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POTENTIAL OF TEACHER RESILIENCE BEFORE EDUCATIONAL CHANGES

*¹Vicente de Vera M. Inmaculada and ²Gabari M. Inés

¹Workplace Hazard Prevention PhD., Public University of Navarra (Spain)

²Psychology PhD., Public University of Navarra (Spain)

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ABSTRACT

The teacher's task imposes physical, mental, emotional and relational demands that in interaction with individual resources can negatively impact their health and well-being. The phenomenon of resilience is particularly important in the educational process because, after the family, the school is a key environment for acquiring the necessary skills to get ahead thanks to the ability of people to overcome the difficulties of life. The purpose of this study is to establish relationships between the perceptions of burnout and resilience in the participating teachers. It is a descriptive study carried out with the voluntary participation of a sample of teachers from the high school teachers Institutes of the Province of Huesca. Initially, 1268 teachers are invited, of which 334 responses are received. The statistical analysis involves a descriptive part and another with correlational and factorial study of the questionnaire. The results confirm that the personal characteristics and resilience of the person act as modulating variables against the burnout syndrome.

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INTRODUCTION

Studies of burnout in the teaching staff show that the decrease in resources dedicated to teaching and curricular changes (Longas, Chamarro, Riera and Cladellas, 2012), work overload (Rodríguez, Sola and Fernández, 2017), temporary pressures (López and Extremera, 2017), interpersonal conflicts (Carlotto and Cámara, 2017), little degree of autonomy (Burgos, Paris, Salcedo and Arriagada, 2018), role dysfunctions (Peña y Cantero, 2017), lack of role reciprocity (Fernández, 2017), among others, are related to the emotional fatigue of teachers (Llull, Cerdà and Pante, 2015; Berrocal, Cabello and Cobo, 2017). Moreover, the incidence of other external factors of the work environment, derived from the specific characteristics of the personality of the subject, family circumstances or the private and social life of the teacher, hinder the development of strategies of coping, which can lead to a decrease in their work, mental and physical activity, being the origin of disorders such as burnout (Murillo, Garrido and Hernández, 2016; Benetti, Goi, Dezordi, and Benetti, 2018; Vicente de Vera and Gabari, 2019). Additionally, the motivation of the teacher must be combined with very diverse circumstances (professional and non-professional) that pose a problem as

well as a challenge: the appearance of new functions, such as the use of ICTs and their teaching; attention to special educational needs or cultural diversity; challenges related to students, such as the need to solve behavioral and disciplinary problems, and the high levels of school dropout and failure (León, Domínguez, Núñez, Pérez y Martín, 2011). In this sense, it has been found that the same stressor agent does not cause the same effects in all individuals. Some subjects are more vulnerable than others to developing the syndrome, since this depends on the cognitive strategies that are available to solve problems, the type of professional exercise, and the development of protection factors linked to individual variables, such as the type of personality and attributes or features of it (Albar *et al.*, 2004, Vargas, Niño and Acosta, 2017; Peña, Raso y Ferrero, 2018). Among the individual resources that prevent the generation of burnout we find resilience, understood as: *a dynamic process that involves a positive adaptation in contexts of great adversity* (Luthar, Cicchetti and Becker, 2000: 543). The research states that resilience decreases vulnerability to burnout (Ornelas, 2016), with the ability to cope with stressors one of the key trends in resilience. In other words, the use of constructive coping strategies focused on the problem, prevents the development of the syndrome (Alarcón, 2018; Noreña, 2018); While the use of passive coping strategies focused on emotion, it facilitates its

*Corresponding author: Vicente de Vera M. Inmaculada

Doctora en Prevención de Riesgos Laborales, Universidad Pública de Navarra, Departamento de Ciencias Humanas y de la Educación, Edificio los Magnolios, Spain

