT OF POLICE OFFICERS FROM THE KRAKOW GARRISON

ABSTRACT

Objectives: *The main aim of the conducted research is to present the burnout syndrom among the Police officers, based on the City Police in Krakow.*

Material and methods: *The main research problem is to highlight the problem in the questions: What is the level of burnout syndrom among the surveyed Police officers of the City Police in Krakow and whether there is a relation between the level of burnout and selected socio-demographic features (sex, age, education, marital status, children, length of service)? The analysis were carried out using IBM SPSS Statistics 26, Pearsona coefficient, as well as Bonferroni test, ANOVA variation analysis. A standardized research tool – MBI (MaslashBornout Inventory) questionnaire was used, comprised of 22 positions and 3 subscales: emotional exhaustion, consisting of 8 positions; depersonalization, consisting of 5 positions; lowering the sense of personal achievement, consisting of 8 positions.*

Results: *The conducted research revealed that occupational burnout among police officers is a widespread and deeply concerning phenomenon. The most dominant element turned out to be depersonalization, which reflects emotional distancing from colleagues and the surrounding social environment. Most officers showed a high level of this component, indicating chronic psychological and emotional fatigue, as well as a loss of empathy and engagement in interpersonal relationships.*

Conclusions: *Based on the results obtained, it can be concluded that burnout among police officers is a serious organizational and psychological challenge. The most worrying conclusion is the almost universal occurrence of high levels of depersonalization, which indicates a significant emotional distance from colleagues and society, and a possible threat to the quality of service.*

KEYWORDS: *burnout syndrome, Occupational stress, Emotional exhaustion, Depersonalization, Police officers*

INTRODUCTION

The meaning of the word *burnout* is quite unequivocal. The phenomenon of burnout has been diagnosed and described relatively recently, only introduced in the latter half of the 20th century. However, it does not mean, it has not existed before. It can reasonably be assumed, that burnout has accompanied man inseparably from time, when he began to perform professional work in the modern sense. Therefore, the natural consequence of the existence of this phenomenon is the formation at a similar time independently of each other clinical and

literary descriptions of people gradually losing energy and motivation to work. People with satisfying jobs, and at the same time frustrated and exhausted by its performance, often willing to abandon it (Terelak, 2003). In a scientific way, the analysis of this phenomenon was undertaken only in the 70s of the last century. The term *burnout* was first used in professional literature only in a year 1974. The precursor of research in this field was an American psychiatrist and scientist Freudenberg (1974), who started his work by observing volunteers, at a drug addiction treatment center. He published the results of his work in the article *Staff burnout*, which was the first attempt to scientifically capture this phenomenon. H. Freudenberg then pointed out the exhaustion of the unit, caused by excessive tasks posed to her by the physical or social work environment.

Further research on this phenomenon H. Freudenberg led with G. Richelson (1980). Based on them, in 1980 they formulated a dictionary definition of burnout, which has become a reference point for other researchers in this field.

Following it, the state of burnout is: *state of fatigue or frustration resulting from a dedication to a case, a way of life or a relationship which did not bring the expected reward.*

Almost parallel to H. Freudenberger's, analysis of exhaustion of professional work was carried out by another American social psychologist C. Maslach, which it is said that it was she who brought the most to learning about burnout. Along with S. Jakson and other colleagues at the University of Berkeley, C. Maslach conducted research on people exposed to occupational stress caused by performing work based on helping others (Maslach, 2010).

Symptoms of burnout are based on three elements of the definition of this syndrome. In fact, in a very simplistic way, we can say that professional burnout in a specific person will be dealt with then when he/she is emotionally exhausted, and will be depersonalized and have a reduced sense of self-esteem. Multidimensionality of burnout is located in several areas. They do not only burden the employee and his loved ones, but also the organization he works for. The main problem is that the burnout does not happen suddenly and violently, but constitutes a long-term process. Similar observations have been reported among police officers, where prolonged occupational stress, exposure to traumatic events and shift work significantly increase the risk of burnout syndrome (Violanti et al., 2017) inder.

Signs, especially those in the initial phase, often they are either not noticed or they are simply ignored. A person undergoing burnout experiences a gradual loss of commitment to work, then stops taking care of himself, begins to have problems with sleep, his relationship with his loved ones. Recent studies conducted among European police officers confirm that emotional exhaustion and depersonalization are among the most frequently reported symptoms of occupational burnout (Queirós et al., 2020).

In 2019, the World Health Organization (WHO) included burnout in the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11) as an occupational phenomenon resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed. According to WHO, burnout is characterized by feelings of energy depletion, increased mental distance from one's job, and reduced professional efficacy (World Health Organization, 2019).

In the concept of burnout prevention, C. Maslach (2010) introduces a division into the impact directed at a person and oriented to the working environment in which he is employed.

With regard to the working environment, he notes that in building burnout prevention, a long-term perspective is important, which it starts from the level of organization rather than actions taken by individuals.

