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Teacher resilience: problems and solutions

Supporting teachers to face the challenge of distance teaching

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SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL HEALTH AND RESILIENCE OF TEACHERS IN SLOVAKIA

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Research Project

Research conducted as part of **Erasmus+ Project 2020-1-LV01-KA226-SCH-094599-PA „Supporting teachers to face the challenge of distance teaching”**

- Slovakia
- Latvia
- Lithuania



Profession of Teacher

- Teacher profession is very demanding in terms of workload since requirements placed upon teacher personality are very high (Paulík, 2017)
 - Requirements for a „good“ teacher which include professional and social competence, qualification, personal maturity and resilience (Black & Howard-Jones, 2000; Paulík, 2017)
- Teacher as an organizing agent in school is responsible for course and result of educational process (Urbánek, 2008)

Teachers and Mental Health

- Most common reasons associated with teacher stress are:
 - excessive administrative burden, excessive workload
 - lack of free time,
 - insufficient school facilities,
 - unhealthy interpersonal relationships with colleagues, school management and students,
 - Insufficient support from school management
 - constant expectations placed upon quality work performance (Zelina, 1997, Paulík, 2017, Vančová, 2017)
- Impact of the pandemic?
- Challenges of distance learning?

Social-Emotional Health

- Cumulation of several positive social and emotional individual strengths that contribute to social-emotional wellbeing
- **covitality** = co-occurrence of several positive strengths
- *“synergistic effect of positive mental health resulting from the interplay among multiple positive psychological building blocks”* (Renshaw et al., 2014, p. 14)
 - shown to be more effective in predicting wellbeing than the presence of a single positive trait alone (Furlong et al, 2014; Renshaw et al., 2014)

Social-Emotional Health System

Social-Emotional Health Survey – Primary

SEHS-P, Furlong et al., 2013

Social-Emotional Health Survey – Secondary

SEHS-S, Furlong et al., 2014

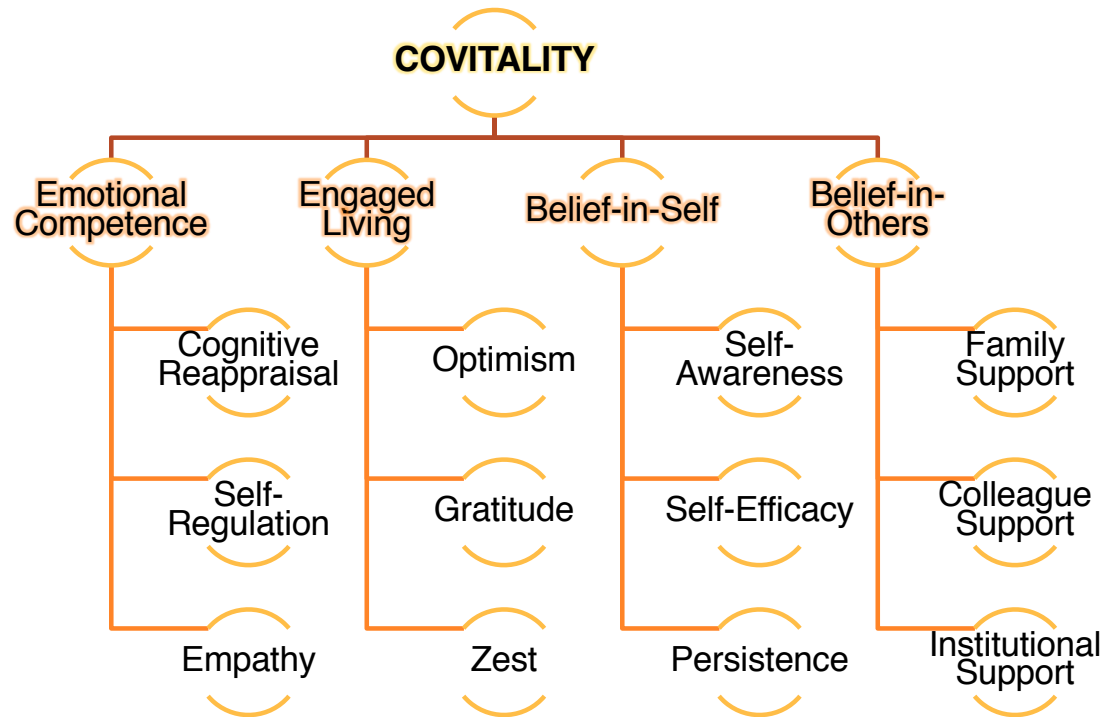
Social-Emotional Health Survey – Higher Education

