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Teachers' Mental Health: The Relevance of Emotional Intelligence in Burnout and Quality of Life

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By

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Abstract

Increasing emotional labour demands in the educational profession have negatively impacted teacher's mental health resulting in high levels of stress, burnout, and subsequently leaving the profession altogether. The desire to improve the mental health well-being and retention rates in educators has given rise to research efforts examining individual factors that may assist in buffering the effects of an adverse occupational environment. Of particular research interest were the potential effects of self-perceived competence in emotional intelligence and individuals' appraisal of their quality of life, on coping with occupational stressors. The current research was designed as a correlational descriptive field study to examine the relationship between emotional intelligence, quality of life, and experiences of burnout symptoms. Strong negative associations were observed between emotional intelligence and burnout as well as between quality of life and burnout. Positive appraisal of psychological health was found to be inversely related to burnout symptoms. These results indicate that it may be of benefit to consider directing professional development resources toward increasing emotional intelligence.

Keywords

Teachers' Mental Health, Emotional Intelligence, Trait Emotional Intelligence, Burnout, Quality of Life.

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Introduction

Teachers comprise a unique work force; their occupational role is arguably amongst the most demanding (Montgomery & Rupp, 2005). Occupational demands placed on educators continue to mount as they are required to fulfill multiple roles that draw upon their capacity for high emotional labour. Over a decade ago, Friedman (2000) underscored that educators are now, more than ever, responsible not only for the academic progress of their students, but their personal progress as well. Teachers are confronted with parents' expectations regarding their students' performance and often receive blame for any shortcomings of the students (Friedman, 2000). Teachers must then also develop and maintain an effective working relationship with their colleagues and supervisors for purposes of social support and assistance in administrative involvement. All these elements of the teaching profession are potential stressors that can have varying negative effects on the educator's work performance, personal well-being, and mental health.

The most common occupational stressors are a lack of administrative support, lack of peer support, role conflict, role ambiguity, and expectations regarding their emotional commitment to their work (Kyriacou, 2001). Variables with respect to the workplace setting, as well as those related to individual educators, all may play a role in either mitigating or exacerbating the negative effects associated with the occupational stressors, and include gender, age, experience, classroom type, and personality characteristics (Kyriacou, 2001).

Together, these potential stressors and variables may combine to threaten teachers' mental health and wellness by reducing their quality of work-life balance and perception of job satisfaction (Mearns & Cain, 2003). A recent survey conducted by the Canadian Teachers Federation (2014) reported that in a sample of 8,096 teachers, 93% expressed having difficulties maintaining work-life balance. 95% of the teachers reported particular challenges in their work life due to an inability to devote the desired time to their students and 90% experienced workload stress as a result of imbalanced class composition. Struggles in the teachers' home life were mostly due to having inadequate time to spend with their children, partners, and themselves

(88%). Prolonged exposure to these stressors while receiving little to no relief leaves the teachers susceptible to suffering from high levels of emotional exhaustion, as they experience deficiencies in their emotional resources while the demands for their emotional engagement increase. Emotional exhaustion is arguably the most critical component of burnout by being a significant predictor of depersonalization which then leads to a reduction in personal accomplishments (Arens & Morin, 2016). The presence of these symptoms of burnout interferes with overall work performance and increases teachers' intent to leave the profession (Arens & Morin, 2016). This is demonstrated in reports that estimate up to 40% of novice teachers leaving the profession after just five years of teaching and 9.3% are leaving within the first year (Ingersoll, 2003; Weis & Weis, 1999). The deteriorating mental health status of educators is in part supported by research findings showing 12 to 20% of teachers in Quebec reporting experiences of burnout symptoms at least once a week (Fernet, Guay, Senécal, & Austin, 2012)

The desire for higher retention rates in educators has given rise to increased research attention on teachers' mental health. Of particular interest are the reasons for why many teachers do not develop burnout and are able to sustain a high quality working life, despite working in an occupation that is known for elevated stress levels.

Burnout

Burnout is recognized as a work-related syndrome in which an individual experiences a diminished interest in work due to chronic exhaustion, and is characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lack of personal accomplishments. Emotional exhaustion is described as the feeling of being depleted in one's emotional and physical resource (Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 1996). Educators experiencing emotional exhaustion find that they simply do not have any more emotional or psychological capabilities to offer their students and peers. Depersonalization refers to a form of psychological detachment in which the individual develops an insensitive and callous attitude towards the people they work with (Maslach et al., 1996). Teachers suffering from this form of burnout may develop a cynical outlook regarding their students

and become so detached that they cannot bring themselves to care about their students or colleagues. Lack of personal accomplishment occurs when an individual perceives that they are no longer effective in their work and are unable to fulfill their professional responsibilities (Maslach et al., 1996). Teachers who are overextended with increasing emotional and professional work demands have reported an increase in depressive moods, feeling lonely and self-blame as well as depressive symptoms such as low self-esteem, social withdrawal, and reduced concentration (Papastylianou & Polychronopoulos, 2009). The hazardous impact of burnout extends to the impairment of physical health as revealed in a study by Peterson et al. (2008) showing emotional exhaustion to be associated with physical pain, sleep disturbances, and impaired memory functioning.

Occupational Environment

Implicit values imposed by the organizational structure and enforced through the immediate context the work occurs in, creates occupational stressors related to potential burnout (Schaufeli, Maslach, & Leiter, 2001). These values form qualitative and quantitative job demands of the teaching profession which include time pressures, increasing workload to meet the diverse needs of students, and role conflicts due to lack of school support services (e.g., counselors, social worker, etc) (Hargreaves, 1994; Ma & MacMillan, 1999; Tsouluhas, 2005). To further understand the relationship of workplace stressors and burnout in the teaching profession, a study was conducted by Abel and Sewell (1999) examining the sources of stress in relation to the symptoms of burnout in rural and urban teachers. The findings identified urban teachers experiencing greater overall stress compared to rural teachers; further, the authors report that significantly greater stress was experience by urban teachers from poor working conditions such as lack of professional recognition, inadequate compensation, and lack of equipment. However, both groups were similar in the stress experienced by time pressures and student misbehaviour. Stress from time pressures was indicative of emotional exhaustion and decreased personal accomplishment in rural teachers, whereas for urban teachers,

emotional exhaustion was associated with poor working conditions and reduced personal accomplishment was predicted by student misbehaviour.

Job Satisfaction

Experiences or perception of any discrepancy between the effort put into the work performance and the reward received in response has shown to increase the risk of burnout among teachers, and this discrepancy threatens their job satisfaction as it decreases their interest and positive affect towards work which in turn may contribute to decreased life satisfaction (Judge & Watanabe, 1993). Job satisfaction is defined as an individual's attitude and feelings towards aspects of their occupation including pay, career advancement opportunities, working conditions, coworkers, and the job itself (Anari, 2012). The most significant factors potentially attributing to job dissatisfaction among teachers include lack of respectful relationship with coworkers and supervisors, strained interactions with pupils and parents, and role ambiguity or conflict (Billingsley & Cross, 1992; Crossman, & Harris, 2006). Repercussions of low job satisfaction involve high work absences and low quality of service leading to increases in administrative costs, reduced productivity, and work disruption (Crossman, & Harris, 2006). Research on social workers has identified high job satisfaction to be negatively associated with burnout and turnover rates (Abu-Bader, 2000). Further exploration by Hombrados-Mendieta, and Cosano-Rivas (2013) identified job satisfaction to be positively associated with life satisfaction. Confirming the significance of workplace relationships, the study showed workplace support as a mediating factor that increased job satisfaction and reduced the risk of burnout. In addition, increased job satisfaction positively correlated with increased organizational commitment with implications of higher retention rates due to positive occupation outlook (Anari, 2012). Therefore, in order to address issues concerning teacher's mental health, well-being and burnout, variables that can contribute to increased job satisfaction in the teaching profession are to be considered.

Emotional Labour

The persistent demand for high emotional labour unique to the teaching profession remains as a predominant occupational stressor associated with risk of burnout (Kinman, Strange, & Wray, 2011). Engaging in supportive emotional involvement to encourage pupils' educational progress is a socially enforced expectation for teachers who are already burdened by their existing professional challenges, including creating lesson plans adhering to changing school board legislation and integrating new technology into the classroom (Wróbel, 2013). Emotional labour then results from the additional pressure on teachers to consistently express positive affect and social interaction with students despite a dissonance in their inner emotional state.

Hochschild, (2003) proposes that emotional laborers are often required to and engage in a form of acting with emotions in which inauthentic emotions are displayed to meet social expectations. This form of acting can be performed on a surface level in which emotion is feigned to suppress the felt emotion or on a deeper level in which emotion is invoked to stimulate a reflection of the desired emotion. Persistent modification of external emotional expressions without the regulation of the internal state like that of surface acting, has been found to strongly correlate with emotional exhaustion (Näring, Brouwers, & Briët, 2006). Teachers reporting more frequent awareness of engaging in emotional labour also reported reductions in job satisfaction and were at greater risk of depersonalizing their students (Kinman et al., 2011). While much of the research conducted on burnout has been focused on contextual factors in the workplace settings, recognizing the influence of emotional labour as a response to interpersonal factors on burnout directs research efforts to examine the role of personality traits on burnout.

