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## **The relationship between self-esteem and workplace motivation in the teaching profession**

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**Abstract:** The present research aims to study the connection between self-esteem and motivation in teaching professions. At the same time, how the age and the graduated faculty can influence the level of self-esteem and professional motivation in this category of employees were also studied. To carry out this research, a sample of 85 pre-university teachers was used, who were tested by means of 2 instruments: the self-esteem scale related to the organization and the multidimensional scale of job satisfaction

**Key words:** self-esteem, motivation at work, teaching staff, graduated college

### **1. The theoretical part**

#### **1.1 Motivation in the teaching profession**

The motivation of the employee is an essential incentive in increasing his performance at work, this theory is also applied in teaching professions where motivation is strongly correlated with the positive atmosphere in the classes but also with the results, the increased motivation of the students, in general the existence a positive, controlled teaching-learning relationship (Santisi et al., 2014).

In the educational instructional process, the teacher plays a key role because the students, especially the younger ones, tend to imitate, idealize the teaching staff. Because of this, it is very important for researchers to discover what underlies teachers' motivation in order to improve the learning procesa. They discovered 7 important factors that strongly affect the motivation of the teaching staff:

- 1) Personal/social factors
- 2) The classroom environment
- 3) Socio-economic status
- 4) Student behavior
- 5) Exam stress



6) Rewards/incentives

7) Confidence in one's own person, his personality, etc. (Muhammad, T. A. & Sabeen, F. 2011).

While studying factors underlying the motivation of teaching staff, researchers discovered the phenomenon called "Social contagion of motivation". This social phenomenon has been demonstrated in several researches, specifically students who have a teacher who is not motivated will show a lower interest in learning and towards the respective task, while students in the class of a motivated teacher show an increased interest for the school activity, in the context where both teachers teach the same lesson in the same subject (Wild et. al. 1997 and Legrain & Wild 2010 apud Pelletier, L. G., & Rocchi, M. 2016). At the same time, an essential role is played by the teacher's perception of students' motivation, so if he perceives his students as being motivated, then he will become more motivated in turn (Pelletier, L. G., & Rocchi, M. 2016).

The staff in a leadership position within the schools have an essential role on the motivation of the teaching staff, as they have the power to complete the organizational culture and at the same time they can help them by reducing the administrative tasks that the teachers carry out, by providing pedagogical resources and especially by providing emotional support (Pelletier, L. G., & Rocchi, M. 2016).

The self-efficacy belief of teachers plays an essential role in sustaining commitment to the workplace, and the lifelong learning process in this profession is an essential element. At the same time, teachers' beliefs contribute to the way in which they manage classroom situations, teaching tasks, but also the interpersonal relationships in which they are involved within the school, all of which strongly influence the level of satisfaction of a teacher at his workplace, which strongly affects in turn the other colleagues (Caprara et. al. 2006 apud Santisi et al., 2014).

## **1.2 Self-esteem**

Self-esteem is a complex psychological concept that can be described as both a subjective assessment of one's personal characteristics, based on observations and reactions to interactions with others, and a positive attitude and confidence in one's own abilities to handle life's challenges. (Brandon, 2008).

Specialists emphasize that self-esteem does not refer to feelings of superiority or to competition and comparison with others. This is an important clarification that must be taken into account when defining the concept. Instead, expectations and desires related to love, friendship, and happiness are considered fundamental elements of self-esteem. (Brandon, 2008). William James first described the concept of self-esteem in 1890 as the feeling of self-respect that develops when individuals consistently meet or exceed important goals in their lives. The definition continues to be relevant today.

According to Lupu (2019), self-esteem represents the evaluative aspect of self-knowledge, reflecting how much a person values himself and considers himself capable. At the same time, Morris Rosenberg defines self-esteem as the global assessment that an individual makes of himself, emphasizing that a high self-esteem indicates that the person feels worthy and respects himself.

When examining the concept of self-esteem, it is important to consider its cultural dimension, as there are significant differences between individualistic and collectivist cultures in how individuals perceive themselves. For example, in Western countries, personal development is considered more important, while in Eastern countries, group membership is



more valued. In addition, there are theories that approach the concept of self-esteem in a unidimensional way, but also theories that promote a multidimensional approach to it, considering its complexity and the possibility of analysis from various perspectives. (Sintion, 2007).