The essence is to find comprehensive solutions and implementing them requires real cooperation within the entire organization.

THE ANALYSIS OF THE AUTHOR'S OWN RESEARCH

The aim of the study was to present the phenomenon of burnout among the police officers, on the example of the Municipal Police Headquarters in Krakow. The main research problem was the question: what is the level of professional burnout of the surveyed officers of the Municipal Headquarters in Krakow and whether there is a relationship between the level of burnout and the selected socio – demographic features (sex, age, education, marital status, length of service and type of employment).

The analysis was carried out using IBM SPSS Statistics 26, Pearson's correlation coefficient, as well as the Bonferroni test, ANOVA variance analysis.

The paper uses a standardized research tool – MBI questionnaire (Maslach Burnout Inventory), which is a specific tool for measuring burnout used in organizations and in scientific research to see how employees evaluate their work, it is a reliable questionnaire providing a concise look at Energy, commitment and effectiveness of work.

Comprised of 22 positions and 3 subscales: emotional exhaustion, consisting of 8 positions; depersonalization, consisting of 5 positions; lowering the sense of personal achievement, consisting of 8 positions.

A high level of burnout is found when the employee scores high on the scale of emotional exhaustion.

The study involved 244 people. The characteristics of the respondents, due to the indicated socio-demographic characteristics, are presented in the following Table no. 1.

The sample comprised 167 men (60.9%) and 77 women (39.1%) with the mean age of the respondents was 50 years, ranging from 23 to 81 years.

The study group was dominated by men (68.4%), officers aged 31–40 years (46.3%), and respondents with a master's degree (57.8%). Detailed characteristics are presented in Table 1. In the second place, respondents were divided by education: secondary – 24.6 %, Bachelor's degree – 16.8 %, Master's degree – 57.8 % and other 0.8 %. The study participants were divided into seven age groups in the following ranges: 20 – 30 years – 19.7 %, 31 – 40 years – 46.3 %, 41 – 50 years – 28.3 %, 51 – 60 years – 5.3 %, above 60 years – 0.4 %. The participants in the study were divided according to their service experience. According to this criterion, it was determined how many police officers belong to a specific service period: 0 – 5 years – 16.0 %, 6 – 10 years – 29.9 %, 11 – 20 years – 40.2 %, 21–30 years – 12.7 % and more than 30 lat – 1.2 %. The last of the factors included in the study was the employment division, which was divided as follows: criminal – 19.7 %, investigation – 7.8 %, prevention – 66.8 % and support – 5.7 %.

Table 1. *Characteristics of the study group*

Socio-demographic characteristics	Number	%
Sex		
Woman	77	31,6
Man	167	68,4
Secondary	60	24,6
Bachelor's degree	41	16,8
Master's degree	141	57,8
Other	2	0,8
20-30 years	48	19,7
31-40 years	113	46,3
41-50 years	69	28,3
51-60 years	13	5,3
above 60 years	1	0,4
0-5 years	39	16,0
6-10 years	73	29,9
11-20 years	98	40,2
21-30 years	31	12,7
above 30 years	3	1,2
criminal	48	19,7
investigation	19	7,8
prevention	163	66,8
support	14	5,7

Source: results based on the research.

EMOTIONAL EXHAUSTION

Subjective belief in the high impoverishment of their own emotional resources, the reason for which is the excessive emotional burden associated with the work performed, translates into the process of its exhaustion. Below, the obtained results of research on this factor (phase) of burnout are analyzed. A person feels overburdened both emotionally and physically. He is unable to relax and regain his strength. When he/she wakes up in the morning he is as tired as in the evening when he went to bed. He/she feels emptiness, lack of energy, fatigue, unwillingness to work and irritability. There is a lack of enthusiasm for action and unwillingness to face another project or another person.

There is a loosening of emotional bonds, a loss of a sense of closeness and attachment. Exhaustion is the first reaction to stress resulting from professional requirements or a big change.

The analysis of the obtained results began with the determination of the relationship between emotional exhaustion, gender and age of the surveyed officers / women officers from KMP in Krakow.

Table 2. *Emotional exhaustion, sex and age of the surveyed women*

Level of exhaustion Age	high		medium		low		total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
20-30 years	0	0	23	92	2	8	25	10
31 – 40 years	6	15	34	85	0	0	40	100
41- 50 years	5	41,7	7	58,3	0	0	12	100
51 – 60 years	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100
60 ≥	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100
Total	11	14,3	64	83,1	2	2,6	77	100

Source: results based on the research.

Table 3. *Emotional exhaustion, sex and age of the surveyed men*

Level of exhaustion Age	high		medium		low		total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
20-30 years	2	8,7	19	82,6	2	8,7	23	100
31 – 40 years	14	19,2	56	76,7	3	4,1	73	100
41- 50 years	7	12,3	44	77,2	6	10,5	57	100
51 – 60 years	1	7,7	11	84,6	1	7,7	13	100
60 ≥	0	0	1	100	0	0	1	100
Total	24	14,4	131	78,4	12	7,2	167	100

Source: results based on the research.