Individual Characteristics

Teachers are not passive recipients of their environment; instead their individual characteristics such as gender, age, years of experience, situational appraisal, and personality traits interact with the workplace condition to shape their mental health. According to the gender role theory by Eagly (1987), women are

often depicted as being more eager to express and exchange feelings of emotions due to their disposition for caring and nurture. This has led to the stereotypical assumption of women being more susceptible to physical fatigue and stress than men (Matlin, 2004). An examination of the interaction between genders and burnout symptoms by Greenglass, Burke, and Ondrack (1990) challenges this assumption by revealing there to be no gender difference in overall report of burnout, postulating that male and females are both just as susceptible to burnout. Gender differences were observed in the form of burnout symptoms in which males tended to score higher on symptoms of depersonalization whereas females reported more frequent experiences of emotional exhaustion. Males also reported experiencing greater occupational stress than their female colleagues. These findings were further supported in a meta-analysis reviewing 183 studies exploring burnout symptoms experienced by women working in a male-typed occupation and men working in a female-type occupation (Purvanova & Muros, 2010).

Early experiences working as an educator significantly impact the development of their teaching career as shown by 40% of novice teachers who leave the profession due to occupation stress and burnout within the first five years of teaching (Ingersoll, Merrill, & Stuckey, 2014). Beginning teachers are at risk of burnout and stress due to their age of transition from a university graduate to entering the workforce for the first time. This period of adjustment in their personal life and professional development combined with the already challenging work environment increases experiences of burnout (Gold & Roth, 2013). While years of experiences confounds age in relation to burnout, younger teachers still tend to experience greater frequency of emotional exhaustion (Antoniou, Polychroni, & Vlachakis, 2006). This may in part be due to teachers with 0-10 years of experience being less likely to limit certain work demands compared to their experienced colleagues (Duatepe, & Akkuş-Çikla, 2004; Sharplin, O'Neill, & Chapman, 2011).

Quality of Life

An examination of teachers' mental health would not be complete without considering the effects of the individual appraisal of occupational stressors and its relations with life satisfaction. An individual's

appraisal of their life circumstances and experiences shape their assessment of their personal well-being including their physical, social, and mental health (WHOQOL Group, 1994). The resulting perceived quality of life is an indication of the individual's level of contentment and acceptance of their current state of well-being. Quality of life has often been equated with life satisfaction, which is defined as the subjective evaluation of the extent to which personal needs and expectations are being met (Anand & Arora, 2009). The subjective nature implies the involvement of personality factors on the assessment and response to life events; specifically, optimism and pessimism have been shown to significantly influence quality of life outcomes (Wrosch & Scheier, 2003). Chang (1998) revealed increased optimism to be correlated with higher satisfaction of life. Findings in a study by Brand et al. (2010) observed an association between satisfaction with life and lower frequencies of emotional exhaustion accompanied by reduced pessimism.

Personality Traits

Further investigation into the relationship between burnout and individual personality has discovered certain personality traits to be directly related to greater risk of developing burnout. Particularly, individuals with perfectionist personality, lower self-esteem, and/or external locus of control reported greater experiences of burnout (Schaufeli, & Enzmann, 1998). A study by Pishghadam and Sahebjam (2012) exploring the relationship between the Big Five model personality traits and burnout found neuroticism to be a predictor of emotional exhaustion. In addition, extroversion was positively correlated with personal accomplishment while a negative correlation occurred between agreeableness and depersonalization. These findings suggest that internal dispositional factors associated with managing and regulating emotional exchanges have a direct impact on burnout and mental well-being. Taking into consideration the prevailing significance of emotional factors within the teaching profession gives merit to directing research attention on the role of emotional intelligence in teachers.

Emotional Intelligence

Since the recognition of human intelligence as a form of mental capability to manipulate, process, and interact with information, other forms of such abilities were simultaneously acknowledged (Neisser et al., 1996). One such form was conceived as emotional intelligence (EI) which is defined as an individual's aptitude for processing emotion-related information in order to accurately perceive, appraise, and express emotions (De Vito, 2009; Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Originally theorized by Salovey and Mayer (1990), EI represents the individual's ability to identify one's own and others' emotions, manage one's emotions for appropriate expressions, regulate and generate emotions in oneself as well as others, and appreciate complexities in emotional exchanges (Salovey & Grewal, 2005).

Theoretically, emotional intelligence allows for success in developing intrapersonal relations and guides our daily interactions with others by enabling self-induction of positive affects as well as induction of positive moods in other people (Ciarrochi, Deane, & Anderson, 2002). Empirical research on emotional intelligence suggests that the construct reflects an increased motivation in work performance, better decision-making abilities, general optimistic mood, and better stress management (De Vito, 2009; John, & Lori, 2005). Individuals with high emotional intelligence tend to have better physical health because they are able to accurately perceive emotional states and respond with positive psychophysiological coping such as exercise and forms of relaxation activities (Tsaousis, & Nikolaou, 2005). Low emotional intelligence has been reported to have a negative relationship with mental health, specifically depression, anxiety, and hostility (Ciarrochi et al., 2002).

The potential benefits of increased emotional intelligence encourage the desirability for research to examine the possibility of improving emotional intelligence. While it remains uncertain the extent to which emotional intelligence can be learned or modified through teaching, there is a growing body of research examining the improvements in emotional intelligence through training interventions (Vesely, Saklofske, & Leschied, 2013). Mindfulness-Based EI training, *The Emotionally Intelligent Teacher*, and RULER

(recognizing, understanding, labelling, expressing, and regulating emotions) are just a few training programs aimed at developing emotional intelligence competence (Brackett, Rivers, & Salovey, 2011; Ciarrochi Ciarrochi, Blackledge, Bilich, & Bayliss, 2007; Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 1999). These programs do so by providing strategies in strengthening specific emotional intelligence skills such as emphasizing emotional self-awareness, managing emotions for decision-making and relationship building, and self-controlled expression of emotions (Vesely et al., 2013). Findings provided confidence in the effectiveness of evidence-based interventions in increasing emotional intelligence (Gardner, 2005; Poole & Saklofske, 2009).

High levels of emotional intelligence continue to be associated with positive psychological, physical, and social outcomes despite the perpetuating controversy regarding the representation and assessment of the construct. While the underlying definition of EI as an individual difference in how emotions are perceived, communicated, regulated, and understood remains undebated, there are differing operationalizations of EI based on whether EI is attributed to being a skilled competence in cognitive processing known as ability emotional intelligence or a presentation of a basic inherent aptitude termed as trait emotional intelligence.

Trait Emotional Intelligence

The conceptualization and measurement of trait emotional intelligence (trait EI) theorizes EI as a personality trait (Carroll, 1993). Petrides, Pita, and Kokkinaki (2007) defined trait EI as being a "constellation of emotion related self-perceptions" formed by higher-order personality dimensions. Drawing upon the assessment of personality profiles, assessments of trait EI consists of personality facets associated with affect evaluation and production. Trait EI measurements are interested in depicting the individual's self-perception of their ability and propensity to engage in processing emotion-related information and to effectively regulate emotional interactions. Concerns of trait EI of being merely a presentation of pre-existing major personality dimensions have been addressed with empirical evidence demonstrating its incremental validity from the Big Five personality dimensions and Eysenk's personality model (Petrides, 2009; Petrides et al., 2007).

Thus, a better understanding of the mitigative potential of individual factors within teachers that could counteract burnout may be acquired by examining the role of trait EI in relation to burnout and stress. Currently, literature examining the relationship between burnout and emotional intelligence is still in its infancy (Pishghadam & Sahebjam, 2012). A pilot study examining the relationship between burnout and emotional intelligence in teachers found a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and personal accomplishment (De Vito, 2009). In the study, individuals with greater emotional intelligence perceived greater successful achievement in their work (De Vito, 2009). Further research investigating the significance of emotional intelligence in mitigating stress conducted by Armstrong, Galligan, and Critchley (2011) found that individuals with higher EI scores reported less distress from external events by being more likely to use coping mechanisms and seeking social support through verbal expression for stress relief. These results showed that intrapersonal rather than interpersonal aspects of EI constructs, particularly emotional self-awareness, self-management, and expression, had a greater influence on counteracting external stressors. Still, the results from the aforementioned studies encourage further investigating on the effects of emotional intelligence on perceptions of quality work-life, burnout, and the well-being of teacher's mental health.

Theoretical Orientation

The attempt to understand the underlying principles supporting emotional intelligence as being in relation with mental health well-being and burnout may benefit from referring to the relational-cultural theory (RCT) understanding of human relationship and emotional connection. The core assumption of RCT conceptualizes meaningful, complex, and mutual connections with others as a central determinant of psychological health and maturity (Jordan, 2001). Shared experiences of intimate relationship are the conduits for developing a sense of self identity and worth. Individuals are driven and shaped by their interdependent relationships characterized by mutual engagement, mutual empowerment, authenticity, and eagerness to accept and process diversity within relationships. The absence of these characteristics in relationships results in interpersonal disconnection and feelings of isolation.