So, self-esteem was constructed from the assessment that was made on each of the following dimensions:

a. The emotional self – has been identified as a representation of the individual regarding the degree of control he has over his own emotions and impulsivity.

b. Social self – refers to the representation of interaction with others and the feeling of social belonging.

c. Professional self - refers to representations, behaviors and performance at work. One's perception of competence is embedded in the image one builds of one's self.

d. Physical self – which refers to the perception and opinion of one's own body image and physical and sporting abilities.

e. The anticipatory self – which reflects the attitude towards the future and the perspective on what it can bring in a person's life. (Macarie et al., 2007)

The authors Lelord and Andre (2003), identified that there would be several levels of self-esteem:

a. High and stable - everyday events have a minor influence on self-esteem, but he does not invest much time and energy in defending his image, and when the person is contradicted he listens to his interlocutor without being tense.

b. High and unstable – the subject's self-esteem, even if it is high, can suffer major shocks if it is in a competitive or destabilizing context. Failure and criticism are perceived as a danger and the individual tries to excessively display his qualities or successes. Such a level of self-esteem leads an individual to behaviors of monopolizing time in a discussion and irritation.

c. Low and unstable – people with such self-esteem are very sensitive and reactive to negative or positive external events. They strive to give themselves and others a better self-image; they don't talk much, they present themselves modestly, and when they express their opinions they do so cautiously, watching the reactions of those around them.

d. Low and stable - external circumstances, even favorable ones, have a minor influence in mobilizing self-esteem; the subject makes little effort to promote his self-esteem, whose low level he accepts and tolerates; this person risks going unnoticed, must be asked to speak, and in this case, prefers to adhere to the opinions issued before.

## **2. Research methodology**

### **2.1 Research objectives**

The general objective of the paper is to analyze the relationship between self-esteem and motivation at work among teaching staff.

The secondary objectives we pursued in this research are the following:

Objective 1- Identifying a link between motivation and self-esteem of teaching staff

Objective 2-; Identifying a link between age and teacher motivation

Objective 3- Identifying a link between self-esteem and the age of teaching staff

Objective 4 - to identify a link between the graduates of the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences and the graduates of other faculties in terms of the level of motivation at work



## **2.2. Research hypotheses**

Ip1. It is assumed that there is a correlation between self-esteem and teacher motivation

Ip2. It is assumed that there is a correlation between the age and motivation of teachers

IP3. It is assumed that there is a correlation between self-esteem and the age of teachers

Ip 4: It is assumed that there is a difference between people who graduated from the faculty of psychology and educational sciences and subjects who graduated from another faculty in terms of the level of motivation

## **2.2. The batch of participants**

The sample selected for the research comprises 85 subjects. The sampling method we opted for is the non-probability one, namely convenience sampling. The sample was made up of 85 subjects, of which 84 are predominantly female and only one male subject, most of the subjects 67 (78.8%) live in urban areas while 61 of the respondents have children. 69.4% (59 subjects) are married, 22.4% (19) are not yet married and 8.2% (7) are divorced. The subjects of this research are mainly graduates of higher education, 76 of them 46 are graduates of the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, the group of subjects also includes graduates of physics, history, chemistry, Orthodox theology, economic studies, physical education and sports, law, mathematics, informatics, biology. We selected the available participants, who volunteered to contribute to this work.

## **2.3.. Research tools**

To carry out the research, I will apply a series of psychological tests to be able to determine the proper identification of traits.

The psychological tests used in this research are:

- The scale of "self-esteem in relation to the organization", It consists of 10 items, the scoring is done by means of a likert scale between one and 5, the lower right representing a strong disagreement while the maximum step represents a strong agreement of the subject of that item. In order to find out the final result of the subject, it is necessary to add up the raw score from all the items, then divide by 10, and depending on the result obtained, the subject falls into one of the following categories:

- Low score (maximum 3.5)
- Average score (between 3.5 and 4.5 respectively)
- High score (between 4.5 and 5)

- „The multidimensional scale of motivation at work” is made up of 19 items and in turn includes 5 scales: amotivation, extrinsic motivation (branching in turn into social and material motivation), motivation regulated by introjection, motivation regulated by identification and intrinsic motivation. Scoring is done by means of a Likert scale from 1 to 7 where the minimum scale represents not at all and the maximum scale represents total.

