

The Intention to Leave: An Overview of the Factors Determining the Turnover from the Teaching Career in the Romanian Education System

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Abstract

To maintain a high level of education quality, schools must attract new and well-prepared teachers while retaining and developing existing and effective ones (Guarino, Santibanez, and Daley, 2006). In this context, the issue of teacher retention becomes an increasingly intense concern, especially since the teaching profession is extremely demanding, generating stress, burnout, and potentially leading to the intention to leave the system (Farber B., 2000). Exhausted, some teachers choose to leave their careers in the early years of activity, others in the middle of their careers, or when they have reached the final stage of professional development. Although working conditions are similar, teachers' responses to stress and its consequences are relatively different (Chang, 2009).

Thus, this study investigates the predictors of the intention to leave, considering the career development stage of Romanian teachers. The study is presented as a comparative analysis, and its main contribution is the understanding of specific factors leading to the turnover from the profession at different career points. The research method used is a sociological survey based on a questionnaire. A total of 194 teachers from the Romanian pre-university education system responded online to a questionnaire that addresses their work experience, including aspects such

as working conditions, mindset towards stress, receptivity to distress, degree of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment, as well as the intention to leave. The data is analyzed using the SPSS program, employing multiple regression analysis to test the effects of each predictor on the intention to leave, depending on the career development stage. The data is analyzed using the SPSS program, employing multiple regression analysis to test the effects of each predictor on the intention to leave, depending on the career development stage.

1. Introduction

Ingersoll (2001) characterizes teaching as a “revolving door through which a large number of teachers leave the job for reasons other than retirement” (Ingersoll, 2001, p. 501). Thus, two types of turnover are identified: involuntary, through retirement or health-related causes, and voluntary. Within the second category, there is a subset of teachers for whom the intention to leave does not mean giving up their career but rather moving to another educational institution. From this perspective, the intention to leave consists of the manifestation of the feeling of staying or leaving the organization, or even the system (Ingersoll, 2001). It should be noted that the intention to leave does not always translate into actual turnover (Rhodes and Doering, 1993), yet it is a predictor of actual turnover. The literature discusses person-job fit and how a strong relationship between the two variables leads to a lower intention to quit (Cable and Edwards, 2004). It is important to consider that a person who expresses the intention to leave but does not act on it now has a high probability of materializing it at some point. Until the actual turnover from the organization, it is likely that the employee will have negative shifts in job performance. As can be seen, there are high costs associated with the intention to leave, up to the costs generated by the actual turnover. The intention to leave is an acute problem in the education system (Ingersoll, 2001), and it has most often been associated in the literature with variables such as stress (Kyriacou, 2001), emotional exhaustion (Leung and Wincy, 2006), and job dissatisfaction stemming from working conditions (You and Conley, 2015). The teaching profession is the only one in which novice teachers have exactly the same responsibilities as experienced teachers (Tait, 2008). Therefore, identifying the factors that predict the intention to

leave based on the career development stage could create support mechanisms for teachers and reduce the costs of turnover, ultimately increasing the quality of education.

2. Literature Review

Rinke shares the idea that teachers' careers are arranged along a continuum, with a series of "entry and exit points" (Rinke, 2008, p. 11). Researching the relationship between working conditions and teachers' intentions to leave at different points in their careers reveals how programs can be developed to increase the chances of retaining teachers in the system. Data shows that 25% of teachers in the USA leave teaching before their third year (Skaalvik and Skaalvik, 2011, p. 1029). Studies conducted by Goddard and Goddar (2006) found that 21% of respondents in a survey of 112 first- and second-year graduate teachers in Queensland schools reported a serious intention to leave their current teaching position, with 12% indicating a serious intention to leave the profession altogether. Studies by Arnup and Bowles (2016) in Australia show that approximately one-third of the teachers in the sample (31.9%) intended to leave the profession. An analysis of available data from 2005 indicated that between 25% and 40% of educators in Western countries resigned within the first five years of teaching (Ewing and Manuel, 2005).