Of the 77 women surveyed, a high level of emotional exhaustion reaches 11. All are located in the age ranges of 31 – 40 years and 41 – 50 years. The average level of emotional exhaustion is characterized by 64 women (83.1% of 77), including the most at the age of 20 – 30 years (92% of 23) and 31 – 40 years (85% from 40).

It should be noted that the low level of emotional exhaustion is presented only by 2 women, who are 20 – 30 years old.

Among men, a high level of emotional exhaustion is appropriate for 24 respondents, among which the most (19.2% of 73) is in the range of 31 – 40 years. The average level of exhaustion is not differentiated by age, because in each of them there are from 76.7 to 84.6%. It should be added that the low level of exhaustion is shown by 12 men, the most of which (10.5% of 57) is between the ages of 41 and 50 years.

Differentiation of emotional exhaustion due to age (in relation to the number in individual age ranges) is presented in Table 4.

Table 4. *Level of the emotional exhaustion of men and women in relation to the age range*

Age \ Level of exhaustion	high		medium		low	
	W	M	W	M	W	M
20-30 years	0	8,7	92	82,6	8	8,7
31 – 40 years	15	19,2	85	76,7	0	4,1
41- 50 years	41,7	12,3	58,3	77,2	0	10,5
51 – 60 years	0	7,7	0	84,6	0	7,7
60 ≥	0	0	0	100	0	0

Source: results based on the research.

Table 5. *Emotional exhaustion, sex, women's education*

Education \ Level of exhaustion	high		medium		low		total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Secondary	4	25	11	68,7	1	6,3	16	100
Bachelor's degree	1	5,5	16	89	1	5,5	18	100
Master's degree	6	14	37	86	0	0	43	100
Total	11	14,3	64	83,1	2	2,6	77	100

Source: results based on the research.

Table 6. *Emotional exhaustion, sex, men's education*

Level of exhaustion Education	high		medium		low		total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Secondary	8	18,2	33	75	3	6,8	44	100
Bachelor's degree	3	13	17	74	3	13	23	100
Master's degree	13	13,3	79	80,6	6	6,1	98	100
other	0	0	2	100	0	0	2	100
Total	24	14,4	131	78,4	12	7,2	167	100

Source: results based on the research.

The second socio-demographic feature that translates into the level of emotional exhaustion is (may translate into) education. The results obtained for the above are provided in Tables 5 and 6.

Most often, emotional detachment occurs in women at the secondary level (83.1 % of officers surveyed), secondary undergraduate education – 89 %, master's degree – 86 % and secondary – 68.7 %. It looks very similar in men, the average level is declared by 78.4 % of police officers surveyed.

Table 7. *Emotional exhaustion and sex and education of the surveyed woman and men*

Level of emotional exhaustion Education	high		medium		low	
	W	M	W	M	W	M
Secondary	25	18,2	68,7	75	6,3	6,8
Bachelor's degree	5,5	13	89	74	5,5	13
Master's degree	14	13,3	86	80,6	0	6,1
other	0	0	00	100		0

Source: results based on the research.

Very similar results can be seen in connection with emotional exhaustion, and gender and education of the respondents. Among the women and men, the highest values are at the secondary level with a master's degree.

The level of emotional exhaustion is undoubtedly influenced by the length of service, especially when it is carried out in uniformed service. Tables 8 and 9 show the results of studies on this factor, with reference to the length of service.

Table 8. *Emotional exhaustion and women's length of service*

Level of emotional exhaustion Length of service	high		medium		low		total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
0-5 years	0	0	17	94,4	1	5,6	18	100
6-10 years	5	16,7	24	80	1	3,3	30	100
11-20 years	5	20	20	80	0	0	25	100
21 – 30 years	1	25	3	75	0	0	4	100
30 ≥	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
total	11	15,6	64	84,4	2	1,2	77	100

Source: results based on the research.

Table 9. *Emotional exhaustion and men's length of service*

Level of emotional exhaustion Length of service	high		medium		low		total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
0-5 years	3	14,2	17	81	1	4,8	21	100
6-10 years	3	7	36	83,7	4	9,3	43	100
11-20 years	14	19,2	54	74	5	6,8	73	100
21 – 30 years	3	11,1	23	85,2	1	3,7	27	100
30 ≥	1	33,3	1	33,3	1	33,3	3	100
total	24	14,4	131	78,4	12	7,2	167	100

Source: results based on the research.

The respondents see a very worrying phenomenon, where women are exhausted from work at an average level of 94.4 % already in the range of 0-5 years of work experience, while men 83.7 % about work experience 6 – 10 years.

Table 10. *Women's emotional exhaustion and an employment division*

Level of emotional exhaustion Employment division	high		medium		low		total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
criminal	5	23,8	16	76,2	0	0	21	100
investigation	3	42,8	4	57,2	0	0	7	100
prevention	3	6,5	42	91,3	1	2,2	46	100
support	0	0	2	66,7	1	33,3	3	100
total	11	14,3	64	83,1	2	2,6	77	100

Source: results based on the research.