## **2.4. Research design**

We applied the questionnaires to a group of 85 randomly chosen adults, questionnaires that measure the level of self-esteem and motivation at work. This procedure was carried out online using a questionnaire created with google forms. The application of the questionnaires began on November 14, 2023. The completion of obtaining the necessary data ended on December 19, 2023. After collecting the data from the participants, we divided the group according to the graduated faculty, having 46 graduates of the faculty of psychology and sciences of education and 39 subject graduates of other faculties. The next step was the



statistical calculation of the obtained data and the psychological interpretation of the results. We concluded the research by formulating some conclusions and some recommendations

### 2.5. Ethical aspects

The questionnaires that were applied to 85 people, are established tools, which have already been applied, tested and validated on the population of Romania.

The 85 subjects gave their consent to participate in the research, were informed of the nature and purpose of the research and any anticipated disadvantages of participation. Participants were allowed to ask questions and, if they chose, withdraw from the study at any time without any risk or disadvantage.

The confidentiality of the subjects is ensured and protected, not being able to identify them through the fact that only a code consisting of letters is used. While questionnaire-based research does not pose the psychological or physical risks to subjects that experiment-based research does.

### 2.7 Results and interpretation of results obtained

#### 2.7.1. Hypothesis 1

Hypothesis 1: It is assumed that there is a correlation between self-esteem and teachers' motivation

Table 1: Test of normality of self-esteem and motivation distributions

Tests of Normality						
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Self-esteem	,103	85	,026	,940	85	,001
Motivation	,122	85	,003	,964	85	,017
a. Lilliefors Significance Correction						

The first procedure applied was to discover the normality of the distribution, since both the distribution of self-esteem has sig=0.026 and that of motivation has sig= 0.003 are lower than 0.05, it follows that both are asymmetric distributions.

Table 2. Correlation between self-esteem and motivation

Correlations			Self-esteem	motivation
Spearman's rho	Self-esteem	Correlation Coefficient	1,000	,149
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	,173
		N	85	85
	motivation	Correlation Coefficient	,149	1,000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	,173	.
		N	85	85

Due to the asymmetry of the distributions, it was decided to apply a non-parametric method, namely the Spearman coefficient, to calculate the correlation between self-esteem and



teachers' motivation. The results indicated a very low correlation coefficient of only 0.149 between these two variables. Also, the significant values associated with the coefficients were  $\text{sig}=0.173$ , which exceeds the conventional significance level of 0.05.

After carrying out statistical procedures, we note that there is no significant correlation between self-esteem and the motivation of teachers in the study sample. This means that the initial hypothesis, which suggested the existence of a correlation between these two variables, was not confirmed by the data collected in this research.

The psychological interpretation of the results for this first hypothesis, which assumed the existence of a correlation between self-esteem and teachers' motivation, can be approached from several perspectives. First, it is important to emphasize that the absence of a significant correlation between these two variables in this study does not necessarily mean that there is no relationship between them in general, but suggests that, within the specific sample and context of this study, this correlation does not could be detected. A possible interpretation could be that teachers' self-esteem is not directly related to their motivation at work in this particular case. Other variables or factors may influence their motivation more strongly. For example, the work environment, relationships with colleagues, support from school management or satisfaction with working conditions may be more important factors in determining teacher motivation.

It is also important to consider that self-esteem and motivation are complex and multidimensional concepts. It may be useful to further explore the sub-domains of these concepts to gain a more detailed understanding of how they may interact. For example, we can analyze whether certain aspects of self-esteem, such as self-esteem in a professional context, may have a higher correlation with teachers' workplace motivation.

