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**TEACHER SELF-EFFICACY, TEACHER BURNOUT AND
PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING**

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Abstract

The aim of the present paper was to examine the relationship between self-efficacy, burnout, and psychological well-being dimensions in a sample of Romanian teachers. The sample consisted of 217 school teachers, 197 females and 20 males, with ages ranged from 22 to 58. Results revealed positive lower correlations between teacher self-efficacy and the six psychological well-being dimensions. Teacher self-efficacy was significant and negatively correlated with exhaustion and depersonalization and positively correlated with personal achievement. Teachers with low and high level of psychological well-being dimensions significantly differ in their perceived self-efficacy and burnout components. Those who scored lower on autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance reported lower levels of perceived self-efficacy within the teaching profession. Also, teachers with lower scores of all psychological well-being dimensions reported higher level of exhaustion and depersonalization and had higher tendency of reduction their personal achievement and to demotivate facing to difficulties. The effect sizes were high. The findings and the limitations of the study were discussed.

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Keywords: Burnout, self-efficacy, well-being, teacher, teaching career.

1. Introduction

Different people react to stress and burnout differently. Teaching is generally considered a stressful profession and some teachers are more affected by burnout feelings than others along their teaching career. Maslach and Jackson (1981) defined burnout as a work-related stress, which is expressed both physically and mentally, described by three distinct dimensions: emotional exhaustion,

depersonalization and loss of the sense of personal accomplishment. Exhaustion refers to chronic emotional fatigue resulting from the different professional demands and responsibilities. Depersonalization is described by indifferent and negative attitudes toward students, detachment in relationships with students or colleagues, avoidance of social contacts, withdrawing into oneself. Depersonalization is similar with cynicism and loss of empathy in interpersonal relationships in professional contexts. Finally, personal achievement refers to the decreasing of personal effort to accomplish things as an effect of demotivation. The reducing personal achievement is associated with negative self-perceptions and feelings of unsuccessful and inadequate (Maslach & Jackson, 1981), and leads to lack of efficiency in achieving work goals. Conversely, feelings of low personal achievement can generate burnout.

Teacher burnout has examined by numerous empirical studies that have been carried out in with the aim to investigate the individual and school organization variables associated with burnout and its dimensions. Unless teachers could experience a great deal of burnout, most of them may cope efficiently with such work-related stress because are sustained by the self-efficacy ability in their adaptive efforts that are required to attain educational goals. The concept of self-efficacy was defined by Bandura (1977, 1997) as the people's beliefs in their capabilities to produce desired effects by their own actions. Self-efficacy beliefs are mediating between skills and actions. Teacher self-efficacy refers to particular teachers' beliefs in their own capabilities to efficiently perform various professional activities in educational settings. Perceived self-efficacy influences teachers' adequately functioning through cognitive, affective, motivational and selection processes (Bandura, 1997). Previous studies explored the relationship between teacher self-efficacy and teachers burnout (Brouwers, & Tomic, 2000; Evers, Tomic & Brouwers, 2004; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2008; Schwarzer, & Hallum, 2008). Researchers found strong relation between these variables (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2007). Teachers with low level of self-efficacy reported high degrees of burnout (Chwalisz, Altmaier, & Russell, 1992). Also, teacher self-efficacy beliefs were negatively related to emotional exhaustion and depersonalization dimensions of burnout and positively related to the personal accomplishment (Evers, Brouwers, & Tomic, 2002; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010). Similarly, teacher self-efficacy was examined as a predictor of teacher burnout (Friedman & Farber, 1992; Savaş, Bozgeyik, & Eser, 2009; Bayani, Bagheri, & Bayani, 2013) and as mediating construct between student behavior and burnout (Brouwers, & Tomic, 1999).

