

When teachers experience burnout: Does a multi-ethnic student population put out or spark teachers' fire?

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Abstract

This study researches the association between schools' ethnic diversity and the three dimensions of teacher burnout: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced sense of personal accomplishment. Two possible explanations, teachers' ethnic prejudice and teachability perceptions of the students, are examined. The first hypothesis states that teachers who work in schools with a high ethnically diverse student population will perceive these students as less teachable, leading towards less positive relationships and therefore are more likely to develop a burnout. The second hypothesis is that teachers are less prejudiced towards ethnic minorities when teaching in high ethnically diverse schools, develop more positive relationships with their students, and as a consequence are less likely to develop a burnout. Through a multilevel analysis, we investigated data (2014-2015), which was gathered from 635 secondary school teachers in 45 urban schools. The findings indicate that only teachers' emotional exhaustion is dependent on the school context. The students' ethnic diversity contributes to emotional exhaustion via the lower level of teachability that teachers attribute to the students in these schools. This study indicates the importance of positive teachability perceptions of students for teachers to remain engaged within their schools and to teach in a culturally responsive way.

Teacher burnout, ethnic diversity, teachability, ethnic prejudice

of ethnicity, language and socioeconomic status (Desmedt & Nicaise, 2006). Within a multicultural school context, teachers face challenges such as different educational, social and psychological demands for which they often lack preparation and have unrealistic expectations (Vedder, Horenczyk, Liebkind & Nickmans, 2006). During teacher training, pre-service teachers often develop teaching strategies which comply more for white students without a migration background and not necessarily accommodate for ethnic minority students' needs. Many teachers adopt a deficit model to explain the educational disadvantages of ethnic minorities, pointing at students' cultural and lingual background (Clycq, Nouwen & Vandenbroucke, 2014). Although teacher education programs are increasingly reforming their curriculum to teach multicultural teaching, it still remains an ongoing issue (Smits & Janssenswillen, 2020). Research has shown that in general teachers do not feel prepared to deal with the students' diversity and that working with culturally diverse students is often considered a stressor (Betorert, 2009; Tatar & Horenczyk, 2003). Tensions may occur between teachers, who are often female, white and middle-class, and students with different cultural backgrounds (Renzulli, Parrott & Beattie, 2011). This perceived cultural mismatch between teachers and students may contribute to teacher stress, lower job satisfaction and attrition (Freeman, Brookhart & Loadman, 1999). The concept of 'diversity-related burnout', (Tatar & Horenczyk, 2003), points out that ethnic diversity and teacher burnout are related as this is a distinct form of burnout. Although strongly related to the traditional construct of burnout, it measures the specific effort exerted by teachers when working with culturally diverse students.

Teacher burnout, where teachers find themselves in a withdrawal reaction, is a great

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1 Introduction

Due to migration processes during the last decades, teachers are increasingly exposed to a heterogeneous student population in terms

international educational challenge (Loonstra, Brouwers & Tomic, 2009). The withdrawal they experience can be physical, by not being present in the school, or psychological, as the teacher is physically present but mentally elsewhere. Teachers with a burnout are distancing themselves as much as possible from their job. Burnout serves as a predictor of teacher attrition (Cha & Cohen-Vogel, 2011; Kukla-Acevedo, 2009). Moreover, teacher attrition negatively affects student achievement, disrupting the continuity for student learning (Ronfeldt, Loeb & Wyckoff, 2013). Nevertheless, even if burnout does not lead to the teacher quitting the profession, the decreased work performance and motivation when experiencing a burnout remains problematic for teachers and students (Maslach, Schaufeli & Leiter, 2001). According to Hughes (2001), a subset of teachers who struggle with a burnout are actually less likely to leave their jobs, a phenomenon which they characterize as 'on-the-job-retirement'. These teachers are more absent and distance themselves from the school setting, which Hughes (2001) claims to be even more problematic than teachers who leave the school. In addition to the negative consequences for the teachers, the entire school is affected by teacher burnout, as these teachers tend to neglect the preparation of their lessons (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). Furthermore, teachers with a burnout are less encouraging and show less favourable social behaviour towards students. As they are more absent as well, the workload increases for other teachers and school staff (Friedman, 2000). Klusmann, Richter and Lüdtke (2016) showed that a higher level of teachers' emotional exhaustion, the key dimension of burnout, is associated with lower test scores of students. Given the negative consequences of teacher burnout, it is necessary to examine its determinants. Nevertheless, little research has analysed effects of the school context on burnout and the processes behind it. In particular, teachers' feelings and beliefs are dependent on the schools' student population and associated social stereotypes (Dewulf, Van Braak & Van Houtte, 2017). For example, schools with

large numbers of low SES and ethnic minority students are often seen as schools with low academic performance in the public discourse (Agirdag, 2011).