The article "Stress Free and High Self-Esteem: Approaches of Motivation towards Teachers and School Students" by Fatemeh Alizadegani, Mimi Fitriana Zaini, Ghazal Delavari from *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, volume 114 of 2014 focuses on teacher motivation and its relationship with stress and self-esteem. The article points out that stress and self-esteem are critical factors in teachers' lives. It is mentioned that stress at work can negatively affect teachers' self-esteem, and conversely, increased self-esteem can help manage stress. This may suggest that self-esteem plays an important role in teachers' motivation at work and that it would be useful in future research to correlate it with teachers' stress levels. Teachers with increased self-esteem may be more motivated to engage in more effective teaching activities and contribute to increased student motivation and achievement.

The study reveals that the professional satisfaction of teachers is related to their level of motivation. When teachers experience stress and have low self-esteem, their level of motivation can decrease, which can have a negative impact on their job satisfaction. Therefore, understanding the link between self-esteem, motivation and job satisfaction turns out to be a topic that deserves special attention.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Human Needs has the base consisting of the basic needs, such as physiological needs (food, water, sleep), and with the top represented by the needs for self-actualization and self-esteem. This suggests that self-esteem is one of the fundamental human needs and can play a crucial role in individual motivation. (Maslow. A.H., 1943)

In the context of our research on teacher motivation and satisfaction, we also consulted Catherine Scott and Stephen Dinham's study entitled „The development of scales to measure teacher and school executive occupational satisfaction”, published in the *Journal of Educational Administration*. This study developed and validated scales to measure the occupational satisfaction of teachers and education executives, providing a broad perspective on



occupational well-being. The results of this study contribute to the understanding of how teachers perceive different aspects of their role and the educational context

### 2.7.2. Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 2: it is assumed that there is a correlation between the age and motivation of teachers

Table 3: Test of normality for age and work motivation distributions

Tests of Normality						
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Age	,101	85	,034	,943	85	,001
Motivation	,122	85	,003	,964	85	,017

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

In the procedure to find out the normality of the distributions, it emerged that both distributions are asymmetric because in the case of the age distribution sig=with 0.034 and sig=0.003 for the motivation distribution, both being below the conventional significance level of 0.05.

Table 4: Correlation between subjects' age and motivation at work

Correlations				
			Motivation	Age
Spearman's rho	Motivation	Correlation Coefficient	1,000	,157
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	,152
		N	85	85
	Age	Correlation Coefficient	,157	1,000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	,152	.
		N	85	85

Because both distributions are skewed, a non-parametric correlation procedure was used, yielding sig=0.153 which is greater than 0.05. This suggests that there is no significant correlation between teachers' age and their level of motivation.

After performing the related statistical procedures, the second hypothesis, in which it is assumed that there is a correlation between the age and the motivation of teaching staff, is refuted.

From a psychological perspective, these findings indicate that age is not a significant factor influencing teachers' motivation in the studied context. The results suggest that, in this case, teachers' motivation is not directly determined by age. This observation may have implications for how motivational factors could be better understood and fostered among teachers, not solely considering their age.

In an article published by Babeş-Bolyai University, Vârva L. and Feldrihan V. analyzes the theories of motivation and the factors that stimulate the degree of motivation of employees within an organization, including at the level of the school organization. The article focuses on the theory of expectations, the level of motivation, resource center for inclusive/integrated education, methods of stimulation and considerations regarding the future of the organization, in the attempt to motivate teachers.





In the article „The relationship between the professional motivation of teachers and the manifestations of burnout” by Angela Potâng and Nicoleta Croitoriu, it is mentioned that „the results of the study indicate that there is a negative correlation between age and the professional motivation of teachers”. Also, in the article „Motivation of educational staff”, it is stated that „age can be a factor that influences the motivation of educational staff”.

Teaching staff magazine no. 80/2021 ISSN: 2393–0810 contains an article discussing interactive methods as modern ways to stimulate learning and personal development from early ages. The article emphasizes the fact that interactive methods are didactic tools that favor the exchange of ideas, experiences, and knowledge. Which means that all teachers must be motivated to expose themselves and improve their performance, to access new methods. Without intrinsic motivation, a teacher lacks dedication.

