

Teaching Experience, Psychological Capital and Work Engagement. Their Relationship with the Burnout on University Teachers

Experiencia profesional, capital psicológico y engagement. Su relación con el burnout en docentes Universitarios

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Summary

The present study has two objectives. The first one is to study whether the different stages of teacher professional development vary the levels of psychological capital, engagement and burnout on university teachers. On the other hand, the second objective is to study the relationship between the stages of professional development, psychological capital and engagement with the burnout of university teachers. The sample is intentional, not probabilistic and was composed of 250 university professors, with an average age of 39 years ($M = 39.5$ and a $TD = 11.15$); fifty one per cent of the participants were female. Thirty-eight per cent of the participants have been teaching at the university for five years or less; twenty seven per cent have been doing so for 6 to 10 years, and thirty five per cent have been teaching at the university for more than 11 years. To evaluate the variables, the Spanish versions of the Psychological Capital Questionnaire, Utrecht Work Engagement Scale and the Oldenburg Burnout Inventory were used. The results indicated that more experienced teachers have higher levels of psychological capital (specifically effectiveness, resilience and hope) and higher levels of absorption, an engagement dimension, than less experienced teachers. No significant differences were found in burnout levels linked to academic experience. Finally, psychological capital (specifically the dimensions of optimism and hope) as well as engagement (specifically the dimensions of vigor and dedication) inhibit the emergence of burnout on university teachers.

Keywords: Teaching; Educational Psychology; Psychological Effects; Stress.

Resumen

El presente estudio se plantea dos objetivos el primero es estudiar si las diferentes etapas del desarrollo profesional de docentes hacen variar los niveles de capital psicológico, engagement y burnout en docentes universitarios. Por otro lado, el segundo objetivo es estudiar la relación de las etapas del desarrollo profesional, del capital psicológico y el engagement con el burnout de los docentes universitarios. La muestra es intencional, no probabilística y estuvo compuesta por 250 profesores universitarios, con una media de edad de 39 años ($M = 39.5$ y un $DT = 11.15$), 51% de los participantes eran mujeres. El 38% de los participantes ejercen la docencia universitaria hace 5 años o menos, el 27% lo hace entre 6 y 10 años y el 35% hace más de 11 años que ejerce la docencia universitaria. Para evaluar las variables se utilizaron las versiones españolas del Psychological Capital Questionnaire, Utrecht Work Engagement Scale y el Oldenburg Burnout Inventory. Los resultados indicaron que los docentes más experimentados presentan mayores niveles de capital psicológico (específicamente eficacia, resiliencia y esperanza) y mayor nivel de absorción, una dimensión de engagement, que los menos experimentados. No se encontraron diferencias significativas en los niveles de burnout vinculados a la experiencia académica. Por último, el capital psicológico (específicamente las dimensiones de optimismo y esperanza) así como el engagement (específicamente las dimensiones de vigor y dedicación) inhiben el surgimiento de burnout en docentes universitarios.

Palabras claves: Docencia; Psicología educativa; Efectos psicológicos; estrés.

Introduction

Higher education constitutes a fundamental basis for the construction and progress of society, thus the strategic imperative to invest in improving education at this level. Although there are many challenges to be faced, the role of teaching as a key part of improvement is clear. Teachers face many challenges related to concern for their professional training, the acquisition of pedagogical strategies, student demotivation, lack of resources, etc. All of these challenges can lead to stress and demotivation among teachers, which can be aggravated or attenuated by the level of teaching experience, as well as by their individual characteristics.

Hence, the first objective of this study will be to analyze whether there are differences in personal variables such as psychological capital, engagement and burnout of university professors according to the teachers' level of experience. The second objective will be to analyze the relationship between the level of experience of the university teachers, the psychological capital and the engagement with the labor burnout.

Teaching experience

When analyzing the activity of university teachers, one must not lose sight of the importance of studying changes throughout professional life. The professional development of teachers is going through different stages: initial training, initiation, stabilization, new concerns, among others.

Research (Marchesi&DíazFouz, 2007) shows that teachers face very diverse situations throughout their professional lives due to changes in the education and lifestyles of new generations of students, as well as the development and strengthening of their own academic skills. Little by little the teacher is accumulating information and experience, but s/he also perceives the difficulty of adapting to the new educational demands. It is for this reason that the personal situation of teachers may change over time, either through changes in the working and professional environment, or through changes in the teacher's own disposition, or, in most cases in which this occurs, through the interaction between the teacher's attitude and the context in which he or she carries out his or her work.