Most studies have focused on the relationship between the ethnic school composition and teachers' job satisfaction or attrition (Freeman, Brookhart & Loadman, 1999; Mueller, Finley & Iverson, 1999; Renzulli, Parrott & Beattie, 2011). In schools with a high amount of ethnic minority students, teachers feel less satisfied and are more likely to leave the profession or transfer schools (Freeman et al., 1999; Mueller et al., 1999). Research shows that teachers' job satisfaction and general wellbeing is strongly associated with the occurrence of a burnout (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2009). Taken together, all this may suggest that teachers are more susceptible to developing a burnout when teaching in highly ethnically diverse schools. However, Tatar and Horenczyk (2003) have demonstrated that teachers have fewer diversity related burnouts in schools with high percentages of ethnic minority students. Supported by the intergroup contact theory, Pettigrew, Tropp, Wagner and Christ (2011) also suggest that increased intergroup contact may also lead to more job satisfaction. Building on these ideas, we can assume that teachers' figurative fire is put out or lit when working in multi-ethnic schools. Few studies have provided insight into the underlying processes why the association between ethnic diversity and teacher burnout might occur. There is a particular lack of studies concerning teacher burnout that focus on teachers' perceptions of their students (Dubbeld, Hoog, Den Brok & deLaat, 2019). Yet, on the one hand, teachers often perceive ethnic minority students as more difficult to teach (Tenenbaum & Ruck, 2007; Van Maele & Van Houtte, 2011), which might impact teachers' wellbeing in a negative way, since they might perceive their teaching task as more difficult. On the other hand, research has shown that teachers in ethnically diverse schools have lower ethnic prejudices and more positive attitudes towards ethnic minority students, which may positively affect their wellbeing in such schools (Kalin, 1996). The present study

distinguishes the three classic dimensions of burnout – emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced sense of personal accomplishment – since research indicated significant contextual differences between them (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010). Therefore, this research explores the role of teachers' perceptions of students' teachability and ethnic prejudice in the association between ethnic school composition and the three dimensions of teacher burnout.

2 Theoretical background

2.1 Teacher burnout

Burnout is considered an endpoint after a process of long-term stress related to the job environment, although burnout itself is also a process rather than an event (Maslach et al., 2001). Research has widely acknowledged that burnout is a construct consisting of three dimensions: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and a reduced sense of personal accomplishment (Lee & Ashforth, 1996; Maslach et al., 1986). The first dimension, emotional exhaustion, entails feelings that teachers' emotional resources are depleted (Maslach & Jackson, 1986). Depersonalization is the development of cynical and distant attitudes towards students. The last aspect of burnout is a reduced sense of personal accomplishment. This dimension encompasses teachers' tendency to perceive their teaching ability negatively and the feeling that teaching is no longer a meaningful job (Maslach et al., 2001).

In general, research on burnout stems from a psychological orientation, describing it as the inability to cope with job related stress. It focuses on the association between burnout and personality traits, but also on individuals' background features, such as gender and educational level (e.g., Antoniou, Polychroni & Vlachakis, 2006; Kokkinos, 2007). Teachers' personalities can increase their risk to develop a burnout, such as an external locus of control, while a protective characteristic is high emotional intelligence (Salami & Ajitoni, 2016; Wilski, Chmielewski & Tomczak, 2015). As for demographic characteristics,

female teachers often experience more stress, emotional exhaustion and a lower sense of personal accomplishment compared to men (Ingersoll, 2001; Lau, Yuen & Shan, 2005). However, males generally score higher on depersonalization (Purvanova & Muros, 2010). Teachers' educational level is generally lower in schools with higher burnout levels than in schools with a lower amount of burnouts (Friedman, 1995). This could serve as an indication that teachers with a lower educational level are more likely to develop a burnout. Other teacher characteristics also seem to be important. Teaching experience plays a role in the development of a burnout, although findings are inconsistent. Teachers with more than ten years of experience are more emotionally exhausted than less experienced teachers (Kokkinos, 2007). Contrary to these results, another study shows that younger teachers experience more emotional exhaustion than older teachers (Antoniou et al., 2006). Since most teachers with little teaching experience are also young teachers, age and teaching experience are often used interchangeably (Ingersoll, 2001). However, considering the increase of lateral entry teachers, who decide to go teaching after a former career choice and are thus older than novice teachers who just graduated (Rones & Smith, 2010), it is necessary to distinguish the effects of teaching experience and age.

