

EXAMINING THE INTERPLAY BETWEEN PSYCHOLOGICAL RESILIENCE AND BURNOUT AMONG FIFTH-GRADE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS DURING THE APPLICATION OF ACQUISITION ASSESSMENT EXAM IN ALGERIA

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Abstract

This study investigates the intricate relationship between psychological resilience and burnout among fifth-year primary school teachers in the context of administering the achievement assessment exam. The research aims to assess the levels of both psychological burnout and psychological resilience while unveiling the dynamics of their correlation among educators. The findings reveal a significant inverse correlation, wherein higher levels of psychological resilience are associated with reduced psychological burnout. The study highlights the high psychological resilience levels among teachers, coexisting with average levels of psychological burnout. Psychological burnout negatively impacts educators' physical and psychological health, their educational performance, and their interpersonal relationships within the school environment. Factors contributing to burnout include professional pressures and certain personal characteristics. However, positive psychological factors, like psychological resilience, play a crucial role in mitigating stress and enhancing mental well-being. Promoting psychological resilience can lead to positive experiences, ultimately bolstering mental health. The study underscores the importance of cultivating these positive psychological attributes to empower teachers to navigate challenges effectively. It emphasizes the need for awareness programs to promote mental health, early stress detection, improved professional and social conditions for teachers, and the implementation of counseling and preventive programs.

Keywords: psychological resilience, burnout, primary school teachers, mental health, professional pressures

Introduction

Psychology has increasingly turned its focus towards examining positive psychological attributes in the face of pressures and crises. These attributes play a crucial role in mitigating the detrimental effects on an individual's mental and physical health, thereby influencing their professional performance and interpersonal relationships. In light of escalating pressures and their diverse origins, educators, in particular, face a tangible risk of psychosomatic ailments, stress, anxiety, depression, and potential psychological burnout.

Burnout is a syndrome that manifests as emotional exhaustion, emotional numbness, and a reduced sense of achievement. It is a state often experienced by individuals in social service professions (Maslach, 2003). This concept is central to our investigation as we seek to uncover the factors contributing to psychological burnout among educators.

Psychological Burnout goes beyond the general burnout definition. It specifically relates to the negative pattern of responses to stressful educational events. This pattern encompasses various factors, such as challenging student behavior, the inherent stressors of the teaching profession, and a perceived lack of support from school administration (Al-Tijani, 2016). This concept allows us to delve deeper into the unique challenges faced by educators.

Psychological Resilience represents an individual's capacity for positive adjustment in the face of a myriad of stressors. It signifies the ability to recover from challenging situations, displaying adaptability and a robust psychological constitution (APA, 2000; Abu Halawa, 2018). Understanding this trait is vital as we assess its role in helping educators cope with the stresses of their profession.

Psychological Flexibility, on the other hand, signifies an individual's openness to new capabilities and their willingness to adapt to changing circumstances. This trait allows for the adoption of diverse problem-solving approaches and fosters resilience when confronted with adversity (Qasim, 2017). Examining this attribute will shed light on how educators navigate the dynamic challenges in their field.

Failure to harmonize personal capacities with external pressures can lead to the development of psychological burnout. Psychological resilience, as a key personality trait, enables individuals to adapt to crises and pressures by enhancing their capacity to withstand challenges and effectively manage stressful situations. As we delve into the study objectives and importance, the following sections will provide a comprehensive view of our research methodology and its significance in addressing these critical issues.

Considering the pivotal role of teachers in educational reform and the importance of positive psychological factors in facilitating balanced professional performance, this study aims to explore the relationship between psychological resilience and psychological burnout among fifth-year primary school teachers. Specifically, the study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of psychological resilience among fifth-year primary school teachers?
2. What is the level of psychological burnout among fifth-year primary school teachers?
3. What is the nature of the relationship between psychological resilience and psychological burnout among fifth-year primary school teachers?

