

Teachers' self-efficacy and well-being: Examining the central role of emotional processes



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INTRODUCTION

Teachers experience a wide variety of emotions at their workplace that need to be managed in accordance to prescribed emotional rules of teacher profession. Teachers' emotions and emotion regulation strategies arise from personal beliefs such as self-efficacy and may have an important role in forming teachers' sense of well-being. The aim of this study was to examine the mediating role of emotional labor and emotions in the relationship between self-efficacy and well-being of middle-school teachers.

SUBJECTS and PROCEDURE

The study was conducted on a sample of 505 Croatian teachers ($M_{age}=41.39$, $SD_{age}=10.44$; 388 of them were female). Teachers filled out self-report scales measuring self-efficacy, emotional labour (deep acting and surface acting), discrete emotions towards students (joy, pride, anger, hopelessness, exhaustion) and well-being (job satisfaction, life satisfaction, positive experiences). Participation in the study was voluntary and anonymous.

INSTRUMENTS

Well-being was assessed by three scales: 1) **Job Satisfaction Scale** (Judge, Thoresen, Bono & Patton, 2001), consisting of 5 items measuring overall job satisfaction on a 7-point Likert-type scale (1=completely disagree, 7=completely agree). Sample item: "I feel fairly satisfied with my present job"; 2) **The Satisfaction with Life Scale** (Diener, Emmons, Larsen & Griffin, 1985), consisting of 5 items measuring global life satisfaction. Sample item: "In most ways my life is close to my ideal"; and 3) the Positive Experiences subscale of **The Scale of Positive and Negative Experiences** (Diener et al., 2009), which includes six items to assess positive feelings (e.g. positive, joyful). Participants responded on a Likert-type format ranging from 1 (very rarely or never) to 5 (very often or always).

Teacher self-efficacy was measured by the 24-item Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk-Hoy, 2001) assessing teachers' self-efficacy in three areas: a) instructional strategies (sample item: "To what extent can you use a variety of assessment strategies?"); b) classroom management ("How much can you do to get children to follow classroom rules?"); and c) student engagement ("How much can you do to help students to value learning?"). Participants responded on a 9-point Likert-type scale (1=not at all able to manage, 9=fully able to manage).

Teachers' emotions experienced in relation to their students were measured by **Teacher Emotion Questionnaire** (Burić, Slišković & Macuka, 2017), namely its subscales of Joy (e.g. "I am glad when I achieve teaching goals that are set"), Pride (e.g. "I feel like a winner when my students succeed"), Anger (e.g. "Some students make me so angry that my face goes red"), Hopelessness (e.g. "I am discouraged by the capabilities of some students") and Exhaustion (e.g. "At the end of my working day, I just want to rest"). Participants responded on a Likert-type format ranging from 1 (very rarely or never) to 5 (very often or always).

Emotional labour experienced by teachers in relation to their job was assessed by two subscales of the **Emotional Labor Scale** (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003), namely Surface Acting (e.g. "On the average day at work, how frequently do you resist expressing your true feelings?" ($\alpha=.63$)) and Deep Acting (e.g. "On the average day at work how frequently do you try to actually experience the emotions that you must show?" ($\alpha=0.81$)). Participants responded on a Likert-type format ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (always).

Results

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of analyzed variables (N=505)

	Self-efficacy	Surface acting	Deep acting	Joy	Pride	Anger	Hopelessness	Exhaustion	Life satisfaction	Job satisfaction
M	4.00	2.42	3.61	4.83	4.52	2.44	2.79	2.89	4.80	3.88
SD	.42	.66	.78	.37	.59	.82	.76	.88	1.18	.73
Range	1-9	1-5	1-5	1-5	1-5	1-5	1-5	1-5	1-7	1-5
α	.92	.65	.81	.80	.87	.77	.84	.89	.87	.82

Table 2. Model fit results

	χ^2	df	CFI	TLI	SRMR	RMSEA 90% C.I.
Measurement model	266.096***	103	.952	.939	.039	.056 (.048, .064)
Full mediation model	266.097***	104	.952	.937	.039	.056 (.047, .064)
Partial mediation model	266.096***	103	.952	.939	.039	.056 (.048, .064)

*** $p<.001$

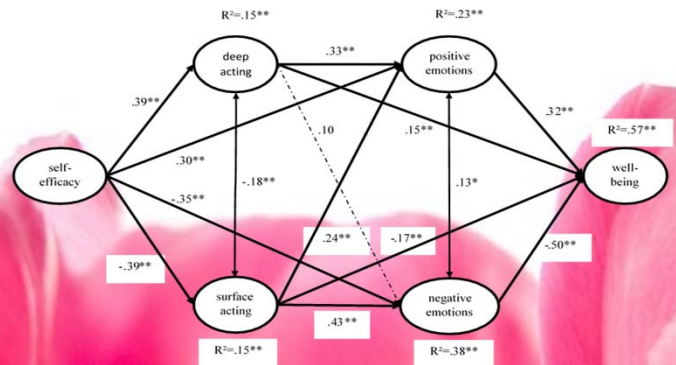
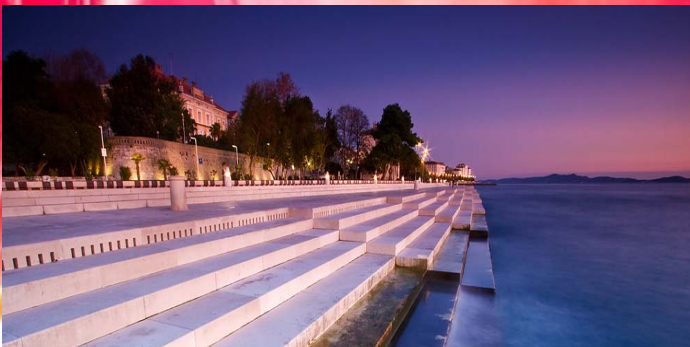


Figure 1. Full mediation model. ** $p<.01$.

SEM analysis revealed that emotional processes fully mediated the relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and well-being. Self-efficacy was positive predictor of deep acting and positive emotions, and negative predictor of surface acting and negative emotions. Next, deep acting positively predicted positive emotions, while surface acting positively predicted both positive and negative emotions, and well-being. Finally, teachers who reported about experiencing more positive, and less negative emotions, also had higher level of well-being.



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