Table 11. *Men's emotional exhaustion and an employment division*

Level of emotional exhaustion Employment division	high		medium		low		total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
criminal	3	11,1	24	88,9	0	0	27	100
investigation	0	0	11	91,7	1	8,3	12	100
prevention	20	17,1	86	73,5	11	9,4	117	100
support	1	9,1	10	90,9	0	0	11	100
total	24	14,3	131	78,5	12	7,2	167	100

Source: results based on the research.

The last factor/feature that can generate emotional exhaustion is the type of service performed. As for the relationship between emotional exhaustion and the service division, most women – 91.3 % feel it while performing tasks in the preventive division, while men in the investigative division – 91.7 %.

The second element of burnout syndrome is a reduction in the sense of personal achievement interchangeably called the sense of work value. It refers to reduced feelings about professional success but also competences. It manifests itself in a decrease in self-competence and work efficiency. A person at this stage

perceives his situation in a bad and negative light. It notes an increase in the sense of inadequacy and lack of skills. There are problems with performing the tasks. Such a state can be intensified on the one hand by insufficient support of the environment, and on the other by the personal negligence of the employee.

This element has also been studied and analyzed. The relationship between the value of work and the age of the officers and officers examined is included in Tables 12 and 13.

Table 12. *Lowering the sense of success and women's age*

Age \ Lowering the sense of success	high		medium		low		total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
20-30 years	2	8	23	92	0	0	25	100
31 – 40 years	16	40	24	60	0	0	40	100
41- 50 years	8	66.7	4	33,3	0	0	12	100
51 – 60 years	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100
60 ≥	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100
total	26	33,8	51	66,2	0	0	77	100

Source: results based on the research.

Table 13. *Lowering the sense of success and men's age*

Age \ Lowering the sense of success	high		medium		low		total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
20-30 years	4	17,4	19	82,6	0	0	23	100
31 – 40 years	16	22	57	78	0	0	73	100
41- 50 years	21	36,8	36	63,2	0	0	57	100
51 – 60 years	7	53,8	6	46,2	0	0	13	100
60 ≥	0	0	1	100	0	0	1	100
total	48	28,7	119	71,3	0	0	167	100

Source: results based on the research.

The factor analyzed here is a reduced sense of own achievements in relation to the age of women and men. The highest number in women is 66.2 % at the average level and 71.3 % of men also at this level. Among the women, the highest results were 92.0% (20 – 30 years), 63.2 % (31 – 40 years) and 46.2 % (41 – 50 years),

while among the men it looked as follows: 83.3 % (20-30 years), 78.0 % (31 – 40 years), as well as 63.2 (41 – 50 years). There are no low results.

Table 14. *Lowering the sense of success and women education*

Lowering the sense of success Education	high		medium		low		total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
secondary	4	25	12	75	0	0	16	100
Bachelor's	3	16,7	15	83,3	0	0	18	100
Master's	19	44,2	24	55,8	0	0	43	100
other	26	33,8	51	66,2	0	0	77	100

Source: results based on the research.

Table 15. *Lowering the sense of success and men education*

Lowering the sense of success Education	high		medium		low		total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
secondary	9	20,5	35	79,5	0	0	44	100
Bachelor's	9	39,1	14	60,9	0	0	23	100
Master's	29	29,6	69	70,4	0	0	98	100
other	1	50	1	50	0	0	2	100
total	48	28,7	119	71,3	0	0	167	100

Source: results based on the research.

An important socio-demographic feature of , which undoubtedly has to do with a sense of success, and thus the perceived value of work is education. The highest scores in women are 83.3 % (bachelor education), 75 % (secondary education) and 55.8 % (master's education), in men it looks similar 79.5 % (secondary), 70.4 % (master's), 60.9 % (bachelor's). Here, in addition, we have another option in 50 % of the officers surveyed.

Table 16. *Lowering the sense of success (own achievements) and the lenght of service of women*

Lowering the sense of success Lenght of service	high		medium		low		total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
0-5 years	2	11,1	16	88,9	0	0	18	100
6-10 years	9	30	21	70	0	0	30	100
11-20 years	14	56	11	44	0	0	25	100
21 – 30 years	1	25	3	75	0	0	4	100
30 ≥	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100
total	26	33,8	51	66,2	0	0	77	100

Source: results based on the research.

Table 17. *Lowering the sense of success (own achievements) and the lenght of service of men*

Lowering the sense of success Lenght of service	high		medium		low		total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
0-5 years	4	19	17	81	0	0	21	100
6-10 years	8	18,6	35	81,4	0	0	43	100
11-20 years	22	30,1	51	69,9	0	0	73	100
21 – 30 years	14	51,9	13	48,1	0	0	27	100
30 ≥	0	0	3	100	0	0	3	100
total	48	28,7	119	71,3	0	0	167	100

Source: results based on the research.