Educators are essential pillars of the educational process, and it is imperative to address their psychological well-being to maintain a balanced professional performance. This study aims to uncover the phenomenon of psychological burnout, identify its causes, and propose preventive measures. Additionally, it sheds light on positive psychological characteristics, particularly psychological resilience, as a protective factor against stress. Understanding these factors can significantly impact teachers' ability to employ positive coping strategies when faced with psychological stress, ultimately contributing to personal, social, and professional adjustment.

Literature Review

The Teaching Profession and Its Stressors

The teaching profession is recognized as one of the most stress-inducing occupations due to the numerous demands educators face, compounded by increasing external pressures. These pressures encompass issues related to management, the scarcity of financial incentives, and conflicts, among others. The emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic has further added to the challenges faced by

educators. The pandemic disrupted traditional teaching methods for several months, introducing a health protocol and reducing instructional hours. Moreover, students have become more reliant on smart devices and have irregular sleep patterns. These factors have substantially increased the educational burden on teachers, exacerbated by the Ministry of Regency's introduction of a new evaluation system for fifth-year students, replacing the end-of-primary education exam. This lengthy evaluation process generated anxiety among students, parents, and additional stress for fifth-year teachers. Such a multitude of stressors and consistent exposure to them can have a detrimental impact on a teacher's psychological equilibrium and physical well-being, leading to exhaustion of energy and effort.

Individual Variability in Response to Stress

Individuals exhibit a wide range of reactions when confronted with stress, and their responses are heavily influenced by their unique psychological traits and their perception of the situations they find themselves in. This means that how people deal with stress can vary significantly from one individual to another. Some individuals possess the ability to employ constructive and positive strategies when facing stressful situations. These strategies may include actively seeking solutions, engaging in effective problem-solving, and maintaining emotional control. These individuals can effectively adapt to challenging circumstances, finding ways to overcome obstacles and maintain their well-being.

Conversely, there are individuals who struggle to cope effectively when confronted with stressors. They may find it challenging to manage their emotional state and may lack the necessary coping mechanisms. As a result, they may experience physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion over time.

This state of exhaustion can have a profound impact on an individual's overall well-being and professional performance. It can diminish their energy and motivation to excel in their work, potentially leading to dissatisfaction with their working conditions and compensation. This dissatisfaction, when combined with ongoing stress, can contribute to the development of psychological burnout.

Psychological burnout typically unfolds in three sequential stages: (1) Emotional Stress, which is the initial stage of burnout, characterized by heightened emotional responses to stressors. Individuals in this stage may experience increased levels of anxiety, frustration, or a sense of being overwhelmed by their work or life circumstances; (2) Emotional Numbness, where individuals may start to emotionally detach from their work and their surroundings. They may become indifferent or emotionally numb to their responsibilities, losing their sense of purpose or passion for their work; (3) Reduced Job Performance, wherein as burnout progresses, individuals may find their job performance deteriorating. They become less effective in their tasks, leading to a decline in their overall professional competence.

Understanding these stages and the underlying factors contributing to burnout is crucial for addressing and preventing it in various settings, whether it's in the workplace or educational institutions (Dionne-Proulx & Alain, 2000; Maslach, Shovel, & Leiter, 2001).

Prevalence of Psychological Burnout Among Educators

The phenomenon of psychological burnout among educators has garnered significant research attention, revealing varying prevalence rates. In a study conducted in the Province of Madrid, Spain, on 47,000 public education teachers, approximately one in every five teachers exhibited a psychological

burnout rate of 21.22%, with 39% displaying serious clinical stress indicators. A study in Cadiz, Spain, conducted by Ayuso and Guillen (2008), found that approximately 50% of secondary education teachers experienced burnout. A Canadian study by Dionne-Proulx and Alain (2000) involving 1787 professors indicated that 6.6% exhibited a high level of psychological burnout, while most had an average level. These findings suggest that psychological burnout tends to develop gradually over months or even years. A more recent study in Stavropol, Russia, involving 35 professors, revealed that 40% scored high on the burnout scale (Pozdnyakova et al., 2021).