emergence (Aldás, 2017; Félix, García and Mercado, 2018). Burnout appears when coping strategies are focused on emotion and avoidance. Recent studies underline that resilience improves or maintains professional efficacy (Villar, 2015). On the one hand, because the individual people perceive environmental demands as stressful and, on the other, because they strive more. That is to say, the lack of self-confidence in doing well the tasks increases the probability of suffering burnout (Vallejo, 2017; Dios, Calmaestra y Rodríguez, 2018). These beliefs have shown their predictive potential in the development of the syndrome. Emotional intelligence is another individual factor that explains that some people are more resistant to stressors because of their ability to perceive, understand and regulate both their emotions and those of others (González, González and San José, 2017). Renowned authors, such as Cassullo and García (2015) and Vélez, López and González (2017), point out that when teachers acquire emotional skills they are in a better position to interact with the students, with the rest of the teachers and with the families. The main objective of the work presented below is to check whether there is a relationship between the perception of burnout and resilience in the sample of teachers from the high school teachers Institutes of the Province of Huesca (Spain). As a secondary objective, it is to be noted that, given the individual differences in the implementation of coping strategies faced with threatening situations, the personal characteristics and resilience of the person are two outstanding modulators of the well-being of the faculty of this study. Finally, we consider the influence that the emotional regulation, as well as the levels of effectiveness perceived by the collective surveyed, exert against burnout.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The design of this study is transversal, framed within a descriptive and correlational model. The independent variable is the belonging to a teaching group of High school teachers of the province of Huesca. The dependent variables are the perceived levels of burnout and resilience.

Participants: The guest sample is composed of the high school teachers of the institutes of the province of Huesca belonging to the public education network in the 2017-2018 academic year (N=1268). The sampling criterion is voluntary participation. The acceptance sample is formed by 334 professors, which supposes a response of 26.34%.

Instruments: Upon request in conformity with the directors of the participating centres, the collection of information is carried out by means of an on-line questionnaire on the Google Drive platform, with a Licker type response scale that combines the items of two questionnaires:

1) Burnout is assessed by the scale Maslach burnout Inventory-General Survey of Schaufeli, Maslach, Leiter and Jackson (1996) in the Spanish version of Salanova, Schaufeli, Llorens, Peiró and Grau (2000). This scale consists of 15 items structured on a Likert type scale, with frequency range from never/no time (0) to always/every day (6). These items are distributed in the three construct scales: emotional exhaustion (5 items), which refers to the loss of emotional resources due to work (for example, item 1: "I am emotionally exhausted by my work; cynicism (4 items) that reflects indifference and distant attitudes toward work (for example, item 8: "I have lost interest in my work since I started in this position"), and

personal/professional effectiveness (6 items), which refers to the effectiveness perceived in the development of the work (for example, item 5: "I can effectively solve the problems that arise in my work"). High scores in exhaustion and cynicism and low scores in efficacy are indicative of burnout syndrome. In the original version of the MBI-GS, its authors find alpha coefficients of Cronbach ranging from .84 a .90 for exhaustion, from .74 a .84 for cynicism, and .70 a .78 for professional efficiency. High scores in exhaustion and cynicism and low scores in efficacy are indicative of burnout syndrome. In the original version of the MBI-GS, its authors find alpha coefficients of Cronbach ranging from .84 a .90 for exhaustion, from .74 a .84 for cynicism, and .70 a .78 for professional efficiency. In its adaptation to Spanish, the values of reliability of the scales according to Alpha of Cronbach are of .83 for exhaustion, .73 for cynicism and .81 for professional efficiency.

2) Resilience is assessed using Serrano Martínez's resiliency assessment questionnaire (2010), with 34 issues structured on a Likert-type scale, with five levels of resetting never (1) to always (5). The psychometric evaluation of the questionnaire evidences 8 items as inconsistent, so they are eliminated, being constituted the questionnaire with 25 reliable items to measure the construct resilience. Cronbach's alpha was adequate, from .845. The exploratory factor analysis is obtained a structure of five factors: sensitivity or coping emotional (6 items), overcoming or coping behavior (8 items), positivism or naive optimism (6 items), stereotyped thinking (4 items) and frustration tolerance (4 items). Also, sociodemographic information is collected in four variables (sex, age range, marital status and number of children), and the socio-labour in two others (age and stability: contracted, official, interim or substitute). It is decided not to request the identification of the work center to avoid a decrease in the level of response, traditionally low in these subjects.