These relationships are not limited to dyadic forms between two individuals. Instead it can be viewed as the relation between the individual and their societal, cultural, and other systemic roles (Frey, 2013). This implies that an individual's desire for acceptance in various relationships and emotional connection is innate, providing further description of the function performed by trait emotional intelligence. For many individuals, experiences of chronic disconnection in their relationships have informed them to withhold significant aspects of their feelings, thoughts, and experiences (Hartling & Sparks, 2008). This is recognized as the central relational paradox in which individuals wrestle with the need to maintain some form of acceptance and stability while preserving their authenticity (Jordan, 2001). Thus, burnout symptoms can be understood as the occurrence of the central relational paradox in which depersonalization demonstrates the individual's sacrifice of the potential for engagement to protect the self from further emotional harm. The acknowledgement of the inherent motivation for positive connections leads efforts for psychological restoration and stress reduction to focus on building and promoting social support.

Coping Strategies

Individuals who work in high stress environments do not all develop burnout. Instead, many develop coping strategies that help to buffer the negative effects of workplace stressors. Coping strategies are most commonly divided into two types, one being action and the other as avoidant or palliative (Kyriacou, 2001). Direct action coping tries to eliminate the source of stress by confronting the stressor in a sustainable manner, while palliative coping reduces stress by avoiding the source of stress and focuses on alleviating the symptoms temporarily (Kyriacou, 2001). Direct action coping have been associated with lower burnout and reduced occupational stress as its coping mechanisms include seeking social support, organizing problem-solving strategies, and engaging in self-care through recreational activities and relaxation (Sharplin et al., 2011). Literature regarding implementation of coping strategies posits that stressful events are cognitively appraised by individuals according to the level of threat the event has to their being, the emotional response

to the event, the external and internal resources available for assistance, and the extent to which the event needs to be changed (Greenglass et al., 1990; Gawali, 2012; Thornton, 1992).

How stressful events are perceived by an individual is critical to determining the form of coping responses implemented (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). In this way, the individual is not only aware of the threat of the stressor, but develops an understanding of the impact the stressors have and how to best counteract that. This form of awareness greatly resembles the emotional intelligence components of emotional self-awareness and self-management, further suggesting its protective function against burnout (Ciarrochi, Chan, & Caputi, 2000). Research by Mearns and Cain (2002) on a similar construct, negative mood regulation (NMR), found it to have a positive association with active coping. Negative mood regulation refers to an individual's expectation in their ability to cease or reduce their experience of negative emotions which relates closely to trait EI self-perceptions of regulating and inducting of positive affect. Teachers with high expectations of their abilities to regulate negative emotions reported lower stress and symptoms of burnout. Gawali (2012) extended the research literature by conducting a simple correlational study on the relationship between emotional intelligence and coping in postsecondary teachers. Findings showed a significant positive correlation between EI and active coping which teachers engaged in emotion management behaviours such as self-disclosure, venting, and creating humour. Furthermore, actively seeking emotional support from peers to assist with positive reframing and receive feedback was associated with reduction of stress and likelihood of depersonalization (Sharplin et al., 2011).

Research Question and Hypotheses

The main research inquiry seeks to investigate the connection, if any, between Emotional Intelligence, Quality of Life, and Burnout. Specifically, variances in emotional intelligence in teachers will be observed to investigate any connections between the frequency of burnout experiences and perceived quality of life. Therefore:

Hypothesis 1. Trait EI scores will have an inverse relationship with burnout scores.

Hypothesis 2. Perceived quality of life is hypothesized to have a negative association with burnout, and a positive relationship with trait EI.

Hypothesis 3. Higher trait EI scores are expected to correlate with greater quality of life, supporting literature on personality traits determining individual appraisal of events, experiences, and surroundings.

Method

Present Study

Much of the existing research on teachers' mental health have been focused on the extent of the impact that occupational stress poses on mental health concerns and has neglected to consider the positive state of mental well-being (Tang, Au, Schwarzer, & Schmitz, 2001). Thus, with a strength-based approach, the current study proposes to identify the reasoning for why teachers who are exposed to the same level of occupational stress as their akin colleagues do not develop burnout or deteriorating mental health.

Design

The primary focus of the current study is to explore factors that influence teachers' mental health by assessing individual, as well as, work-related factors that moderate teacher stress and burnout. The study is conducted as a correlational descriptive field design using a questionnaire survey composed of self-report measures to observe the relationships and relative strength of association amongst the variables of interest, namely perceived burnout symptoms, quality of work life, and trait emotional intelligence. Secondary data originally collected by Marko (2015) using the Teacher Mental Health and Wellness online survey is used in this current study. While the cross-sectional and self-reported nature of this study limits confidence in inferring causal relations, results from this study coinciding with previous literature will be able to strengthen statements of correlational relationships.

Participants

The study received ethical approval through the university research ethics board (Appendix A). The sample was selected using a non-random, convenience consenting sampling method. A total of 600 participants completed the Teacher Mental Health and Wellness online questionnaire, to which a link was provided from a large provincial teacher federation website, and a national professional teachers' association online newsletter. The participants included both elementary and secondary school teachers. Recruitment was conducted through electronic mail that included a link to the letter of information (Appendix B) and the research questionnaire (Appendix C).

Measures

Demographics Information

Demographic information collected from the participants included: age, gender, employment status, years of employment, marital status, and whether they were employed in rural or urban areas.

Teacher Burnout Inventory

The Teacher Burnout Inventory was developed by Richmond, Wrench, and Gorham (2001) to observe the frequency of burnout symptoms experienced by individuals in the teaching profession. They recognized that burnout symptoms can be perceived in areas of communication, physiology, behaviour, and organizational context. The measure consists of 20 items rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Higher scores indicate a greater frequency in experiencing burnout symptoms. The items in the scale inquire the respondents to reflect on any experience of burnout symptoms in their physiological changes, behavioural responses, communication patterns, and organizational attitudes. A higher overall score implies a greater presence of burnout symptoms. A recent study by Marko (2015) found the measure to account for 59% variance of teacher burnout and the 20 items loaded onto 3 factors: workplace stress (10 items), relational engagement (6 items), and occupational outlook (4 items). Cronbach

alpha of internal consistency was .90 for workplace stress, .82 for relational engagement, and .86 for occupational outlook.

World Health Organization Quality of Life (WHOQOL- BREF)

The World Health Organization Quality of Life (WHOQOL-100) is an assessment tool developed by the World Health Organization Quality of Life Group for a comprehensive, culturally-sensitive, and subjective evaluation of individual facets of life that are deemed important to the perceived quality of life (WHOQoL Group, 1998). However, the estimate length of time required for completion and total number of items led to the development of the WHOQOL-BREF. The WHOQOL-BREF is composed of 26 subset items from the WHOQOL-100 and examines 4 domains of quality of life accompanied by 2 independent questions about the individual's perceived quality of life and health overall. Each item is scored on a 5-point Likert scale indicating: the degree of satisfaction an individual feels, how much they have experience certain events, how completely they were able to perform, and how often they felt a certain mood. High scores indicate a higher quality of life. Domain scores based on WHOQOL-100 and WHOQOL-BREF showed significant correlations ranging from .89 to.95. Cronbach alpha for each domain ranged from .66 (Domain 3- Social Relationship) and .95 (Domain 1- Physical Health). Test-retest reliability over an 8-week period showed a range of .66 to .87 (WHOQoL Group, 1998).

Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire–Short Form (TEIQue-SF)

The Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire–Short Form (TEIQue–SF) is derived from the full Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire developed by Petrides and Furnham (2006) to measure global trait emotional intelligence. The TEIQue-SF consists of 30 items represented by a 7-point Likert scale in which responses range from 1 (completely disagree) to 7 (completely agree), and high scores indicate high levels of the desired component (Cooper, & Petrides, 2010). These ratings were scored on four factors of trait EI: emotionality, sociability, self-control, and well-being. Test-retest reliability over a 12-month time period was reported as a range from .59 to 0.86. Cronbach alpha remained significant in both genders with a

range of .68 to .86. Internal consistencies of overall scales were .76 (*N*=1721). Concurrent validity was emphasized to provide evidence of a predictive ability distinct from existing measures. After accounting for the variances in the Big 5 personality dimensions, Trait EI was able to show correlations with theoretically related constructs (e.g., rumination, life satisfaction, and coping) (Petrides, Pérez-González, & Furnham, 2007). This provides evidence that trait emotional intelligence is not simply a unique expression of existing personality characteristics.

Procedure

The survey questionnaire was distributed through mass email lists from a large provincial teacher federation and a national professional teachers' association. The email included a letter of information and a link to the survey which was developed on the Qualtrics platform. The email was sent through the groups to their current members and completion of the questionnaire implied voluntary implicit consent from the participants. Results received from the respondents were downloaded only onto Western's secure server for data analysis.

Analyses

Descriptive statistics were generated to provide an overview and to detect any thematic patterns of the respondents in the study. Pearson correlation analyses were performed to test hypotheses 1-3. To address the overarching research inquiry, stepwise multiple linear regression was conducted, with the Teacher Burnout Inventory as the dependent variable and subscales from the WHOQOL and TEIQ as the predictors.