Murillo Torrecilla (2007), based on a comparative study of professional careers and teacher evaluation in 50 countries and 55 educational systems in Latin America and Europe, points to the need to formulate comprehensive policies aimed at improving and sustaining the quality of teaching, as a fundamental condition for ensuring student learning. When investigating the answers that each educational system gives to the same questions and challenges, they consider the stage of teacher training and the professional development, maintain, and increase teacher excellence. Among its conclusions, it states that, together with criteria of knowledge of the subject and teaching skills, it would be necessary to take into account the vocation towards teaching. For this reason, it seems important to incorporate strategies that not only measure knowledge and skills, but also attitudes and commitment: a good teacher is not one who knows his or her subject and knows how to teach it; he or she is fundamentally a professional committed to his or her work and improvement throughout his or her teaching career (Páramo, 2008).

As teachers acquire more experience in higher education, they modify and enrich not only their academic training, but they may also modify individual characteristics that may or may not contribute to mitigating the experience of the stressful situations with which they will be confronted.

Psychological Capital

One of the constructs developed within the framework of Positive Psychology is that of Psychological Capital, defined by Luthans and his collaborators as a state of positive psychological development, which represents the person's positive assessment of circumstances and his probability of success based on effort and perseverance (Luthans, Avolio, Avey, & Norman, 2007). It is a construct composed of four dimensions: effectiveness, optimism, hope and resilience. Those who possess a high level of psychological capital are characterized by: (a) having confidence (effectiveness) to assume and make the effort necessary to succeed in challenging tasks; (b) making a positive attribution (optimism) about success now and in the future; (c) persevering in goals and, when necessary, redirecting paths to goals (hope) to succeed; and (d) when beset by problems and adversities, sustaining their effort (resilience) to achieve success (Luthans, Youssef, & Avolio, 2007).

The development of these aspects generates positive effects on institutions, especially in terms of productivity. Studies clearly show that psychological capital is positively related to labor performance. People make a difference, especially when they are self-effective, optimistic, hopeful and resilient (Luthans, Youssef, & Avolio, 2007). That is, they are people capable of setting valuable personal goals, realistic goals, creating multiple ways to achieve goals and to avoid obstacles. At the same time they know how to identify adversity, recognize self-destructive beliefs, realize the consequences of those beliefs and question counterproductive beliefs. In addition to providing support to recover from adversity and grow in the face of positive change (Bakker, Rodríguez-Muñoz, & Derks, 2012).

Recent academic studies have shown that people with high levels of psychological capital are capable of setting specific and challenging goals, are intrinsically motivated and more committed to their work, and consequently show better performance, both in students (Gutiérrez, Tomás, & Alberola, 2018; Legé, López Pell, & Fagnani, 2012) and in teachers (Siu, Bakker, & Jiang, 2014). Along the same lines, we find research (Ponce Gutiérrez & Yáber Oltra, 2012) that analyzes the effect that psychological capital has on organizational behavior in the university environment. Among their findings, they point out the importance of psychological capital as a construct in which institutions can invest to develop their human resources, since it promotes attitudes and behaviors that favor individual performances and positive institutions. The results suggest the value and potential of psychological capital, not only for the survival of teachers in more adverse work environments, but also for them to prosper and develop all their capacities.

Also interesting is the contribution of research that focuses on the basic psychological needs of students of pedagogy in the first years of teaching experience. Among their results, they point out that the satisfaction of the need for competence, relationship, and autonomy in students of pedagogy is considerably less than in experienced teachers and the importance of teaching experience in order to increase levels of satisfaction (Evelein et al., 2008). A comparison of teaching effectiveness beliefs between future teachers and experienced teachers also reveals differences in classroom experience. Among the dimensions analyzed are classroom management, class discipline, and effectiveness in personal teaching. Analyzes comparing expectations of effectiveness showed significant differences in the management and discipline dimension in favor of the group of teachers working. In addition, there were differences in the management and discipline dimension in terms of the number of years of experience in the group of practicing teachers (De la Torre & Casanova, 2007).