Procedure: Telephone contact with the management teams of the schools requesting their collaboration to disseminate the questionnaire among teachers via email. A unique questionnaire is designed in Google Drive and it is done to reach all the invited professors along with the letter of presentation assuring the anonymity, as well as explaining the objective that is intended to obtain from the data collection. A one-month response time is established. A previous analysis is done to discard incomplete or erroneous questionnaires.

Data analysis: The relationship between the scores and the measured aspects between the factors of the factor extraction is measured by correlation coefficients. Only those variables that derive correlation in values of $p > .20$ are included. In the study, r values are taken into account with a statistical significance of $p = .01$ for the results to be sufficiently significant. For the statistical descriptive analysis, correlational and factorial analysis of the information, the statistical package SPSS version 22 is used. The factorial structure of the scales is verified by exploratory factor analysis (EPT) with rotation of the Varimax type. Prior to the performance of the factorial analysis, its adequacy was confirmed by the KMO index and the Barlett test.

RESULTS

The distribution of the sample is: 188 women (56.29%) and 146 men (43.71%). The age range varies between 22 and 65 years. The highest accumulated percentage is between 46 and

55 years old (38.92%), age range in which burnout cases usually emerge. With regard to marital status, teachers married or living in pairs predominate (73.65%), a characteristic that is also identified as a factor of protection, compared to singles (12.57%), although it is recorded 4.20% in other categories (widower, separated). It emphasizes the participation of the teachers with children; 66.47% of teachers have a child. Again we find a peculiarity that can act as a factor of protection in terms of resilience. As for the employment situation, 70.66% of the teachers are officials, labor stability that can contribute as a factor of protection in terms of resilience, but also falls into a work area where there are more problems related to the exhaustion. Teachers predominate with a teaching experience of more than twenty years (44.91%), an aspect that can act as a protective factor given the safety of work experience, but that can also have negative repercussions in terms of loss of harmony.

Table 1. Sociodemographic distribution of the accepting sample

Ages	Men	Women	Total	Percentage
Between 22 and 35 years	12	30	42	12.57
Between 36 and 45 years	44	64	108	32.34
Between 46 and 55 years	62	68	130	38.92
Between 56 and 65 years	28	26	54	16.17
Less than three years from	8	4	12	3.59
Three to five years from	12	10	22	6.59
Five to fifteen years between	26	70	96	28.74
Fifteen and twenty years	28	26	54	16.17
More than twenty years	78	72	150	44.91
Official	104	132	236	70.66
Hired	16	20	36	10.78
Interim	24	32	56	16.77
Substitute	2	4	6	1.79
Married or living a couple	108	138	246	73.65
Single	22	20	42	12.57
Others	4	10	14	4.20
Empty	12	20	32	9.58
No son	44	68	112	33.53
A son	30	44	74	22.15
Two children	56	64	120	35.93
Three children	14	10	24	7.19
More than three children	2	2	4	1.20

In relation to sociodemographic variables there are significant differences in the dimension emotional fatigue and personal/professional effectiveness depending on the sex variable ($p < .05$), appreciate higher rates of emotional exhaustion and lower levels of effectiveness in female teachers. With regard to the cynical dimension, no significant differences are found in relation to the sex variable. With respect to variable age range ($p < .05$), it is the strip of 36 to 45 years which obtains superior results in cynicism with 37.70%, in which the female sex predominates. Likewise, there are statistically significant differences in the variable age range ($p < .05$) With respect to the dimension personal/professional effectiveness, being equally the strip of 36 to 45 years the highest scores in effectiveness manifest. In the variable marital status ($p < .05$), significant differences were reported, resulting in more emotional exhaustion of married teachers, with 58.82% and, specifically, female sex. No significant differences are seen in any of the dimensions of burnout as regards the number of children. Finally, the professional state variable, presents significant differences in the personal/professional efficiency dimension, with the official teaching staff the highest scores obtained in that dimension. As far as resilience is concerned, the female sex participant in this study presents more resilient characteristics against the male. Teachers married or living as a couple are more resilient

compared to single or separate. In addition, the data report a higher percentage of resilient subjects with children. Also, the results indicate to the teachers of 46-55 years with more than 20 years of teaching exercise, with greater characteristics resilient compared to the other bands of age considered. Figure 1 shows a synthesis of the significant differences depending on the sociodemographic variables described