The factor that reduces the sense of success is lenght of service. Based on the presented results, it can be concluded that the highest level of reduction in the sense of success has the highest number of women working in the profession from 21 to 30 years (51.9 %), on the average level, the highest number of women working from 0 to 5 years (88.9 %) and from 6 to 10 years (70 %). However, in the group of men, the highest level is achieved by officers working from 21 to 30 years (51.9 %), and an average level of a person with internship intervals of 6-10 and 0 – 5 years (over 80 %).

Table 18. *Lowering the sense of success and the employment of women*

Lowering the sense of success Employment division	high		medium		low		total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
criminal	12	57,1	9	42,9	0	0	21	100
investigation	4	57,1	3	42,9	0	0	7	100
prevention	10	21,7	36	78,3	0	0	46	100
support	0	0	3	100	0	0	3	100
total	26	33,8	51	66,2	0	0	77	100

Source: results based on the research.

Table 19. *Lowering the sense of success and the employment of men*

Lowering the sense of success Employment division	high		medium		low		total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
criminal	9	33,3	18	66,6	0	0	27	100
investigation	3	25	9	75	0	0	12	100
prevention	30	25,6	87	74,4	0	0	117	100
support	6	54,5	5	45,5	0	0	11	100
total	48	28,7	119	71,3	0	0	167	100

Source: results based on the research.

The last feature, which was adopted as a differentiating level of lowering the sense of success, is the employment division.

The data presented above indicate that the high level of reduction in the sense of success affects the most women (reference to the number of vertical employees) in the criminal and investigative service. On the other hand, the average level is reached by all women working in supportive services and most of the prevention. The high level of reduction in the sense of success is felt by the most men working in the auxiliary and criminal services,

while the average in the largest number is the competent employed in the investigative and prevention department.

Depersonalization, or dehumanization or distancing, refers to a specific individual's behavior toward others. This stage manifests itself in negative, cynical and excessive defensive distancing and loss of idealism. Interpersonal relations at work and not only lose their existing subjective character. It is expressed by distancing and ignoring people and their needs. In this phase, relationships with others lose their current character and become impersonal. There is a loss of well-being and the ability to work effectively. There is a cold attitude towards work and colleagues and cynicism, which according to Maslach (2011) to some extent is an attempt to protect oneself from exhaustion and disappointment in the sense that it is safer to be indifferent.

Table 20. *The level of depersonalization of women and their age*

Age \ Level of depersonalization	high		medium		low		total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
20-30 years	24	96	1	4	0	0	25	100
31 – 40 years	40	100	0	0	0	0	40	100
41- 50 years	12	100	0	0	0	0	12	100
51 – 60 years	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100
60 ≥	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100
total	76	98,7	1	1,3	0	0	77	100

Source: results based on the research.

The analysis of the obtained results in this area began with the determination of the relationship between depersonalization and gender. In women it looks very dangerous, because 100 % of the surveyed officers aged 31 – 40 and 41 – 50, while in men it looks even worse, because 100 % the occurrence of the phenomenon is declared by officers aged 20 – 30, 31 – 40 and 41 – 50. The results should be considered highly worrying.

Table 21. *The level of depersonalization of men and their age*

Level of depersonalization Age	high		medium		low		total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
20-30 years	23	100	0	0	0	0	23	100
31 – 40 years	72	98,6	1	1,4	0	0	73	100
41- 50 years	57	100	0	0	0	0	57	100
51 – 60 years	13	100	0	0	0	0	13	100
60 ≥	1	100	0	0	0	0	1	100
total	166	99,4	1	0,6	0	0	167	100

Source: results based on the research.

Table 22. *Depersonalization level and education of women*

Level of depersonalization Education	high		medium		low		total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Secondary	16	100	0	0	0	0	16	100
Bachelor's degree	17	94,4	1	5,6	0	0	18	100
Master's degree	43	100	0	0	0	0	43	100
Other	76	98,7	1	1,3	0	0	77	100

Source: results based on the research.

Table 23. *Depersonalization level and education of men*

Level of depersonalization Education	high		medium		low		total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Secondary	43	97,7	1	2,3	0	0	44	100
Bachelor's degree	23	100	0	0	0	0	23	100
Master's degree	98	100	0	0	0	0	98	100
Other	2	100	0	0	0	0	2	
Total	166	99,4	1	0,6	0	0	167	100

Source: results based on the research.

Subsequently, the relationship between depersonalization and education of men and women was analyzed. High levels are found in 97.7% of women and 99.4% of men. The highest percentage is women with secondary

education – 100 % and higher – 100 %, while in men undergraduate – 100 %, master's degree – 100 % and other – 100 %.

Table 24. *Depersonalization and the lenght of service of women*

Depersonalization level Lenght of service	high		medium		low		total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
0-5 years	18	100	0	0	0	0	18	100
6-10 years	29	96,7	1	3,3	0	0	30	100
11-20 years	25	100	0	0	0	0	25	100
21 – 30 years	4	100	0	0	0	0	4	100
30 ≥	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100
total	76	98,7	1	1,3	0	0	77	100

Source: results based on the research.