SEHS-S, Furlong et al., 2016

Social-Emotional Health Survey – Teachers

SEHS-T, Furlong & Gajdošová, 2017

Social-Emotional Health - Teachers



(Social-Emotional Health - Teachers. Furlong & Gajdošová, 2017)

Resilience

- „Personality characteristic that moderates negative effects of stress and promotes adaptation“

(Wagnild, Young, 1993, s. 165)

- Promotes optimal development of individual in the context of past and present adversity
- Enables coping with difficult life situations and adverse circumstances over the lifespan



Complex disposition that enables development of competences in adverse life circumstances

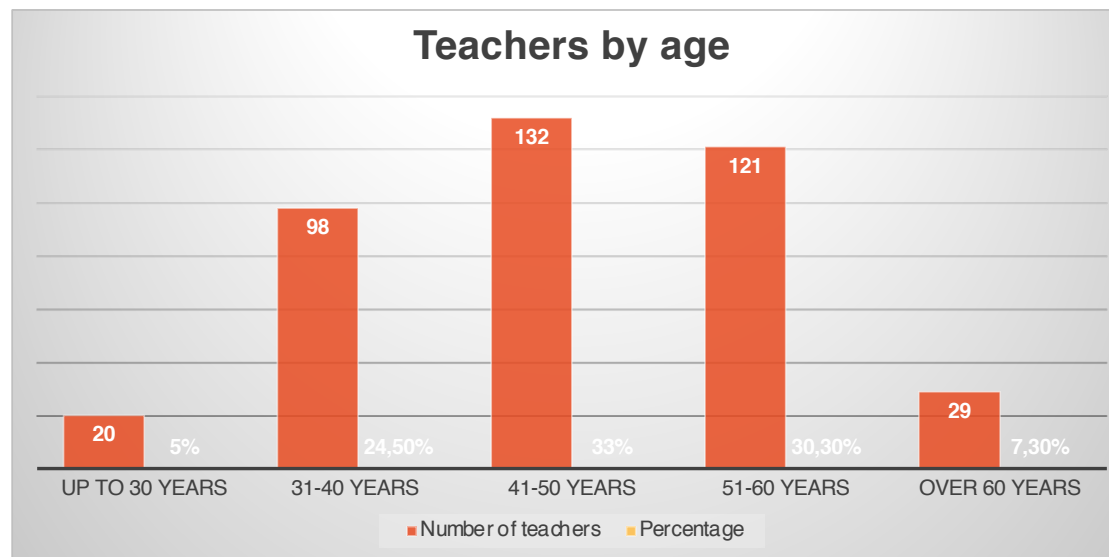
(Szobiová et al., 2015)

Aim of the Study

- Examine social-emotional health and resilience of teachers in Slovakia
- Determine whether there are associations between covitality, its domains and indicators, and resilience
- Determine which social-emotional domains and indicators act as predictors of resilience