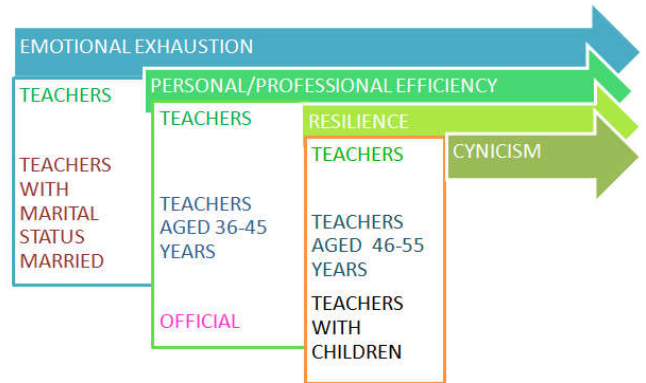


Figure 1. Resilience and burnout based on sociodemographic variables of the sample

As for the correction of the burnout questionnaire, it is carried out as established by the manual of Bresó, Salanova, Schaufeli and Nogareda (2007), so that the values of factors (exhaustion, cynicism and personal/professional effectiveness) are an average value. The results identify 4 cases that manifest burnout (2.40%), with elevated exhaustion and cynicism and low efficacy; 14 cases (8.38%) also appear with elevated exhaustion and cynicism and normal efficacy, which make it possible to suspect more cases (see Table 2). To know what percentage of teachers suffers burnout, also performs the correction of Burnout questionnaire through percentiles. Participating teachers present burnout rates below the 25th percentile. On the other hand, above the 25th percentile ($n=92$), positive values are obtained in efficacy. Also, to know what percentage of teachers is resilient, the median is used, knowing that corresponds to the 50 percentile. This indicates that there is a tendency to consider teachers who surpass it as potential resilient.

Table 2. Evaluation of burnout in teachers of Huesca

Burnout cases	n	Percentage	Burnout index
Burnout syndrome	4	2.40	High
No burnout effectively < 4	12	7.18	Under
No burnout with exhaustion > 5	32	19.16	Middle
No burnout with cynicism > 5	18	10.78	Middle
No burnout with exhaustion > 5 and cynicism > 5	14	8.38	Middle

In this study, a total of 44 subjects (13.17%), of them, 26 woman and 18 man surpass the median of the five factors at the same time and we can consider them as resilient. According to these assessments, resilience seems to tend to develop more in the collective of female teachers than in men. Also, the results indicate that the group of teachers participating is between the 25th and 75 percentile, in the middle category of resilience. By means of the factorial analysis of the single questionnaire (union of the Burnout questionnaire and of resilience) we obtain 5 factors that evaluate aspects of the work of the teachers surveyed. These factors account for 47.74% of the variance.

Table 3. Evaluation of resilience in teachers of Huesca

Resilience factors	Participants that exceed the median in each factor	Percentage that exceeds the median in each factor
Factor I: Emotional coping	182	54.49
Factor II: Behavioral coping	176	52.69
Factor III: Positivism	180	53.89
Factor IV: Stereotyped thinking	168	50.30
Factor V: Tolerance to frustration	176	52.69

Table 4. Total variance explained by the components after the rotation

TOTAL VARIANZA EXPLICADA					
	Component	Additions of Saturations to the square of the extraction		Sum of the saturations to the rotation square	
		% accumulated	Total	% of variance	% accumulated
Gross	1	26.17	6.65	13.57	13.57
	2	34.20	6.58	13.43	27.00
	3	39.88	5.07	10.36	37.36
	4	43.96	3.18	6.49	43.85
	5	47.74	1.91	3.89	47.74

Table 5. Reliability analysis of the Questionnaire

Dimensions	No. of elements	Cronbach's Alpha
Teacher's personality	9	.85
Efficacy at work. Positive aspects at work	7	.74
Negative aspects of the situation	6	.87
Symptoms of exhaustion in teachers	6	.91
Aspects related to achievements and cognitions	3	.54