Results

Demographics

Table 1: General Demographic Information

General Information	N	%	M (SD)	Range
Gender				
Female	416	69.3		
Male	162	27.0		
Transgendered	7	1.2		
Age	580		43.4 (9.34)	20-70
Marital Status				
Married	399	66.5		
Common-Law	60	10.0		
Single	85	14.2		
Divorced	30	5.0		
Separated	17	2.8		
Widowed	3	0.5		
Community				
Urban	219	36.5		
Rural	159	26.5		
Remote	20	3.3		
Teaching Grade Level*				
Senior	407	67.8		
Intermediate	264	44.0		
Primary	59	9.8		
Other	80	13.3		
Alternative	54	9.0		
Junior	38	6.3		

**please note that multiple responses were possible on this item, so frequencies exceed 100%*

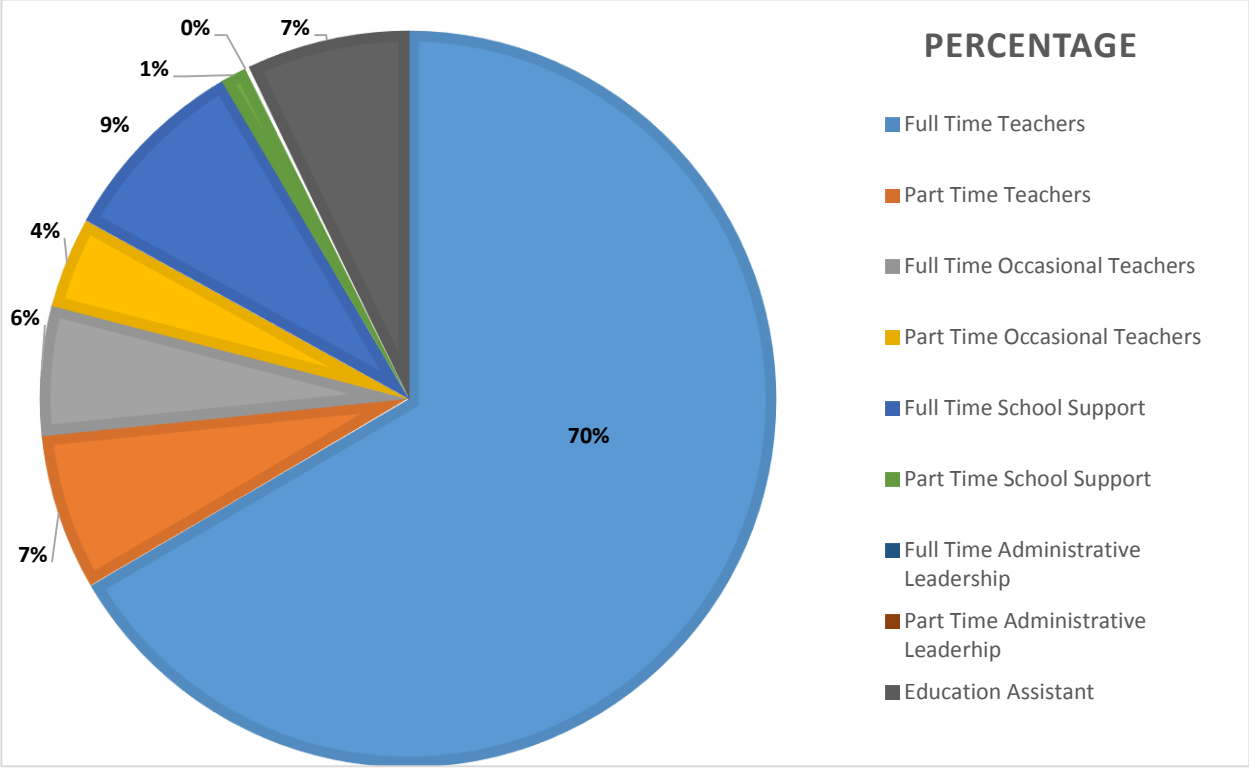
General demographic information regarding the participants are outlined in Table 1. 69.3% of the participants were female, 27% male, and 1.2% identified as transgendered. The larger representation of females in the sample is reflective of the gender split in teaching; specifically, Statistics Canada which shows that women constitute 57% of the teaching profession at the secondary level and 83% at the primary level (Turcotte, 2011). The age within the sample ranged from 20-70 with an average age of 43 years (SD= 9.3). 76.5% of the participants were married, of which 10% were common-law. A combined total of 22.5%

of the sample were single which included participants who were divorced (5%), separated (2.8%), and widowed (0.5%). In addition, 36.5% of the participants resided in urban regions while 26.5% lived in rural areas and 3.3% lived in remote locations.

Additional information relating to the occupational details of the educational professionals are also presented in Table 1. The years of teaching experience within the sample ranged from 0-43 years with the average having worked for 15.52 years. The majority of the sample taught at the senior level (67.8%). Subsequently, 44% of the sample taught at the intermediate level, 9.8% at the primary level, 9% at the alternative level, 6.3% at the junior level, and 13.3% at "Other".

Graph 1 illustrates a breakdown of the sample's occupational roles.

Figure 1: Participants' Occupational Roles



The occupational roles were categorized by time commitment of either full time (FT) or part time (PT) except for the role of Educational Assistants. PT Administrative Leaderships (0.2%) and PT School Support (1.2%) constituted the smallest representation of the participant sample. Occupational roles considered under Administrative Leadership included federation presidents, administrative support, and

department heads. There were no FT Administrative Leadership within the sample. The PT School Support category was composed of guidance counsellors, psychology support staff, social workers, child and youth workers, and chaplains. The remaining employment roles listed in descending order beginning with the largest to smallest representation of the participant sample are FT Teachers, FT School Support, Educational Assistants, PT Teachers, FT Occasional Teachers, and PT Occasional Teachers.

Table 2: Means and Standard Deviations for Teacher Burnout Inventory, Trait Emotional Intelligence, and Quality of Life

Scales & Subscales/Domains	N	%	M	SD
Teacher Burnout Inventory*	484	80.7	37.7	11.6
Workplace Stress			2.55	0.88
Relational Engagement			1.64	0.64
Occupational Outlook			2.17	0.93
Trait Emotional Intelligence*				
Well-Being	447	74.5	5.38	1.10
Emotionality	446	74.3	5.14	0.88
Sociability	439	73.1	4.65	0.99
Self-Control	444	74.0	4.55	1.02
Global	396	66.0	4.97	0.77
WHO Quality of Life*				
General Health	493	82.1	70.36	20.43
Environmental Health	491	81.8	68.76	15.06
Physical Health	497	82.8	66.54	17.65
Psychological Health	495	82.5	61.92	18.67
Social Relationships	495	82.5	57.96	24.34

***higher scores indicate more endorsement of the variable/scale of interest**

Teacher Burnout Inventory

Key results from the scales used in the Teacher Mental Health and Wellness online survey are summarized in Table 3. Scores on the Teacher Burnout Inventory represent the frequency in which teachers and educational professional experience symptoms of burnout. A summed score between 20-35 implies that the respondent is experiencing few burnout feelings; 36-55 suggests some strong feelings of burnout; 56-70 means having substantial burnout feelings; and 71-80 indicates the presence of burnout (Richmond et al., 2001). The teachers and educational professionals had a mean (*M*) score of 37.71 with a standard deviation

(*SD*) of 11.60. This indicates that overall the participants were experiencing some strong feelings of burnout. The participants showed a greater response to the following questions items: "I feel stressed at work" (M=3.47), "I feel frustrated at work" (M=3.43), and "I am weary with all of my job responsibilities" (M=3.27). Questions that received the lowest mean scores were "My students make me sick" (M=1.37), "I avoid looking at my students" (M=1.38), "I communicate in a hostile manner at work" (M=1.55), "I avoid communication with students" (M=1.57).

Emotional Intelligence

The 30 questionnaire items that comprise the Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire are categorized into 4 subscales: Well-Being, Self-Control, Emotionality and Sociability. Altogether, the items generate a Global Trait Emotional Intelligence (EI) score which imply facets of adaptability and self-motivation in addition to the characteristic traits indicated by the four subscales. These scores demonstrate the respondent's self-perception of their emotional competencies (Petrides, 2009). The Well-Being subscale yielded the highest mean score of 5.38 (SD=1.10). Out of the 6 questionnaire items in the subscale, the item receiving the highest endorsement by the participants was "I feel that I have a number of good qualities" (M=5.85, SD=1.19). This was in line with the item that expressed the participants' belief of being full of personal strengths (M=5.40, SD=1.29). The lowest means score was reported for the item "I generally believe that things will work out fine in my life" (M=5.06, SD=1.49). One of the reverse scored items, "On the whole, I have a gloomy perspective on most things" received a moderately high mean score (M=5.43, SD=1.61) which indicates that the majority participants responded that on the whole, they do not have a gloomy perspective on most things.

Following closely is the Emotionality subscale with a mean score of 5.14 (SD=0.88). The item with the highest mean score was "Those close to me often complain that I don't treat them right" (M=5.81, SD=1.47) which is also a reverse scored item. The item with the lowest mean score was "I often pause and think about my feelings." (M=4.25, SD=1.61). The participants' displayed a relatively high level of

confidence in their ability to recognize their emotions as reflected by the reverse scored item "Many times, I can't figure out what emotions I'm feeling" (M=5.44, SD=1.55). The items "I often find it difficult to see things from another person's viewpoint" (M=5.50, SD=1.40) and "I'm normally able to "get into someone's shoes" and experience their emotions" (M=5.18, SD=1.46) that demonstrates self-perceived competence in empathy had a moderately high endorsement.