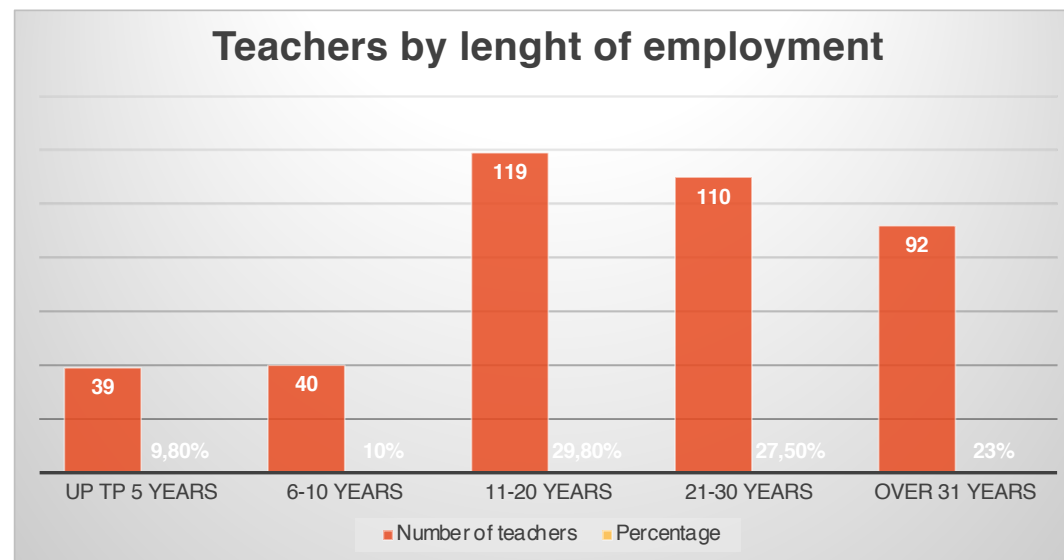
Participants

- 400 teachers from various regions of Slovakia
- 359 **females** (89,8%) and 41 **males** (10,3%)



Participants

- Type of school: **elementary** 278 teachers (69,5%), **high** school 122 (30,5%)
- Residency: 251 **urban** teachers (62,8%) 149 **rural** teachers (37,3)



Measures

Social-Emotional Health Survey–Teachers

SEHS- T; Furlong & Gajdošová, 2017

- Multidimensional measure assessing covitality in four domains (*Emotional Competence, Engaged Living, Belief-in-Self, Belief-in Others*) and three indicators per each domain
- 48 items, 6-point Likert scale
- Total score = covitality index (48 – 288), low, medium and high covitality level
- Internal consistency α 0,837 *Emotional Competence*, α 0,907 *Engaged Living*, α 0,873 *Belief-in-Self*, α 0,859 *Belief-in-Others*, covitality α 0,946

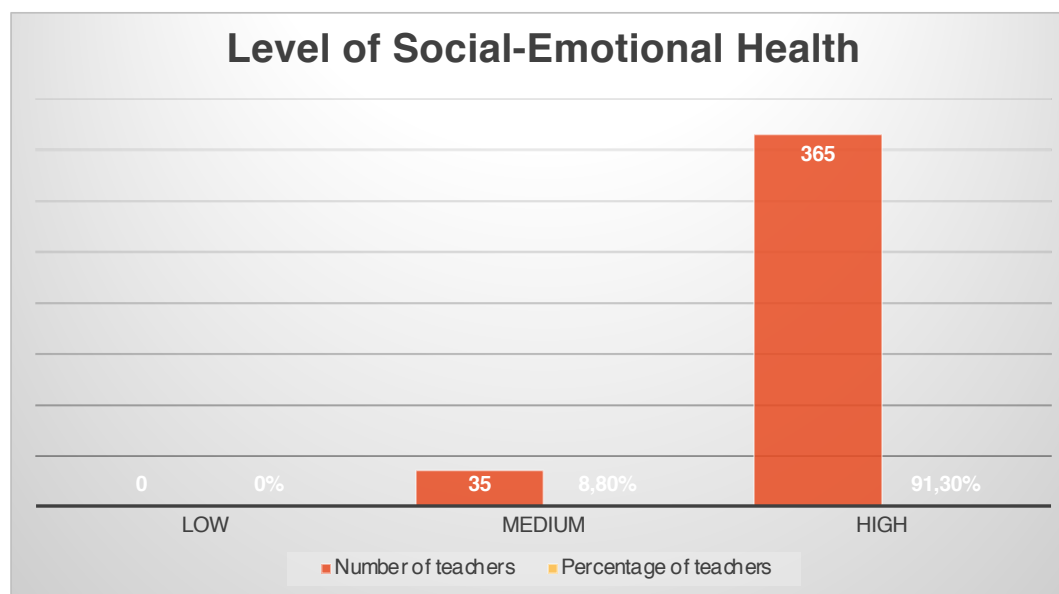
Measures

Resilience Scale; RS

Wagnild & Young, 1993, Wagnild, 2016

- Assesses individual resilience in two dimensions: *Personal Competence* and *Acceptance of Self*
- 25 items, 7-point Likert scale, low resilience (less than 115), moderately low to moderate (116 to 144), moderately high to high resilience (more than 145)
(Wagnild, 2016, s. 82)
- Internal consistency $\alpha = 0,936$

Results: Level of Social-Emotional Health



Results: Level of Social-Emotional Health Domains

Levels of Covitality Domains	Belief-in-Self	Belief-in-Others	Emotional Competence	Engaged Living
low	1 / 0,3%	3 / 0,8%	0 / 0%	2 / 0,5%
medium	46 / 11,5%	51 / 12,8%	34 / 8,5%	66 / 16,5%
high	353 / 88,3%	346 / 86,5%	366 / 91,5%	332 / 83%