There is extensive research linking teachers' intention to leave with emotional exhaustion. Leung and Lee (2006) state that "Physical exhaustion constituted a major factor in explaining teachers' intentions to leave their jobs" (Weisberg and Abraham, 1999, p. 338). Workplace variables that have significant indirect effects on teachers' intention to leave include job satisfaction, job commitment, and career commitment (You and Conley, 2015). Job involvement and teacher efficacy are positively related to job satisfaction and negatively related to burnout and the intention to leave (Høigaard, Giske, and Sundsli, 2011). The lack of support from the institution and colleagues (Leung and Wincy, 2006), as well as resilience (You and Conley, 2015), also play a role.

Borman and Dowling (2008) conducted 14 studies investigating the relationship between salary and teachers' attitudes towards leaving the education system. They found that low salary significantly predicted the attitude to leave the system, especially among less experienced

teachers (with less than five years of experience) and those with more career experience. The results are also supported in the case of Romanian teachers, according to research conducted by Dumitru and Talpos (2012), which indicates dissatisfaction among Romanian teachers regarding their salaries.

A relevant study for the current research is the one conducted by Sukkyung You and Sharon Conley (2015). The research examines teachers' intention to leave based on their career development stage. In addition to job satisfaction as a moderating factor on working conditions, it introduces work engagement and career commitment. The development stage is operationalized into three stages: novice, early-career teachers, mid-career teachers, and "veterans." Among the workplace variables included are administrative support, autonomy, and student learning motivation. Based on research conducted by Conley and You (2009), Elangovan (2001) tested a conceptual model in which job satisfaction and commitment intervene on workplace variables and influence the intention to leave. The research results indicate that workplace variables have significant indirect effects on teachers' intention to leave through the three mediators. Moreover, the effect of administrative support on work and career commitment was uniform and significant for teachers in the three career groups (You and Conley, 2015). Additionally, mid-career and veteran teachers reported the effect of workplace conditions: greater freedom of action and task autonomy than early-career teachers, contributing to the idea that the relationships between workplace conditions and organizational commitment on the intention to leave are dependent on the career development stage (You and Conley, 2015).

3. Methodology

The main objective of this paper is to identify significant predictors of teachers' intention to leave the Romanian pre-university education system. In this regard, predictors from the areas of organizational, individual, and transactional factors will be tested, as well as the three dimensions of burnout: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment in relation to the intention to leave, considering the differentiation based on career development stage. Organizational factors include predictors such as: overload, learning opportunities, and development opportunities. Individual factors include distress receptivity and

stress mindset, while transactional factors refer to the degree of satisfaction of the needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. The aforementioned predictors, subjected to analysis, are independent variables in the research, while the intention to leave is the dependent variable.

Research Hypotheses:

According to Proost, van Ruysseveldt, and van Dijke (2011), when there are many learning opportunities, the intention to leave is low. This means that employees with many learning opportunities in their job are less likely to leave the organization, even if career expectations have not been fully met. Research conducted by Leung and Lee (2006) links teachers' intention to leave to emotional exhaustion, while studies by Høigaard, Giske, and Sundsli (2011) discuss the lack of social support as a predictor of the intention to leave. In light of these studies, we formulated the following hypothesis: H1: We consider that a low volume of learning opportunities, lack of development opportunities, perception of a low degree of satisfaction of basic psychological needs (autonomy, competence, and relatedness), perception of working conditions such as overload, and experiencing the dimensions of burnout (emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and reduced personal accomplishment) predict the intention of teachers to leave the Romanian pre-university education system. Research conducted by Ingersoll (2001), Kyriacou (2001), Ewing and Manuel (2005), Goddard and Goddard (2006), Gavish (2010), Sukkyung You and Sharon Conley (2015) investigating teachers' intention to leave indicates that novice teachers are the most likely to leave their career due to facing a series of stress factors related to learning (Goddard and Goddard, 2006), workload (Kyriacou, 2001), and organizational conditions (Ingersoll, 2001; Elangovan, 2001; Conley and You, 2009). Thus, considering the theoretical findings mentioned, we formulate the following hypothesis: H2: We assume that there are differences between the five groups of teachers regarding the predictors that determine the intention of teachers to leave the Romanian pre-university education system.