Table 6. Correlational study of the factors

Factors	Factor I	Factor II	Factor III	Factor IV	Factor V
Factor I	1	-.38	.56	.56	-.08
Factor II	-.38	1	-.41	-.22	.38
Factor III	.56	-.41	1	.77	-.27
Factor IV	.56	-.22	.77	1	-.05
Factor V	-.08	.38	-.27	-.05	1

** Correlation is significant at level .01 (bilateral)

Table 7. Correlations of burnout factors with resilience factors

	Exhaustion	Cynism	Efficacy	Factor I	Factor II	Factor III	Factor IV	Factor V
Exhaustion	1	.58**	-.24**	.37**	.20**	.33**	.61**	-.58**
Cynism	.58**	1	-.21**	.30**	.06	.29**	.47**	-.48**
Efficacy	-.24**	-.21**	1	-.18*	.31**	-.34**	-.41**	-.31**
Factor I	.37**	.30**	-.18*	1	.32**	.56**	.43**	.50**
Factor II	-.20**	-.06	.31**	.32**	1	.19*	.08	.26**
Factor III	-.33**	-.29**	.34**	.56**	.19*	1	-.41**	.54**
Factor IV	.61**	.47**	-.41**	.43**	-.41**	.08	1	-.59**
Factor V	-.58**	-.48**	.31**	.50**	.26**	.54**	-.59**	1

** Correlation is significant at level .01 (bilateral).

* Correlation is significant at level .05 (bilateral).

The rotated factorial solutions form a well-defined structure with no overlap. The matrix of the main components showing the unique saturation of each variable to the corresponding factor is included in table 4. The factors found in the factorial analysis are collected in the following Table. Correlational study of questionnaire factors includes the following results. In addition, Table 7 presents the correlational study of the instruments applied in this study.

DISCUSSION

The participation data in this study denote that it is a collective, with seniority in the performance of the teaching profession. The low participation of new teachers, as well as of the eventual teaching staff, is noteworthy, which may reflect a certain fear of participating in subjects such as the objective of this work (to evaluate teacher burnout).

On the contrary, probably due to the security provided by this administrative condition, the official teaching staff is very collaborative and does not express their experiences on a subject that, unfortunately, affects the teaching profession completely. It should be noted the majority participation by women, as well as the greater collaboration of the married teachers and with children. In this regard, authors such as Albar *et al.* (2004), they note that the fact of having children functions as a factor of protection against the syndrome, since it is related to the emotional support received by the family. As for the evaluations obtained in the components of the factorial analysis, the personality traits of the teachers evaluated in Factor I are a facilitating or inhibiting function in the development of the syndrome. The results corroborate the studies of Díaz *et al.* (2010), Ornelas (2016), Aldás (2017) and Félix *et al.* (2018), among others, who point out that the interaction between individual variables and the influences of the environment increases the possibility of producing stress

and psychosocial mismatch in the person, but they also elevate the ability to respond effectively to adversity. Likewise, according to Vargas *et al.* (2017), Alarcón (2018) and Noreña (2018), a resilient subject can remain stable even in the presence of conflicts, staying involved in the task and seeing these deficits as a challenge to overcome, without developing burnout. In short, the results of this factor confirm that the resilience of teachers decreases the vulnerability to burnout. Factor II includes aspects that positively influence teacher performance. It is noted the contributions of Villar (2015) and Vallejo (2017) who underline that, as the teacher's self-efficacy decreases, feelings of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization increase, and tends to perceive environmental demands as stressful, which prevents you from seeing the positive aspects of the job. So, when a teacher perceives himself as a child, he is less likely to suffer from the syndrome, since the labour barriers have a minor impact (Dios *et al.*, 2018). Thus, the levels of perceived efficacy found in this component protect the participating teachers against burnout. On the contrary, the Factor III agglutinates negative aspects of the teaching work. Some questions measure emotional exhaustion, others, the cynicism experienced. It is therefore a factor that measures burnout. In this context, Lull *et al.* (2015) affirm that most of the investigations on burnout point to the high school teachers as the most affected, especially in terms of depersonalization and personal fulfillment. Thus, the loss of emotional resources caused by the demands of teaching work (excessive number of students, excess of tasks, temporary pressures and overload of work, scarce support teachers, inadequate schedules, excessive bureaucracy, etc.), interact with the individual resources of the teacher, negatively impacting their health. These authors explain that negative interactions with pupils (frictions, conflicts and disputes) relate, on the one hand, positively with emotional exhaustion and depersonalization and, on the other, negatively with the low personal fulfillment. Likewise, the results confirm the investigations of Berrocal *et al.* (2017) and Peña *et al.* (2018) who report that the demands of students, companions and families cause emotional exhaustion in teachers; while depersonalization is expressed by emotional estrangement towards students and work companions.