According to the psychological perspective, the solution for a burnout is developing a personal coping strategy to regain resilience (Howard & Johnson, 2004). However, the sociological view on burnout has taken a different perspective on the concept, since burnout is viewed as a role-specific alienation which is induced within an organization or work setting (Dworkin, 1987). Within this perspective, burnout should be reduced through organizational change rather than stress coping strategies. Most researchers have concluded that some background and personality traits matter, but that the main causes of burnouts are environmentally embedded in the organizational context, which is, in case of teachers, the school (Dworkin, 1987; Foley & Murphy, 2015). Additionally, it is easier to change school features than

amending the teacher's personality or demographic traits when trying to reduce the occurrence of burnouts among teachers.

As such, the determinants of teacher burnout can be divided in two main categories: individual factors and organizational factors, such as the institutional school environment or the school composition in terms of the student population (Maslach et al., 2001). The school context in which teachers work is also shaped by the grade they work in. Research has shown that teachers have more conflictual relations with older students than with younger students (Hamre, Pianta, Downer & Mashburn, 2008). Students generally become less engaged in school as they become older (McDermott, Mordell & Stoltzfus, 2001). Another, more structural feature of the school context, is the track in which the teacher works. Research has shown that teachers who teach in vocational and technical tracks experience a higher job dissatisfaction and a higher likelihood of having a burnout (Van Houtte, 2006). Although the present study will take into account the grade and track teachers work in, their teaching experience, educational level and their gender, it focuses mainly on the ethnic school composition, since little research has investigated how this may or may not affect the three teachers' burnout dimensions.

2.2 Ethnic school composition and burnout

The increase of ethnic school heterogeneity due to migration is one of the main reasons why most research focuses on the ethnic school composition in order to explain several teachers' wellbeing outcomes (e.g., Freeman et. al, 1999; Mueller; Renzulli et al., 2011). White teachers often interact more negatively with ethnic minority students than with students without a migration background (Saft & Pianta, 2001; Thijs, Westhof & Koomen, 2012). Dworkin (1987) has pointed out that teachers who find themselves in a situation of 'racial isolation from the student body', or in other words experience a racial mismatch, are more likely to develop dimensions of burnout. Hence, teachers' own ethnicity is also an important factor to take into account. Since the majority of the teachers are white, they

experience a situation where they feel 'racially isolated' when teaching in high ethnically diverse schools. The concept of 'racial isolation' in schools already implies that there is greater distance between teachers and these students. Furthermore, teachers in general seem to be less satisfied in highly ethnically diverse schools, which they are more likely to leave to transfer schools (Mueller et al., 1999; Renzulli et al., 2011; Scafidi, Sjoquist & Stinebrickner, 2007). These studies all suggest that teachers often struggle to work successfully in ethnically diverse schools. An experimental study by Glock, Kleen and Morgenroth (2019) confronted teachers with fictitious schools with either a high or low ethnic diversity and assessed teachers' imagined feelings working in those schools. Their findings show that ethnic diversity even has an anticipated negative effect on teacher burnout and teacher efficacy. Merely imagining school settings can induce negative feelings, showing the far-reaching stereotypes concerning high ethnic diversity schools. However, this artificial setting limits the ecological validity of this study.

Tatar and Horenzyck (2003) state that there is a specific kind of burnout when working with a culturally diverse student group, namely the diversity related burnout, measuring the potentially negative impact of ethnic diversity on teachers' wellbeing. Remarkably, these authors found that schools with a higher proportion of migrant students than average have less teachers with a diversity related burnout than schools with less migrant students. These results are explained by the fact that schools with a higher ethnic mix already have adjusted their instruction methods, the curriculum and vision of the school to the needs of their diverse student population (Tatar, Kfir, Sever, Adler & Regev, 1994). These teachers are more prepared to deal with diversity in the classroom, which makes them feel more competent, resulting in more job satisfaction (Tatar & Horenzyck, 2003). Although it might be possible that ethnic diversity has a smaller effect on general burnout than on diversity-related burnout, since the two concepts are strongly associated, the effects might remain. On a class level,

teachers appear to be more self-efficacious when teaching classrooms with more ethnic minority students (Thijs et.al, 2012). Since teachers in these ethnically diverse classes are more experienced with culturally diverse students, their self-efficacy is increased.

Since the findings on the association between ethnic school composition and burnout are inconsistent, underlying processes need to be examined. Following Renzulli and colleagues (2011), we represent two possible explanations of the association between ethnic school composition and teacher burnout, namely first teachers' perception of students' teachability and second their degree of ethnic prejudice. It is likely that teachers who work in ethnically diverse schools perceive their students as less teachable and therefore develop a burnout more quickly. At the same time, we argue that ethnic prejudice could mediate the association between ethnic school composition and teacher burnout, namely that teachers who work in highly ethnically diverse schools will have less ethnic prejudices and therefore will be less prone to suffer from a burnout.