Teaching Engagement

In addition to psychological capital, the literature also reflects teacher engagement as a novel focus of analysis resulting from an approach marked by positive psychology (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2001).

The concept of engagement represents a new approach that examines workers' positive experiences and conditions conducive to well-being, and has been defined as a positive and persistent motivating state related to work and integrated by the dimensions of vigor, dedication and absorption (Salanova, Schaufeli, Llorens Gumbau, Peiró Silla, & Grau Gumbau, 2000). Thus, the vigor component refers to high levels of energy, perseverance and effort in the work that is carried out despite the difficulties. Dedication refers to high levels of involvement, enthusiasm, inspiration and challenge in occupational tasks. Finally, the absorption factor refers to high levels of concentration and happiness during work performance.

On the other hand, positive psychology presents engagement as a motivational construct that relates to work in a positive way; where the individual experiences high levels of energy and mental endurance. People with high levels of engagement present more energetic and effective connections with their work, are proactive, propose alternatives for improvement, have values that coincide with those of the institution, and finally receive positive feedback (Lorente & Vera,

2010). They are characterized by high levels of energy, endurance and mental activation while working and are willing to invest effort in the work they are doing, even when there are difficulties in the process. They are people with a high labor implication, together with the manifestation of a feeling of significance, importance and challenge in front of work. When performing work, they experience strong doses of concentration and enjoyment, which leads them to perceive that time passes quickly and that they have difficulties to disconnect from what they are doing (Lozano-Paz & Reyes-Bossio, 2017).

Literature presents the burnout syndrome as the counterpart to engagement, conceptualization that will be dealt with in the following section.

The burnout on teachers

Stress and demotivation of teachers are increasingly frequent problems in the educational field. Following the model of Maslach and Jackson (1981), the three characteristic symptoms of burnout are: low personal fulfillment, physical and emotional exhaustion and finally depersonalization. As for low personal fulfillment, the person feels incapable of carrying out his/her work, perceives an unsatisfactory performance that leads to the development of feelings of personal failure, incompetence and low self-esteem. Another of the symptoms refers to physical and emotional exhaustion, experience of being emotionally exhausted, empty and without energy which appears associated with various physical manifestations. And finally, the depersonalization, where the person manifests negative attitudes of isolation and distancing in relation to the people for whom he works. This theory was operationalized through the Maslach Burnout Inventory - MBI (Maslach and Jackson, 1981). Although this test is one of the most used for burnout evaluation, it presents a limitation that was developed exclusively for use in professions related to human services. Subsequently, an adaptation of the scale to other professions was made that was called Maslach Burnout Inventory - General Survey (Schaufeli, Leiter, Maslach and Jackson, 1996), although it did not get such good psychometric results as the original scale. Hence Demerouti and colleagues developed Oldenburg Burnout Inventory (OLBI), which postulates the existence of two factors of exhaustion and disconnection from work (Demerouti, 1999; Demerouti & Nachreiner, 1998). OLBI proposes not only to evaluate the affective aspect of exhaustion as MBI does, but also to add the evaluation of the cognitive and physical aspects of exhaustion. This facilitates the application of the instrument to those workers who perform physical work, and those whose work is mainly intellectual work (Demerouti & Bakker, 2008). On the other hand, disconnection in the OLBI refers to distancing oneself from work in general, the object of work, and the content of the work (e.g., lack of interest, as well as dislike of work). In addition, disconnection elements refer to the relationship between employees and their jobs, particularly with respect to identification with the job and the willingness to continue in the same occupation (Demerouti & Bakker, 2008).

In the case of teachers, the burnout can manifest itself in their bond with the students by adopting a distant relationship of little receptivity to their demands. At the origin of this problem is a certain crisis of professional identity and a motivational deficit of the teacher towards his professional activity. It is clear that the teaching profession has undergone great transformations, due to the changes in the socio-cultural context in which the current university professor has to carry out his work. Today's teacher not only has to respond to his or her research-administrative functions and responsibilities, as a member of a university community, but must also respond to his or her intrinsic duty to educate future professionals (Silvero Miramón, 2007). All these facts generate physical and mental affectations that translate into later repercussions in the work environment such as absenteeism, high levels of rotation, low levels of productivity, caused by the so-called burnout syndrome. Among the main characteristics of work that encourage the development of burnout syndrome in university teachers are: multiplicity of tasks, work overload, time limitations to comply with academic activities, lack of recognition, mental workload, inadequate work spaces, lack of compensation for efforts and low social relations at work (Botero Álvarez, 2012).

