

TOWARDS THE WELL-BEING OF VOCATIONAL TEACHERS: THE ROLE OF PERSONALITY CHARACTERISTICS

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Abstract. Background: The success of teaching practices and teachers' well-being largely depends not only on the curriculum, but also on the teachers' personality characteristics. On the other hand, teachers' perception about their own profession, themselves and others in the occupation leads to increased quality of education. Therefore, it can be assumed that teachers' personality traits are among the most significant determinants of their professional identity that foster holistic psychological wellbeing. **Purpose:** The purpose of the study is to investigate the Big Five personality traits as predictors of professional identity of the vocational teachers in Lithuania. **Method:** The sample consisted of 346 teachers from the Lithuanian vocational training system. The Big Five inventory (BFI; Benet-Martinez & John, 1998; John, Donahue, & Kentle, 1991; John, Naumann, & Soto, 2008) was used to measure the teachers' personality traits. Vocational teachers' professional identity was measured using the Teachers' Professional Identity Questionnaire (Beijaard, Verloop, & Vermunt, 2000). Also, questions on demographic variables were used in the study. **Results:** Personality traits of agreeableness, conscientiousness and openness to experience were significant predictors of vocational teachers' professional identity. Teachers' professional identity, which consists of distinct aspects of expertise (subject matter experts, didactical experts, and pedagogical experts), is analyzed. **Conclusion:** The results support the importance of vocational teachers' personality traits for their professional identity. The results can help the researchers deepen their understanding of the importance of the teachers' personality for their well-being. The study results can also provide teachers with a more comprehensive awareness of their professional identity.

Keywords: professional identity, personality traits, vocational teachers, well-being.

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INTRODUCTION

In today's classrooms, teachers have broader societal functions and play much more professional roles than ever before (Choy, Wong, Chong, & Lim, 2014; Goodyear & Dudley, 2015; Voinea & Palasan, 2014; Wilkins, Mohamed, & Smith, 2011). Moreover, the teacher's main role in the society has also been changed – from less of a transmitter of knowledge toward more of a facilitator of learning (Goodyear & Dudley, 2015; Živkovic, 2013). There is evidence that the teacher's personality influences teaching practices and outcomes. Personality traits are identified as an important factor in the teachers' work activities (Klassen & Tze, 2014; Buela & Mamman, 2015) because they describe stable individual characteristics, which determine personal behavior in professional field (Mount, Barrick, Scullen, & Rounols, 2005).

Congruent identity is a part of psychological well-being (Rothausen, Henderson, Arnold, & Malshe, 2015). Associations between identity and well-being have been confirmed by a considerable amount of previous research (e.g. Cosgriff, 2017; Cox, Brett-MacLean, & Courneya, 2016; Day & Kington, 2008; Kotic & Dimitrova, 2017; McNair, 2017; Morrison, 2013; Pellegrino, 2015; Tang & Ferguson, 2014). Identity is a key element in the understanding of a person's strivings for health and well-being (Sharma & Sharma, 2010). Development of professional identity is inseparable from both personal and professional well-being. For example, professional isolation, absence of professional dialogue and support, results in the deterioration of personal and professional well-being (Morrison, 2013). According to Acton and Glasgow (2015), educating teachers about the key facets of wellbeing is essential in order to preserve and sustain the teaching profession, thus enabling greater possibilities for professional success. Core elements of identity and well-being include purpose, trajectory, relatedness, expression, acceptance, and differentiation (Rothausen et al., 2015).

Previous research has proven that teachers' identity has significant impact on various teaching-related consequences. Teachers' professional identity is the basis for meaning making (Chong, 2011; Day, Kington, Stobart, & Sammons, 2006), self-efficacy (Day et al., 2006; Yamin-Ali & Pooma, 2012), motivation (Day et al., 2006; Komba, Anangisye, & Kataro, 2013; Lee & Yin, 2011; Marcelo, 2009), commitment (Day et

