

# Research on Job Burnout and Countermeasures of Teaching Secretary in Applied Undergraduate Colleges and Universities

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**Abstract:** Teaching secretary, a crucial component of the current teaching management team in colleges and universities, bridges the gap for communication and exchanges between students and teachers, faculties and schools, departments and administration sections. Their working status directly affects the improvement of the overall teaching quality of colleges and universities. Targeting at teaching secretaries in applied undergraduate colleges and universities, this paper expounded their specific job burnout and causes at length, and listed feasible countermeasures from angles of education concept, guiding principle for education, management policy, etc.

**Keywords:** Teaching Secretary, Job Burnout, Countermeasures

## 1. Introduction

A higher threshold for college students has been raised in all walks of life as China has sustained social economy and made progress in higher education. Similarly, a string of requirements for the professional quality and working attitude of teaching secretaries are proposed since colleges and universities are facing a new external environment in terms of teaching management. In addition to heavy workload, lack of policies to back their promotion and professional title evaluation, plus frequent overtime working arrangement, as well as stress from continuing education have led them to tension, insomnia, and irritability, resulting in job burnout of varying degrees, amid the continuous advancement of personnel reform in domestic colleges and universities<sup>[1]</sup>. Without targeted and timely guidance, it will surely bruise their enthusiasm and hamper the quest to sustaining teaching quality. In this regard, it is of great practical significance in-depth research and exploration on the job burnout of teaching secretaries in colleges and universities. That also makes a key issue to improve the human resource management of colleges and universities in all rounds as the domestic market economy has become a new norm.

## 2. Methods

In this study, by means of questionnaire survey and individual interview, the method of cluster random sampling was adopted to sample the teaching secretaries of colleges and universities in Taian city. Finally, 215 questionnaires were recovered, of which 206 were valid, with an effective rate of 95.81%. In addition, through in-depth interviews with a number of teaching secretaries of different ages, academic qualifications, marital status and working time, we can understand their current work situation and know the opinions of teaching managers on their job burnout.

The questionnaire takes the Chinese version adapted by Lu Jiamei according to the Maslach teacher Burnout questionnaire (MBI-ES) as a reference, including emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, low sense of achievement three factors, 24 questions, using Likert 5-point scoring method, the score of each factor is the average score of all items of this factor, which is divided into the sum of factor scores. The higher the factor score and total score, the more serious the degree of job burnout experienced. In this study, SPSS16.0 was used for statistical analysis. According to the structure of the questionnaire, the author designs the interview outline, which is discussed by five anonymous experts and revised repeatedly, and the content validity is good.

### 3. Results and Discussion

#### 3.1 Analysis on the overall characteristics of Job Burnout of Teaching Secretaries in Colleges and Universities

On the whole, the total score of job burnout and the average score of the three dimensions are lower than the median score. Most of the teaching secretaries' evaluation of self-job burnout is mostly concentrated in the areas below the median score, but a small number of teaching secretaries' job burnout and the scores of various dimensions are higher than the median score. 27.58% of the staff experienced a serious sense of low achievement, 21% had serious depersonalization, and 15.53% had serious emotional exhaustion (Tab.1).

Table 1: General situation of job burnout of teaching secretaries in universities (n=206)

Dimension	Average score	Standard deviation	Less than 2 points(%)	2-3 points(%)	More than 3 points(%)
Emotional exhaustion	2.09	0.59	42.59	41.88	15.53
Depersonalization	2.44	0.67	19.63	59.37	21.00
Low sense of achievement	2.51	0.55	21.36	51.06	27.58