Burnout can be considered a disease typical of the welfare professions and especially of teaching, characterized by contact with people, since the burden of extreme responsibility for the well-being of others is added to the demands of work (Dierendock, Buunk, & Schaufeli, 2001a). At the heart of the burnout phenomenon is the perception of the disproportion between the demands that the context demands and the responses that one is able to offer (González Torres, 2003). Teachers are spoken of as a high-risk group, and many works have been devoted in recent years to studying the burnout syndrome in teachers (Darrigrande & Durán, 2012; Dierendock, Schaufeli, & Buunk, 2001b; Silvero Miramón, 2007).

In any case, work contexts vary, as do the activities carried out by each professional in his or her work, which is why it is important for educational institutions to identify and evaluate both psychosocial risk factors and protective factors for teachers in their particular context so that the impact of the burnout can be prevented or counteracted in this way (Botero Álvarez, 2012). In this same line we find more recent studies that seek to identify psychological variables that influence stress reactivity, since the literature supports the idea that the subjective perception of stress is influenced by dispositional variables such as emotional intelligence, sensitivity to anxiety and experiential avoidance, among others. The results support the need to target each of these dispositional variables to reduce reactivity to emotional stress (Choi, Vickers, & Tassone, 2014).

Present study

Based on the above, the objectives of this study are:

- 1) To study whether the different stages of the professional development of teachers vary the levels of psychological capital, engagement and burnout on university teachers.
- 2) To study the relationship between the stages of professional development, psychological capital and work engagement with the burnout syndrome of university teachers.

Method

In the present study it is empirical using quantitative methodology, the scope of the study is of correlational type. The first objective of the study is to analyze by group difference the variations of psychological capital, teacher engagement and labor burnout according to the stages of professional development of university teachers. The second objective analyzes the relationship of the variables under study.

Participants and procedure

In order to carry out the study, a non-probability and convenience sample of 250 Argentine university professors was formed. Fifty-one percent of the participants were women and 49% were men, with an average age of 39 years ($M = 39.5$ and $TD = 11.15$). Forty per cent of the participants have a qualifying degree and 60 per cent of the participants have a postgraduate degree. 38% of the participants have been teaching at university for 5 years or less, 27% between 6 and 10 years and 35% have been teaching at university for more than 11 years.

In order to collect the data, we contacted the authorities of three Argentinean universities (one public and two private) to whom we explained the objectives of the research and asked for the contact information of their university professors. Once the permits had been obtained, the teachers received an email inviting them to participate in the study. It was explained to them that their participation would be voluntary, anonymous and that the information would not be shared with the academic institution. Those teachers who agreed to participate completed informed consent and were given protocols with assessment scales. The university teachers did not receive any kind of reward for participating in the study.

Instruments

Psychological capital. The abbreviated version of the Psychological Capital Questionnaire proposed by Luthans, Avolio, Avey and Norman (2007) was used, and validated in Argentina by Omar, Salessi and Urteaga (2004). The scale includes 12 items that evaluate the 4 dimensions of psychological capital: self-efficacy (e.g. item "I feel safe presenting information to a group of colleagues", Cronbach's Alfa for the study = .85, CI: .81, .88), hope (e.g. item "If I encounter a problem at work, I can think of many ways out of it" Cronbach's Alfa for the study = .85, CI: .81, .88), hope (e.g. item "If I encounter a problem at work, I can think of many ways out of it" Cronbach's Alfa for the study = .83, CI .79, .86), resilience (e.g. item "I can go through difficult situations at work because I have experienced difficulties before", Cronbach's Alpha for study = .71, CI .64, .75) and optimism (e.g. item "I am optimistic about what will happen to me in the future regarding work", Cronbach's Alpha for study = .83, CI .78, .87). Teachers are asked to evaluate each statement using a Likert scale of 1 ("Strongly Disagree") to 6 ("Strongly Agree") points.