al., 2006; Komba et al., 2013; Marcelo, 2009), job satisfaction (Day et al., 2006; Komba et al., 2013; Marcelo, 2009), decision making (Chong, 2011; Monrouxe, 2010), and work efficiency (Alsup, 2006; Beijaard et al., 2000; Chong & Low, 2009; Chong, 2011; Day et al., 2006). Also, the teacher's professional identity impacts one's perception of teaching as a career choice (Chong, 2011). It is argued that this perception largely influences teachers' teaching methods and their approach to the professional development (Chong & Low, 2009; Chong, 2011). Moreover, teachers' perceptions of their own professional identity affect their willingness to cope with educational change and to implement innovations in their teaching practices (Beijaard et al., 2000). Studies have revealed links between teachers' professional identity and the ability to promote educational change (Chong & Low, 2009; Chong, 2011), changes both inside and outside school (Alsup, 2006; Beijaard et al., 2000). Hence, the awareness of vocational teachers' professional identity is crucially important. Professional identity can foster holistic psychological well-being and be utilized as an instrument (Komba et al., 2013; Marcelo, 2009) of teachers' motivation, commitment, satisfaction, etc. Various influential factors (individual and contextual) have been explored in previous studies (e.g. Beijaard et al., 2000; Lee & Yin, 2011; Smit, Fritz, & Mabalane, 2010; Yamin-Ali & Pooma, 2012). However, there is a lack of research exploring the links between vocational teachers' professional identity and their personality traits. The scientific contribution includes several aspects. First, the vocational teachers' professional identity is being studied. It is believed that the professional identity of vocational teachers differs from that of the other teachers, because the former in large part are practitioners (come from practice) and choose the teaching profession as their second career. Second, it is assumed that stable personality traits of vocational teachers might be associated with different types of professional identity. Compared with other works in the field, this study focuses on antecedents of professional identity, while previous papers highlighted the consequences of professional identity (e.g. commitment, job satisfaction, decision making, teaching practices, etc.). Thus, the purpose of this study is to investigate if the personality traits of vocational teachers might be predictors of their professional identity.

BACKGROUND

Teacher's professional identity

Identity is defined as a complex and multidimensional construct which includes many roles that a teacher performs in different social contexts (Day & Kington, 2008). Beijaard (1995) defined the teacher's professional identity as an answer to the question "what a teacher is?". According to the author, identity can generally be defined as "who or what someone is, the various meanings people can attach to themselves, or the meanings attributed by others" (p. 34). Teachers' professional identity reflects how they see themselves and other teachers in this profession (Marcelo, 2009; van Veen & Sleegers, 2009). Professional identity includes not only professional knowledge and skills, but also the fundamental norms and values characterized by the profession (Danielewicz, 2001).

Therefore, professional identity is often interpreted through one's personal understanding of who one is as a teacher and understanding of what kind of teacher one would like to become. The concept of teacher's professional identity reflects the complexity of the teaching profession where personal and professional dimensions interact (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011). Ibarra (1999) also defined professional identity as an integration of personal and professional roles. According to the author, professional identity involves relatively stable beliefs, values, motives and experience. Chong (2011) notes that the teacher's professional identity reflects how a person perceives the teacher's role and what is his or her attitude towards the students, teaching and learning. Teacher's professional identity consists of a number of identity elements, such as self-image, work motivation, responsibilities, self-esteem, perception of teaching, subject and subject pedagogy (Lee & Yin, 2011; van Veen & Sleegers, 2009). It also encompasses teaching-related self-efficacy, teaching philosophy, behavior, competence and readiness (Yamin-Ali & Pooma, 2012).

Although professional identity is considered to be a relatively stable characteristic of a person, most authors agree that the teacher's professional identity is flexible (e.g. Chong, 2011; Chong & Low, 2009; Komba et al., 2013; Marcelo, 2009; Olsen, 2008), because it is constantly being developed in the face of new contexts and relationships. Additionally, teacher's professional identity is multifaceted (Beijaard et al., 2004;

Komba et al., 2013; Marcelo, 2009; Smit et al., 2010). It is composed of sub-identities which are not necessarily linked (Komba et al., 2013; Marcelo, 2009).

Komba and colleagues (2013) have specified three basic characteristics that describe the teacher's professional identity: (a) expertise in one's area of specialization, (b) moral integrity, and (c) expertise in didactical terms. Beijaard and others (2000) proposed a similar structure of the teacher's professional identity concept which is based on many years of research in this field. According to the authors, teachers derive their professional identity from the ways they see themselves as (a) didactical experts, (b) pedagogical experts, and (c) subject matter experts. In research and teaching practices in Europe, "these are common concepts to indicate what a teacher should know and be able to do" (Beijaard et al., 2000, p. 751). Definitions of these concepts are described below.