2.3 Ethnic school composition, teachability and burnout

The assumptions that teachers have about students' abilities to accomplish educational goals are comprised by the concept of teachability (Kornblau, 1982; Van Houtte, 2002). According to Haberman (2005) teachers have different perceptions of 'teachable students' or 'disruptive students'. Although dependent on the specific ethnic minority group, teachers generally have lower expectations of ethnic minority students and perceive them as less teachable compared to white students (Tenenbaum & Ruck, 2007; Tettegah, 1996). Expectations about the behaviour of ethnic minority students are even lower than academic expectations and teachers intervene more when ethnic minority students misbehave compared to white students (Glock, 2016). At the school level, teachers who work in predominantly ethnic minority schools tend to transmit lower expectations to all their students, viewing them as less academically able and ascribing

more motivational and disciplinary problems to them (Freeman et al., 1999; Mueller et al., 1999).

Teachers' perceptions of ethnic minority students are more negative because of several reasons. Firstly, perceptions towards all students in ethnically diverse schools could be more negative since teachers might take over the idea that these schools are more difficult and even problematic contexts, as this is ingrained in public discourse and by policy makers (Agirdag, Van Avermaet & Van Houtte, 2012). Their lower expectations seem to be based on ethnicity, disadvantaging ethnic minority students (Tenenbaum & Ruck, 2007). By stereotyping students based on ethnic background, teachers easily categorize them, not aware how this maintains ethnic hierarchies (Glock, Kneer & Kovacs, 2013).

Secondly, schools with a high amount of ethnic diversity can pose challenges for teachers, which they do not always feel equipped to handle (Tatar & Horenczyk, 2003). Teachers indicate an increasing teaching load, because students whose mother tongue is not the teaching language require more time and effort from the teachers' perspective (Ballet, Kelchtermans, Martens & Roels, 2006). Teachers also state that they struggle to achieve the same results for both ethnic minority students and ethnic majority students. However, even when there are no performance differences between these two groups of students, through the continuous affirmation in the public discourse that this achievement gap is accurate, this achievement gap is also constructed in teachers' minds (Mueller et al., 1999). Thirdly, in these schools, there are more interethnic conflicts (Goldsmith, 2004), although there are also more interethnic friendships (Johnson, Crosnoe & Elder, 2001).

Lastly, in low socioeconomic schools teachers evaluate their students to be less teachable (Agirdag, Van Avermaet & Van Houtte, 2012). Since schools with a high proportion of ethnic minority students often also have a high proportion of students with a low socioeconomic status (Driessen, 2002), it might be the case that teachers evaluate their

students to be less teachable because they are held back by a challenging socioeconomic situation (Agirdag, 2018). Due to the high correlation between students' ethnic and socioeconomic situation, it remains difficult to distinguish both mechanisms. However, regarding teacher mobility, where teachers leave for another school, Scafaldi, Sjoquist and Stinebrickner (2007) were able to separate these highly correlated school characteristics. Their findings show that teachers are more likely to leave because the large proportion of ethnic minorities rather than the socioeconomic status of the students. Nevertheless, socioeconomic status still plays a role in why teachers' teachability perceptions are lower for ethnic minorities (Agirdag, 2018). Regardless of the underlying reasons, the perceived student diversity often has negative effects for teachers, as Betoret (2009) shows that a higher perceived student diversity was linked to a higher likelihood of a burnout for teachers. In sum, teachers may perceive the student population in multi-ethnic schools as less teachable and consequently view their jobs as less viable work settings (Piot, Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2010).

2.4 Ethnic school composition, ethnic prejudice and burnout

In line with the majority of studies, ethnic prejudice is defined as a negative attitude towards ethnic outgroups (De Witte, 1999; Quillian, 1995). According to Allport (1954) ethnic prejudice consists of a cognitive aspect, namely the stereotype towards an ethnic minority group, and an affective aspect of antipathy for that group. However, ethnic prejudice is often a reflection of how people think about the world rather than one specific attitude towards one ethnic group. Only few studies have included the role of ethnic prejudice to explain teachers' wellbeing in ethnically diverse schools. Nevertheless, eradicating ethnic prejudice may function as an explanation why teachers develop less aspects of a burnout in such schools, as Tatar and Horenzyck (2003) suggested.