Table 25. *Depersonalization and the lenght of service of men*

Depersonalization level Lenght of service	high		medium		low		total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
0-5 years	21	100	0	0	0	0	21	100
6-10 years	43	100	0	0	0	0	43	100
11-20 years	72	98,6	1	1,4	0	0	73	100
21 – 30 years	27	100	0	0	0	0	27	100
30 ≥	3	100	0	0	0	0	3	100
total	166	99,4	1	0,6	0	0	167	100

Source: results based on the research.

Another issue that was taken into account was the level of depersonalization and its relationship with lenght of the service. The relationship between these variables was noted, in women a high level of the phenomenon shows 98.7 % of respondents, in men 99.4 %. There are no women or men at low levels. As for women, the highest results (100 %) are achieved by those who have an internship: 0 – 5, 11 – 20, 21 – 30 years of work experience, while men (100 %): 0 – 5, 6 – 10, 11 – 20, 21 – 30 years of experience.

Table 26. *Depersonalization and the type of service of women*

Depersonalization level Type of service	high		medium		low		total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
criminal	21	100	0	0	0	0	21	100
investigation	7	100	0	0	0	0	7	100
prevention	46	100	0	0	0	0	46	100
support	2	66,7	1	33,3	0	0	3	100
total	76	98,7	1	1,3	0	0	77	100

Source: results based on the research.

Table 27. *Depersonalization and the type of service of men*

Depersonalization level Type of service	high		medium		low		total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
criminal	27	100	0	0	0	0	27	100
investigation	12	100	0	0	0	0	12	100
prevention	116	99,1	1	0,9	0	0	117	100
support	11	100	0	0	0	0	11	100
total	166	99,4	1	0,6	0	0	167	100

Source: results based on the research.

The last analyzed dependence was the level of depersonalization, and the type of service performed in women and men. At a high level, it occurs in 98.7 % of women and 99.4 % of men. Among the women 100 % in criminal, investigative and preventive services, 66.7 % in support services, while among the men 100 % in criminal, investigative and supportive services, 99.1 % preventive.

Table 28. *Levels of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and a reduced sense of success of the surveyed officers/executions of the Municipal Police in Krakow*

Level Burnout syndrome's factor	high		medium		low		total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
emotional exhaustion	36	14,8	193	79,1	15	6,1	244	100
depersonalization	242	99,2	2	0,8	0	0	244	100
lowering the sense of success	74	30,3	170	69,7	0	0	244	100
Average statistical result	117,3		121,6		15			

Source: results based on the research.

The above table shows that the most respondents 99.2% are at a high level of depersonalization. A high level in the field of emotional exhaustion is presented by 14.8% of respondents and in the field of feeling a decrease in the sense of success 30.3% of respondents. It should also be noted that at a low level of depersonalization and a reduced sense of success there is not a single person.

RESULTS OF THE FINAL ANALYSIS

To sum up, it was decided to check what is the correlation between exhaustion, depersonalization and a reduced sense of success. To do this, the Pearson coefficient was used, which is presented in the table below.

Table 29. *The correlation between emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced sense of professional success*

Emotional exhaustion	Pearson	1	.285**	.687**
	Sig.		<.001	<.001
	N	244	243	244
Depersonalization	Pearson	.285**	1	.237**
	Sig.	<.001		<.001
	N	243	243	243
Reduction of the sense of success	Pearson	.687**	.237**	1
	Sig.	<.001	<.001	
	N	244	243	244

** The correlation is significant at 0.01 (bilateral)

Source: results based on the research.

The analysis revealed a strong positive correlation between emotional exhaustion and a reduced sense of professional achievement ($r = 0.687$; $p < 0.001$).

As mentioned above, gender in the profession of a policeman, due to its specificity, differentiates the functioning and performance of professional duties. Therefore, and at the same time due to the large difference in the number of groups of men and women, it was decided to use statistical analysis to determine the differences in their level of burnout.

Table 30. *Statistical analysis of differences in the level of burnout by gender*

(I) VAR00005	(J) VAR00005	Difference (I-J)	Error	Sig.	95% Confidence interval	
					Upper limit	Lower limit
.00	1.00	.0882	.03956	.078	-.0068	.1831
	2.00	-.0233	.03956	1.000	-.1182	.0717
1.00	.00	-.0882	.03956	.078	-.1831	.0068
	2.00	-.1114*	.03960	.015	-.2064	-.0164
2.00	.00	.0233	.03956	1.000	-.0717	.1182
	1.00	.1114*	.03960	.015	.0164	.2064

Statistical error = 191.

* The average difference is 0.05.

Source: results based on the research.

Table 30, based on the Bonferoni post-hoc test, shows large differences in the level of burnout in men and women. The calculations presented above clearly indicate that the scale of the phenomenon is much larger in the surveyed men than in women.