The teacher as a subject matter expert. Traditionally, knowledge of the subject is the base of a teacher's professional knowledge. It is generally accepted that the teacher is required to have a deep and thorough understanding of the subject that is being taught. However, teaching is much more than just transmission of knowledge. This concept of teaching takes sufficient account of the complexity of the teaching profession. New conceptions of the teacher include such roles as a classroom manager, a facilitator of learning etc. (Beijaard et al., 2000). Therefore, knowledge of the subject is only one element in the construction of the teacher's professional identity.

The teacher as a didactical expert. Models of teaching define the relevant aspects of teaching: how to plan, execute, and evaluate lessons. However, the models of teaching do not uncover the complete complexity of teaching in practice, because "the main tasks here are initiating, guiding, and influencing students' thinking activities, and gradually transferring control over the learning process from the instructor to the learner" (Beijaard et al., 2000, p. 752).

The teacher as a pedagogical expert. Teaching cannot be reduced only to its didactical side (a technical or instrumental action). This must be related to the pedagogical side, where ethical or moral aspects should be taken into account (Beijaard et al., 2000). Positive pedagogical relationship between students and teachers is considered to be an essential condition for effective teaching and learning (McInerney & McInerney,

2006). Teachers experienced 30 % fewer problems related to the teaching subject if they had high-quality teacher-student relationships (Marzano & Marzano, 2003). Effective teacher-student relationship concerns the teacher's behavior: cooperation with students, understanding students' needs, teacher's involvement or engagement with students.

Positive pedagogic teacher-student relationships have a significant effect on student learning, classroom management, accommodating diversity, and showing care and concern (Choy et al., 2014). Students are motivated when they believe that their teachers care about them academically and personally (Fuhrman, 2010). According to Garrett (2010), students are more likely to adhere to the rules of the classroom when they believe their teachers care about them. Teachers face many dilemmas, for example: how to deal with deviant student behavior or how to diagnose and help students overcome the problems that arise as a result of divorce or sexual abuse (Beijaard et al., 2000). Teachers need to handle students' cultural diversity present in today's classrooms, as well as academic diversity, such as different learning styles and motivational levels (Choy et al., 2014). It can be presumed that the pedagogical side of teaching is more important than the subject matter side and the didactical side of teaching.

The professional identity is a process that cannot be separated from the development of the personality. Professional identity is formed in the context of personality development and professional activity processes. Furthermore, teacher's personality traits are analyzed as factors that influence the formation of professional identity.

Teacher's personality

Personality traits are identified as important factors in various daily situations and in the working life, because they define stable personal characteristics and determine personal behavior (Mount et al., 2005). Previous studies have confirmed the importance of personality traits for various professional results and processes. For example, personality traits have an important role in career decision-making self-efficacy (Hartman & Betz, 2007), career satisfaction (Lounsbury et al., 2004), work performance (Rusbadrol et al., 2015), training efficiency (Fatemi et al., 2015) etc. Also, personality traits have an influence on professional

identity formation (Žydzūnaitė & Crisafulli, 2011). Research on the relationship between identity and personality traits aims to reveal how identity depends on stable inner personal characteristics (Hirschi, 2012).

One of the most significant theories that explain the structure of personality is the Big Five model of personality. This model is the result of several decades' worth of research on this topic (John et al., 2008; Zhang, 2002) and covers five broad domains which define human personality and account for individual differences (Costa & McCrae, 1992; John et al., 2008). The Big Five model of personality includes personality traits of openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism.

Conscientiousness of the teacher comprises the abilities to plan, organize, pose, formulate and implement the aims (John et al., 2008; O'Connor & Paunonen, 2007; Žukauskienė & Barkauskienė, 2006). The results of Pandey's and Kavitha's (2015) research revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between conscientiousness and self-efficacy. Also, teachers' conscientiousness is related to the students' achievement motivation (Hart et al., 2007).