Teacher Engagement. The short version of nine items of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004) in its Argentinean version of Pujol-Cols, and Arraigada (2018) was used to assess the engagement of university teachers. This scale has acceptable levels of validity and was used in several previous studies carried out in Argentina (see Mesurado, Tortul, & Schonfeld, 2018, Mesurado, Richaud, & Mateo, 2016). The scale includes elements that measure three dimensions of engagement with work: vigor, dedication and absorption. Vigor is characterized by investing high energy and mental strength in work (e.g. item "In my work I feel full of energy", Cronbach's Alfa for study = .89, CI: .86, .91). While dedication refers to experiencing enthusiasm, inspiration, pride and challenge (e.g. item "When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work", Cronbach's Alfa for study = .86, CI: .82, .88). Absorption refers to being concentrated and involved in one's own work (e.g., "I am immersed in my work," Cronbach's Alpha for study = .75, CI .68, .81). Participants are asked to use a 7-point scale where 1 means Never and 7 means Daily. The internal consistency of the total test for this study was Cronbach Alpha = .91, CI .90, .93.

Work Burnout: The Oldenburg Burnout Inventory, developed by Demerouti, Mostert and Bakker (2010) and adapted to Argentina in previous work by Mesurado & Richaud (2017), was used to evaluate burnout syndrome. The scale is composed of 16 items that evaluate two aspects of the burnout: burnout (e.g., "There are days when I feel tired before arriving at work", Cronbach's Alpha for the study = .78, CI: .74, .82) and lack of engagement (e.g., "Lately, I am inclined to think less about work and to do it almost mechanically", Cronbach's Alpha for the study = .78, CI: .74, .82). The internal consistency of the total test for this study was Cronbach's Alpha = .79, CI .75, .82. Teachers were asked to evaluate each statement using four response options 1 ("Strongly agree") to 4 ("Strongly disagree") points.

Teaching experience. Teachers were asked about the number of years the teacher was teaching, then the responses were coded into three groups Stages 1, 2 and 3. Stage 1 participants who taught at the university 5 years ago or less, which represented 38% of the participants. Stage 2 those who were university teachers between 6 and 10 years old, which represented 27% of the participants. Finally, Stage 3 those who were teaching for more than 11 years, which represented 35% of the participants.

Statistical procedure

Before statistical analyzes were performed to provide answers to the first objective of the study, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test was calculated for each variable in each group of teaching experience (stage 1, 2 and 3). The results indicated normality in all dimensions of all variables, except for three dimensions of the psychological capital variable (efficacy, resilience

and optimism) and two dimensions of engagement (dedication and absorption). This lack of normal distribution in three dimensions of a psychological capital variable occurred only in the group of teachers who had more than 11 years of experience (stage 3). While the lack of normal distribution in two dimensions of the engagement variable occurred in teachers between 6 and 10 years of teaching (stage 2), the lack of normal distribution in two dimensions of the engagement variable occurred in teachers between 6 and 10 years of teaching (stage 2). For this reason, in order to approach the study of objective 1, non-parametric analyzes were carried out to study the variables of psychological capital and labor engagement, while a parametric test was used to analyze the burnout variable

Two Kruskal-Wallis tests were carried out in order to address objective 1 of the research. In the first, the four dimensions of psychological capital were used as DV, and in the second, the three dimensions of work engagement. Finally, a multivariate variance analysis (MANOVA) was carried out to analyze the burnout. In all cases, the three stages of teaching experience were used as the VI (equal to or less than 5 years of experience, between 6 and 10 years of experience and more than 11 years of teaching experience).

In order to respond to the second objective of the study, a regression analysis was carried out in blocks where the stages of teaching experience were included as VI of block 1, in block 2 the 4 dimensions of psychological capital were included and in block 3, the 3 dimensions of work engagement. As DV, the total level of work exhaustion was used. This parametric test was used after having found a normal distribution in the variables included in the study using Kolmogorov-Smirnov.

Results

Psychological capital, engagement and burnout according to the stages of teaching experience

The first objective of this study is to analyze whether the levels of psychological capital, engagement and burnout at different stages of the professional development of university teachers vary. For this purpose, the descriptive statistics of mean, typical deviation, asymmetry and kurtosis were first calculated for each of the variables according to the level of teaching experience (See Table 1).