The research results presented above allow for statistical analysis, on the basis of which it is possible to determine the professional burnout of the surveyed officers of the Municipal Police Headquarters in Krakow.

Table 31. *Descriptive statistics*

Statystyki		W1	W2	W3	W4	W5	W6	W7	W8	W9	W10	W11	W12	W13	W14	W15	W16	W17	W18	W19	W20	W21	W22	Wyczerpanie	Wartosc	Depersonalizacja
N	Wzrost Braki danych	244	244	244	244	244	244	244	244	244	244	244	243	244	244	244	244	244	244	244	244	244	244	244	243	244
		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Średnia		2,33	2,29	2,60	2,60	2,65	2,57	2,40	2,98	2,75	3,07	2,65	2,82	2,75	2,50	2,02	1,83	2,09	2,14	1,93	2,20	2,18	1,98	22,0574	19,9012	12,9007
Błąd standardowy średniej		,065	,061	,064	,061	,069	,067	,064	,060	,066	,061	,066	,059	,063	,065	,054	,050	,055	,061	,053	,058	,058	,060	,28921	,16850	,14729
Mediana		2,27*	2,27*	2,63*	2,60*	2,69*	2,58*	2,37*	3,08*	2,82*	3,20*	2,67*	2,84*	2,78*	2,49*	1,96*	1,79*	2,05*	2,08*	1,85*	2,18*	2,13*	1,87*	21,9250*	19,0260*	12,5882*
Dominanta		2	2	3	3	4	2	2	4	3	4	2	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	25,00	20,00	14,00
Odchylenie standardowe		1,019	,957	,999	,957	1,076	1,053	1,007	,942	1,037	,949	1,037	,923	,980	1,020	,836	,781	,856	,948	,829	,905	,901	,938	4,51755	2,62665	2,30071
Wariancja		1,037	,915	,999	,916	1,158	1,110	1,015	,888	1,075	,901	1,076	,851	,960	1,041	,699	,610	,733	,899	,687	,820	,812	,880	20,408	6,899	5,293
Skosność		,287	,184	-,149	-,085	-,149	-,058	,175	-,516	-,274	-,714	-,110	-,237	-,204	-,047	,480	,670	,382	,339	,692	,229	,359	,562	-,061	-,168	-,344
Błąd standardowy skosności		,156	,156	,156	,156	,156	,156	,156	,156	,156	,156	,156	,156	,156	,156	,156	,156	,156	,156	,156	,156	,156	,156	,156	,156	,156
Kurtioza		-	-,928	-,930	-	-	-	-,723	-	-,476	-	-,882	-	-	-,370	-,025	-,534	-,882	,042	-,805	-,639	-,705	-,274	,729	,218	
		1,014	1,027	1,250	1,201	1,040	1,111	1,171	1,019	1,110																
Błąd standardowy kurtiozy		,310	,310	,310	,310	,310	,310	,310	,310	,310	,310	,310	,310	,310	,310	,310	,310	,310	,310	,310	,310	,310	,310	,310	,310	,310
Rozstęp		3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	24,00	19,00	14,00
Minimum		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9,00	8,00	5,00
Maksimum		4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	33,00	27,00	19,00

Source: results based on the research.

The presented statistics allow to conclude that the greatest differences occur as a result of general and depersonalization. The skewness parameter clearly indicates that the results obtained in the study group have a distribution similar to normal.

In the conducted research, there were no statistically significant differences in the analyzed variables between police officers representing different police departments, as well as depending on gender, age, education and seniority, which allowed to make calculations for the entire group of respondents, ie 244 officers. The calculations were made using the variance analysis method (ANOVA), the Pearson factor, the Bonferroni post-hoc test and IBM SPSS Statistics 26.

DISCUSSION

The phenomenon of occupational burnout among police officers has been the subject of numerous scientific studies due to the specific nature of police service, which is associated with constant exposure to stress, responsibility for the safety of others, shift work, and frequent contact with difficult and traumatic situations. The results obtained in the present study indicate the occurrence of burnout symptoms among officers of the Municipal Police Headquarters in Kraków, particularly in the dimensions of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced sense of personal accomplishment.

The analysis demonstrated that emotional exhaustion was present at a medium level in the majority of respondents, regardless of gender, age, education, or length of service. Similar findings were obtained by McCarty et al. (2019), who reported moderate levels of emotional exhaustion among police officers and indicated that occupational stress remains one of the primary predictors of burnout.

These findings are consistent with previous studies conducted among police officers, which indicate that emotional exhaustion is one of the most common manifestations of occupational burnout in uniformed services. Similar relationships between occupational stress and burnout dimensions were identified among Polish police officers (Baka, 2015).

Ogińska-Bulik (2003) emphasized that long-term exposure to occupational stress among police officers contributes significantly to emotional overload and gradual depletion of psychological resources.

The results also revealed a very high prevalence of depersonalization among the surveyed officers. This finding should be interpreted with caution due to its exceptionally high level compared with results reported in previous studies.