Neuroticism comprises the emotional stability and degree of negative emotions. This personality trait reflects the tendency to experience unpleasant emotions (fear, sadness, anger, frustration, guilt and dissatisfaction) (Costa & McCrae, 1992; John et al., 2008; Žukauskienė & Barkauskienė, 2006). Neuroticism is negatively related to self-efficacy (Rusbadrol et al., 2015), or performance (Pandey & Kavitha, 2015), ineffectiveness of career planning (Hartman & Betz, 2007) and avoiding to actively make career-related decisions (Wang et al., 2006).

Openness to experience comprises an imaginativeness, aesthetic sensitivity, curiosity, and interest in the inner and outer world (John et al., 2008; Žukauskienė & Barkauskienė, 2006). This factor is related to the pleasure of new experiences (Costa & McCrae, 1992), career satisfaction (Lounsbury et al., 2004), self-actualization by seeking creative and intellectual outcomes (Hartman & Betz, 2007). Also, openness to experience is related to job performance (Rusbadrol et al., 2015) and self-efficacy (Pandey & Kavitha, 2015).

Agreeableness factor is described by compassion, forgiveness, and sincerity (Costa & McCrae, 1992; John et al., 2008; Žukauskienė & Barkauskienė, 2006). People who have a high degree of agreeableness

are oriented towards the development of interpersonal relationships by helping others to live a meaningful life (Hartman & Betz, 2007). Agreeableness has a relative influence on the prediction of emotional intelligence of teachers (Iruloh & Ukaegbu, 2015) and is related to job performance (Rusbadrol et al., 2015) and self-efficacy (Pandey & Kavitha, 2015).

Extraversion reflects the person's sociability, activeness and optimism (Costa & McCrae, 1992; Žukauskienė & Barkauskienė, 2006). Extraverts are energetic, talkative, and assertive. They get their energy from interacting with others (John et al., 2008). Extraversion, as well as agreeableness, predicts emotional intelligence of teachers (Iruloh & Ukaegbu, 2015).

A more thorough understanding of the significance of personality traits for the teacher's professional identity is relevant, because different professional roles require different skill sets and attitudes that are tied to personality. Not every teacher can be an inspiring and motivating leader who can recognize what a student needs and integrate the personally meaningful information into the curriculum. Educational organizations put more and more importance on personality when looking for new candidates to fill a job position or considering the opportunities of promotion. In this light, analysis of the predictive value of the teachers' personality traits for their professional identity was chosen in this article.

METHOD

Participants

The sample consisted of 346 respondents (27.6 % of men and 72.4 % of female) from the Lithuanian vocational training system. The vast majority of the respondents were between 50 and 59 years of age (38.2 %), other age groups were distributed as follows: 18–29 years – 5.2 %, 30–39 years – 17.3 %, 40–49 years – 21.1 %, 60 years and more – 17.3 %. The vast majority of teachers have a university education (79.2 %), others have a higher non-university education (13 %), 4 % of respondents indicated special secondary education or vocational education. More than two-thirds (71.7 %) of the participants reported that they teach vocational subjects, 18.8 % are teachers of general subjects, and 5.5 % teach both. Most of the vocational teachers have a teaching qualification

(63.9 %) and a senior teacher's qualification category (47.4 %). Most of the participants are technology (48.6 %) and social sciences (23.1 %) representatives (also, humanities – 12.7 %, physical sciences – 6.6 %, agriculture – 4.3 %, biomedicine – 0.6 %, 1.7 % specified multiple fields, and 2.3 % did not answer). The greater part of the study participants work in vocational schools (56.9 %) and vocational training centers (41.9 %). The participants have solid work experience: 50.6 % have more than 20 years. Most teachers (50 %) are working full-time or more (27.5 %).

Procedure

The research employs quantitative research strategy. Data collection was conducted in 2016. The research was implemented in April and May. Using the probability cluster selection method, 27 vocational schools (which comprise a third of all 90 currently operating state and non-state vocational schools) were randomly selected for the research in 10 regions of the country. The research data was processed using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). The selected reliability level is $p < .05$. The distribution of variables is close to normal distribution, the asymmetry and excess coefficients satisfy the normality conditions, the sample is large, therefore the parametric criteria were selected for the statistical analysis.