The substantial evidence for the intergroup contact theory by Allport (1954) states that contact between ethnic majority and minority

members reduces ethnic prejudice (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2000). This theory suggests that teachers working in highly ethnically diverse schools have more positive attitudes towards ethnic minorities (Kalin, 1996). This can be partly explained through the mere exposure hypothesis (Zajonc, 1968), which suggests that repeated exposure to ethnic minorities results in familiarity, and is associated with more positive attitudes. However, in his prevailing framework Allport (1954) argues that individuals would not change ethnic prejudice simply through involuntary contact alone since the conditions of contact between interethnic groups matter. When conditions such as equal group status within the situation, common goals, intergroup cooperation and the support of authorities are granted, ethnic diversity will reduce ethnic prejudice. Stearns, Banerjee, Mickelson and Moller (2014) argue that a positive organizational culture for teachers includes these conditions, fostering a situation where the initial negative effect of an ethnic mismatch between teachers and students on teachers' job satisfaction is nullified.

When the conditions in the school are right, we argue that interethnic contact in schools reduces prejudice and therefore possibly teacher burnout, as Pettigrew and Tropp (2011) also suggest that increased intergroup contact may directly lead to more job satisfaction. On the contrary, negative stereotypes and prejudice can have a detrimental effect on the entire school (Agirdag, Loobuyck & Van Houtte, 2012), and consequently affect teachers' stress levels and their wellbeing. If teachers are not ethnically prejudiced, it benefits their work attitude in a multi-ethnic school and may lower their chances of struggling with a burnout. When schools with a higher ethnic mix already have adjusted to deal with their student population without ethnic prejudices, teachers are more prepared to deal with diversity in the classroom, resulting in a higher job satisfaction (Tatar & Horenzyck, 2003). On a class level, teacher efficacy develops more when teaching a higher rate of ethnic minority students (Thijs et al., 2012). Generally, studies have shown that when

teachers see diversity in a positive light, this lowers teachers' diversity related burnout (Gutentag, Horenczyk & Tatar, 2017; Tatar & Horenczyk, 2003). In sum, we argue that teachers who work in high ethnically diverse schools may have less ethnic prejudices towards ethnic minority students and will consequently also reduce their chances to suffer from a burnout.

3 The present study

Research has mostly focused on the effect of ethnic school composition on teachers' attrition or job satisfaction (Mueller et al., 1999; Renzulli et al., 2011; Scafidi et al., 2007). Dworkin (1987) has shown that teachers who are 'racially isolated' from the student body in their school, have a higher chance to experience a burnout. However, no study of the association between the ethnic school composition and burnout has included its three dimensions. By disentangling burnout, we can differentiate whether the ethnic school composition has the same or a different effect for emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishment. Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2010) have indicated that emotional exhaustion and depersonalization are affected by different processes, such as time pressure and relations with parents. In addition, according to the phase model of the development of burnout (Leiter & Maslach, 1988), emotional exhaustion arises first in response to the environment and in turn results in depersonalization as a way of coping with the exhaustion. In the last phase of developing a burnout, the teacher's work loses its meaning as he or she has a lower sense of personal accomplishment. Since emotional exhaustion is the first stage, it may be more strongly related to environmental factors of the school, such as the ethnic school composition.

In addition, to the best of our knowledge, no studies have focused on exploring several underlying processes why there may be an association between ethnic school composition and teacher burnout. This study will analyse

two possible hypotheses: teachers' perceptions of their students' teachability and their ethnic prejudices. The first hypothesis states that teachers who work in schools with a high ethnically diverse student population will perceive these students as less teachable and therefore are more likely to develop emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and a reduced sense of accomplishment. The second hypothesis is that teachers are less prejudiced towards ethnic minorities when teaching in high ethnically diverse schools and as a consequence are less likely to develop emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and a reduced sense of accomplishment in high diversity schools.

4 Research context

Flanders, the Dutch speaking region of Belgium, rapidly changed into an ethnically diverse society mostly because of labour immigration from Southern Europe, Turkey and North Africa and subsequently from several Eastern European countries (Vanduynslager, Wets, Noppe & Doyen, 2013). Because the immigrants often were located in the same areas of their work places, they still live more spatially segregated. The school segregation across ethnic lines is also due to the educational policy of free school choice (Sierens, Van Houtte, Loobuyck, Delrue & Pelleriaux, 2006). At the time of the data gathering, the assignment of students to certain schools was in most places not regulated by any policy and allowed parents to freely choose for certain schools and to avoid others, sometimes based on the students' composition or a negative or positive reputation.

Education is compulsory for all students from the ages of 6 to 18. The secondary educational system in Flanders is divided in three grades, which each encompass two study years. From the third year of secondary school, there are four types of tracks: the academic, arts, technical and vocational track. Officially, students choose a track at the age of 14 years old, but in practice the decision for a track is often already made at the age of

12 years old. The ethnic and socioeconomic inequalities in the Flemish secondary education are also reflected in the tracking system, with ethnic minority students being overrepresented in technical and vocational tracks (Demanet, Van den Broeck & Van Houtte, 2014).