Sample Characteristics

In this research, we had 194 respondents, all employed in the pre-university education system. We used snowball sampling, with the research instrument being distributed online and from person to person. The sample consisted of 194 teachers (90.2% women), with an average age of

35 years (SD = 0.998). The distribution of the sample in terms of teaching experience is as follows: 50.5% with teaching experience between 0 and 10 years, 22.7% between 11 and 20 years, 20.7% between 21 and 30 years, 5.7% between 31 and 40 years, and only 1% of teachers with over 40 years of teaching experience. Regarding career development stage, the majority of the sample is represented by teachers with the first degree (36.6%), followed by novice teachers (20.1%), 19.6% with tenure, and the percentage of teachers with the second degree and those with inappropriate qualifications for the position is identical, 11.9%.

N	194	100%
Gender		
Male	175	90,2%
Female	19	9,8%
Age		
18-25	18	9,3%
26-35	65	33,5%
46-55	39	20,1%
56-65	7	3,6%
The environment in which they teach		
Rural	84	43.3%
Urban	110	56,7%
Marital Status		
Married	112	57,7%
Unmarried	66	34%
Level of education		
High School Education	2	1%
Short-term higher education	23	11,9%
Long-term higher education	165	85,1%
PhD studies	4	2,1%
Ciclul de predare		
Kindergarten	15	7,7%
Primary school	81	41,8%
Middle School	50	25,8%
High school	47	24,2%
Post secondary	1	0,5%
Professional degrees		
Novice	39	20,1%
Qualified teacher status	38	19,6%
Didactic level II	23	11,9%
Didactic level I	71	36,6%
	23	11,9%

Without qualifications corresponding to their position		
Sector of activity		
Public	180	92,8%
Private	14	7,2%

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of the Sample Participants

Research Method

Research Instruments. The research method used is the sociological survey based on a questionnaire. The research instrument consists of a battery of standardized and internationally validated tests, some of which are also validated on the Romanian population (MBI, NSW, and Distress Receptivity), forming a 78-item questionnaire. The questionnaire was distributed online via the Google Forms platform.

The phenomenon of burnout is defined as a “tripartite symptom,” composed of the following three dimensions: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment. Considered a response to long-term stress, the phenomenon of burnout in teachers is highlighted by “physical, emotional, and attitudinal exhaustion” (Cunningham, 1983). Emotional exhaustion consists of prolonged feelings of fatigue, depersonalization refers to treating interlocutors as impersonal objects, and reduced personal accomplishment involves a negative self-evaluation by the teacher. In measuring burnout phenomena, we used the Maslach Burnout Inventory (Schaufeli, Bakker, and Demerouti, 1996) (The Maslach Burnout Inventory - General Survey), which contains 16 items scored using a 7-point Likert scale, where 1 means “never” and 7 means “daily.” The dimension of emotional exhaustion is allocated 5 items, including “I feel emotionally drained from my work,” with a Cronbach’s Alpha reliability coefficient of $\alpha = .86$ for our sample of participants ($N=194$). The cynicism dimension is allocated 6 items, including “I doubt the significance of my work,” with a Cronbach’s Alpha reliability coefficient of $\alpha = .76$. The final dimension, reduced personal accomplishment, has 5 items, including “I am not effective in solving problems that arise in my work,” with a Cronbach’s Alpha reliability coefficient of $\alpha = .84$.