Results: Indicators of Belief-in-Self

- 70 – 85% teachers scored high in Self-efficacy and Self-awareness
- 40 % of teacher reported problems with concentration in indicator Persistence

	Self-Efficacy	Persistence	Self-Awareness
Minimum	6,00	5,00	6,00
Maximum	24,00	24,00	24,00
Mean	20,03	19,02	20,59
Std. Deviation	2,84	3,09	2,62
Median	20,00	19,00	21,00

Results: Indicators of Belief-in-Others

- 86,3% teachers scored high in Family Support and 75% in Colleague Support
- Only 35,6% teachers reported strong sense of belonging, 12,8% provided negative ratings for sense of belonging in indicator Institutional Support

	Family Support	Institutional Support	Colleague Support
Minimum	4,00	5,00	4,00
Maximum	24,00	24,00	24,00
Mean	20,97	18,11	20,42
Std. Deviation	3,54	3,58	3,86
Median	22,00	19,00	21,00

Results: Indicators of Emotional Competence

- 90% teachers reported high empathy to colleagues and others

	Cognitive Reappraisal	Empathy	Self-Regulation
Minimum	7,00	11,00	12,00
Maximum	24,00	24,00	24,00
Mean	18,53	21,56	20,58
Std. Deviation	3,34	2,38	2,41
Median	19	22	21

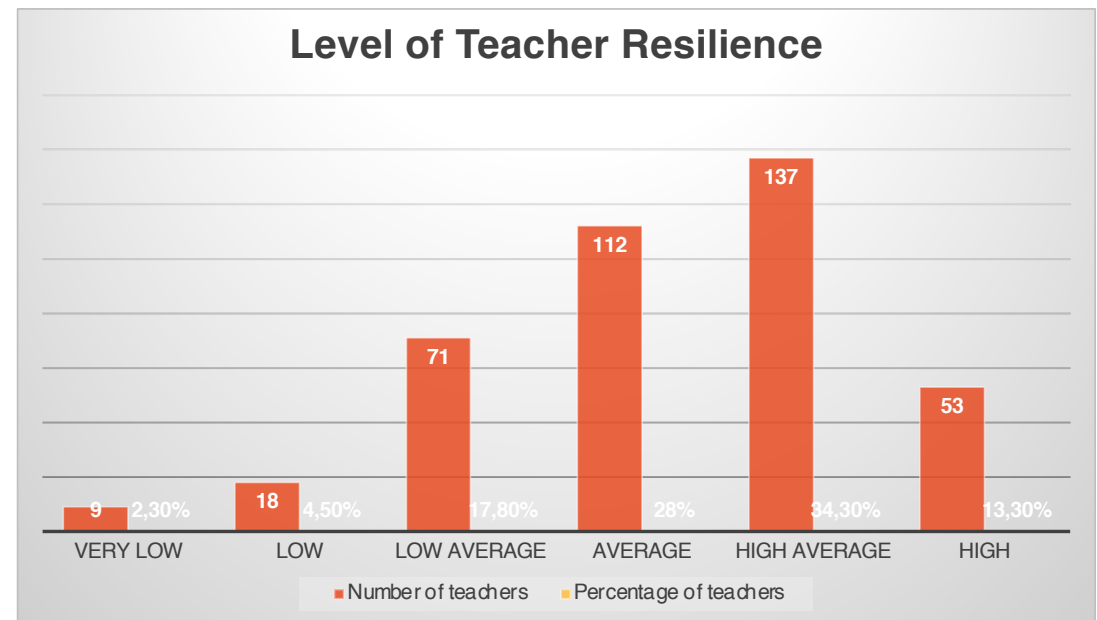
Results: Indicators of Engaged Living

- 49,5% provided high ratings for indicator Zest
- Lowest rating were reported for indicator Optimism
- 53% teachers think positively
 - 65% expect to have a good day
 - 38% expect to have a joyful day

	Gratitude	Zest	Optimism
Minimum	7,00	5,00	4,00
Maximum	24,00	24,00	24,00
Mean	22,70	18,45	17,68
Std. Deviation	2,09	3,67	3,55
Median	24	19	18