5 Methods

5.1 Data

The analysis was based on the RaDiSS 2 data (Racism and Discrimination in Secondary Schools), which is the second wave of the research project RaDiSS. The data were collected from students in the sixth year of secondary education and the teachers of these students, from October until March in 2014-2015. For this article, the student data were only used to gain insight into the ethnic school composition of the students in the schools. A multistage sampling frame for the schools was used to ensure the number of cases and sufficient variability in terms of students' ethnicity and the level of urbanization of the school. Four large, multicultural Flemish districts were selected for the sample (Antwerp, Ghent, Hasselt, and Sint-Niklaas). These four districts were included because of the high percentage of inhabitants with a non-Western-European background (Noppe & Lodewijckx, 2013). The sample comprised of one third of schools with a low proportion of ethnic minority students (less than 15%), one third with a medium proportion (between 15% and 49.9%), and one third with a high proportion (between 50% and 100%).

The data collection for the first wave comprised 55 schools and these school were contacted a second time. In the end, 45 of these schools were willing to participate. In the sample, 14 schools had a low proportion of ethnic minority students, 15 a medium proportion, and 16 a high proportion. The ethnic minority composition of the schools ranges from 0% to 95%. In these schools, the teachers were questioned through a written questionnaire.

In total 669 out of 1,584 teachers completed the written questionnaire, which

created a response rate of 42%. Furthermore, we could only analyze the teachers who filled in the questions concerning burnout, resulting in data of 635 teachers.

5.2 Variables

Burnout. The three subdimensions of burnout were measured separately. The item construction of the dimensions was translated by Schaufeli and Dierendonck (1994) to Dutch from the Maslach Burnout Scale (MBI), constructed by Maslach and colleagues (1986). The scale contains 22 items and similar to other foreign versions of the MBI, the scale has the same internal consistency and construct validity as the original version (Maslach et al., 2001).

In total, 635 teachers provided a valid answer to all three dependent variables, namely the subdimensions of burnout: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and a reduced sense of personal accomplishment. All three subdimensions have a range from 1 (indicating never) to 7 (indicating always). As for emotional exhaustion, there are 8 items measuring the mental and physical depletion as a consequence of job factors. Items are for example 'I feel emotionally drained from my work' and 'I feel like I'm on the end of my rope'. The Cronbach's alpha for emotional exhaustion is 0.878. The mean for emotional exhaustion is 2.75 ($SD=0.88$). The scale of depersonalization consists of 7 items such as 'I worry that this job is hardening me emotionally' and 'I don't really care what happens to some of my pupils'. It measures the emotional distance the teacher experiences towards the students. The Cronbach's alpha for depersonalization is 0.645. This Cronbach's alpha is slightly lower than that of the other burnout dimensions, however, this subscale usually has a rather low internal consistency (Schaufeli, Enzmann & Girault, 1993). The mean score for depersonalization is 2.00 ($SD=0.51$). Lastly, reduced sense of personal accomplishment measures the negative perception of the teacher towards his or her ability to teach. An example of an item is 'I think I am positively influencing pupils through my work'. The items for this subscale were then rescaled so that positive values

indicated a lower lack of achievement to be in line with the values of the other subscales. The Cronbach's alpha for this dimension is 0.819. The mean score for this subscale is 2.41 ($SD=0.73$). For all three subdimensions a higher score indicates a higher emotional exhaustion, level of depersonalization and reduced sense of personal accomplishment, thus indicating an increased risk of struggling with a burnout when high levels are combined.

Ethnic school composition. We measured the ethnic school composition through the Herfindahl index, measuring the schools' diversity (Rhoades, 1993). The ethnicity of the students was assessed by the birthplace of their maternal grandmother (Timmerman, Vanderwaeren & Crul, 2003). As is common, students with a maternal grandmother born in Western-Europe are considered native students whereas students who have grandmothers with another country of origin are considered students with a migration background (Timmerman, Hermans & Hoornaert, 2002). The countries of origin were categorized in 14 categories: Western-European, Turkish, Moroccan, South-European, Eastern-European, other Northern-African countries, South- and Central America, Asian, Sub-Saharan African, Middle-Eastern and others. The Herfindahl index is calculated as $(\text{percentage ethnic group } 1)^2 + (\text{percentage ethnic group } 2)^2 + (\text{percentage ethnic group } n)^2$ (Putnam, 2007). Following Lancee & Dronkers (2008), we multiplied the Herfindahl index by -1 as an inverse of the ethnic homogeneity index of Putnam (2007), to measure the amount of ethnic heterogeneity in the schools. Hence, the index ranges from -1 to 0, with -1 meaning that there is only one ethnic group at the school present while 0 means that each pupil in the school has a different ethnicity. On average, schools have an ethnic heterogeneity score of $-.450$ ($SD=.255$). The school with the lowest ethnic diversity scored -1 on the index and the school which was the most ethnically diverse scored -0.18 . We must also note that the SES composition is strongly correlated with the ethnic school composition ($r=0.689$). In line with previous studies we measured SES by calculating the mean parental

occupational status (e.g., Agirdag, 2018; Van Maele & Van Houtte, 2011). However, due to multicollinearity problems, we could not include SES composition in our analysis.

