

Correlation analysis of the studied variables

The following stage of analysis is outlined below, showcasing the results of Pearson's r linear correlation for each of the three pairs of variables tested: the feeling of stress with burnout, the feeling of stress with stress coping styles and the stress coping styles with burnout. The results are presented in tables 2, 3 and 4, respectively. The above results indicate a strong positive correlation between exhaustion and disappointment as dimensions of burnout and the lack of awards at work ($r > .50$, $p < .001$) Additionally, only uncertainty related to work organization correlates with exhaustion, and this is a moderately strong relationship, while lack of control remains in a negative and weak correlation. The dimension of disappointment also maintains positive, moderate relationships with organizational uncertainty and a sense of responsibility, and a weak negative relationship with lack of control over work processes and outcomes. The perceived lack of professional effectiveness demonstrates a positive, moderate correlation with the greatest number of stressful work conditions, such as uncertainty, social contacts, a sense of responsibility, and lack of support, and a negative, moderate correlation with lack of control. The least correlation was observed between the dimension of lack of commitment to relationships and stress, with only two of its dimensions: uncertainty and lack of support, contributing to decreased involvement in interpersonal relationships. An interesting finding is the negative correlation between exhaustion, lack of professional effectiveness, and disappointment, and lack of control as an organizational stressor. The lower the sense of control experienced by the respondents at work, the less exhaustion, disappointment, and increase in professional effectiveness they experience. It is possible that awareness of the lack of influence over specific directions and outcomes of one's work is associated with the adoption of stress coping strategies that may help mitigate the effects of burnout. Subsequent analyses will verify the interrelationships between stressors and coping styles (Table 3). Początek formularza

Table 3. Correlations between the subjective sense of stress and styles of coping with stress

Variables	Task-focused style	Emotion-focused style	Avoidance-focused style
Mental burden	-.10	.00	.00
No awards	-.11	-.19	.10
Feeling of uncertainty	.03	.00	.30**
Social contacts	-.25*	.17	.35**

cont. tab. 3

Variables	Task-focused style	Emotion-focused style	Avoidance-focused style
Sense of danger	.14	-.01	-.23
Physical nuisance	.06	-.16	-.28*
Unpleasant work conditions	.08	.18	.11
Lack of control	-.05	-.15	-.41***
Lack of support	-.10	.02	.07
Sense of responsibility	-.01	-.05	-.03
Sense of stress – Total	-.09	-.05	.13

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

The results in Table 3 indicate three interrelationships - a negative and moderate one between lack of control at work and avoidance-focused coping style, a weak positive one between the stressfulness of social contacts and avoidance coping style, and a weak negative one between physical nuisance and avoidance coping style. It appears that as the frequency of using the avoidance coping style increases, the stressfulness of the lack of control over the course and outcomes of one's work decreases, as designers distance themselves from this source of stress. Conversely, employing the avoidance coping style intensifies the sense of uncertainty related to work organization and stress associated with social contacts. Finally, physical nuisance at work is weakly and negatively associated with the avoidance coping style, indicating that its use is linked to a lower perception of physical discomfort.

The last analysis of correlations concerns coping styles and burnout. The results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Correlations between the style of coping with stress and burnout

Variables	Psycho-physical exhaustion	Lack of commitment to relationships	Lack of professional effectiveness	Disappointment
Task-focused style	.02	.23*	-.06	-.03
Emotion-focused style	-.17	-.28*	.21	-.20
Avoidance focused style	.14	-.07	.33*	.11

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

The above analyses reveal one moderate and positive relationship: between the avoidance-focused coping style and the lack of professional effectiveness ($r = .33$, $p < .05$). Moreover, this style does not appear to be significantly associated with other dimensions of burnout. On the other hand, as the use of emotion-focused coping style increases, albeit to a weak extent, commitment to relationships also increases ($r = -.28$, $p < .05$), and frequent utilization of task-focused style is weakly linked to a decrease in involvement in relationships ($r = .23$, $p < .05$). It seems that the more individuals focus on their own experiences, the more they maintain relationships with others, whereas when employing task-oriented styles, thus confronting stressors directly, they engage less in interpersonal relationships. Given the weak interdependencies, caution should be exercised in interpreting the results, although it is worthwhile to replicate them in a larger sample due to the emerging interesting patterns of relationships and their explanations.