Measures

Professional identity. Teachers' professional identity questionnaire (Beijaard et al., 2000) was used to measure the vocational teachers' professional identity: subject matter expert, pedagogical expert, and didactical expert. The questionnaire consists of 18 items (6 for each dimension). The instrument was translated (Dutch-Lithuanian and Lithuanian-Dutch) and used with permission from the author (D. Beijaard). Teachers were asked to what extent they agreed with the items on a four-point scale (ranging from 1 – "disagreement", to 4 – "complete agreement"). Some examples of the items used: "The subject I studied determined my decision to become a teacher" (a subject matter item); "In my lessons, I pay a lot of attention to varied learning activities" (a didactical item); "As a teacher, I serve as a model for the way students mix with each other" (pedagogical item).

According to Beijaard and colleagues' (2000) approach to teacher's professional identity, the descriptions of didactical, pedagogical, and subject matter expert are provided below. A didactical expert is a teacher who bases his/her profession on knowledge and skills related to the planning, execution, and evaluation of teaching and learning processes (the value of Cronbach's alpha is .692). A pedagogical expert is a teacher who bases his/her profession on knowledge and skills required in order to support the students' social, emotional, and moral development (Cronbach's alpha is .684). A subject matter expert is a teacher who bases his/her profession on the knowledge and skills of the subject matter (Cronbach's alpha is .617). Previous studies supported the reliability and validity of the instrument (Beijaard et al., 2000). In previous studies, the internal consistency of the scales was similar and ranged from .58 to .68 (Beijaard et al., 2000).

Personality traits. Personality traits of vocational teachers were measured using Big Five Inventory (BFI; Benet-Martinez & John, 1998; John et al., 1991, 2008). It is a self-report inventory designed to measure five personality traits: extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience. The questionnaire's translation into Lithuanian was approved by the scholars of the Department of Psychology of Vytautas Magnus University. The questionnaire is comprised of 44 short phrases based on trait adjectives that respondents had to evaluate in the 5-point Likert scale (from 1 – "strongly disagree" to 5 – "strongly agree"). In this study, the reliability of the Big Five scales (Cronbach's alpha) varies from .69 to .82 (Extraversion – .692; Conscientiousness – .704; Agreeableness – .617; Neuroticism – .686; Openness to experience – .816).

Demographic variables. As demographic variables, the participants reported their age, gender, education, qualification category, etc.

RESULTS

Vocational teachers' perceptions of their professional identity based on the three aspects of teacher expertise are distributed as follows: the teachers see themselves more as subject matter ($M = 3.40$, $SD = .40$) and pedagogical ($M = 3.36$, $SD = .39$) experts and less as didactical experts

($M = 3.29$, $SD = .40$). Using the t-paired test criteria, a comparison of the differences in the professional identities of vocational teachers is provided in Table 1.

Table 1. Vocational Teachers' Professional Identity Comparison: differences between pairs

	Pair	Mean	SD	Pair differences		t test	df	p
				Mean	SD			
1	Pedagogical expert	3.36	.39	.067	.32	3.85	345	p < .001
	Didactical expert	3.29	.40					
2	Didactical expert	3.29	.40	-.104	.35	-5.58	345	p < .001
	Subject matter expert	3.40	.40					
3	Pedagogical expert	3.36	.39	-.037	.32	-2.10	345	.036
	Subject matter expert	3.40	.40					

The analysis of the Independent samples t-test was performed in order to verify whether the professional identity differs depending on the teachers' gender, age and other socio-demographic characteristics. When comparing vocational teachers by their gender, the only significant difference was found in the teachers' scores for the scale of pedagogical expert (Table 2). The results indicate that a greater number of female rather than male teachers perceive themselves as pedagogical experts ($p < .05$).

Table 2. Vocational Teachers' Professional Identity Comparison by Gender

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	t-test	Cohen's d	p
Didactical expert	Males	93	19.39	2.45	334	-1.700	-.21	.15
	Females	243	19.89	2.37				
Pedagogical expert	Males	93	19.71	2.57	334	-2.184	-.26	.03
	Females	243	20.33	2.21				
Subject matter expert	Males	93	20.21	2.15	334	-.812	-.10	.57
	Females	243	20.45	2.50				

No statistically significant variances were found in the analysis of vocational teachers' professional identity differences by age. No statistically significant differences were found when analyzing the teachers'

professional identity according to their education or qualification category. What this means is that the teachers' professional identity is similar among teachers with different socio-demographic characteristics.