Studies conducted locally in Algeria have consistently shown high levels of psychological burnout among educators at various educational levels. For instance, a study by Bouqsa and Medawar (2019) on 60 intermediate education teachers in Batna revealed a high level of functional psychological burnout. Another study by Bouminkar and Namash (2023) on intermediate education teachers in Constantine found a high level of psychological burnout. In contrast, a study by Tijani (2016) on 240 male and female teachers reported an average level of psychological burnout. This high degree of psychological burnout has far-reaching consequences, extending beyond professional performance to negatively impact physical and mental health. It is associated with an increased risk of depression and other mental disorders, reduced job satisfaction, higher rates of illness and absenteeism, and the manifestation of psychosomatic symptoms and cognitive disturbances, which significantly affect the overall quality of life (Angelini et al., 2021).

The Role of Psychological Resilience

Psychological resilience plays a pivotal role in individuals' ability to withstand the adverse effects of stress and trauma (Abu Halawa, 2018). Resilient individuals can maintain their emotional balance and psychological well-being when confronted with challenging situations. This resilience enables them to adapt effectively and positively confront stressors and traumatic circumstances. Flexibility is a critical dimension of personality that helps individuals navigate psychological stress. It signifies openness to new capabilities and a willingness to adapt to changing circumstances. Flexible individuals seek diverse problem-solving approaches and do not feel helpless in the face of adversity (Qasim, 2017).

Psychological resilience counters the significant decline in cohesion and self-balance when individuals are exposed to stressful or traumatic events (Ahren et al., 2006; Long, 2011). Neglecting to cultivate psychological resilience in educational institutions, whether for students or teachers, can have detrimental effects on the mental health of individuals within these institutions (Al-Mutairi, 2021).

Psychological flexibility is a vital factor influencing a teacher's effectiveness and professional adaptability. It directly affects their ability to fulfill their duties and achieve educational objectives while creating a healthy, tension-free learning environment for students. Psychological flexibility equips teachers to cope with school-related pressures, teaching requirements, and adapt to changes effectively. It ensures the maintenance of stability when facing crises and problems.

Methodology

Research Design

This study adopts a descriptive approach, which is commonly utilized in the investigation of psychological and social phenomena. It is well-suited to the nature of the subject at hand, focusing on the examination of psychological resilience and its relationship with psychological burnout among

fifth-year primary school teachers. This approach involves data collection, interpretation, analysis, and the derivation of implications.

Study Population

The study's target population consists of fifth-year primary school teachers in the city of **Tolga biskra (Algeria)**, including those teaching Arabic and French, totaling 113 teachers.

A random sampling method was employed, involving the distribution of an electronic questionnaire to fifth-year primary school teachers in Tolga. The final study sample (n = 47) comprised both male (n = 8) and female (n = 39) teachers who responded to the questionnaire. The field study was conducted during the period from May 2023 to July 2023, coinciding with the administration of the primary education assessment exam for the first time. Table 1 presents the characteristics of the study sample.

Table 1. Characteristics of the Study Sample

Characteristics	Repetition	Percentage
Age		
Less than 30 years	6	12.7%
30 to 40 years	25	53.19%
41 to 50 years	12	25.53%
Older than 50 years	4	8.51%
Years of Experience		
Less than 5 years	10	21.3%
6 to 10 years	18	38.3%
11 to 15 years	13	27.7%
16 to 20 years	1	2.1%
More than 20 years	5	10.6%

Data Collection Instruments

This study utilizes two primary data collection tools:

Maslach Burnout Scale (1981):

1. The Maslach Burnout Scale, designed by Christina Maslach in 1981, consists of 22 items, each with 7 response alternatives. The scale comprises three dimensions: emotional exhaustion, Depersonalization, and Personal Accomplishment. When correcting the responses, scores ranging from 0 to 6 degrees are assigned to each item of the scale. The minimum limit for the burnout scale is 22 degrees, and the upper limit for psychological burnout is 132 degrees. The Arabic version of the scale has shown high reliability in the Arab environment. The psychometric properties of the scale were assessed in the Algerian environment. Al-Tijani Jaradi Arabized the scale from English into Arabic and applied it to a sample of 50 male and female teachers. The validity of the tool was confirmed through arbitrator validity and peripheral comparison (discriminatory validity), with a scale reliability coefficient (Cronbach's alpha) of 0.74. Burnout levels are categorized as follows:
 2. Low psychological burnout: 0 to 43 degrees