Factor IV reflects symptoms of teacher exhaustion. In the educational field, emotional exhaustion refers to the loss of emotional resources caused by physical, mental, emotional and relational demands. As Longas *et al.* (2012), Fernández (2017), Peña and Cantero (2017) and Burgos *et al.* (2018) refer, the barrier factors (eg, role dysfunctions, absence or scarcity of resources, work overload, interpersonal conflicts, etc.), hinder the attainment of objectives, diminish in the teacher the feelings of self-efficacy and, with the time, they originate the syndrome. Other authors, such as Rodríguez *et al.* (2017) and López and Extremera (2017), assert that labor overload also contributes to their appearance. Finally, Murillo *et al.* (2016), Carlotto and Cámara (2017), Benetti *et al.* (2018) and Vicente de Vera and Gabari (2019), report that the lack of organizational support causes emotional exhaustion in teachers and, therefore, influences the results of this component. The Factor V collects manifestations of the field of emotional intelligence of the teaching staff. Valuations confirm the contributions of Cassullo and García (2015) and Vélez *et al.* (2017), who express that greater emotional competence on the part of the teacher implies less exhaustion and depersonalization, in addition to higher levels of personal fulfillment.

Conclusions

The results of this study allow to establish levels of relationship between burnout and resilience expressed. In situations of work adversity, the most resilient teachers achieve greater skills and competences of work commitment, at the same time that they have the capacity to overcome the difficulties and adapt appropriately; while less resilient teachers are predisposed to increase their effect with fatigue and indifference at work. It is concluded that resilience reduces vulnerability to burnout. Also, some teaching professionals are more vulnerable than others to suffer burnout. It is concluded that some personal variables (eg, humor, empathy, resistant personality, self-efficacy) with those that face labor demands, act as protective factors against burnout. From these lines, we consider that personal resources can be object of the institutional approach of continuous training in the line of prevention and health promotion in the Secondary Education educational field. Together with them, family cohesion and social support, among others, with which the person deals with labor demands, act as protective factors against burnout.

There is also a positive association between resilience and the cognitive aspects of teachers. Cognitions and emotions act as mediating variables in the relationship between perceived work stress and the attitudinal and behavioral responses of Secondary Education teachers who have collaborated in this research. The teacher who perceives himself as possessing a certain degree of skills to regulate his emotions, uses more active strategies to deal with stressful situations in the academic environment, and is in a better position to interact with the students, with the rest of the teaching staff and with families. Therefore, we emphasize the importance acquired by the development of emotional competencies in the teaching staff, since they allow to implement appropriate coping strategies and improve support networks through a socially adjusted interaction. Finally, it should be noted that the positive aspects of the work increase the perceived effectiveness of the teacher, so that they help him to control stressful situations. On the contrary, the negative aspects of the work diminish the feelings of effectiveness of the teacher, hinder the achievement of objectives and, over time, give rise to burnout. Therefore, the values found in this work highlight the value of self-efficacy as a mediator for the motivation and achievement of the goals of the teaching staff of this study. Despite all the above, this work presents a number of limitations.

First, it is a cross-sectional study that prevents establishing causal relationships. In this sense, it would be interesting to use a longitudinal design with more data collection moments. Secondly, the sample used represents a very specific group, since they are professors of public institutes of the province of Huesca. The context of this sample makes it difficult to generalize the data reported, for example, to the situation of primary teachers, or to other areas, such as private schools. For this reason, it would be advisable to compare these results with other levels, as well as to carry out comparison studies in other provinces/autonomous Communities, and even in other countries, to check whether the conclusions correspond to the findings obtained in this study. However, despite the above limitations, the results presented may have important practical implications in order to facilitate the well-being of high school teachers.

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