#### 3.2 The manifestation of Job Burnout of Teaching Secretaries in Colleges and Universities

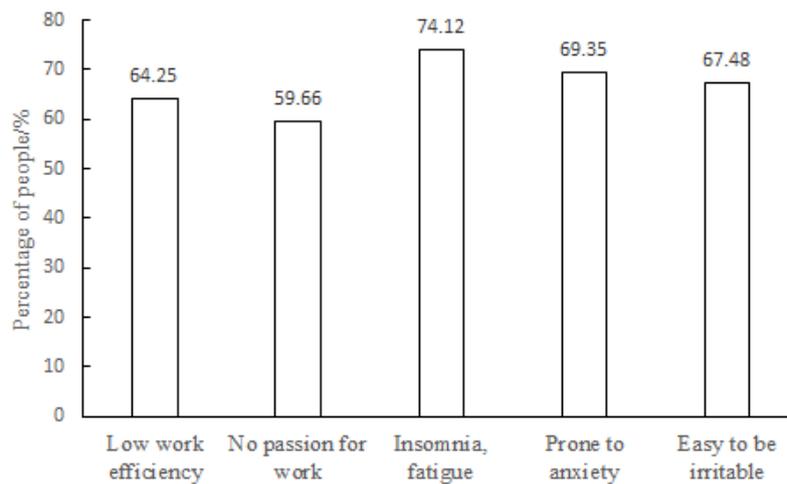


Figure 1: The manifestation of Job Burnout of Teaching Secretaries in Universities

The survey found that the performance of job burnout of teaching secretaries in colleges and universities is that the completion of daily work is inefficient and procrastination can be procrastinated; secondly, the work is perfunctory and without passion; finally, it is easy to lose control and lose interest in any job neglect to deal with interpersonal relationships, moody (Fig.1). The physical and psychological performance is that the body is in a state of sub-health for a long time, insomnia, fatigue, and it is easy to get sick. Secondly, it is easy to be anxious, feel full of pressure at work, serious psychological burnout, and spread to life. Finally, it is often in irritability and easy to lose your temper.

#### 3.3 Analysis on the causes of Job Burnout of Teaching Secretary

With the application-oriented transformation of colleges and universities, great changes have taken place in the mode of talent training, the mode of teaching management has also changed, the focus of teaching management has shifted downward, and the weight of each branch in teaching management has increased. Teaching secretaries have more and more workload in teaching affairs, work intensity increases, work responsibility is heavier, and hard work and emotion can not be rewarded and recognized. The body and mood are in a state of exhaustion for a long time, so the teaching secretary has varying degrees of job burnout. The author, based on personal experience and face-to-face interviews with colleagues, concluded the following causes liable.

### ***3.3.1 Complicated and heavy workload and stressful mental pressure***

A prodigious amount of work falls on shoulders of teaching secretaries, in addition to already heavy daily work and management of thousands of students amid the continuous advancement of teaching reform in domestic colleges and universities. They are primarily responsible to the teaching dean, assist in tasks assigned by the Academic Affairs Office. In this case, they have to take practical and effective measures to ensure the teaching order and aid the orderly development of teaching activities. In addition, communication and coordination of various matters also do their duties. Simply put, the daily work they face are multifarious and overwhelming, they are under great pressure and are easy to suffer from job burnout.

### ***3.3.2 Intense work and unacknowledged by society***

Teaching secretaries deal with a lot of complicated work every day, letting alone frequent overtime schedule, and huge work responsibilities, especially in the case of teaching accidents, graduation, etc. which doubles work intensity and puts them in a state of anxiety and tension for a long time. However, these efforts have not earned them deserved attention from both society and the school. Neither their efforts nor achievements made at work are affirmed and recognized. Without intervention, their enthusiasm will be seriously eroded, leading to job burnout.

### ***3.3.3 Severely-hampered career development***

Squeezed by burdensome daily tasks, they barely have time to reflect on their work. In the context of a normalized market economy, colleges and universities have put a great deal of resources on full-time teachers and middle and high-level administrative personnel, leaving limited resources and conditions behind for the professional development of teaching secretaries. They face difficulty in job transfer, professional titles assessment, and suffer from great fall in wages and benefits, judging from conditions given above. Therefore, job burnout by surging stress from balancing teaching tasks and teaching and research activities no longer seems to be hard-to-explain.