3. Average burnout: 44 to 87 degrees
4. High psychological burnout: 88 to 132 degrees

Table 2. Distribution of Items in Maslach Burnout Scale Dimensions

Dimensions	Paragraphs
Emotional Exhaustion	1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 13, 14, 16, 20
Depersonalization	5, 10, 11, 15, 22
Personal Accomplishment	4, 7, 12, 17, 18, 19, 21, 9

Psychological Resilience Scale (HER, 2008)

The Psychological Resilience Scale, known as HER, was developed by Brien et al. in 2008 and standardized for the Algerian environment by Hammouda et al. (2016). The scale includes 23 items distributed across three dimensions of psychological resilience: self-efficacy (12), growth and development (5), and optimism (6). A grading system is used to score the Psychological Resilience Scale. A grade of 5 corresponds to "always," a grade of 4 to "often," and so forth. The scale scores are categorized into three levels:

1. Low: 23 to 53
2. Average: 42 to 84
3. High: 85 to 115

Table 3. Dimensions of the Psychological Resilience Scale and Its Items

Dimensions	Paragraphs
After development and growth	8, 12, 20, 21, 23
After self-efficacy	1, 4, 3, 5, 7, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 18, 22
After optimism	2, 6, 13, 16, 17, 19

Statistical Analysis

The data collected in this study were analyzed using various statistical methods, including mean, t-tests, standard deviation, Pearson correlation coefficient, frequencies, percentages, and ratios. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software was employed for data processing and analysis.

Results and Discussion

Correlation Between Psychological Resilience and Psychological Burnout

To explore the relationship between psychological resilience and psychological burnout among fifth-year primary school teachers, we calculated the Pearson correlation coefficient. The results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Pearson Correlation Coefficient Between Psychological Resilience and Psychological Burnout

Relationship Variables	Correlation Coefficient	Significance Level
Psychological Resilience Psychological Burnout	-0.374	p < 0.05

Table 4 illustrates the Pearson correlation coefficient ($r = -0.374$) between psychological resilience and psychological burnout among fifth-year primary school teachers. The negative statistical significance ($p < 0.05$) indicates an inverse relationship. In other words, as psychological resilience increases, psychological burnout decreases. This suggests that psychological resilience plays a pivotal role in maintaining individuals' psychological well-being during times of crises and pressure, reducing negative psychological symptoms, and mitigating psychological burnout (Rutter, 1987; Vowles & McCracken, 2010; Melhem et al., 2020).

Psychological resilience, defined by Biron (2012) as the ability to adapt to stressful events, empowers individuals to display positive adaptive behaviors when facing stressors and conflicts. It encompasses maintaining emotional control, adapting to new situations effectively, and viewing challenges as opportunities for personal growth and development (Abu Halawa, 2018). This trait allows individuals to face various challenges, reduce the negative effects on their physical and psychological health, and consider stressors as opportunities for self-improvement (Abu Halawa, 2013).

Moreover, individuals with high psychological resilience perceive difficulties as chances for personal growth and possess the capacity to confront stressors positively (Qasim, 2017). This characteristic leads to quicker recovery from traumatic situations and enhances the individual's ability to cope with future stressors effectively. However, it's essential to note that not all studies agree on the relationship between burnout and psychological traits. For instance, Al-Khatib's (2016) study found no relationship between burnout and ego flexibility dimensions.

Level of Psychological Resilience Among Fifth-Year Primary School Teachers

To determine the level of psychological resilience among fifth-year primary school teachers, we calculated the mean and standard deviation based on the psychological resilience scale scores. The results are displayed in Table 5.

