Motivating teachers
Autonomy and pressure in the teaching profession

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Overview

- Reference to SDT as the theoretical background
- Empirical study with Austrian teachers
- Conclusion & future research
SDT and teaching

Basic psychological needs

- autonomy
- competence
- relatedness

(Deci & Ryan, 2008)
Teachers’ motivation

- Job-related pressure reduces basic psychological need satisfaction of teachers and influences their teaching style.
  (Taylor, Ntoumanis & Standage 2008)

- The more pressure teachers perceive, the less self-determined they feel towards teaching.
  (Pelletier, Séguin-Lévesque & Legault 2002)

- High pressure leads to more controlling behaviour.
  (Deci et al. 1982; Flink, Boggiano & Barrett 1990)
Controlling teachers
Pressure in teaching

- Pressure from *above*
- Pressure from *below*
- Pressure from *within*

(Pelletier & Sharp 2009; Leroy et al. 2007; Reeve 2009)
Autonomy as a resource in teaching

- Self-determined teachers might be more resistant against job-related pressure.  
  (Roth et al. 2007)

- Satisfaction of basic psychological needs relates positively to job satisfaction and work engagement and negatively to exhaustion.  
  (Van den Broeck et al. 2010)

➡️ Is there a reciprocal relation between basic psychological needs satisfaction and feeling under pressure?
Study – Model I

- Autonomy
- Competence
- Relatedness

Pressure in teaching

Self-efficacy
Study – Model II

- Autonomy
- Competence
- Relatedness

Pressure in teaching

Self-efficacy
Study - Method

- 488 Austrian secondary school teachers
- Questionnaire
  - Work-related Need Satisfaction Scale
    (Van den Broeck et al. 2010)
  - Self-efficacy in teaching
    (Schwarzer & Schmitz 1999)
  - Pressure in teaching
Study – Measuring pressure

- educational laws and reforms
- amount of workload and time spent for work
- working with pupils
- demands of the curriculum and individual aims
- participating in continuing education
- participating in school projects
- cooperating or dealing with colleagues
- dealing with parents
- being observed in class (head of school/supervisor)
Study – Results Model I

![Diagram showing the relationships between Autonomy, Competence, Relatedness, Pressure in teaching, and Self-efficacy with statistical values for each relationship]

\[ \chi^2 = 123.48; \text{ d.f.} = 54; \chi^2/\text{df} = 2.29; \text{ RMSEA} = .05; \text{ SRMR} = .04; \text{ CFI} = .97; p < .001 \]
Study – Results Model II

\[ \chi^2 = 127.80; \text{ d.f.} = 54; \chi^2/\text{d.f.} = 2.37; \text{ RMSEA} = .05; \text{ SRMR} = .04; \text{ CFI} = .97; p < .001 \]
Study – Final results

- Autonomy
- Relatedness
- Competence
- Pressure in teaching
+ Self-efficacy

Arrows indicate relationships between the concepts.
Conclusion

- If we want motivating and motivated teachers, it is helpful to identify pressure inducing sources and provide flexible and supportive work environments for teachers to foster basic psychological needs satisfaction by...
  - considering motivational resources of teachers
  - offering choices and clear structures
  - using non-controlling language
  - providing explanatory rationales
  - acknowledging and accepting expressions of negative affects
Future research

- Longitudinal studies with cross-correlations and repeated measures

- Exploration of the relations between basic psychological needs satisfaction in teaching and other relevant variables, like e.g. collective efficacy, proactive attitude or willingness to cooperate with colleagues …
Discussion

- Which (additional) factors can put teachers under pressure?
- Which changes in educational systems are required to improve teachers’ basic psychological needs satisfaction?
- Does an increasing output orientation in education have to lead to more pressure in the teaching profession?


Reeve, Johnmarshall. 2009. “Why teachers adopt a controlling motivating style toward students and how they can become more autonomy supportive.” *Educational Psychologist* 44(3):159-175.