The teachers and educational professionals demonstrated a mean score of 4.66 (SD=0.99) in Sociability. The highest score resulted from the item "I can deal effectively with people" (M=5.35, SD=1.37) which was followed by "I would describe myself as a good negotiator" (M=4.83, SD=1.41). The lowest score resulted from "I'm usually able to influence the way other people feel." (M=4.41, SD=1.40). Lastly, the subscale with the lowest mean score was found for Self-Control (M=4.55, SD=1.02). The questionnaire item with the highest mean score was reported for "I'm usually able to find ways to control my emotions when I want to" (M=4.98, SD=1.45). The item with the lowest mean score was "Others admire me for being relaxed" (M=4.02, SD=1.81). This item is further supported by the moderate mean score from the item "On the whole, I'm able to deal with stress" (M=4.54, SD=1.61). Overall, the participants reported a mean Global Trait EI score of 4.97 (SD=0.77).

WHO – Quality of Life

Four domain scores can be derived from The World Health Organization Quality of Life brief survey (WHOQOL-BREF). These domain scores demonstrate the respondent's personal perception of the quality of life pertaining to the following domain areas: Psychological health, Physiological health, Social Relationships, and Environment. Two question items examining the respondent's overall perception of their quality of life and health are combined to create the General health domain. The scores are scaled in a positive direction in which a higher score denotes a greater perceived quality of life. The raw scores from each domain were transformed to a 0 to 100 point scale so as to be comparable to other psychometric

measures including the World Health Organization Quality of Life (WHOQOL-100) (WHOQoL Group. (1998).

The participants indicated being highly satisfied with their general quality of life as demonstrated by a mean score of 70.36 (SD=20.43). This is followed by a high satisfaction in the teachers and educational professionals' perceived quality of Environmental health (M=68.77, SD=15.06). In terms of the factors contributing to a healthy environmental conditions, the respondents reported being most satisfied with their mode of transportation (M=4.28, SD=0.78) and with how safe they feel in their daily life (M=4.05, SD=0.86). The teachers and educational professionals were least satisfied in the extent to which they have the opportunity for leisure activities (M=2.98, SD=1.08). Physical health was perceived to be highly satisfactory as well, with a mean of score of 66.54 (SD=17.65). The participants reported being greatly satisfied with how well they were able to get around (M=4.50, SD=0.74) as well as their capacity to work (M=3.47, SD=1.06). There was a low satisfaction in the perceived quality of sleep among the participants (M=2.82, SD=1.18). Two particular reverse scored items regarding perceived physical health worth noting is the extent to which the teachers and educational professionals' physical pain prevented them from doing what they needed to do (M=4.11, SD=0.99) and how much they needed medical treatment to function in their daily life (M=4.08, SD=1.07). Following physical health in the level of satisfaction is Psychological health with an overall score of 61.93 (SD=18.67). The teachers and educational professionals indicated they perceive their life to be highly meaningful (M=3.68, SD=0.95) and reported having much enjoyment of life (M=3.65, SD=0.85). Simultaneously, the participants expressed being only moderately satisfied in their general self (M=3.35, SD=1.07) and their ability to accept their bodily appearance (M=3.34, SD=1.19). The participants also indicated experiencing in moderate frequency negative feelings such as depression, anxiety, and despair (M=3.38, SD=0.96). The lowest satisfaction among the participants was in regards to the quality of their Social relationships (M=57.96, SD=24.35). Specifically, they were least satisfied with their sex life

(M=2.93, SD=1.30) and only somewhat satisfied with their personal relationships (M=3.53, SD=1.14) and the support they receive from their friends (M=3.49, SD=1.05).

Correlational Analyses

Table 3: Correlations Between Teacher Burnout, Trait Emotional Intelligence, and Quality of Life

Measure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. TBI - Total	-									
2. EI_Total	-.516	-								
3. EI_Well-Being	-.498	.823	-							
4. EI_Self-Control	-.393	.773	.566	-						
5. EI_Emotionality	-.352	.745	.511	.357	-					
6. EI_Sociability	-.320	.717	.424	.492	.369	-				
7. WHO-General	-.426	.444	.528	.379	.194	.218	-			
8. WHO-Physical	-.507	.455	.452	.436	.200	.247	.663	-		
9. WHO-Psych	-.563	.688	.790	.536	.352	.361	.670	.648	-	
10. WHO-Social	-.431	.541	.584	.362	.411	.277	.522	.450	.657	-
11. WHO-Environ	-.437	.520	.560	.378	.339	.277	.585	.592	.664	.507

Pearson correlation analyses were conducted to investigate the relationship between Trait EI, Teachers' Burnout and Quality of Life. Results are presented in Table 3 which indicates a statistically significant negative relationship between the Global Trait EI and Teacher Burnout ($r = -.516$, $p<0.01$). Each of the Trait EI subscales was also significantly negatively correlated with Teacher Burnout. Quality of Life domains had a statistically significant negative association with Teacher Burnout, particularly, Psychological Health ($r = -.563$, $p<0.01$). Significant relationships were also detected between Trait EI and each Quality of Life domains, which may signal the overlap in the psychometric properties between the two measures. Specifically, there was a significant correlation between Well-Being and Psychological Health ($r = .790$, $p<0.01$), Emotionality and Psychological Health ($r = .352$, $p<0.01$), and Sociability and Social Relationships ($r = .277$, $p<0.01$).

Regression

Table 4: Results from Stepwise Regression with Quality of Life and Emotional Intelligence

	Variable	Beta	R Square	R Square Change	Sig. Correlation
1.	WHO_Psych Health	-.578	.334	.334	.000
2.	WHO_Psych Health	-.410			
	EI_Total	-.240	.364	.029	.000
3.	WHO_Psych Health	-.338			
	EI_Total	-.213			
	WHO_Soc. Relat.	-.141	.375	.011	.016

A multiple regression analysis was performed to evaluate the extent to which Trait Emotional Intelligence and Quality of Life predicted Teacher Burnout. The stepwise method was used with the predictor variables consisting of the four Trait EI subscales, Global Trait EI, and the four domains of Quality of Life. The dependent variable was the overall Teacher Burnout score. Psychological Health significantly predicted Teacher Burnout (R^2= .33, $F(1, 330)=168.82$, $p<0.001$). Global Trait EI accounted for an additional 3% of the variance (R^2= .36, $F(1, 329)=15.24$, $p<0.001$) and Social Relationships provided another 1% of the variance (R^2= .37, $F(1, 328)=5.83$, $p<0.001$). The four subscales of Trait EI were not predictive of Teacher Burnout despite having significant bivariate correlation. See Table 4.

Discussion

The purpose of the present research was to examine the relationship between symptoms of burnout, trait emotional intelligence, and quality of life perceived by those in the teaching profession. This study was an attempt to investigate the role of internal dispositions in potentially mitigating teachers' experiences of burnout. In particular, the study hypothesized that individual characteristics that related to competencies in emotion induction and regulation enable teachers to adaptively cope with the stress of their occupational demands. This research examined whether: (1) higher trait EI scores would result in decreased burnout, (2) perceived quality of life would have negative influence on the frequency of burnout, and (3) greater trait EI scores would inform a greater perceived quality of life. All three hypotheses were supported by the patterns of association among the variables.

A statistically significant relationship was found between Trait EI, Teachers' Burnout, and Quality of Life. There was a negative correlation between Trait EI and Teacher Burnout in which greater trait EI scores was associated with lower frequencies of burnout experiences. Respondents who evaluated themselves to be competent in assessing their experiences of emotion-related information and utilizing them to foster their social engagements tended to experience fewer burnout symptoms. Perceived quality of life, particularly in the domain of psychological heath, demonstrated a negative relationship with Teacher Burnout as well. This suggests that teachers who reported being satisfied with their sense of self-esteem, possessing a positive outlook towards life, and living a meaningful life were less likely to experience burnout.

Burnout

Findings from the Teacher Burnout Inventory demonstrated that a majority of the participants were experiencing some strong feelings of burnout. Factor analysis conducted on the Teacher Burnout Inventory to describe the particular sources of burnout symptoms found three potential factors: workplace stress, relational engagement, and occupational outlook. The participants expressed their feelings of burnout to be largely associated with workplace stress as reflected in the high endorsement of questionnaire items such as

being weary of job responsibilities and feeling stressed at work. Additional findings indicate that the teachers perceived significantly fewer burnout experiences stemming from their relational engagements as they rarely experienced attempting to avoid interaction with their students or communicating in hostile manners (e.g., calling students ugly names).