Table 5. Average Psychological Resilience Among Fifth-Year Primary School Teachers

Scale	Sample Size	Mean (SMA)	Hypothetical Average	Standard Deviation	Level	P-value
Psychological Resilience	47	95.80	96	9.93	Middle	15.90

Table 5 shows that the average psychological resilience among fifth-year primary school teachers is 95.80, with a standard deviation of 9.93. This falls within the range of high psychological resilience (85-115), indicating a high level of psychological resilience among the study sample. This result aligns with previous research (Melhem et al., 2020; Al-Khatib, 2007) which indicated high levels of ego flexibility and self-acceptance among teachers.

This high level of psychological resilience can be attributed to teachers' strong sense of self-efficacy, allowing them to excel in their teaching tasks and navigate obstacles with determination. Additionally, self-acceptance and dealing positively with various situations contribute to teachers' psychological flexibility, making them well-equipped to face challenges effectively (Ludenselger & Ritt, 1984; Al-Tijani, 2016).

Level of Psychological Burnout Among Fifth-Year Primary School Teachers

To assess the level of psychological burnout among fifth-year primary school teachers, we computed the mean and standard deviation based on the Maslach burnout scale scores. The results are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Average Psychological Burnout Among Fifth-Year Primary School Teachers

Scale	Sample Size	Mean (SMA)	Standard Deviation	Level
Psychological Burnout	47	54.33	9.88	Middle

Table 6 indicates that the average psychological burnout among fifth-year primary school teachers is 54.33, categorizing it as an average level of psychological burnout. This finding is consistent with studies by Al-Khatib (2007), Tajani (2016), and Shabani (2017), which also reported medium levels of psychological burnout among teachers.

Psychological burnout results from an individual's perception of external pressures and their ability to cope with them. Individuals who feel in control of environmental events are better equipped to handle stressors, while those who perceive a lack of control may experience psychological burnout (Al-Tijani, 2016). The third trimester, during which this study was conducted, presents additional pressures for teachers due to the implementation of the achievement assessment exam. Teachers' ability to adapt to these changes and their control over stressors are crucial factors influencing the level of psychological burnout (Peterson & Seligman, 1993).

Conclusion

This research delved into the intricate relationship between psychological resilience and burnout within a cohort of fifth-year primary school educators, against the backdrop of the administration of the achievement assessment exam. The study's objectives encompassed gauging the levels of psychological burnout and psychological resilience while unearthing the dynamics of their interplay among these teachers.

The findings unveiled a compelling inverse correlation between psychological resilience and psychological burnout within the cadre of fifth-year primary school teachers. Notably, the research divulged that the teachers exhibited a commendably high degree of psychological resilience, coexisting with an average level of psychological burnout.

Psychological burnout emerges as a deleterious phenomenon that casts a pall over an educator's physical and psychological well-being. This malaise casts a shadow over their educational prowess and interpersonal interactions within the scholastic milieu. It results from the sustained exposure to an amalgamation of professional, environmental, and personal pressures. Indeed, prior studies conducted in Algeria have spotlighted alarmingly high levels of psychological burnout among educators. Numerous factors contribute to the onset of psychological burnout, with professional pressures taking a prominent role. Furthermore, intrinsic personal attributes can serve as predisposing factors to this condition. However, the emergence of positive psychological attributes, such as psychological resilience, holds promise in mitigating the effects of stress and bolstering mental well-being. The

cultivation of resilience can even yield heightened positive experiences, rendering it an effective avenue for fortifying mental health.

It follows that the emphasis must be laid on accentuating these positive psychological traits, which empower educators to navigate challenges, crises, and diverse scenarios. As evidenced by the findings of this study, psychological resilience emerges as a pivotal factor in diminishing levels of psychological burnout, thus preserving educators' mental well-being and enhancing their adaptability in both their professional and social spheres.

Hence, experts and authorities must redouble their efforts to confront this burgeoning issue, initiating crucial awareness programs that underscore the significance of safeguarding mental health to counteract stress. Prompt identification of the early indicators of physical and psychological stress is paramount to preempting the development of psychological burnout. Furthermore, the amelioration of professional and social conditions for educators is crucial, providing them with an environment conducive to fulfilling their duties free from undue pressure. Finally, the implementation of counseling and preventive programs can be instrumental in fostering psychological resilience and curbing the onset of burnout among teachers.

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