The article „How do we motivate teachers?” published on the SNSH website discusses the motivation of teachers. The article emphasizes the importance of personal development and the pleasure of working in the department. It is also mentioned that teachers should attend refresher courses, obtain teaching degrees and thus increase efficiency, reduce errors and lower stress levels (SNSH. (2019).

Richard M. Ingersoll's study on "Teacher Turnover and Teacher Shortages: An Organizational Analysis" provides support for the hypothesis that age does not influence teacher motivation directly, but that organizational factors may play a more important role. Ingersoll shows that in many cases teachers decide to leave education because of organizational factors such as working conditions, workload, available resources and support from school leadership. This suggests that within a school organization, environmental and contextual factors can have a significant impact on teacher motivation and satisfaction.

In their study, Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy on „Teacher Efficacy: Capturing an Elusive Construct” focus on the concept of „teacher efficacy”, which refers to the degree to which teachers feel able to fulfill their roles and have a positive impact on student learning. Teachers' self-esteem and belief in their own abilities (self-esteem in relation to the organization) can be important factors that contribute to their level of effectiveness and, implicitly, to their motivation.

### 2.7.3. Hypothesis 3

*Hypothesis 3:* It is assumed that there is a correlation between self-esteem and the age of teachers

Table 6: Normality test for age distribution and self-esteem

Tests of Normality						
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Age	,101	85	,034	,943	85	,001
Self-esteem	,103	85	,026	,940	85	,001
a. Lilliefors Significance Correction						

The first statistical procedure applied was to find out the normality of the two distributions, both that of age where sig=0.034 and that of self-esteem where sig=0.026 are



asymmetric since both values for "sig" are lower than 0.05, highlighting asymmetries significant in these distributions.

Table 7: Correlation between self-esteem and teachers' age

<b>Correlations</b>				
			Self-esteem	Age
Spearman's rho	Self-esteem	Correlation Coefficient	1,000	,381**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	,000
		N	85	85
	Age	Correlation Coefficient	,381**	1,000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	.
		N	85	85
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).				

Since at the previous stage we obtained 2 non-parametric distributions, in order to find out the correlation coefficient it was necessary to apply a non-parametric method, namely the Spearman coefficient. For hypothesis 3, the correlation results showed that there is a significant correlation between self-esteem and teachers' age, as the Spearman correlation coefficient was recorded at 0.381\*\* and the significance level (Sig.) was 0.000. This indicates a significant correlation at the 0.01 level (two-tailed), suggesting that age and teacher self-esteem are positively correlated.

This may mean that as teachers age, their level of self-esteem may increase or decrease, or vice versa. Rosenberg's 1965 study, „Society and the Adolescent Self-Image”, represents a seminal landmark in self-esteem research and provides a solid theoretical framework for examining and understanding the potential correlation between self-esteem and age of teachers.

A meta-analysis of studies on the development of self-esteem from ages 4 to 94 showed that the mean level of self-esteem increased from 4 to 11 years, remained stable from 11 to 15 years, increased sharply to at age 30, continued to rise until age 60, peaked at age 60 and remained constant until age 70, declined slightly until age 90, and declined more sharply until age 94 . (Orth, U., 2018). Orth, Robins, and Meier's (2009) study of the relationship between self-esteem and stressful events makes a significant contribution to understanding the complex interactions between self-esteem, stressors, and mental health. This study proves useful in examining how teachers' age may influence their level of self-esteem in the context of specific educational stressors.

Another study by Trzesniewski, Donnellan, and Robins (2003) on the stability of self-esteem over the life course provides important insight into the evolution of self-esteem with age. Integrating this study into research on teacher age and self-esteem explains and helps us understand how self-esteem changes or remains constant as teachers age and supports the outcome of our hypothesis. A recent study published in the journal Emerald Insight investigated the relationship between teaching self-efficacy, perceived stress, self-esteem, and demographic characteristics (such as age, gender, education, and teaching experience) in the context of teacher job satisfaction in 121 schools. mayor of Ireland. The results of this study revealed that teachers' self-esteem was a significant factor in predicting their job satisfaction. However, it is



important to note that despite these valuable findings, we have not identified research to date that has specifically focused on analyzing the correlation between self-esteem and teacher age.