Discussion

Burnout in the studied sample has reached the upper limit of average scores in each of its dimensions, and in the scope of two scales: lack of engagement in relationships and disillusionment, men significantly more frequently experience its effects. The results should be concerning, as they indicate that the stressfulness of work conditions as a necessary condition for the development of burnout may pose a significant threat to exacerbating burnout symptoms in the future. Differences in the portrayal of burnout between women and men confirm the heterogeneity of this process, where men more often employ distancing mechanisms from sources of stress, which may manifest as a loss of engagement in interpersonal relationships and cynicism. This, in turn, seems to be associated with a sense of disillusionment (Pines & Arnson, 1988; Maslach & Leiter, 2005). Further analyses confirmed the high stressfulness of most work conditions, such as: the sense of mental workload associated with its complexity, uncertainty regarding work organization, sense of responsibility, lack of rewards, lack of support at work, and social contacts. The convergence of these factors is not random and clearly presents the key dilemmas faced by the studied employees in the design industry. They are subject to strong pressure from external expectations, while simultaneously not receiving mitigating support or compensation in the form of rewards and reinforcements in the workplace. According to dominant burnout theories, the stronger the employee experiences mismatch in their relationship with work, the greater the risk of developing professional burnout (Demerouti et al., 2001; Maslach & Leiter, 2005; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Furthermore, women significantly experience more stress in interpersonal contacts (clients, colleagues), which is supported by research findings available in the literature indicating that women exhibit higher levels of friendliness and empathy than men. Consequently, they are more prone to exhaustion than symptoms of cynicism as a mechanism of distancing from relationships, which

is more frequently observed among men (Brookings et al., 1985; Busing & Perrar, 1991; Maslach & Jackson, 1981; Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998; Şek, 1994). The most common coping style with stress turned out to be avoidance-focused, prevailing over the others at an average frequency of use. The results also indicate heterogeneity among the participants—men significantly more often employ task-focused styles (i.e., confrontational styles), while women tend to use emotion-focused and avoidance-focused styles (non-confrontational styles). These findings largely align with those already present in the literature, suggesting that gender differentiates the frequency of coping strategies, with men predominating in active, problem-solving forms, and women in emotional expression and reducing unpleasant stress-related tension (Ogus et al., 1990; Poulin & Walter, 1993; Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998; Şek, 1994). Why, however, did the avoidance-focused coping style turn out to be the most common in the entire sample? Avoidance is one of the coping strategies in situations of frustration, when an individual's goals are thwarted by encountered obstacles. Frustration induces a state of disorganization and disorientation in decision-making and executive functions. When faced with insurmountable barriers, an individual may attempt to circumvent them, substitute one goal for another, or withdraw from action, which may take the form of avoiding confrontation with the source of stress (Cox, Griffiths, & Rial-Gonzales, 2000, 2016; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Maslach & Leiter, 2010, 2021; Tomaszewski, 1982). Given that the surveyed designers exhibit concerning levels of burnout symptoms—already hovering around high scores—in terms of exhaustion, disillusionment, loss of engagement in relationships, and diminished professional efficacy, it can be assumed that the predominance of avoidant coping styles may threaten further escalation of burnout. Avoidance strategies, when used over time, pose the highest risk in this regard (Şek, 2004; Terelak, 2005). Subsequent analyses aimed to answer questions about the interrelationships between stress, coping styles, and burnout in the studied sample. It was found that the use of task-focused coping style is weakly associated with a decrease in the stressfulness of social contacts, while the use of avoidant coping style is accompanied by an increase in uncertainty regarding work organization and the stressfulness of social contacts, and these are moderately strong associations. However, the strongest relationship concerns the correlation of the avoidant style with a lack of control over the course of work, the stressfulness of which diminishes with an increase in the frequency of avoidance coping style. When an individual distances themselves from sources of stress, the belief that they have little control over what happens at work ceases to be troublesome. This aligns with stress and coping theory, where the effectiveness of stress management depends on individual characteristics, the duration of the stress transaction, and the controllability of the stressful situation (Şek, 2004; Terry, 1994). If an individual has little influence on changing the conditions of their work, temporary use of non-confrontational styles (including avoidance) can provide relief and necessary distance helpful in ultimately devising coping strategies (Ogińska-Bulik & Juczyński, 2010; Suls & Fletcher, 1985).