Results suggest that despite the significant level of burnout experienced internally by the teachers, many of them denied the outward expression of their distress, particularly towards their students. This may illustrate the unique occupational expectations placed on teachers and educational professionals to constantly attend to the emotional needs of their students at the negligence of their own emotional well-being. The current research provides additional evidence that the daily commitment teachers make to engaging in emotional labour in the form of suppressing distressing emotions and generating emotions incompatible to their inner experiences may increase their risk of burnout. Furthermore, it is relevant to consider the demographic results showing that the majority of the sample has remained in the teaching profession for an estimate of fifteen years even though they recognized a deficiency in their mental well-being resulting from experiences of occupational stressors. This finding supports the hypothesis that the teachers may appear to possess certain capabilities and competencies in resisting burnout.

Emotional Intelligence

Significant associations between each trait emotional intelligence subscale (Well-Being, Emotionality, Self-Control and Sociability) and experiences of burnout were detected through bivariate correlational analyses. Findings show a significant, negative, relationship between each EI subscale and teacher burnout. Not surprisingly, the global EI index created by the sum of all four subscales also demonstrated a significant and negative relationship with burnout.

It is relevant to note that reflected in the Well-Being subscale are elements that describe an individual's level of self-regard along with their overall outlook on life. Teachers who endorsed a higher

Well-being score reported a greater confidence in their personal strengths and greater enjoyment of their current state of life while also reporting experiencing fewer burnout symptoms.

The teachers' perceived level of self-confidence in their emotional competency is portrayed in the Emotionality subscale which was also found to have a significant negative relationship with burnout. Teachers who predominately perceived themselves as being highly skilled in recognizing their own emotions and empathizing with others also reported engaging in fewer depersonalized forms of social interaction as well as fewer experiences of workplace stress. The Sociability subscale depicted the teachers' perception of their capabilities in influencing others through social interaction. A negative correlation was found between teachers who expressed greater confidence in their ability to negotiate and deal effectively with others and symptoms of burnout. Results also revealed in the statistically negative relationship between Self-control and burnout in which teachers who identified themselves as having a healthy degree of control in regulating emotions and impulses also reported fewer occurrences of burnout.

It is interesting to note that while the association between Self-control and burnout, although significant, was not as strong as other relationships. This relationship may allude to the aforementioned challenges of emotional labour experienced by those within the teaching profession. In that, although appropriate modification and regulation of emotion is necessary for stress management, it may be that teachers are pressured to engage in excessive or an unhealthy degree of control over their emotions. It may also be that the teachers continued to experience emotional labour as they perform self-control only in the form of surface acting which is strongly associated with experiences of emotional exhaustion in relation to burnout. Further investigation to uncover the precise nature of these relationships could be very valuable.

A potential hypothesis that arises, based on the results from the current study, is that positive self-belief (the expectation of being capable of recognizing and regulating both positive and negative emotions) reduces the risk of burnout. This is supported by existing research which suggests that possessing greater self-confidence in one's emotional competencies is relevant to coping adaptively to negative moods and

experiences of stress (Gawali, 2012; Mearns and Cain, 2002). Informing this idea is literature demonstrating that a reduction in self-efficacy in teachers is associated with an increase in experiences burnout, feelings of powerlessness, and use of negative coping styles (Schwarzer & Hallum, 2008; Yu et al., 2015).

Results from the regression analysis found that global trait emotional intelligence was significant predictor of burnout. It is interesting to note that the strength of this predictor did not translate to the individual trait EI subscales, but the more global domain. The results suggest that, with 3% of the variance in burnout accounted for by EI, there are other factors that may be at play.

Quality of Life

One such factor may have been the teachers' subjective evaluation of their perceived quality of life; even though the teachers were experiencing considerable job strain and symptoms of psychological distress, the majority reported being highly satisfied with their overall quality of life. Correlational results revealed that there were significant and negative relationships between each perceived quality of life domain, and burnout. A plausible hypothesis is that the teachers' appraisal of their life experiences may inform their level of self-confidence with regard to their ability to cope with emotional distress and stressors.

A significantly negative correlation was found between Psychological health and burnout. Psychological health was expressed in the Quality of Life measure as the extent to which the respondents are satisfied with their self and are able to found enjoyment as well as meaning in their current life while taking into consideration experiences of negative emotions. Thus, the results indicated that enjoyment and meaning in life is inversely related to burnout. In addition, multiple regression analysis findings revealed that Psychological health was a significant predictor of burnout. This is consistent with previous literature that observed internal dispositions encouraging positive appraisals and self-evaluations improved coping with stress (Chang, 1998).

A negative relationship was also detected between Physical health and burnout, which makes sense when we consider the holistic view of health, and that there is an important connection between the body and

the mind. The overall appraisal of personal safety was reflected in accessibility to necessary services such as transportation as reflected in the quality of the individual's perceived Environment, which was found to have a strong negative association with burnout. An increased level of satisfaction in the quality of social support from friends, their sex life, and overall personal relationships was correlated with fewer experiences of burnout symptoms.

Significant positive correlations were reported between each trait emotional intelligence subscale and each of the quality of life domains. The statistically significant relationship between Trait EI and Quality of Life may be due to the shared properties in the conceptual constructions of the categorized facets. The Well-being subscale and Psychological Health domain both contained items that evaluated the participants' perception of their self-esteem and optimistic outlook or positive feelings towards life. Results showed that teachers' well-being scores were positively associated with self-regard and life satisfaction. The strong association between Emotionality and Psychological Health is notable, reflecting the connection with respondent's recognition of their own emotional experience. A higher score on Emotionality may be interpreted thusly: teachers who perceived themselves as being more attuned to their positive and negative emotions are also effective in appropriately expressing their emotions in their relational interactions. Sociability and Social relationships were shown to have a significantly positive relationship despite some distinction in the aspects of social relations being measured. The Sociability subscale in the Trait EI measure concentrated on the individual's perception of themselves as an agent of influence in social contexts; while the Social Relationship domain in the WHO-QOL measure examined the individual's evaluation of the current state of their social support. It stands to reason that individuals who perceive themselves as having a greater influence in determining the outcomes of their social interactions are likely to be more satisfied with the changes or maintenance they have made to their social relations.

This sense of perceived autonomy experienced by the teachers in forming and sustaining meaningful relationships may be an alternative form of expressing self-confidence in their emotional intelligence. By

evaluating themselves as an active role in their interpersonal relationships, teachers may be acknowledging their inherent ability to recruit social resources and be encouraged to facilitate authentic relationships with their peers, and even students. Recent developments in relational-cultural theory stress the importance of perceiving oneself as someone who is able to construct emotional connections, as doing so empowers the individual to challenge the central relational paradox. The individual, upon recognizing their relational capacity, strives to foster authenticity and remained emotionally engaged in their social interactions (Jordan, 2013).

Implications

Counselling

Reports from the current study on the moderate high level of burnout symptoms experienced by teachers remains consistent with existing literature, and together provides justifiable reasons to be concerned about the threat of burnout experienced by those in the education profession. What has been made clear is that emotional intelligence and other related forms of personal resources are strongly associated with the extent to which teachers can withstand occupational stressors. There is also growing confidence in the effectiveness of improving emotional intelligence through training programs (Clarke, 2010; Hen & Sharabi-Nov, 2014; Karimzadeh et al., 2014; Slaski & Cartwright, 2003; Veseley et al., 2013).

In developing interventions that cultivate emotional intelligence and reduce, or even prevent, burnout it may of benefit to consider the large standard deviations in the reports of burnout symptoms. This implies that there was a considerable group of teachers within the sample that reported experiencing only a few burnout feelings while other teachers in the sample expressed feeling substantial burnout symptoms. While it is uncertain what allows certain teachers to demonstrate greater resiliency to burnout than others, the varying degree in which the teachers are negatively affected by their experiences of stress encourages the need for multiple responses to address mental health needs of teachers at varying levels. Furthermore, it may be worth exploring whether those who demonstrate higher resiliency against burnout are in the position to

provide peer support. In this way, acknowledging the existing elements of strength within the population by leveraging the mental wellness of individuals with greater emotional capacity to build up individuals who may struggle more, but continue to remain in the profession.

The results of the current research acknowledges the significance of engaging supportive and interactive social relationships on coping with stressors among the teachers and suggests that fostering emotional connection in the workplace is likely to contribute to positive mental health. Using this line of thinking, the evidence supports the use of the Relational-Cultural Theory (Jordan, 2013) framework for constructing or selecting interventions for burnout prevention. Such interventions may potentially provide a buffer for the relational disconnections resulting from increasing demands of emotional labour which would then allow for experiencing acceptance, regaining authenticity, and mental health restoration. Therefore, maximizing mental health benefits for the educators in the form professional development may require efforts that focus on developing emotional intelligence. An important potential benefit to addressing concerns of emotional exhaustion experienced by educational professionals is that significant improvements to teachers' mental health may reasonably be expected to also positively impact their students' learning experience and academic performance (Arens & Morin, 2016).

Future Research

Dispositional factors that allow individuals who express high levels of burnout to remain in the teaching profession continue to be a promising area of research. The present study was a preliminary examination of such factors with the focus on emotional intelligence and individual appraisal of life experiences. Further exploration on coping methods used by those identified as possessing significantly low or high emotional intelligence may provide greater insight into the specific factors at work in reducing the impact of occupational stresses and preventing burnout. In addition, dispositional tendencies to cope with distress by seeking peer support and social connection should be further investigated. Literature on

improving school mental health has typically directed research involving students, and has not addressed the mental health of teachers.