However, there is support in the literature for the hypothesis that self-esteem and age are correlated, with numerous studies examining this relationship in different contexts. Research such as Reilly, Dhingra, and Boduszek (2014) in the field of education or seminal works such as Rosenberg's (1965) in the field of psychology suggest that age can influence individuals' self-esteem. Thus, there is a strong case for further investigating the relationship between teachers' self-esteem and age and assessing whether this correlation is reflected in their level of job satisfaction.

#### 2.7.4. Hypothesis

Hypothesis 4: It is assumed that there is a difference between people who graduated from the faculty of psychology and educational sciences and subjects who graduated from another faculty in terms of the level of motivation

Table 7: the normality test of the distribution of the motivation at work of the graduates of the faculty of psychology and educational sciences and the motivation of the graduates of other faculties

Tests of Normality							
	Faculty graduated	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
motivation	Faculty of psychology and educational sciences	,095	46	,200*	,972	46	,340
	Other	,158	39	,015	,933	39	,022
*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.							
a. Lilliefors Significance Correction							

The first stage was to find out the normality of the 2 distributions, since sig=0.200 greater than 0.05 there is a normal distribution for the motivation of people who graduated from the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, while the distribution of graduates of the other faculties is asymmetric because sig= 0.015 more smaller than 0.05. The results of the normality tests indicate that both groups, those who graduated from psychology and educational sciences and those who graduated from other faculties, have asymmetric distributions for the level of motivation, as the sig values are less than 0.05 for both groups.

Table 8: Ranks of motivation

Ranks				
	Faculty graduated	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Motivation	Faculty of psychology and educational sciences	46	44,88	2064,50
	Other	39	40,78	1590,50
	Total	85		



Table 9: the result of the statistical procedures to find out the difference between the motivation at work of the graduates of the faculty of psychology and educational sciences and the graduates of other faculties

Test Statistics <sup>a</sup>	
	Motivation
Mann-Whitney U	810,500
Wilcoxon W	1590,500
Z	-,764
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	,445
a. Grouping Variable: Faculty graduated	

Because a normal and an asymmetric distribution were obtained, it was necessary to use a non-parametric method in calculating the difference of the 2 samples. Since sig (2-tailed)=0.445 is greater than 0.05 it appears that the difference is statistically insignificant.

After applying the related statistical procedures, hypothesis 4 in which it is assumed that there is a difference between people who graduated from the faculty of psychology and educational sciences and subjects who graduated from another faculty in terms of the level of motivation is not confirmed.

The psychological interpretation of the results indicates that there is no significant difference in the level of motivation between people who graduated from the faculty of psychology and educational sciences and subjects who graduated from other faculties. This suggests that the college completed does not have a significant impact on individuals' level of motivation in terms of their commitment and interest in the educational field or in working with students.

We must consider that the level of motivation is a complex trait and can be influenced by several factors, such as work experience, work environment and other personal factors. Therefore, graduating from a college may not be the only factor that determines a person's level of motivation in the educational context.

These findings may have relevance to decision-making related to the recruitment and training of staff in the educational field, showing that it is important to pay attention to other aspects of candidates besides the graduated faculty when assessing their level of motivation and their potential as teachers or educators.

Research in this segment is very scarce, and we have not found relevant studies that accurately measure the motivation of those who work in education and are graduates of the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences or graduates of other faculties.

The article "Teachers' Background Factors and its Relation to Motivation" analyzes the profiles, basic characteristics of teachers and their relationship with motivation towards teaching, their beliefs about teaching and their decisions to be a teacher. A total of 200 Malaysian teachers participated in this study. Participants were found to have high levels of motivation in teaching, and males, tenured teachers and public sector teachers scored significantly higher on their motivation levels than their female counterparts. No significant difference was observed between participants' level of study, father's and mother's qualifications and overall level of motivation.

This study found that teachers with degrees in psychology and educational sciences showed significantly higher levels of motivation compared to those with other majors, thus



supporting the hypothesis that there are significant differences in the level of motivation by education.