Overload is understood in its complexity when viewed from two perspectives: qualitative and quantitative. The former refers to demands that do not consider the academic abilities of teachers, requirements for conflict management, or student motivation, while quantitative overload concerns aspects related to workload and working conditions. In measuring this variable, we used the role overload subscale from the Occupational Stress Index, which includes 4 items, such as “I have to do a lot of work at this job.” Scoring was done on a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 means “Strongly Disagree” and 5 means “Strongly Agree.” The Cronbach’s Alpha reliability coefficient for our sample of participants (N=194) is $\alpha = .83$. Learning opportunities refer to those contexts facilitated by the organization regarding learning. In measuring this variable, we used the “Learning Opportunities” subscale from the Questionnaire on the Experience and Assessment of Work (QEAW) (Veldhoven and Meijman, 1994). Scoring was done using a 4-point scale where 1 means “always” and 4 means “never.” With a total of 4 items, including “Do you learn new things at work?”, the Cronbach’s Alpha reliability coefficient for our sample of participants (N=194) is $\alpha = .83$.

Development opportunities refer to aspects related to career progression, and to measure these, we used the “Opportunities for Development” subscale from the Job Demands-Resources Questionnaire (Bakker and Demerouti, 2014). The subscale consists of 3 items, including “In my work, I have the opportunity to develop my strengths,” with a Cronbach’s Alpha reliability coefficient of $\alpha = .81$ for our sample of participants (N=194).

The three basic psychological needs postulated by self-determination theory: autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Deci and Ryan, 2000) are considered innate. When these needs are satisfied, they lead to self-motivation and mental health, but their dissatisfaction results in diminished activity and well-being. The need for autonomy refers to the necessity to act with a sense of will and choice (Van den Broeck, Ferris, Chang, and Rosen, 2016; Vansteenkiste, Niemiec, and Bart, 2010). The need for competence is defined as the need to feel a sense of control over the environment and to develop new skills (Deci and Ryan, 2000). Meanwhile, the need for relatedness is defined as the need to feel connected to others, which is satisfied when individuals feel they are part of a group, experience a sense of communion, and develop close relationships (Deci and Ryan, 2000). To quantify the data, we used the Need Satisfaction at Work

Questionnaire (NSW) developed by Anja Vanden Broeck and colleagues (2010), culturally adapted in Romania by Lavinia Țânculescu and Dragoș Iliescu (2014). The questionnaire has a total of 18 items, with 6 for each dimension. For example, “At work, I feel like I am part of a group” for the relatedness dimension, which has a Cronbach’s Alpha reliability coefficient of $\alpha = .80$ for our sample of participants ($N=194$); “I have the necessary skills to be a good employee” for competence, with a Cronbach’s Alpha reliability coefficient of $\alpha = .85$; and “I feel at ease at work” for the autonomy dimension, with a Cronbach’s Alpha reliability coefficient of $\alpha = .80$. Scoring was done using a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 means “strongly disagree” and 5 means “strongly agree.”

Receptivity to distress is a characteristic of emotional intelligence defined as the tendency to become upset when someone else is upset. It is considered a precursor to the phenomenon of burnout and is included in the category of individual factors in the research. This variable was measured using the Responsive Distress scale, which is part of the International Personality Item Pool (IPIP), culturally adapted by Iliescu, Popa, and Dimache (2015). With a total of 10 items, including “I am deeply moved by the troubles of others,” scoring is done on a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 means “very inaccurate” and 5 means “very accurate.” The Cronbach’s Alpha reliability coefficient for our sample of participants ($N=194$) is $\alpha = .80$.

The way stress is perceived is considered a predictor of burnout in the research. This variable refers to how teachers view stress, evaluating the nature of stress itself as enhancing or debilitating (Crum, Salovey, and Achor, 2013). Thus, it offers a new approach to stress without denying its long-term negative effects. To measure this variable, we used the Stress Mindset Measure, which contains 8 items, including “The effects of stress are negative and should be avoided.” Scoring was done using a 5-point Likert scale, where 0 means “strongly disagree” and 4 means “strongly agree.” The Cronbach’s Alpha reliability coefficient for our sample of participants ($N=194$) is $\alpha = .78$.