Results: Level of Resilience

Mean	142,08
Median	145,00
Mode	147,00
Std. Deviation	18,71
Skewness	-1,27
Std. Error of Skewness	,122
Kurtosis	4,60
Std. Error of Kurtosis	,24
Minimum	28,00
Maximum	175,00
Percentiles	
	25 131,00
	50 145,00
	75 155,00



Results: Level of Resilience and Sociodemographic Variables

Age of teachers

- **Lowest** level of resilience – age up to 30 years ($Mn=131,5$)
- **Highest** level of resilience – age above 60 years ($Mn=151$)
- Statistically significant difference between youngest and oldest teachers ($p < 0.001$)

Results: Level of Resilience and Sociodemographic Variables

Type of school

- Lower level of resilience in elementary school teachers ($Mn=143,28$) in comparison to high school teachers ($Mn=148,44$), ($p=0,002$)

Results: Correlations between Resilience and Social-Emotional Health

- Significant positive correlations between resilience and social-emotional health, $r_s = 0,75$, $p < 0.001$ and its domains

	Correlation Coefficient	Sig. (2-tailed)
Covitality Index	,75**	,00
Belief-in-Self	,68**	,00
Belief-in-Others	,49**	,00
Emotional Competence	,61**	,00
Engaged Living	,72**	,00

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Results: Correlations between Resilience and Social-Emotional Health

	Correlation Coefficient	Sig. (2-tailed)
Self-Efficacy	,657**	,00
Persistence	,540**	,00
Self-Awareness	,531**	,00
Family Support	,388**	,00
Institutional Support	,437**	,00
Colleague Support	,312**	,00
Cognitive Reappraisal	,633**	,00
Empathy	,391**	,00
Self-Regulation	,404**	,00
Gratitude	,453**	,00
Zest	,662**	,00
Optimism	,653**	,00

Results: Predictors of Resilience

- Results of regression analysis indicate that **predictors of resilience are:**
- **3 covitality domains:**
 - *Engaged Living, Belief-in-Self and Emotional Competence ($R^2=0,606$; $p=0,000$)*
- **7 covitality indicators:**
 - *Self-Efficacy, Zest, Self-Regulation, Optimism, Cognitive Reappraisal, Gratitude and Colleague Support ($R^2=0,620$; $p=0,000$)*

Discussion

Level of Social-Emotional Health

- Overall **high level** of social-emotional health reported by teachers
- Over 90% teachers reported high level
- Over 80% of reported high level in individual domains
- Slovak teachers have **high emotional competences** (empathy, self-awareness, self-efficacy) and high belief in others (**support of family and colleagues**)
- **Limits** were found in **institutional support** and especially in **optimism** of teachers

Discussion

Level of Resilience

- Overall **high level** of resilience reported by teachers
- Below average for 25% of teachers
- Average level for 28% teachers
- Above average 47% of teachers

Discussion

Level of Resilience

Age

- Highest level of resilience – teachers + 60 years
- Lowest level of resilience – teachers below 30 years
 - Resilience increases with age (Wagnild, Young, 1993; Wagnild, 2016)

Type of School

- Elementary school teachers have lower resilience than high school teachers
- Support of resilience in elementary schools needed

Discussion

Resilience and Social-Emotional Health

- Positive correlations between social-emotional health, its domains, indicators and resilience
- Support previous findings between covitality and resilience (Furlong et al., 2014; Martazavi & Yarohali, 2015; Kapušová & Szobiová, 2018; Szobiová, Gajdošová & Hochsteigerová, 2020)

Discussion

Resilience and Social-Emotional Health

- **3 covitality domains** (Engaged Living, Belief-in-Self and Emotional Competence)
- **7 covitality indicators** (Self-Efficacy, Zest, Self-Regulation, Optimism, Cognitive Reappraisal, Gratitude and Colleague Support)
- **identified as predictors of resilience**

Limitations

- Specificity of the sample (elementary and high school teachers)
 - Small sample size
- Online questionnaire assessment
 - Report's bias
 - Potential overlap of items addressing positive emotionality
 - Nonstandardized measures

Implications

- By supporting mental health and resilience of teachers, improvements in quality and effectiveness of education as well as school social climate may be achieved
 - Positive impact on mental health and wellbeing of students and other school employees
- Collaboration within multidisciplinary teams in schools
- Results as a basis for holistic teacher mental health program promoting teacher mental health and resilience
 - With the aim to help teachers react to new emerging requirements in education as their profession
 - Provide them with professional support that they deserve

Thanks for your attention!



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