Psychological well-being is other variable that has been studied in relation to teacher burnout. Teachers significantly contribute to the development of the students' personality and their psychological well-being is important from the perspective of teaching profession effectiveness in order to achieve the educational goals. The concept of well-being generated a lot of scientific debates among researcher and practitioner psychologists. Well-being is a dynamic concept that includes subjective, social, and psychological dimensions as well as health-related behaviors. Ryff (1989) considered psychological well-being as individual's attempt to realize the own potential and conceptualized it as a multidimensional construct consisting of six dimensions: autonomy (the sense of independence and self-determination in thoughts and actions), environmental mastery (the sense of mastery and competence in managing the environment, the control of external activities in order to obtain benefits of surrounding opportunities), personal growth (the feeling of continued development, achieving the new experiences and realizing individual abilities), positive relations with others (the feeling of empathy, affection, and intimacy in

relations with others, the capacity to establish satisfying and trusting relationships with others), purpose in life (having goals in life, a sense of directedness, and believing that there is meaning in the past and present life), self-acceptance (positive attitude toward oneself and accepting the multiple aspects of self, including good and bad qualities, having positive feeling about the past life) (Ryff, 1989; Ryff, 1995; Ryff & Keyes, 1995). Review of scientific literature revealed that the study of well-being in teachers has been focused especially on teacher subjective well-being and its psychological correlates and less on psychological well-being aspects (Stanculescu, 2014). A number of studies examined the psychological well-being in teachers and its relationships with individual and school organization variables have been conducted (Damasio, Pimenteira de Melo, & Lustosa 2013; Refahi & al., 2015; Jantarapat, Suttharangsee, & Petpichechian, 2014; McInerney & al., 2014).

2. Purpose of the Study

The present study aims to investigate the relationships between self-efficacy, burnout, and well-being in a sample of Romanian teachers. The main objectives of the study are the following:

- To examine the relations between self-efficacy, burnout, and psychological well-being in teachers;
- To identify differences in teachers' self-efficacy and burnout depending on psychological well-being.

Arising from these objectives, the following hypotheses were tested:

H1. Teacher self-efficacy is positively correlated with psychological well-being dimensions.

H2. Exhaustion and cynicism are negatively correlated with psychological well-being dimensions, whereas personal achievement is positive correlated with psychological well-being dimensions.

H3. We presume differences in teacher self-efficacy depending on the level of psychological well-being.

H4. We presume differences in teachers' burnout depending on their psychological well-being.

3. Method

3.1. Participants

A total of 217 school teachers, 197 females and 20 males, with ages ranged from 22 to 58 (mean age=31.00, SD=9.32) participated in the study. 45 of participants were preschool teachers, 86 primary school teachers, and 86 secondary school teachers. Their teaching experience ranged from 1 to 34 years (mean age=7.65, S =7.72). 144 participants are from urban and 73 from rural environment.

3.2. Measures

Participants completed three self-reported instruments.

Teacher self-efficacy. Teachers' self-perception about their levels of efficacy was assessed using the Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale (TSES) (Schwarzer, Schmitz, & Daytner, 1999). The scale consists of 10 items (e.g. "When I try really hard, I am able to reach even the most difficult students"; "I am confident

in my ability to be responsive to my students' needs even if I am having a bad day"). Responses were given on a 4-point Likert scale from 1 (not at all true) to 4 (exactly true). The items are all positively worded and direct in the content. The final score was calculated as medium score of the items. The reliability of the scale measured by Cronbach's alpha coefficient was .78.

Teacher burnout. In order to measure burnout was applied Maslach Burnout Inventory - Educators Survey (MBI-ES), developed by Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter (1996). The instrument consists of 22 items divided in three subscales. The dimensions of burnout are the emotional exhaustion, measured by nine items, depersonalization, measured by five items, and the reduction of personal achievement consisted of eight items. Participants rated their responses on a 7-point scale from 0 ("never") to 6 ("every day"). The results consist of three separate scores, one for each factor. The scores of the subscales were calculated as mean scores of the items whereby each construct was measured. The overall score of the scale was calculated as a combination of high scores on the first two subscales and a low score on the third subscale that indicated high levels of burnout in teachers. Cronbach's alphas for the subscales were .75, .70, and .81, respectively. The subscale for personal achievement is different from the other two sub-scales because the scoring is reversed.