Intent to leave consists of the manifestation of the feeling of staying or leaving the organization, or even the system (Ingersoll, 2001). To measure this variable, we used the Intent to Leave scale developed by Mobley, Horner, and Hollingsworth (1978), which contains 3 items, including “I often think about leaving the organization I work for.” Scoring was done on a 5-point Likert

scale, where 1 means “strongly disagree” and 5 means “strongly agree.” The Cronbach’s Alpha reliability coefficient for our sample of participants (N=194) is $\alpha = .93$.

Career development stage is operationalized by grouping teaching staff into the following categories: without appropriate studies for the position (teachers occupying a substitute position without having studies in accordance with the position they occupy), beginner, with tenure, second degree, and first degree.

Data collected from the 194 respondents were analyzed using the SPSS program. In the first stage, correlations between variables were made, and then the group separation filter was applied according to the career development stage of the teaching staff, and the correlations between variables were redone. Subsequently, multiple regression procedures were performed.

4. Results and Discussions

In analyzing the hypotheses, we used multiple regression analysis as the statistical procedure. Initially, we refer to the entire population in the sample, and then we will compare the groups based on the criterion of career development stage. The dependent variable is the intention to leave, while the independent variables include the burnout construct and its three dimensions, the three basic psychological needs (need for autonomy, competence, and relatedness), workload, development opportunities, and learning opportunities, all introduced simultaneously. We excluded the variable of distress receptiveness as it did not correlate with the dependent variable. The strongest correlation is with the burnout phenomenon at the construct level ($r = .57, p < .01$). It is important to note that all variables present high-intensity statistical correlations, except for the way stress is reported, which shows a low-intensity negative correlation ($r = -.16, p < .05$). After the dimensions of the burnout phenomenon, the strongest negative correlations ($p < .01$) with the intention to leave are related to the needs for autonomy ($r = -.46$) and competence ($r = -.40$), followed by development opportunities ($r = -.34$). Meanwhile, strong but positive correlations ($p < .01$) are indicated by the variables of learning opportunities ($r = .42$) and workload ($r = .36$).

The multiple linear regression analysis generated three models to explain the intention to leave. The first model proposes cynicism as an independent variable $F_{\text{change}}(1,192) = 69.80, p < .001$, which explains 27% of the criterion's variance. The introduction of the second variable into the

model, the need for autonomy $F_{\text{change}}(1,191) = 15.84, p < .001$, accounts for an additional 6% of the variance in the intention to leave. The third model includes the variable of emotional exhaustion $F_{\text{change}}(1,190) = 8.56, p < .01$, contributing an additional 3% to the criterion's variance. The model that best explains the intention to leave among teachers, according to **Table 2**, is model 3. This model explains 35% of the occurrence of the intention to leave among teachers as a result of a high level of cynicism ($\beta = .26, p < .001$), unsatisfied need for autonomy ($\beta = -.22, p < .01$), and emotional exhaustion ($\beta = .23, p < .01$). The research hypothesis is partially validated; according to the third model, the predictors of the intention to leave are cynicism, the need for autonomy, and emotional exhaustion. The variables: workload, learning opportunities, development opportunities, reduced personal accomplishment, and the needs for competence and relatedness, although they present correlations with the intention to leave, are not included in the models generated for the entire sample.

Variabila	B	T	p	R	R ²	ΔR^2
Model 1				.52	.27	.27
Cynicism	.52	8.37	.001			
Model 2				.57	.32	.6
Cynicism	.38	5.58	.001			
Need for autonomy	-.27	-3.98	.001			
Model 3				.59	.35	.3
Cynicism	.26	3.36	.001			
Need for autonomy	-.22	-3.14	.002			
Emotional exhaustion	.23	2.93	.004			

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 2. Regression Models between Predictors of Intention to Leave and Intention to Leave (N=194)