Table 1.
Descriptive statistics of the variables included in the study

Variables	Stage 1: 5 years or less of teaching experience n = 97			Stage 2: between 6 and 10 years of teaching experience n = 65			Stage 3: 11 years or more of teaching experience n = 88		
	M (DT)	Asymmetry	Kurtosis	M (DT)	Asymmetry	Kurtosis	M (DT)	Asimetría	Curtosis
Psychological Capital	4.66 (.93)	-.96	1.25	5.01 (.82)	-.60	-.26	5.04 (.83)	-1.9	6.58
Self-efficacy									
Hope	4.58 (.78)	-.71	.54	4.66 (.81)	-.48	.47	4.88 (.70)	2.00	9.77
Resilience	4.33 (.87)	-.77	.36	4.69 (.62)	-.47	.78	4.74 (.80)	1.15	2.99
Optimism	4.51 (1.08)	-.94	.72	4.82 (.95)	-.91	.93	4.67 (.93)	1.42	3.35
Engagement									
Vigor	15.11 (1.10)	-.58	.07	5.13 (1.21)	-.92	.24	5.42 (.89)	-.45	-.35
Dedication	5.47 (1.20)	-.97	.81	5.49 (1.32)	1.40	2.40	5.9 (.82)	-.66	-.14
Absorption	5.38 (.94)	-.58	.19	5.32 (1.13)	-1.11	2.13	5.73 (.90)	-.53	-.27
Burnout									
Disconnection	22.00 (.46)	.35	.06	2.01 (.52)	.47	.22	1.88 (.43)	-.03	.04
Exhaustion	2.44 (.37)	.28	.01	2.35 (.35)	.68	1.3	2.35 (.38)	.09	1.12

This was followed by a Kruskal-Wallis test studying the differences in the psychological capital levels of teachers according to the stages of professional development of university teachers. The results indicate that there are statistically significant differences in the levels of psychological capital according to the stage of experience at the level of perceived effectiveness [Kruskal-Wallis test (2) = 10.60, $p \leq .01$, $\eta^2 = .04$], level of resilience [Kruskal-Wallis test (2) = 12.25, $p \leq .01$, $\eta^2 = .06$] and hope [Kruskal-Wallis test (2) = 8.86, $p \leq .01$, $\eta^2 = .03$]. No significant differences were found in optimism [Kruskal-Wallis Test (2) = 3.12, $p = .21$]. Differences in the study variables between the different stages of teacher development were then analyzed using the Mann-Whitney U test. Teachers with 11 or more years of practice had higher levels of self-efficacy [Mann-Whitney U = 3160.5, $p \leq .01$], hope [Mann-Whitney U = 3223.5, $p \leq .01$] and resilience [Mann-Whitney U = 3084.5, $p \leq .01$] than teachers who were going through the first stage of professional development (less than 5 years of practice). Likewise, teachers who had between 6 and 10 years of practice had higher levels of self-efficacy [Mann-Whitney U = 2496.5, $p \leq .05$] and resilience [Mann-Whitney U = 2459.0, $p \leq .05$] than teachers with less than 5 years of practice.

A Kruskal-Wallis test was then used to study differences in engagement levels according to the stages of professional development of university teachers. The results indicate that there

are statistically significant differences in levels of psychological capital according to the stage of experience at the level of absorption [Kruskal-Wallis test (2) = 7.69, $p \leq .05$, $\eta^2 = .03$]. No significant differences were found in vigor [Kruskal-Wallis test (2) = 3.31, $p = .19$] or in dedication [Kruskal-Wallis test (2) = 7.69, $p = .03$]. No significant differences were found in vigor [Kruskal-Wallis Test (2) = 3.31, $p = .19$] or in dedication [Kruskal-Wallis Test (2) = 5.76, $p = .06$]. The Mann-Whitney U test was then used to analyze the difference in absorption levels between the groups. Teachers who had 11 or more years of professional practice had higher levels of absorption than teachers who were in the first stage of professional development (less than 5 years of practice) [Mann-Whitney U = 3154.5, $p \leq .01$] and the second stage of professional development (between 6 and 10 years) [Mann-Whitney U = 2270.0, $p \leq .05$].

Finally, a MANOVA was carried out in which it was analyzed whether burnout levels vary in the different stages of the professional development of university teachers. The results indicate that there are no statistically significant differences in occupational burnout syndrome [Hotelling's T^2 (4, 490) = 1.72, $p = .14$, $\eta^2 = .01$].