Well-being. In order to assess well-being, Psychological Well-Being Scales (PWB), was used. The scale, developed by Carol Ryff (1989), consists of 6 dimensions: autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance. The short 42-item version (Ryff, Keyes & Hughes, 2004), with 7 items for each subscale, was applied. Participants indicated their degree of agreement to various statements on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). The scores of the subscales were calculated as mean scores of the seven component items. Higher scores on each subscale indicated greater well-being on that dimension. The Cronbach's alphas for the subscales were 0.71 (autonomy), 0.74 (environmental mastery), 0.77 (personal growth), 0.785 (positive relations), 0.79 (purpose in life), and 0.805 (self-acceptance), respectively.

Participants with missing data on applied scales were removed from the sample. Participants received course credits for their participation.

4. Results

Means and standard deviations for all measures were calculated. Pearson correlation coefficients were computed to examine the associations between variables. Descriptive statistics and correlations between variables are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics and correlations of the variables

	m	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	TSE	3.70	.29	1								
2	EXH	.86	.68	-.15*	1							
3	CYN	.26	.46	-.13*	.45**	1						
4	PAC	5.26	.77	.45**	-.31**	-.25**	1					
5	MBI	-4.13	1.44	-.35**	.79**	.67**	-.76**	1				
6	AUT	4.56	.81	.25**	-.17**	-.13*	.26**	-.26**	1			
7	ENV	4.69	.71	.28**	-.35**	-.26**	.42**	-.48**	.53**	1		
8	GRO	5.01	.70	.38**	-.20**	-.28**	.44**	-.42**	.50**	.67**	1	
9	REL	4.95	.75	.35**	-.20**	-.26**	.38**	-.38**	.51**	.64**	.59**	1

10	LPU	4.93	.63	.26**	-.27**	-.24**	.37**	-.40**	.39**	.52**	.61**	.50**	1
11	SAC	4.73	.75	.30**	-.33**	-.21**	.44**	-.46**	.57**	.68**	.59**	.59**	.47**

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level. * . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.
 TSE-teacher self-efficacy, EXH-exhaustion, CYN-cynicism, PAC-personal achievement, MBI-MBI total score, AUT-autonomy, ENV-environmental mastery, GRO-personal growth, REL-positive relations, LPU-life purpose, SAC-self-acceptance

As can be seen in Table 1, results indicated significant positive low and medium correlations between teacher self-efficacy and all six psychological well-being dimensions. Significant negative low and medium correlations were obtained between exhaustion and all six psychological well-being dimensions. Also, cynicism and psychological well-being components have lower negative associations. Personal achievement was positive correlated with all psychological well-being dimensions. The teachers' overall score on MBI is negatively medium correlated with participants' score on TSE scale ($r = -.35$). Correlations between the MBI and its subscales are high: .79 (MBI and burnout subscale), .67 (MBI and cynicism subscale), -.76 (MBI and personal accomplishment subscale). Moreover, the teachers' mean score on exhaustion subscale was .86 (SD = .68) indicating a relative moderate degree of emotional exhaustion. The overall mean score on cynicism subscale was .26 (SD = .46) indicating a moderate to high degree of depersonalization. The teachers' overall mean score on personal accomplishment subscale was 5.26 (SD = 5.37) indicating a moderate degree of personal achievement.

Concerning the second hypothesis, based on the means on each psychological well-being subscale, the sample was divided in two subgroups: with low and high level on that psychological well-being dimension, respectively. To assess differences in teachers' self-efficacy and burnout depending on the level of psychological well-being, independent t-test was applied. r^2 coefficient of determination as indicator of effect size was calculated.

