

The Influence of Feelings of Guilt on the Relationship between Burnout and Psychosomatic Disorders in Portuguese and Spanish Teachers

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Stress is the fourth most common health symptom reported by European workers. Teachers are a high-risk population with a relevant prevalence rate for work-related stress because of the highly emotional nature of this work (Chang, 2009; Pena, Rey, & Extremera, 2012). One of the main consequences of work-related stress is burnout. According to Gil-Monte (2012) burnout progresses in a parallel way from the cognitive deterioration (i.e., low enthusiasm towards the job) and the emotional deterioration (i.e., psychological exhaustion) to attitudes and behaviours of cynicism and indifference (i.e., indolence). The model considers that in some cases, negative attitudes on the job, especially towards the people with whom the worker establishes work relationships, lead to feelings of guilt (Gil-Monte, 2012). Feelings of guilt are a symptom that appears to be involved in the burnout syndrome (Ekstedt & Fagerberg, 2005; Maslach, 1982). This variable could explain different types of burnout (Farber, 2000; Vanheule, Lievrouw & Verhaeghe, 2003), taking into consideration the role of feelings of guilt in the relationship between burnout and its consequences.

The aim of this study was to investigate the mediator role of feelings of guilt in the relationship between burnout and psychosomatic disorders, and the cross-national validation of this role according to the Gil-Monte (2005; 2012) model of burnout in two samples of teachers (Portuguese vs. Spanish teachers).

The study sample was composed of 1,266 teachers, 1062 from Spain and 204 from Portugal. Using Amos 7, a structural equation model was evaluated. The measures of goodness of fit for the model for the Spanish sample were: $\chi^2(df = 9) = 75.46$ ($p = .000$), RMSEA = .083, GFI = .98, AGFI = .94, CFI = .95, NFI = .95; and for the Portuguese sample the measures of goodness of fit for the model were: $\chi^2(df = 9) = 20.20$ ($p = .000$), RMSEA = .078, GFI = .97, AGFI = .91, CFI = .95, NFI = .92. This indicates that the fit of this model was satisfactory for the two samples.

The results obtained provide empirical partial evidence for the mediator role of guilt in the relationship between burnout and psychosomatic disorders (i.e., mediator role of feelings of guilt: indolence-guilt- psychosomatic disorders) for two samples of teachers from Spain and Portugal.