While the Teacher Burnout Inventory was an appropriate measure for the current study, additional validation efforts to examine its psychometric properties, validity, and testing reliability is advised. The construct of emotional intelligence continues to garner research efforts, especially as various conceptualizations of emotional intelligence compete to be confirmed in its relations with greater emotional, personal and social development. Additional investigation on trait emotional intelligence is encouraged to determine its associations with life satisfaction, positive health-related outcomes, success in social networking, and prevention of burnout.

Limitations

There are multiple limitations in the present investigation that should be taken into consideration. No causal inferences can be made about the results due to the research design as being a correlational descriptive field study. A link to the online questionnaire survey was made available on the teacher federation home web page, and in the online newsletter of a national professional teacher association, but there was no ability to track the distribution of the survey. The design of the survey may have contributed to attrition in participation in that the questionnaire was required to be completed in one sitting with no option of returning to previous questions; it would simply reset after a certain period of inactivity. The survey was made available only in English which was likely to have restricted or distorted the responses from the participants whose first language is not English. Limited financial resources constrained the accessibility of the standardized measures used to evaluate the variables. Specifically, the Teacher Burnout Inventory was used to measure burnout instead of the Maslach Burnout Inventory which has been tested more rigorously and thus demonstrates greater psychometric validity. Finally, the current study was also susceptible to limitations common in self-report measures such as social desirability or reference bias.

Strengths

The present study is the first of its kind in Canada in examining teachers' mental health in relation to their experiences of burnout and occupational stress. Psychometrically sound standardized measures were administered to assess Teachers' Burnout, Quality of Life, and Trait Emotional Intelligence. The study was able to recruit a considerably large sample, strengthening the external validity of the research and generalizability of the results. The use of an online-medium likely increased the ease of access to the questionnaire survey which may in part have allowed for the sizeable response.

Closing Remarks

Overall, findings in this current research revealed that emotional intelligence, quality of life, and burnout were significant in their association with teachers' mental health. Results provided insights into the influences of intrapersonal, along with interpersonal, factors of emotional intelligence and positive appraisal of perceived quality of life on experiences of burnout symptoms. The results reported here may inform future research considerations and the development of clinical interventions specifically for individuals in the teaching profession. It is encouraged that future research continue investigative work attending not simply to what is increasing the risk of burnout for teachers, but also what continues to motivate, empower, and strengthen them to endure and even thrive in their hostile occupational encounters.

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Western Research

Research Ethics

Appendix A

Western University Non-Medical Research Ethics Board
NMREB Amendment Approval Notice

Principal Investigator: Dr. Susan Rodger
Department & Institution: Education\Faculty of Education,Western University

NMREB File Number: 105571
Study Title: An Examination of Teachers' and Education Professionals' Mental Health and Wellness
Sponsor:

NMREB Revision Approval Date: October 30, 2014
NMREB Expiry Date: February 28, 2015

Documents Approved and/or Received for Information:

Document Name	Comments	Version Date
Instruments	revised questionnaire	2014/10/09

The Western University Non-Medical Science Research Ethics Board (NMREB) has reviewed and approved the amendment to the above named study, as of the NMREB Amendment Approval Date noted above.

NMREB approval for this study remains valid until the NMREB Expiry Date noted above, conditional to timely submission and acceptance of NMREB Continuing Ethics Review.

The Western University NMREB operates in compliance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS2), the Ontario Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA, 2004), and the applicable laws and regulations of Ontario.

Members of the NMREB who are named as Investigators in research studies do not participate in discussions related to, nor vote on such studies when they are presented to the REB.

The NMREB is registered with the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services under the IRB registration number IRB 00000941.

[redacted]

Ethics Officer, on behalf of Riley Hinson, NMREB Chair

Ethics Officer to Contact for Further Information

Erika Basile ebasile@uwo.ca	Grace Kelly grace.kelly@uwo.ca	Mina Mekhail mmekhail@uwo.ca	Vikki Tran vikki.tran@uwo.ca

This is an official document. Please retain the original in your files.

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Western Education

Appendix B

An Examination of Teachers' and Education Professionals' Mental Health and Wellness
LETTER OF INFORMATION

Introduction
My name is Kirsten Marko and I am a graduate student at the Faculty of Education at Western University. I am conducting research into the experiences of stress, burnout and mental health in the lives of teachers and other education professionals.

Purpose of the Study
The aim of the study is to explore mental health and wellness, stress and the experience of seeking help, balancing work life and home life, and burnout among teachers and education professionals. We hope to, through this project, develop an understanding of the needs, strengths and challenges faced by people who work in the education system.

Participation
If you agree to participate in this study you will be asked to complete a survey that asks questions about stress, mental health, burnout, and your quality of life. The survey is completed electronically. Using the link provided here and in the email to which this letter is attached, you can access the survey. The survey will take about 20 minutes to complete.
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Confidentiality
The information collected will be used for research purposes only, and neither your name nor information which could identify you will be used in any publication or presentation of the study results. Otherwise, all information collected for the study will be kept confidential.

Risks & Benefits
While there are no known risks to participating in this study, you might find that responding to questions about these topics is upsetting. You will also find, attached to the email where you found this letter, a list of mental health resources organized by geographical area and school board, which you may find useful.

Voluntary Participation
Participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate, refuse to answer any questions or withdraw from the study at any time with no effect on your employment or connections with your professional affiliations.

Publication
The results of this study are intended for publication. If you choose to complete any of the free response items, we may quote you. Your name will not be used.

Questions
If you have any questions about the conduct of this study or your rights as a research participant you may contact Dr. Susan Rodger [redacted] or the Office of Research Ethics, Western University at [redacted]

Thank you,

Susan Rodger, PhD., C. Psych
Associate Professor

Kirsten Marko, BA
Master of Arts, Candidate
[redacted]

Faculty of Education, Western University,
1137 Western Road, London, ON N6G 1G7

Appendix C

Teacher Mental Health and Wellness: Online Survey

Demographic Information

Please note that the survey cannot be returned to once the browser has been closed - only the responses completed before the survey was closed will be recorded. Please complete the following items. If you would prefer not to answer any item, you are permitted to skip it.

Q1. Gender:

- ❍ Male (1)
- ❍ Female (2)

Transgender (3)

Q2. Please indicate your age.

_____ Age (1)

Q3. Level(s) currently teaching:

- ❑ Primary (1)
- ❑ Junior (2)
- ❑ Intermediate (3)
- ❑ Senior (4)
- ❑ Alternative (5)
- ❑ Other (6)

Q4. How long have you been teaching (including this year)?

_____ Years (1)

Q5. How many different schools have you taught in?

_____ # of schools (1)

Q6. What is your current role in the school? Is this role full time or part-time?

Occasional Teacher (1)	❑ Full Time (1)	❑ Part Time (2)
Long-term Occasional Teacher (2)	❑ Full Time (1)	❑ Part Time (2)
Classroom Teacher (3)	❑ Full Time (1)	❑ Part Time (2)
Learning Support Teacher (4)	❑ Full Time (1)	❑ Part Time (2)
Guidance Counsellor/School Support Teacher (5)	❑ Full Time (1)	❑ Part Time (2)
Chaplain (6)	❑ Full Time (1)	❑ Part Time (2)
Psychology Staff (7)	❑ Full Time (1)	❑ Part Time (2)
Social Worker (8)	❑ Full Time (1)	❑ Part Time (2)
Educational Assistant (9)	❑ Full Time (1)	❑ Part Time (2)
Child and Youth Worker (10)	❑ Full Time (1)	❑ Part Time (2)
Principal (11)	❑ Full Time (1)	❑ Part Time (2)
Vice Principal (12)	❑ Full Time (1)	❑ Part Time (2)
Other (please specify) (13)	❑ Full Time (1)	❑ Part Time (2)

Demographic Information Continued…

Q7. Please indicate the features of the community where you work (check all that apply):

- ❑ Remote (1)
- ❑ Rural (2)
- ❑ Urban (3)
- ❑ (4)
- ❑ 5001-15,000 people (5)
- ❑ 15001 – 50,000 people (6)
- ❑ 50,001 – 100,000 people (7)
- ❑ 100,001 – 200,000 people (8)
- ❑ 200,001-500,000 people (9)
- ❑ 500,001-1,000,000 people (10)
- ❑ Over 1,000,000 people (11)

Q8. Marital Status:

- ❍ Married (1)
- ❍ Common-law (2)
- ❍ Divorced (3)
- ❍ Separated (4)
- ❍ Single (5)
- ❍ Widowed (6)

Q9. Do you have children?

- ❍ Yes (1)
- ❍ No (2)

If "No" is selected, then skip to "Do you currently care for aging parents…"

Q10. How many children do you have in each of these age groups?

	# of children in age group (1)
Age 0-2 (1)	
Age 3-6 (2)	
Age 7-11 (3)	
Age 12-18 (4)	
Age 19-25 (5)	
26 and older (6)	

Q11. Please estimate the number of hours per month you spend caring for your child/children.

Q12. Do you currently care for ageing parents or adult siblings?