According to Papazoglou and Tuttle (2018), depersonalization may develop as a psychological defense mechanism protecting police officers from chronic exposure to traumatic and emotionally demanding situations. The obtained results are generally consistent with previous studies conducted among police officers in Europe and North America (Violanti et al., 2017; Queirós et al., 2020).

Nevertheless, the tendency toward emotional distancing, cynicism, and reduced interpersonal engagement has been identified in earlier research as a common coping mechanism among police officers exposed to chronic occupational stress. According to Maslach (2010), depersonalization often develops as a psychological defense strategy aimed at protecting individuals from emotional overload and professional frustration.

Another important finding concerns the reduced sense of personal accomplishment. Although the majority of respondents reported a moderate level of this dimension, a considerable proportion demonstrated a high level of reduced professional efficacy. Similar observations have been reported by other researchers, who found that prolonged exposure to organizational stressors, excessive workload, and limited opportunities for professional development may negatively affect job satisfaction and perceived effectiveness among police personnel.

The statistical analyses conducted in the present study demonstrated significant relationships between the dimensions of burnout syndrome. In particular, emotional exhaustion was strongly associated with a reduced sense of personal accomplishment. This observation corresponds with the multidimensional model of burnout proposed by Maslach and Jackson, according to which emotional exhaustion constitutes the central component of burnout and may subsequently lead to depersonalization and decreased professional effectiveness.

The findings obtained in this study are generally consistent with previous national and international research indicating that police officers constitute a professional group particularly vulnerable to occupational burnout. Similar conclusions were presented by Syed et al. (2020), whose review identified police personnel as one of the occupational groups most exposed to mental health problems and burnout symptoms. Research conducted by Purba and Demou (2019) demonstrated that organizational stressors, workload and lack of institutional support significantly increase the risk of burnout among law enforcement personnel.

However, some of the observed results, especially those related to depersonalization levels, differ from findings reported in the literature and may require further verification in future studies conducted on larger and more diverse samples.

The study has several limitations. First, the research was conducted within a single police unit, which limits the generalizability of the findings. Second, the cross-sectional design does not allow for the assessment of changes in burnout levels over time. Third, the use of self-report questionnaires may involve subjective assessment and response bias. Future research should include a larger sample of police officers representing different organizational units and regions, as well as longitudinal analyses enabling the identification of changes in occupational burnout over the course of service.

Despite these limitations, the study contributes to the growing body of knowledge concerning occupational burnout among police officers and highlights the need for systematic preventive measures aimed at improving psychological well-being and occupational functioning within police organizations.

CONCLUSIONS, INNOVATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

The aim of this study was to determine the level of occupational burnout among police officers serving at the Municipal Police Headquarters in Kraków and to identify relationships between burnout dimensions and selected socio-demographic characteristics.

The obtained results indicate that occupational burnout is a significant phenomenon among the surveyed police officers. The majority of respondents demonstrated a moderate level of emotional exhaustion and a moderate reduction in the sense of personal accomplishment. At the same time, the highest values were observed in the depersonalization dimension, which may indicate a tendency toward emotional distancing and reduced interpersonal engagement in professional duties.

The findings confirm that occupational burnout among police officers is a multidimensional phenomenon and remains closely associated with the specific nature of police service. The conducted analyses revealed relationships between burnout dimensions and selected socio-demographic

variables, including age, education, length of service, and employment division. Emotional exhaustion and reduced personal accomplishment were particularly evident among officers with longer service experience, suggesting that prolonged exposure to occupational stressors may contribute to the development of burnout symptoms.

The results obtained in this study are generally consistent with previous national and international research indicating that police officers constitute a professional group exposed to elevated levels of occupational stress and burnout. The demanding nature of police work, responsibility for public safety, exposure to traumatic events, and organizational pressures may significantly affect officers' psychological well-being and professional functioning.

From a practical perspective, the findings highlight the need to implement systematic preventive measures within police organizations. Particular attention should be paid to regular psychological support, stress management training, mental health monitoring, and programs aimed at strengthening resilience and coping strategies among police officers. Organizational interventions focused on improving the work environment and reducing occupational stressors may also contribute to lowering the risk of burnout.

The present study has several limitations. First, the research was conducted within a single police unit, which limits the possibility of generalizing the findings to the entire population of police officers in Poland. Second, the study was based on self-reported data, which may be influenced by subjective perceptions and response bias. Third, the cross-sectional design does not allow for the assessment of changes in burnout levels over time.

Future research should include larger and more diverse samples of police officers representing different organizational units and regions of the country. Further studies should also focus on identifying factors contributing to occupational burnout and evaluating the effectiveness of preventive and intervention programs designed to improve officers' mental health and professional well-being.

In conclusion, occupational burnout remains an important challenge for contemporary police organizations. Continuous monitoring of burnout symptoms and the implementation of evidence-based preventive measures may contribute to improving both the quality of police service and the psychophysical well-being of officers.

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