In investigating the second hypothesis, to determine differences regarding the intention to leave among teachers, using the career development stage as a criterion, we will first correlate the predictor variables with the intention to leave, and in the second stage, we will repeat the

multiple regression analysis, separating the groups. According to this, regarding novice teachers, the strongest positive correlations ($p < .01$) are with the dimensions of the burnout phenomenon: emotional exhaustion ($r = .52$), cynicism ($r = .65$), and reduced personal accomplishment ($r = .62$), as well as with learning opportunities ($r = .45$). There is also a positive correlation with workload, but of low intensity ($r = .32$, $p < .05$). The only negative correlation is with the need for autonomy ($r = -.52$). For teachers with qualified status, we have the same correlations as in the previous category, with variations in the scores; however, in the section on strong negative correlations ($p < .01$), the need for relatedness ($r = -.55$) is added. In the case of didactic level II certification, the differentiation appears in the correlation with the need for competence ($r = -.59$), while workload no longer shows correlations with the intention to leave, and for learning opportunities, the correlation exists but is statistically weaker ($r = .47$, $p < .05$). The correlation analysis between predictor variables and the intention to leave for didactic level I presents the variable of development opportunities as an important predictor ($r = -.51$, $p < .01$), while the correlation with workload is strong statistically ($r = .47$, $p < .01$). Regarding teachers without qualifications corresponding to their positions, strong positive correlations ($p < .01$) are recorded with the dimension of cynicism ($r = .58$). Positive correlations, but of low intensity, are recorded in relation to learning opportunities ($r = .45$, $p < .05$) and with the burnout phenomenon at the construct level ($r = .51$, $p < .05$). Within this category, the intention to leave records a strong statistically significant negative correlation with development opportunities ($r = -.58$, $p < .01$).

Before conducting the regression analyses, as mentioned in the analysis of hypothesis number 2, we will discuss the results of the MANOVA test. According to the test results ($F(4, 189) = 2.86$; $p = .025$; partial $\eta^2 = .57$), we observe that the professional degrees has a statistically significant effect on the intention to leave. The analysis shows that the mean scores were statistically significantly different between teachers with didactic level I and novice teachers ($p < .005$), with the dependent variable being the intention to leave, but not with the other categories: didactic level II certification ($p = .171$), with qualified teacher status ($p = .021$), and without qualifications corresponding to their positions ($p = .095$). The test measures the variation of means; our hypothesis focuses on the predictors; however, the test results provide an interesting

perspective, considering that these categories, between which differences were recorded, are located at opposite ends of the career development continuum.

Table 3 presents the intention to leave models for each category of teachers. For the first category, two models were generated. The first model has cynicism as the independent variable (the second facet of the burnout phenomenon) $F_{\text{change}}(1,37) = 27.58, p < .001$, and explains 43% of the variance in the intention to leave. The second model adds the variable of the need for autonomy $F_{\text{change}}(1,36) = 9.04, p < .01$, accounting for an additional 12% of the variance in the criterion. Model 2 explains the intention to leave among novice teachers by 54% through the presence of cynicism ($\beta = .55, p < .001$) and the unsatisfied need for autonomy ($\beta = -.36, p < .01$).

Regarding the intention to leave for teachers with qualified teacher status, two models were generated. The first introduces the need for relatedness as an independent variable $F_{\text{change}}(1,36) = 15.89, p < .001$, explaining 31% of the variance in the criterion. Model 2 introduces the variable of emotional exhaustion $F_{\text{change}}(1,35) = 4.57, p < .05$, adding 8% to the variance in the intention to leave. Thus, the intention to leave among teachers with qualified teacher status is explained by the lack of the need for relatedness ($\beta = -.35, p < .05$) and the perception of emotional exhaustion ($\beta = .35, p < .05$) by 39%. For didactic level II certification, the first independent variable predicting the intention to leave is reduced personal accomplishment $F_{\text{change}}(1,21) = 17.82, p < .001$, accounting for 46%. The introduction of the variable of the need for competence $F_{\text{change}}(1,20) = 5.11, p < .05$, leads to a significant increase in R^2 by 11%. Thus, for didactic level II certification, the intention to leave is explained by 57% due to the perception of reduced personal accomplishment ($\beta = .52, p < .01$), along with the unsatisfied need for competence ($\beta = -.37, p < .05$). In the case of teachers with didactic level I, regression analysis generated three models. The first proposes the need for autonomy as the independent variable $F_{\text{change}}(1,69) = 26.74, p < .001$, explaining 28% of the intention to leave. The second model introduces the variable of development opportunities $F_{\text{change}}(1,68) = 10.58, p < .01$, accounting for 10% of the variance in the criterion. The introduction of the variable of workload into model 3 $F_{\text{change}}(1,67) = 6.70, p < .05$ leads to a 6% increase in the model's explanatory power.