- ❍ Yes (1)
- ❍ No (2)

If "No" is selected, then skip to "Do you do any volunteer work outside…"

Demographic Information Continued…

Q13. What type of support do you provide for your ageing parents or adult siblings? Please check all that apply.
- ❑ They live with me (1)
- ❑ They live on their own and I visit them on a regular basis to check on them (2)
- ❑ They live in a supported care facility (3)
- ❑ I advocate for their health and well-being needs with healthcare providers (4)
- ❑ Other (please explain) (5) _____

Q14. Please estimate the number of hours per month you spend caring for your ageing parent or sibling.

Q15. Do you do any volunteer work outside of your school?
- ❍ Yes (1)
- ❍ No (2)

If "No" is selected, then skip to "Do you do any volunteer work at your…"

Q16. Please estimate the number of hours per month you spend doing volunteer work outside of your school.

Q17. Do you do any volunteer work at your school?
- ❍ Yes (1)
- ❍ No (2)

If "No" is selected, then skip to "Since becoming a teacher or education…"

Q18. Please estimate the number of hours per month you spend doing volunteer work at your school.

Q19. Since becoming a teacher or education professional, have you ever experienced mental health distress that interfered with your ability to engage in the activities of everyday life (i.e. work, relationships, health-promoting behaviours, etc.)?
- ❍ Yes (1)
- ❍ No (2)

Q20 Have you ever received psychotherapy or counselling?
- ❍ Yes (1)
- ❍ No (2)

If "No" is selected, then skip to "If you have never gone for counselling…"

Q21. Where did you go for help? Check all that apply.
- ❑ Privately paid therapy (psychologist, social worker, counsellor) (1)
- ❑ Family Doctor (2)
- ❑ Clergy member (3)
- ❑ Psychiatrist (4)
- ❑ EAP (Employee Assistance Provider) (5)
- ❑ Mental Health Distress Crisis Line (telephone) (6)
- ❑ Walk-in Clinic (7)
- ❑ Other (8) _____

Q22. Please briefly explain the reason(s) why you received psychotherapy or counselling.

Demographic Information Continued…

Q23. Was the psychotherapy/counselling helpful?

- ❍ Yes (1)
- ❍ No (2)
- ❍ I'm not sure (3)

Q24. If you have never gone for counselling or psychotherapy, but you wished you could, what prevented you? Check all that apply.

- ❑ Financial restrictions (1)
- ❑ It was not available in my community (2)
- ❑ Privacy issues (3)
- ❑ Other (4) _____
- ❑ I have never wished to go to counselling or psychotherapy. (5)

If "I have never wish to go…" is selected, then skip to End of Block

Q25. Please briefly describe your situation with regards to your reason for not receiving counselling or psychotherapy when you wished you could have.

Teacher Burnout Inventory (20 Items)

Please note that the survey cannot be returned to once the browser has been closed - only the responses completed before the survey was closed will be recorded. Please complete the following items. If you would prefer not to answer any item, you are permitted to skip it.

Q33. This measure is designed to determine how you currently feel about your job and its related aspects. There are no right or wrong answers. Work quickly and choose your first impression. Please indicate the degree to which each statement applies to you by marking whether you:

		Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neutral (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
1.	I am bored with my job. (1)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
2.	I am tired of my students. (2)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
3.	I am weary with all of my job responsibilities. (3)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
4.	My job doesn't excite me anymore. (4)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
5.	I dislike going to my job. (5)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
6.	I feel alienated at work. (6)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
7.	I feel frustrated at work. (7)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
8.	I avoid communication with students. (8)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
9.	I avoid communication with my colleagues. (9)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
10.	I communicate in a hostile manner at work. (10)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
11.	I feel ill at work. (11)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
12.	I think about calling my students ugly names. (12)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
13.	I avoid looking at my students. (13)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
14.	My students make me sick. (14)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
15.	I feel sick to my stomach when I think about work. (15)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
16.	I wish people would leave me alone at work. (16)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
17.	I dread going to school. (17)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
18.	I am apathetic about my job. (18)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
19.	I feel stressed at work. (19)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
20.	I have problems concentrating at work. (20)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q34. Please insert any additional comments about these questions and/or this topic below.

World Health Organization – Quality of Life BREF (26 Items)
Please note that the survey cannot be returned to once the browser has been closed - only the responses completed before the survey was closed will be recorded. Please complete the following items. If you would prefer not to answer any item, you are permitted to skip it.

This questionnaire asks how you feel about your quality of life, health, or other areas of your life. If you are unsure about which response to give to a question, please choose the one that appears most appropriate. This can often be your first choice. Please keep in mind your standards, hopes, pleasures and concerns. We ask you think about your life in the last two weeks.

Q35. Please read each question, assess your feelings, and select the option on the scale that gives the best answer for you for each question.

	Very poor (1)	Poor (2)	Neither poor nor good (3)	Good (4)	Very good (5)
How would you rate your quality of life? (1)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
How would you rate your health? (2)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q36. The following questions ask about how much you have experienced certain things in the last two weeks.

	Not at all (1)	A little (2)	A moderate amount (3)	Very much (4)	An extreme amount (5)
To what extent do you feel that physical pain prevents you from doing what you need to do? (1)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
How much do you need any medical treatment to function in your daily life? (2)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
How much do you enjoy life? (3)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
To what extent do you feel your life to be meaningful? (4)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
How well are you able to concentrate? (5)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
How safe do you feel in your daily life? (6)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
How healthy is your physical environment? (7)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

World Health Organization – Quality of Life BREF Continued

Q37. The following questions ask about how completely you experienced or were able to do certain things in the last two weeks.

	Not at all (1)	A little (2)	Moderately (3)	Mostly (4)	Completely (5)
Do you have enough energy for everyday life? (1)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Are you able to accept your bodily appearance? (2)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Have you enough money to meet your needs? (3)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
How available to you is the information that you need in your day-to-day life? (4)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
To what extent do you have the opportunity for leisure activities? (5)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
How well are you able to get around? (6)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q38. The following questions ask you to say how good or satisfied you have felt about various aspects of your life over the last two weeks.

	Very dissatisfied (1)	Dissatisfied (2)	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (3)	Satisfied (4)	Very satisfied (5)
How satisfied are you with your sleep? (1)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
How satisfied are you with your ability to perform your daily living activities? (2)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
How satisfied are you with your capacity for work? (3)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
How satisfied are you with yourself? (4)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
How satisfied are you with your personal relationships? (5)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
How satisfied are you with your sex life? (6)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
How satisfied are you with the support you get from your friends? (7)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
How satisfied are you with the conditions of your living place? (8)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
How satisfied are you with your access to health services? (9)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
How satisfied are you with your mode of transportation? (10)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Q39. The following question refers to how often you have felt or experienced certain things in the last two weeks.

	Never (1)	Seldom (2)	Quite often (3)	Very often (4)	Always (5)
How often do you have negative feelings, such as blue mood, despair, anxiety, depression? (1)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

World Health Organization – Quality of Life BREF Continued

Q40. Please insert any additional comments about these questions and/or this topic below:

Trait Emotional Intelligence (30 Items)
Please note that the survey cannot be returned to once the browser has been closed - only the responses completed before the survey was closed will be recorded.

Q41. Please answer each statement below by putting a circle around the number that best reflects your degree of agreement or disagreement with that statement. Do not think too long about the exact meaning of the statements. Work quickly and try to answer as accurately as possible. There are no right or wrong answers. There are seven possible responses to each statement ranging from "Completely Disagree (#1) to Completely Agree (#7).

	1 Completely Disagree (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	7 Completely Agree (7)
Expressing my emotions with words is not a problem for me. (1)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I often find it difficult to see things from another person's viewpoint. (2)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
On the whole, I'm a highly motivated person. (3)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I usually find it difficult to regulate my emotions. (4)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I generally don't find life enjoyable. (5)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I can deal effectively with people. (6)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I tend to change my mind frequently. (7)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Many times, I can't figure out what emotion I'm feeling. (8)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I feel that I have a number of good qualities. (9)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I often find it difficult to stand up for my rights. (10)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I'm usually able to influence the way other people feel. (11)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
On the whole, I have a gloomy perspective on most things. (12)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Those close to me often complain that I don't treat them right. (13)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I often find it difficult to adjust my life according to the circumstances. (14)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
On the whole, I'm able to deal with stress. (15)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I often find it difficult to show my affection to those close to me. (16)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I'm normally able to "get into someone's shoes" and experience their emotions. (17)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I normally find it difficult to keep myself motivated. (18)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

I'm usually able to find ways to control my emotions when I want to. (19)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
On the whole, I'm pleased with life. (20)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I would describe myself as a good negotiator. (21)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I tend to get involved in things I later wish I could get out of. (22)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I often pause and think about my feelings. (23)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I believe I'm full of personal strengths. (24)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I tend to "back down" even if I know I'm right. (25)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I don't seem to have any power at all over other people's feelings. (26)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I generally believe that things will work out fine in my life. (27)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
I find it difficult to bond well even with those close to me. (28)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Generally, I'm able to adapt to new environments. (29)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍
Others admire me for being relaxed. (30)	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

Curriculum Vitae

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Post-secondary Education and Degrees:	Western University London, Ontario, Canada 2014-2016, M.A. Counselling Psychology
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