Ethnic prejudice. Because the majority of the ethnic minorities in Flanders come from Morocco, Turkey, and Eastern Europe, negative attitudes to these three groups are summed to account for teachers' ethnic prejudice. A scale constructed by Vervae (2018) was used with 18 items, ranging from 1 (absolutely disagree) to 5 (completely agree). Two examples of items are: "Moroccans/Turks/Eastern Europeans do not contribute to the welfare of Belgium," and "Moroccans/Turks/Eastern Europeans are commonly unreliable" (Quillian, 1995). A higher score indicates greater ethnic prejudice. The mean of this ethnic prejudice scale is 2.45 ($SD=0.63$). The Cronbach's alpha for the ethnic prejudice scale is 0.940.

Teachability. Teachers' perceptions of the teachability of students are measured by 31 items from the Teachable Pupil Survey of Kornblau (1982). This scale entails pupil characteristics in terms of school-appropriate behavior, social behavior and cognitive-motivational behavior. Examples of these characteristics are being "insightful", "honest" and "calm". The items in this Likert-scale range from 1 (absolutely disagree) to 5 (definitely agree). A higher score on the scale points out that the teacher evaluates the students as more teachable. The mean of this scale is 3.22 ($SD=0.48$). The Cronbach's alpha for the teachability scale is 0.950.

Gender. In the sample, 35.5% of the teachers are male. This is a reflection of the current gender ratio among Flemish teachers in secondary schools (Department of Education, 2017).

Teaching experience. Teaching experience was measured by the number of years respondents had been working as a teacher, including the year of the survey. It also includes the years that teachers have worked in other schools. This is a metric variable, ranging between 0 and 41 years. The mean teaching experience in the sample is 15.34 years ($SD=10.29$). Since teaching experience has a non-linear association with the dimensions of

Table 1
Descriptives of variables

| | % | n | Mean | SD | Min. | Max. |
|--|-------|-----|-------|-------|-------|------|
| <i>Dependent variables</i> | | | | | | |
| Emotional Exhaustion | | 635 | 2.75 | 0.73 | 1 | 7 |
| Reduced sense of personal accomplishment | | 635 | 2.42 | 0.71 | 1 | 7 |
| Depersonalization | | 635 | 2.00 | 0.51 | 1 | 7 |
| <i>School variables</i> | | | | | | |
| Ethnic diversity | | 642 | -0.45 | 0.25 | -0.82 | 0 |
| Track: general track | 16.4% | 640 | | | | |
| Technical track | 54.9% | 637 | | | | |
| Vocational track | 28.6% | 637 | | | | |
| <i>Teacher variables</i> | | | | | | |
| Gender: women | 36.4% | 640 | | | | |
| Educational level: university | 74.9% | 610 | | | | |
| Educational level: bachelor | 25.1% | 610 | | | | |
| Grade: third grade | 43.0% | 610 | | | | |
| Third & second grade | 49.0% | 610 | | | | |
| First & third | 0.6% | 610 | | | | |
| All grades | 7.4% | 610 | | | | |
| Ethnic prejudice | | 602 | 2.45 | 0.63 | 1 | 5 |
| Teachability | | 637 | 3.22 | 0.48 | 1 | 5 |
| Teaching experience | | 641 | 15.12 | 10.26 | 0 | 41 |

burnout, we added the squared term of teaching experience in order to account for its non-linearity.

Tracking. We asked the teachers in which tracks they teach and 44.1% responded they teach in more than one track. Therefore, we categorized the teachers according to the track in which they teach that has the lowest societal prestige. The majority of the teachers (54.1%) teach in the technical and art track, 16.4% teaches only in the general track and 29.4% teaches in the vocational track.

Grade level. Within the sample, 44% of the teachers exclusively teach in the third grade (with students who are in their last two years of secondary school). Another 49% teach in both the second and the third grade while 7% teach either in all three grades or in the first and the third grade.

Educational level. The last control variable we included is the educational level of the

teacher. Almost 75% of the teachers obtained a university degree, while 25% had another form of certification to teach.