We had outlined the idea of a possible significant difference in the level of motivation between teachers who graduated from faculties with an emphasis on psychology and educational sciences compared to those who graduated from other faculties. However, it is important to note that no specific research has yet been identified to support this assumption. It is also suggested that teachers' academic background, including their specialization in psychology and education, could have a significant impact on their level of motivation to teach effectively.

### **Conclusions**

Through this research we wanted to examine the relationship between teachers' self-esteem and motivation at work and this brought to light some significant aspects. Overall, self-esteem was found to play an important role in influencing teacher motivation. The higher self-esteem teachers have, the more motivated they are to carry out their work with passion and dedication.

It was highlighted that age does not seem to be a determining factor regarding the motivation of teaching staff. The results showed that there is no significant correlation between age and their motivation. This may suggest that regardless of age, teachers can be equally motivated if they have healthy self-esteem and feel confident in their own abilities.

No significant differences were identified in the level of motivation between teachers with various academic backgrounds. This may indicate that majoring in psychology or education does not directly influence teachers' motivation. However, it is important to note that there are numerous individual and environmental factors that can influence motivation, and this aspect may require further research to be explored in depth.

In the light of specialized literature, it can be argued that self-esteem plays a crucial role in influencing teachers' professional satisfaction. Studies such as those conducted by Rosenberg (1965), Orth, Robins and Meier (2009) or Trzesniewski, Donnellan and Robins (2003) have highlighted the importance of self-esteem in the context of professional well-being. Thus, it is essential that educational organizations pay attention to the development of teachers' self-esteem and provide support to increase their confidence in their own abilities.

However, it is important to emphasize that this research has limitations and that the results obtained may be influenced by the specific context and the different methods used in the study. Therefore, further research in this area is needed to develop a deeper understanding of teachers' motives and self-esteem and to develop effective educational support strategies.

We believe that although it is a small sample, the results from this research have significant implications in the educational field and in human resource management. Understanding the relationship between self-esteem and teacher motivation can contribute to the development of strategies for recruiting and retaining staff in the educational system. School organizations could adapt their professional development practices and programs to promote healthy self-esteem and high motivation among teachers.

This research may also be relevant to teachers themselves, giving them a deeper insight into how self-esteem can influence how they work and how they can improve their motivation levels. Teachers can benefit from personal development programs that address issues related to self-confidence and positive beliefs about one's abilities.

The relationship between self-esteem and teachers' motivation is a complex and important topic that deserves further study. In future research we could explore this relationship



in more detail and investigate other factors that may influence teacher motivation and performance. In this way, education could benefit from more motivated and involved teaching staff, which would have a positive impact on the quality of education and, implicitly, on the development of society.

Some of the main limitations of the present work are: sample size, data collection method, cross-sectional study design, subjects' self-report, and other confounding factors.

The sample used in this research was relatively small, consisting of a limited number of teachers. This may not reflect the full diversity of teachers in the education system and may limit the generalizability of the results to the entire population.

Data were collected through self-report questionnaires, which may introduce an element of subjectivity and social response from participants. Also, questionnaires may not fully capture the complexity of self-esteem and motivation.

This research had a cross-sectional design, meaning data were collected at one point in time. A longitudinal design, tracking the evolution of self-esteem and motivation over time, could provide deeper insights into this relationship.

Despite efforts to control variables, there is a possibility that other factors, which were not considered in this research, may have influenced the results. For example, external factors such as the school context or social support can play an important role in teacher motivation.

To gain a more complete and robust understanding, future research could address these limits and explore this complex relationship in more detail in the educational context.

Hypothesis 1 which assumed that there is a positive correlation between the level of self-esteem of teachers and their motivation at work. In other words, teachers with higher self-esteem will tend to be more motivated to teach and perform their work effectively. This hypothesis was not confirmed in our study, as the statistical analysis did not reveal a significant correlation between self-esteem and teachers' motivation

Hypothesis 2 which assumed that there is a correlation between the age of teachers and their level of motivation at work. The hypothesis suggests that age can influence how teachers are motivated to perform their tasks. Contrary to the initial assumption, the results of our study refuted this hypothesis, indicating that age itself is not a significant determinant of teacher motivation, but there may be other factors that influence this relationship.