Relationship between stages of teacher development, psychological capital, and work engagement with work burnout syndrome

The second objective of this study is to analyze the relationship of the stages of professional development, psychological capital, and work engagement with the burnout syndrome of university teachers. For this purpose, a linear regression per block was carried out. In block 1, the variable stages of teacher development was introduced, in block 2, the 4 dimensions of psychological capital (self-efficacy, hope, resilience and optimism), and in block 3, the three dimensions of the variable labor engagement (vigor, dedication and absorption). The three blocks were used as predictor variables, while the total level of labor exhaustion or burnout was used as a criterion variable.

The results of the analysis indicate that the model was significant in block 1 [$F(1, 248) = 4.26$, $p \leq .05$]. The burnout was significantly related to the stages of teacher development ($\beta = -.13$, CI: -.10, -.01). Teachers with higher levels of experience had lower burnout levels. The model based on stages of teacher development explained 2% of variance. In the second block it was also significant [$F(5, 244) = 14.25$, $p \leq .001$], hope ($\beta = -.20$, CI: -.17, -.02) and optimism ($\beta = -.24$, CI: -.14, -.03) were found to be related to the burnout. Higher levels of hope and optimism seem to discourage the onset of work-related burnout syndrome. The second block explains 21% of the variance. Finally, in block 3 it was significant [$F(8, 241) = 25.28$, $p \leq .001$], it was identified that the dimensions of labor engagement of vigor ($\beta = -.21$, CI: -.12, -.02) and dedication ($\beta = -.33$, CI: -.15, -.05) were also related to the prevention of burnout. This third block explained 23% of the variance. That is to say, the total model explained 44% of the burnout manifestations among the university professors included in this study. All regression results are shown in Table 2.

Tabla 2.*Results of the regression by blocks is the prediction of the burnout*

Variables	R ² / Δ R ²	Change in F (gl, gl error)	β
Block 1	.02/.02*	F (1,248) = 4.26	-.13*
Stages of teacher development			
Block 2	.23/.21***	F (4,244) = 16.47	-.06
Stages of teacher development			
Psychological capital			-.11
Self-efficacy			
Hope			-.20**
Resilience			.02
Optimism			-.24**
Block 3	.44/.23***	F (3,241) = 34.03	-.01
Stages of teacher development			
Psychological capital			.01
Self-efficacy			
Hope			-.07
Resilience			-.02
Optimism			-.14*
Engagement			-.21**
Vigor			
Dedication			-.33***
Absorption			-.07

Nota: * $p \leq .05$; ** $p \leq .01$; *** $p \leq .001$

Discussion

The first objective of this study was to analyze whether the individual characteristics of university teachers vary according to the level of teaching experience acquired. Specifically, it was analyzed if the levels of psychological capital, engagement and burnout differ in the different stages of professional experience of university teachers. Our results indicate that statistically significant differences can be found in psychological capital and engagement. The teachers with the highest level of experience (11 years or more) presented higher levels of efficiency, resilience and hope linked to their teaching activity than the less experienced teachers (5 years or less of experience), and the teachers who were in an intermediate stage of teaching experience (between 6 and 11 years) presented higher levels of efficiency and resilience than the less experienced teachers (5 years or less of experience). As might be expected, the most experienced teachers presented higher levels of effectiveness than teachers with fewer years of experience, given that with the passing of time it is logical for them to grow in knowledge and mastery of the contents they transmit in their classes, as well as the pedagogical skills to transmit those contents. Our results are in line with previous research that identified high levels of motivation during initial training, while self-efficacy increased as they progressed in the teaching career (Hashmi&Shaikh, 2011), and other studies show that more experienced teachers have considerably higher levels of competence than less experienced teachers (Evelein, Korthagen, & Brekelmans, 2008).

On the other hand, it is probable that the most experienced teachers have gone through different adverse situations in the labor and personal field, which has strengthened them at the

same time that made them more resilient to face labor contradictions than less experienced teachers. It is also likely that if the experienced teacher achieved a passionate dedication to teaching, he or she will broaden his or her positive experiences in relation to his or her work. These positive experiences then help powerfully to deal with conflicts.

In addition, the development of a hopeful attitude towards their work can lead experienced teachers to persevere more in the objectives until they reach successful situations and maintain them in time than teachers who are just beginning their academic careers. In turn, goal-oriented passion maintains and reinforces commitment and action (Cardelle-Elawar&Sanz, 2010; Marchesi&DíazFouz, 2007).