The latest analyses focused on the relationships between coping styles and burnout in the studied sample. Task-focused styles were found to be associated with a weakening of engagement in relationships with others. Presumably, project development and responsibility for its outcome as a task become an exhausting challenge that can result in a weakening of interpersonal interactions. Conversely, emotion-focused style is associated with increased engagement in relationships, where through expression and dialogue, unpleasant tension related to occupational stress can be reduced. Finally, avoidance-focused style contributes to a loss of professional efficacy, thus posing a risk of burnout when used over the long term.

Conclusion

The most stressful factors experienced by employees in the creative industry include social contacts, sense of uncertainty caused by work organization, lack of rewards, sense of mental burden related to the complexity of work, sense of responsibility and lack of support. Social interactions were found to be a particularly significant stressor among women, which is the only gender difference in the level of stress experienced.

The conducted research confirmed that burnout syndrome affects creative employees in the design industry and their ability to cope with stress is insufficient. This prompts further research and dissemination of awareness of the risk factors of professional burnout and the need to develop methods and preventive actions to protect the health of creative, professionally active people. The importance of creativity for the development and achievements of civilization is enormous, which is why it is so important to provide creative individuals with optimal working conditions.

Translated by Author

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PODMIOTOWE I ORGANIZACYJNE
CZYNNIKI RYZYKA WYPALENIA ZAWODOWEGO
WŚRÓD PRACOWNIKÓW KREATYWNYCH BRANŻY PROJEKTOWEJ

Streszczenie. Cel. Niniejsze badanie ma na celu zbadanie współzależności między stresem, strategiami radzenia sobie i wypaleniem zawodowym wśród projektantów zajmujących się pracą twórczą w takich dziedzinach jak grafika, fotografia reklamowa, ilustracja, rysunek i rzeźba. **Grupa badana i narzędzia.** Grupa badana obejmowała 80 osób (40 kobiet i 40 mężczyzn) zajmujących się pracą twórczą. Zastosowano następujące narzędzia: Kwestionariusz wypalenia zawodowego (LBQ), Kwestionariusz radzenia sobie ze stresem (CISS) i Kwestionariusz subiektywnej oceny pracy (KSOP). **Rezultaty.** Wyniki badań wskazują na średni poziom stresu i wypalenia zawodowego. Zaobserwowano zwiększony poziom wyczerpania psychofizycznego, rozczarowania i braku skuteczności zawodowej w odniesieniu do czynników stresogennych, takich jak brak nagród w pracy, poczucie niepewności spowodowane organizacją pracy, zwiększone poczucie odpowiedzialności i kontakty społeczne. **Wnioski.** Interakcje społeczne okazały się szczególnie istotnym czynnikiem stresującym wśród kobiet, stanowiąc jedyną różnicę związaną z płcią w postrzeganym poziomie stresu. Ponadto stwierdzono, że kobiety częściej stosują style radzenia sobie skoncentrowane na unikaniu i emocjach, podczas gdy mężczyźni częściej preferują strategie radzenia sobie skoncentrowane na zadaniu.

Słowa kluczowe: stres organizacyjny, radzenie sobie ze stresem, wypalenie zawodowe, praca kreatywna, pracownicy branży projektowej

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