The most expressed personality traits of vocational teachers are agreeableness ($M = 3.91, SD = .50$) and conscientiousness ($M = 3.90, SD = .56$). Personality traits of extraversion and openness to experience are also strongly expressed: scores are above the mean value of the scale (respectively: $M = 3.59, SD = .52$ and $M = 3.51, SD = .45$). The least expressed trait is neuroticism ($M = 2.56, SD = .61$).

Multiple linear regression analyses were used in order to clarify the importance of vocational teachers' personality traits for their professional identity. The regression characteristics revealed that all models have a statistically significant prognostic value (Table 3). Personality traits of agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience explain from 15.5 to 21.9 percent variation of professional identity.

Table 3. Summary of Regression Analysis: Personality Traits in the Prediction of Professional Identity

Predicted variables	R ²	F-test	df	Standardized Beta					Cohen's d
				Extraversion	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness	Neuroticism	Openness to experience	
Didactical expert	.219	19.08**	5	.004	.066	.314**	-.018	.215**	.28
Pedagogical expert	.155	12.46**	5	.055	.112*	.158**	.015	.227**	.18
Subject expert	.155	12.45**	5	-.001	.122*	.202**	.040	.227**	.18

Note: **p < .01; *p < .05.

Regression analysis revealed that conscientiousness and openness to experience predict vocational teachers' perception as didactical experts. The agreeableness, conscientiousness and openness to experience have statistically significant prognostic value in vocational teachers' perception of pedagogical experts and subject matter experts.

Regarding the results of the analysis of variance, additional regression analysis for males and females (pedagogical expert) was performed. The results revealed that men's personality traits of conscientiousness ($p < .01$) and openness to experience ($p < .01$) predict their perception as pedagogical experts. Conversely, for women, only openness to experience ($p < .05$) is a predictor of pedagogical expertise.

DISCUSSION

Most of the vocational teachers in this study saw themselves as subject matter experts. Teachers who scored high on subject matter expertise tend to pay attention to the content of teaching subjects (innovation, curriculum issues, development of subject area competencies). Above all, teachers who scored high on subject matter expertise tend to refer to the transmission of knowledge as the core of their work. Previous findings indicate that for many teachers their perceptions of professional identity shift specifically from subject matter expertise to didactical and pedagogical expertise during their careers (Beijaard et al., 2000). Additionally, it was found that females are more of pedagogical experts than males. It can be assumed that females are more sociable and altruistic compared with males. According to Knox (2006), females are more oriented toward relationships, while males tend to be more autonomous, thus their identities are different.

In this study, it was assumed that teachers' personality traits may be related with their perceptions of professional identity. The results suggest that conscientiousness and openness to experience personality traits are very important for the teachers' identification with their professional roles. This means that planning, organizing, need for affiliation, task vacation and similar processes (conscientiousness), as well as imagination, attention to inner feelings, aesthetic sensitivity, intellectual curiosity, and interest in the inner and outer world (openness to experience) are the features of vocational teachers that are the most important for their professional identity. This confirms the previous research findings that teachers' personality traits of conscientiousness and openness to experience are important for the teachers' positive work-related outcomes (Hart et al., 2007; Fatemi et al., 2015; Pandey &

Kavitha, 2015; Rusbadrol et al., 2015). The results also revealed that the personality trait of agreeableness contributes to the prediction of pedagogical and subject matter expertise. Teachers who score high in agreeableness are oriented towards the development of interpersonal relationships by helping others to live a meaningful life (Hartman & Betz, 2007). This enhances the understanding that teachers (pedagogical experts) serve as the model for the way students interact with each other, but subject matter knowledge and skills are the basis for the teaching/learning processes.

The teaching profession is exceptional for its importance to the public, because the teacher's activities and personality characteristics directly affect each of its members. Fatemi and colleagues (2015) emphasize that it is of crucial importance to highlight that the teachers' attitudes toward their own profession, professionalism, ideology and beliefs derived from their background may also influence behavior and performance in class.

The findings of this study provide implications towards the vocational teachers' profession and the vocational schools. Most of all, the implications of the obtained association between vocational teachers' professional identity and their personality traits are important for the discussion on the conceptualization of the professional identity of vocational teachers. Also, the results are important for the implementation of professional development of teachers in vocational schools.