### ***3.3.4 The problem of role conflict is prominent***

According to the analysis of the questionnaire, the average role pressure of teaching administrators in colleges and universities belongs to the middle level, while the average pressure of role conflict is 3.62, which is higher than the middle level. The teaching secretary's own management function and service function intersect, and some personnel lack a clear understanding of the role, so they are unable to perform the role behavior properly in their work. The teaching management work faces many kinds of personnel, at the same time, facing different role requirements and role expectations. Teachers' expectations of them are different from students' expectations of them, and the school's expectations of them and parents' expectations of them are also different. There is a contradiction between multiple role requirements and their own cognition and ability, which leads to the role conflict among teaching managers.

### ***3.3.5 The negative emotions are serious***

The survey results show that among the questionnaires related to job burnout of teaching administrators in colleges and universities, the average value of emotional exhaustion is 3.759, which is much higher than the average value. In colleges and universities, the educational background of teaching secretaries is generally lower than that of teachers and researchers in teaching and research posts, and the degree of respect in the unit is low. Teaching management requires a lot of communication between teaching managers and teachers and students. Teaching managers have been working in a mechanical, monotonous, high-pressure, high-intensity and high-density state for a long time. This also makes teaching managers, especially teaching secretaries, in a tense and negative emotional state for a long time.

## ***3.4 Feasible suggestions on improving the Job Burnout of Teaching Secretaries***

Job burnout, a key factor weakening the overall work quality and daily work attitude of teaching secretaries in colleges and universities, brings adverse impact on their physiology and psychology. Therefore, it deserves our due attention and demands targeted solutions.

### ***3.4.1 Realize information management and improve work efficiency***

Colleges and universities should fully develop and use campus network systems and management platforms to realize computer information management in an all-round way, so as to make teaching

management more efficient and convenient, so that teaching secretaries can handle general affairs through office systems. While giving the teaching secretary full authority to deal with, through the system task division and background monitoring to clarify and clarify the responsibilities of each position. This can liberate grass-roots teaching managers from a large number of mechanical work and improve their work efficiency.

#### ***3.4.2 Strengthen team building and do a good job in vocational training***

Only by strengthening the team building of teaching secretaries can we effectively enhance their social reputation. They should be covered on the agenda of professional construction as an important part of the higher education system. We should take the initiative to carry out targeted professional and skill training, and vigorously promote the selection and appointment system construction, attach great importance, comprehensively enhance their sense of job identity and belonging to the school, and minimize the negative impact of job burnout [2].

#### ***3.4.3 Perfect the incentive mechanism and open up promotion channels***

In the context of a normalized market economy, incentives of college teaching secretaries should be spiritual and material. We should build a professional title evaluation system in accordance with characteristics of their daily work, reasonably select evaluation indicators, and form a complete evaluation system integrating qualitative and quantitative evaluation. From this, their achievements could be truthfully evaluated, and material and spiritual incentives such as general commendation, honorary certificates, paid vacations, and annual bonuses should be given accordingly [3]. At the same time, we should clarify the promotion path, formulate a scientific and reasonable promotion system, and ensure that their hard work can drive their career development and gain a greater stage of self-worth realization.

#### ***3.4.4 Worship a positive attitude and coping with occupational pressure***

Despite heavy teaching management work on their shoulder, their position in the current higher education system is rather awkward. These problems requires college administrators to recognize the important role of the teaching secretary, apply practical methods and methods to help them better carry out work and study, and help teaching through training, symposium, face-to-face conversation and other means. So that they could hone their ability to withstand pressure and improve their career planning, better complete their own work, relieve occupational pressure, and engage in work with more enthusiasm [4].

## **4. Conclusion**

The performance of job burnout of teaching secretaries in colleges and universities is that the daily work is inefficient, the work is not passionate, the mood is easy to get out of control, and the body is in a state of sub-health, insomnia and fatigue for a long time. The main reasons for the job burnout of teaching secretaries are heavy work, high mental pressure, high work intensity and social disapproval, and strong limitations in career development. Based on this, this paper puts forward specific countermeasures and suggestions for four aspects: strengthening work cooperation, reducing work intensity, strengthening team building, doing a good job in vocational training, improving incentive mechanism, smoothing promotion channels, advocating positive mentality and alleviating professional pressure.

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