As can be seen in Table 2, results revealed significant differences in teacher self-efficacy ($m_1 - m_2 = -.12$, $p < .01$, $r^2 = .04$), burnout ($m_1 - m_2 = .32$, $p < .01$, $r^2 = .05$), depersonalization ($m_1 - m_2 = .14$, $p < .05$, $r^2 = .02$), personal achievement ($m_1 - m_2 = -.31$, $p < .01$, $r^2 = .04$), and the MBI total score ($m_1 - m_2 = .77$, $p < .001$, $r^2 = .07$) between teachers with low ($N_1 = 108$) and high autonomy ($N_2 = 109$).

Table 2. Results of independent t-test

	TSE		EXH		CYN		PAC		MBI	
	t	p	t	p	t	p	t	p	t	p
AUT	-3.16	.002	3.5	.001	2.33	.02	-3.01	.003	4.09	.000
ENV	-3.22	.001	2.96	.003	2.80	.006	-5.01	.000	5.06	.000
GRO	-3.76	.000	2.67	.008	3.64	.000	-4.90	.000	5.17	.000
REL	-4.25	.000	3.32	.001	4.02	.000	-4.75	.000	5.47	.000
LPU	-3.21	.002	2.98	.003	2.88	.004	-4.66	.000	4.93	.000
SAC	-4.39	.000	4.47	.000	3.20	.002	-5.15	.000	6.11	.000

Also, teachers with low ($N_1 = 104$) level of environment mastery differed from those with high level ($N_2 = 113$) in their perceived self-efficacy ($m_1 - m_2 = -.12$, $p < .01$, $r^2 = .04$), burnout ($m_1 - m_2 = .27$, $p < .01$, $r^2 = .04$), depersonalization ($m_1 - m_2 = .17$, $p < .01$, $r^2 = .04$), personal achievement ($m_1 - m_2 = -.51$, $p < .001$, $r^2 = .13$), and their MBI total score ($m_1 - m_2 = .96$, $p < .001$, $r^2 = .13$).

Concerning personal growth as dimension on psychological well-being, teachers with low ($N_1 = 108$) level differed from those with high level ($N_2 = 109$) in the perceived self-efficacy ($m_1 - m_2 = -.14$, $p < .001$, $r^2 = .06$), burnout ($m_1 - m_2 = .24$, $p < .01$, $r^2 = .04$), depersonalization ($m_1 - m_2 = .22$, $p < .001$, $r^2 = .06$),

personal achievement ($m_1-m_2 = -.49$, $p < .001$, $r^2 = .11$), and MBI total score ($m_1-m_2 = .96$, $p < .001$, $r^2 = .12$).

Teachers with low ($N_1=100$) positive relations with others reported different scores from those with high positive relations ($N_2=117$) in their perceived self-efficacy ($m_1-m_2 = -1.67$, $p < .001$, $r^2 = .08$), burnout ($m_1-m_2 = .30$, $p < .01$, $r^2 = .04$), depersonalization ($m_1-m_2 = .25$, $p < .001$, $r^2 = .07$), personal achievement ($m_1-m_2 = -.47$, $p < .001$, $r^2 = .11$), and their MBI total score ($m_1-m_2 = 1.03$, $p < .001$, $r^2 = .14$).

Similarly, teachers with low ($N_1=108$) purpose of life differed from those with high life purpose ($N_2=109$) in their perceived self-efficacy ($m_1-m_2 = -.12$, $p < .01$, $r^2 = .05$), burnout ($m_1-m_2 = .27$, $p < .01$, $r^2 = .04$), depersonalization ($m_1-m_2 = .18$, $p < .01$, $r^2 = .04$), personal achievement ($m_1-m_2 = -.46$, $p < .001$, $r^2 = .10$), and their MBI total score ($m_1-m_2 = .92$, $p < .001$, $r^2 = .12$).