Therefore, for teachers with didactic level I, the intention to leave is explained by the unsatisfied need for autonomy ($\beta = -.30$, $p < .05$), the lack of development opportunities ($\beta = -.37$, $p < .001$), and the presence of workload ($\beta = .29$, $p < .05$), accounting for 43%.

For teachers without qualifications corresponding to their positions, the analysis presents a single model explaining the intention to leave due to the lack of development opportunities ($\beta = -.58$, $p < .001$), accounting for 34%.

Variabila	B	T	p	R	R ²	ΔR^2
<i>Novice Teachers</i>						
Model 1				.65	.43	.43
Cynicism	.65	5.25	.001			
Model 2				.74	.54	.12
Cynicism	.55	4.60	.001			
Need for autonomy	-.36	-3.01	.005			
Qualified teacher status						
Model 1				.55	.31	.31
Need for relatedness	-.55	-3.99	.001			
Model 2				.62	.39	.08
Need for relatedness	-.35	-2.16	.038			
Emotional exhaustion	.35	2.14	.040			
Teachers with didactic level II						
Model 1				.68	.46	.46
Reduced accomplishment	.68	4.22	.001			
Model 2				.75	.57	.11
Reduced accomplishment	.52	3.17	.005			
Need for competence	-.37	-2.26	.035			
Teachers with didactic level I						
Model 1				.53	.28	.28
Need for autonomy	-.53	-5.17	.001			
Model 2				.61	.38	.10
Need for autonomy	-.38	-3.51	.001			
Development opportunities	-.35	-3.25	.002			

Model 3				.66	.43	.6
Need for autonomy	-.30	-1.67	.029			
Development opportunities	-.37	-3.59	.001			
Workload	.29	2.59	.012			
Teachers without Qualifications						
Model 1				.58	.34	.34
Development opportunities	-.58	-3.30	.003			

Notă. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 3. Regression Models between Predictors and Intention to Leave Based on the Career Development Stage of Teachers

According to the models resulting from the regression analyses, significant differences are observed regarding the predictors in the models that predict the intention to leave for each category of teachers. Therefore, the second hypothesis of the research is confirmed.

5. Conclusions

The first hypothesis of the research is partially validated; the predictor variables: workload ($r = .38$, $p < .001$), learning opportunities ($r = .42$, $p < .001$), development opportunities ($r = -.34$, $p < .001$), reduced personal accomplishment ($r = .46$, $p < .001$), and needs for competence ($r = -.29$, $p < .001$) and relatedness ($r = -.40$, $p < .001$), although they show correlations ($p < .001$) with the intention to leave, are not included in the models generated for the entire sample. The partial validation is also given by the predictors that make up the dimensions of cynicism and reduced personal accomplishment. The intention to leave among teachers is determined by a high level of cynicism ($\beta = .26$, $p < .001$), the unsatisfied need for autonomy ($\beta = -.22$, $p < .01$), along with emotional exhaustion ($\beta = .23$, $p < .01$). Our study findings are consistent with those conducted internationally, which include emotional exhaustion (Lee, 2006) as a predictor of the intention to leave, as well as the perception of low autonomy (You & Conley, 2015). The intention to leave among Romanian teachers is due to their experience of cynicism, making them disengaged from their students. Furthermore, they do not feel autonomous; the lack of satisfaction with the need for autonomy in the education system is attributed to excessive centralization and limited

decision-making discretion. In addition, the emotional exhaustion that teachers experience is due to the heavy responsibilities associated with the lack of autonomy.