Limitations

This study has a several limitations that should be mentioned. The main limitation is related to the methodology of the study. Although the theory of Big Five personality traits is widely recognized in the world, and its instrument (*BFI*) of measuring the main five traits of personality is widely used in scientific research, the question arises: are 44 questions enough to measure the personality traits? In future research, it would be useful to consider other instruments to assess personality traits. Also, *Teachers' professional identity questionnaire* (Beijaard et al., 2000) was used to measure vocational teachers' professional identity. The mentioned instrument was designed and used in a sample of teachers, and given the specifics of vocational teachers, the

instrument might be not the most suitable for the current sample. In addition, although the size of the sample is large, the effect sizes are small. For this reason, the results should be evaluated critically and analogous studies are needed.

CONCLUSIONS

The current study is an attempt to examine the association between professional identity and personality traits among Lithuanian vocational teachers. The presented empirical research indicated that most vocational teachers see themselves as subject matter experts who are an authority in a particular area of teaching. Taking into account the specifics of vocational education and training system, these results are not surprising since the purpose of vocational training institutions is to help a person to acquire qualification and very specific competences related to a certain profession. Besides, the findings of the study revealed that vocational teachers' personality traits of agreeableness, conscientiousness and openness to experience were linked to teachers' professional identity. The results support the importance of stable personal characteristics of vocational teachers for their identification with a particular professional role. Among other things, this is relevant for those entering the teaching profession. It is recommended to consider and to evaluate not only knowledge, but also individual personality characteristics that are required in a teacher's profession. Measures of personality traits could be used in teacher preparation and vocational schools in order to improve their admissions or to make better hiring decisions. It is certain that future research in this area is needed in order to better understand the associations between teachers' personality and teaching practices.

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PROFESIJOS MOKYTOJŲ GEROVĖS LINK: ASMENYBĖS CHARAKTERISTIKŲ REIKŠMĖ

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Santrauka. Problema. Mokymo praktikos sėkmė ir mokytojų gerovė daugiausia priklauso ne tik nuo mokymo turinio, bet ir nuo mokytojų asmenybės ypatumų. Be to, mokytojų suvokimas apie savo profesiją, save ir kitus su ta profesija susijusius žmones lemia ugdymo kokybę. Todėl keliami prielaida, kad mokytojų asmenybės bruožai yra vieni svarbiausių veiksnių, turinčių reikšmę mokytojų profesiniam identitetui, kuris neabejotinai yra mokytojų psichologinės gerovės sąlyga. **Tyrimo tikslas** – ištirti profesijos pedagogų asmenybės bruožų prognostinę vertę jų profesinio identiteto prognozei Lietuvoje. **Tyrimo metodai.** Imtį sudarė 346 Lietuvos profesinio mokymo sistemoje dirbantys pedagogai. „Didžiojo penketo“ inventorių (BFI, Benet-Martinez ir John, 1998; John, Donahue ir Kentle, 1991, John, Naumann ir Soto, 2008) buvo naudotas profesijos pedagogų asmenybės bruožams įvertinti. Profesijos mokytojų profesinis identitetas buvo matuojamas naudojant Mokytojų profesinio identiteto klausimyną (Beijaard, Verloop ir Vermunt, 2000). **Rezultatai.** Profesijos mokytojų profesinį identitetą reikšmingai prognozuoja tokie asmenybės bruožai, kaip sąžiningumas ir

atvirumas patyrimui. Taip pat analizuojami profesijos mokytojų profesinio identiteto atskirų komponentų (profesiniai vaidmenys: dalyko ekspertas, didaktikos ekspertas ir pedagogikos ekspertas) sąsajos su asmenybės bruožais. **Išvada.** Rezultatai patvirtina profesijos mokytojų asmenybės bruožų svarbą jų profesiniam identitetui. Rezultatai gali padėti mokslininkams gilinti supratimą apie mokytojų asmenybės svarbą jų gerovei. Tyrimo rezultatai taip pat gali padėti mokytojams geriau suprasti jų profesinį identitetą.

Reikšminiai žodžiai: profesinis identitetas, asmenybės bruožai, profesijos mokytojai, gerovė.

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