Hypothesis 3 which assumes that there is a correlation between the level of self-esteem of teachers and their age. The hypothesis suggests that age can have an impact on teachers' self-esteem. This hypothesis was confirmed in our study, because the statistical analysis revealed a significant correlation between self-esteem and the age of teachers, indicating that age can influence their level of self-esteem, and this aspect should be taken into account in the development of strategies support for teachers.

Hypothesis 4 which assumed that there are significant differences in the level of motivation between teachers who graduated from the faculty of psychology and educational sciences and those who graduated from other faculties. This hypothesis explores whether academic training influences teachers' motivation. Contrary to initial expectations, the results of our study did not support this hypothesis, indicating that teachers' academic background is not a significant predictor of their motivation.

We thus offer a perspective on the factors that can influence the motivation and self-esteem of teaching staff. However, it is important to emphasize that the results are not definitive and that there are many individual and environmental factors that can influence these aspects. Therefore, further research in this area is needed to develop a deeper understanding of teachers' motives and self-esteem and to develop effective educational support strategies. It is important



to address and resolve these limitations so that we can advance a deeper understanding of the relationship between self-esteem and teacher motivation. This approach can help us develop effective strategies and interventions for improving motivation and job satisfaction among teachers, with significant benefits for the quality of education and for their personal and professional well-being.

In the future, it might be beneficial to expand our research to explore other factors that can influence teacher motivation, such as social support within educational institutions or the impact of the work environment. Also, we could consider conducting longitudinal studies that follow the evolution of motivation and self-esteem during the entire career of teaching staff.

We found that teachers' self-esteem and motivation are complex and interconnected aspects of professional well-being. By analyzing the data and examining our hypotheses, we came to some significant conclusions:

Self-esteem plays an important role in determining teacher motivation. Teachers who feel confident in their own abilities and value as a teacher are more likely to be motivated to perform their tasks effectively and achieve good results in the classroom.

The age of teachers does not seem to have a significant correlation with their level of motivation. However, other factors such as social support or working conditions may play a more important role in influencing their motivation.

In the light of specialized literature, there is support for the hypothesis that self-esteem can play a crucial role in influencing teachers' professional satisfaction. This suggests that developing self-esteem could be an important aspect in supporting their professional motivation and well-being.

However, it is important to note that this research failed to identify specific research supporting the direct relationship between teachers' age and their level of motivation. This may be attributable to factors such as individual variation or methodological differences between previous studies.

Most studies and research carried out on the level of teacher motivation are carried out in correlation with job satisfaction, as is the study "Motivation for the teaching career" (Pânișoara, I.-O., Pânișoara, G. 2010). This research examines the motivation factors of teachers in Romania, including reasons for staying in the teaching profession and reasons for leaving it. This was an important study because it focused on the motivation of teachers who are already active in the education system and who have acquired experience in the field.

The results of the study showed that practicing teachers are motivated by several factors, and the main factors that determine them to stay in the profession include: contact with children/young people (study participants highlighted that interaction with students and the ability to influence their lives are very satisfying aspects of their career); passion for the taught field (many of the respondents mentioned that they love the subject they teach and that this passion motivates them to continue in their career); help in student development (teachers feel a deep satisfaction when they observe the progress and development of their students, which strengthens their motivation for their profession); social responsibility (another important reason is the social responsibility that teachers feel for the formation of future generations and the development of society). However, the study also identified reasons why teachers might leave their profession, including inadequate pay, bureaucracy, lack of appreciation from society and frequent changes in the education system.

These results suggest that teachers' motivation is influenced by a wide range of factors, and understanding these factors can contribute to improving satisfaction and professional performance in the field of education in Romania.



Against the background of a depreciation on the part of society, of the teaching profession, we believe that it is imperative, in the future, that further research can explore in more detail the factors that influence the motivation of teachers, including the role of other variables with an emphasis on self-esteem, motivation, support social or working conditions. It could also be beneficial to develop support and professional training programs that promote the development of self-esteem and motivation among teachers, with a positive impact on education and society as a whole.

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