The results found in this study indicate that the levels of engagement among teachers with different levels of experience differ only in the absorption dimension. More experienced teachers report higher levels of absorption in their teaching than less experienced teachers. Previous experience is likely to contribute to their ability to concentrate and absorb during work due to the training acquired over the years. However, no differences were found in the other dimensions of engagement, vigor and dedication. This would indicate that teaching work has enormous possibilities of generating high intrinsic motivation and high personal and professional commitment in the people who carry it out (González Torres, 2003) regardless of the levels of experience acquired by the teacher.

On the other hand, our studies did not identify differences in burnout levels in relation to the stages of work experience of university teachers. Perhaps, we did not find differences because the levels of work burnout do not vary from one stage of teaching experience to another, but what can change are the types of stressors. Previous research found that sources of stress change throughout a teacher's career, so in the case of the youngest teachers it was the students and working conditions, while in the most experienced the main source was the social environment (Flores Ramírez, 2002). Hence, previous studies (Murillo Torrecilla, 2007; Veldman, van Tartwijk, Brekelmans, &Wubbels, 2013) coincide in the need to develop integrated policies that tend to train motivated and competent teachers who maintain a level of teacher engagementthroughout their teaching careers.

The second objective of our work was to analyze the relationship of the stages of professional development, psychological capital and work engagement with burnout syndrome in university teachers. Our results indicate that the relationship between teaching experience in preventing burnout levels is very low (around 2%). However, individual characteristics such as psychological capital and engagement levels are presented as important aspects in the prevention of this syndrome, explaining 21% and 23% of the variance respectively. Specifically, we find that when teachers report high levels of hope and optimism linked to their teaching activity, these characteristics prevent the appearance of syndromes of exhaustion. Hence, it will be important to foster positive attributions in teachers, based on objective reality, about their current and future educational achievements. This would lead them to persevere in their objectives in the hope of achieving the proposed goals. From these results derives the need for the authorities of educational institutions to be able to stimulate university teachers in this direction, to support them in their teaching tasks and goals, in such a way that they do not feel alone in the face of the challenge of student education.

On the other hand, it is important to emphasize that the development of work engagement in teachers also prevents the appearance of work exhaustion. Specifically, the dimensions of vigor (high levels of energy, perseverance and effort in the work) and dedication (high levels of involvement, enthusiasm, inspiration and challenge in the occupational tasks) are related to the inhibition of burnout. It is clear that engaging in education with vigor and dedication means much more than having a job. In this regard, some authors make reference to the fact that experiencing teaching work as a vocation motivates and maintains the commitment of teachers (González Torres, 2003), thus preventing burnout syndrome. The engagement generated by university

teaching perhaps fills its daily activity with meaning, allowing it to re signify and attenuate the challenges and fatigue caused by the teaching task.

As a way of conclusion, it can be said that one of the main contributions of this work for the academic community is the analysis of variables in studies (teaching experience, psychological capital, engagement and burnout) in a specific Latin American country such as Argentina, where university teachers face strong labor pressures. These findings show us that the burnout syndrome in this specific population is not mainly due to fatigue linked to years of teaching, but rather to individual characteristics of teachers, as well as to the lack of commitment to the task.

Limitations and future studies

One of the most important limitations of this study is that it was developed using a cross-sectional design for data collection, which does not allow us to ensure that the different stages of teaching experience cause changes in the personal characteristics of university teachers. Likewise, it does not allow us to analyze the trajectory of psychological capital, engagement and burnout over time since we did not follow up on the same teachers at each stage of academic experience. Another aspect to bear in mind is that in this work the teaching experience was operationalized taking into account only the seniority in years. In future studies this operationalization could be enriched by integrating other aspects of the teaching experience such as the degree of studies, the levels or type of hiring that teachers have with the institution, the hours in front of the group, number of groups, numbers of students among others.

On the other hand, the type of design used enables us to analyze the relationships between teaching experience, psychological capital and engagement with burnout, but does not enable us to identify these variables as predictors of this symptomatology to which teachers may be exposed. Finally, another limitation that we found and that could be taken into account in future studies is that the selection of participants was of an intentional, non-probabilistic type, which also limits the generalization of results to other university teachers.

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