Finally, teachers with low ($N_1=109$) and high ($N_2=108$) self-acceptance reported different levels of perceived self-efficacy ($m_1-m_2 = -.16$, $p < .001$, $r^2 = .09$), burnout ($m_1-m_2 = .40$, $p < .001$, $r^2 = .09$), depersonalization ($m_1-m_2 = .19$, $p < .01$, $r^2 = .04$), personal achievement ($m_1-m_2 = -.51$, $p < .001$, $r^2 = .12$), and their MBI total score ($m_1-m_2 = 1.11$, $p < .001$, $r^2 = .16$).

5. Discussion

The present study investigated the relationships between self-efficacy, burnout, and well-being in a sample of Romanian teachers. First, we calculated Cronbach's alpha coefficients to examine the internal consistencies of the used scales. All scales and subscales yielded acceptable internal consistencies, ranged from .70 (depersonalization-MBI) to .81 (personal achievement -MBI, self-acceptance- PWBS).

Results revealed that teacher self-efficacy is positively correlated with all six psychological well-being dimensions. Teacher self-efficacy was lowest correlated with autonomy and relatively medium correlated with personal growth and positive relations with others dimensions. Also, exhaustion and cynicism components are negatively associated with psychological well-being dimensions, whereas personal achievement has positive medium correlations with psychological well-being dimensions.

Concerning the relationships between self-efficacy and burnout components the findings has shown negative significant correlations with exhaustion and depersonalization and positive significant correlations with personal achievement. Thus, teachers with higher skills within the teaching profession might be characterized of lower levels of stress or symptoms of burnout and depersonalization or cynicism in interpersonal relations. These efficient teachers show to their students and/or colleagues more negative attitudes and professional empathy. Teachers who scored high on the entire MBI reported low levels of psychological well-being in each subscales, and conversely. The first our two hypotheses were supported.

In order to identify the differences between teachers with different job skills within the teaching profession *t*-test has been applied. Results indicated that teachers with low psychological well-being significantly differ than those with high psychological well-being in their perceived self-efficacy. Those with lower scores on autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance have lower perceived self-efficacy within the teaching profession. The effect sizes were medium and high. Also, were obtained differences in the level of teachers' burnout

depending on their psychological well-being as follows: teachers with lower autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance have higher level of exhaustion, and conversely. The effect sizes were medium. Similarly, teachers with lower autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance have higher level of depersonalization, and conversely. In other words, teachers who are higher self-determining and independent, possess a positive attitude toward the self, have satisfying relationships with others, goals in life, feelings of continued development and competence in managing the environment have significant lower levels of burnout and depersonalization than those with low autonomy and ability to develop new attitudes or behaviors, negative attitude toward the self, few goals or aims, difficulties in managing the environment and unsatisfied relationships with others.

With regard to the third component of burnout - personal accomplishment, our findings revealed that teachers with high well-being significantly differ than teachers with low psychological well-being. By comparison, teachers with lower autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance have higher tendency of reduction of their personal achievement and to demotivate facing to difficulties. The effect sizes were high in all cases. The last two hypotheses were supported.

6. Conclusions

The current study examined the relationship between teacher self-efficacy, teacher burnout and teacher's well-being in a Romanian sample. We found that teacher self-efficacy significantly related to teacher burnout and well-being dimensions, which is consistent with the previous studies.

This study has certain limitations. First, the findings are limited by the characteristics of the sample. All participants were teachers with different specializations but on the same south-east region of the country. Therefore, our findings cannot be generalized over all Romanian teachers. The second limitation refers to the instruments we used. The internal consistencies of the used scales and their subscales have acceptable or good internal consistencies but not high. The third limitation refers to the fact that present study focused on the relationships between few variables which have been already examined as relevant for teacher personality and teaching profession, consequently, the perspective of the study is simply descriptive. For these reasons, the findings of the present study are only a starting point for next prospective research focused on understanding teacher personality in the context of professional demands and responsibilities. On the basis of these results, could be testing explanative models of teacher burnout based on various variables relative to self. Secondly, findings of this study could provide possible directions to action against teacher burnout by prevention and intervention programs focused simultaneously on increasing teacher self-efficacy ability and psychological well-being.

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