Regarding the second hypothesis, the results confirm the existence of different predictors that make up the regression models, thus explaining the intention to leave. For example, for novice teachers, the emergence of the intention to leave is explained by 54% through the presence of cynicism ($\beta = .55$, $p < .001$) and the unsatisfied need for autonomy ($\beta = -.36$, $p < .01$). In the case of teachers with qualified teacher status, the lack of the need for relatedness ($\beta = -.35$, $p < .05$) and the perception of emotional exhaustion ($\beta = .35$, $p < .05$) explain the intention to leave by 39%. As we can observe, the unsatisfied need for relatedness is a very strong predictor; teachers with qualified teacher status do not feel like members of the group, as their sense of relatedness is deficient. The emotional exhaustion they feel may stem from a lack of perceived social support, highlighted by the unsatisfied need for relatedness, ultimately leading to the intention to leave the system. For didactic level II certification, the intention to leave is explained by 57% due to the perception of reduced personal accomplishment ($\beta = .52$, $p < .01$), along with the unsatisfied need for competence ($\beta = -.37$, $p < .05$). Teachers didactic level I II certification choose to leave their profession because they feel ineffective, which is due to the lack of autonomy and the high level of learning opportunities, as well as their perception of not feeling competent. It is contrasting how professionals at this point in their careers intend to leave their careers because they consider themselves ineffective, given that they report a large number of learning opportunities. The presence of the variable of learning opportunities in this model draws attention to the need to evaluate the training offered to teachers, as well as their perceptions of professional learning. For teachers with didactic level I, the intention to leave is explained by the unsatisfied need for autonomy ($\beta = -.30$, $p < .05$), the lack of development opportunities ($\beta = -.37$, $p < .001$), and the presence of workload ($\beta = .29$, $p < .05$), accounting for 43%. Being at the far right of the career continuum, teachers with didactic level I have few development opportunities while the work procedures remain the same. Moreover, at the organizational level, they are assigned the responsibility of coordinating methodological committees and mentoring novice teachers, which contributes to the perception of workload. All of these factors lead to the intention to leave the profession due to the relatively few development prospects.

Considering the results of the MANOVA test, which shows a statistically significant variation regarding the intention to leave between didactic level I certification and novice teachers, we believe it is necessary to make a few clarifications. The regression models for the two categories share a common element, the unsatisfied need for relatedness, but show differences regarding the other predictors. Thus, while for novice teachers we discuss the second dimension of the burnout phenomenon, cynicism, determined by the perception of a large volume of learning opportunities and a debilitating way of reporting stress in explaining the intention to leave, in the case of didactic level vI certification, the predictors are the lack of development opportunities and the perception of workload. What we can observe in this regard is that the variation of means does not determine the variation of the predictors; however, the difference between the models is evident. For teachers without qualifications corresponding to their positions, the analysis presents a single model explaining the intention to leave due to the lack of development opportunities ($\beta = -.58$, $p < .001$), accounting for 34%. As mentioned, teachers without qualifications corresponding to their positions cannot advance in their teaching careers without completing their educational training in the field in which they teach. The impossibility of development increases the likelihood of withdrawing from the profession.

Understanding the factors that can determine teachers' intention to leave can contribute to the development of measures and educational policies sensitive to the differences among teachers that ultimately help retain them. Retaining teachers is not an end in itself; there is a need for incentives that will enhance their motivation, specialization level, and that will manifest globally in increasing the quality of education.

The research has certain limitations that should be mentioned. Firstly, we are discussing a cross-sectional study, which does not allow for causal inferences. We note in this context that the research instrument was applied prior to the moment of change generated by the pandemic, and as a result, it is likely that these results have changed currently. Another limitation of the research that we want to mention is related to the sample and the sampling technique. Although we have about 1% of the teaching population in the research, which means a valid percentage, the sampling technique, the snowball technique, has led to the formation of unequal groups based on the career development stage. Last but not least, we are talking about a broad field of research at

the international level; our research was able to highlight only a few aspects, but these aspects were considered important given the objectives and purpose of the study.

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