5.3 Research Design

Firstly, we analyzed the bivariate correlations of the three subdimensions of burnout and the correlations between ethnic prejudice, teachability and these dimensions (shown in Table 2). Secondly, we performed a multilevel analysis (MLwiN 2.32) to account for the nested structure in the data. A zero model was estimated for the three dependent variables: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishment, where no independent variables were added in order to calculate the variance at the teacher and school level. In the next step, the ethnic school composition was included in the zero model. In the first model, we controlled for the individual teacher variables that appeared to

be relevant according to previous studies: track, gender, teaching experience, educational level and the grades in which the teacher works (e.g., Antoniou et al., 2006; Kokkinos, 2007). In the second model, the explanatory variable ethnic prejudice is added to analyze whether it might explain a possible relation between school ethnic school composition and the dimensions of burnout. With the same purpose, the variable perceived teachability is included in model three. All metric variables were grand mean centered. For all dependent variables, the missing values were imputed by item correlation substitution. Thus, if an item had a missing value, it was replaced with the value of the item that had the highest correlation with the particular missing item (Huisman, 2000). The remaining scale variables ethnic prejudice and teachability were considered as missings if more than 40% of the items were missing.

6 Results

The three dimensions of burnout are moderately correlated (see Table 2). The bivariate correlation between emotional exhaustion and reduced sense of accomplishments is .255 ($p < .001$). Depersonalization and emotional exhaustion have a correlation of .433 ($p < .001$) and depersonalization and reduced sense of accomplishments .388 ($p < .001$). These correlations indicate the distinctiveness of the several dimensions, although, if the subdimensions are merged to the unidimensional construct of burnout, it has a Cronbach's Alpha of .864. The two explanatory

variables in this study, teachability and ethnic prejudice have a fairly low correlation of $-.188$ ($p < .01$), showing that the variables measure different attitudes and perceptions.

The multilevel analyses indicated that emotional exhaustion is the only variable that varies significantly between different school contexts. However, the unconditional model for emotional exhaustion (Model 0 in Table 4) showed that only 3.32% ($p < 0.05$) of the total variance is to be explained by the school context, indicating a significant yet small improvement of the model by including the variance at the school level. The level of depersonalization and reduced sense of personal accomplishment do not vary between schools. Hence, this entails that ethnic diversity in the school is not associated with depersonalization or reduced sense of personal accomplishment and that, furthermore, these dimensions of burnout do not seem to be dependent on the schools' characteristics. However, we continued the multilevel analyses for the three dependent variables to account for the nested structure in the sample.

Some individual teacher characteristics were significantly associated with depersonalization, (Table 3). Depersonalization is higher for more experienced teachers ($y = 0.014$, $p < .05$). In addition, male teachers feel significantly more depersonalized from their students compared to female teachers ($y = 0.173$, $p < .001$). Both perceived teachability and ethnic prejudice have a significant effect on teachers' level of depersonalization. When teachers perceive their students as less teachable, they have higher chances of feeling

Table 2

Bivariate (Pearson) correlations between the dimensions of burnout, teachability, ethnic prejudice and ethnic school composition

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|-----------------------------------|---|----------|----------|---------|---------|
| 1 Emotional exhaustion | 1 | .433 *** | .255 *** | .170 ** | .100 * |
| 2 Depersonalization | | 1 | .388 *** | .065 | .192 ** |
| 3 Reduced sense of accomplishment | | | 1 | .010 | .130 ** |
| 4 Teachability | | | | 1 | .188 ** |
| 5 Ethnic prejudice | | | | | 1 |

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Table 3

Results: multilevel analyses Depersonalization and Reduced sense of accomplishment

| | Depersonalization | | Reduced sense of accomplishment | |
|---|-------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| | Model 0 | Model 1 | Model 0 | Model 1 |
| Teaching experience | | 0.014 (0.007)* | | -0.020 (0.010)* |
| Track: (ref: general track) | | | | |
| Technical track | | -0.101 (0.060) | | -0.364 (0.088)*** |
| Vocational track | | 0.028 (0.061) | | -0.140 (0.089) |
| All grades | | 0.021 (0.081) | | -0.016 (0.114) |
| 2 nd and 3 rd grade | | -0.011 (0.041) | | -0.086 (0.057) |
| Gender: women | | -0.173 (0.041) *** | | -0.003 (0.057) |
| Bachelor degree (ref: master degree) | | -0.062 (0.049) | | -0.19 (0.068) |
| Teachability | | -0.332 (0.042) *** | | -0.602 (0.060)*** |
| Ethnic prejudice | | 0.097 (0.033) ** | | 0.074 (0.046) |
| <i>Variance explained</i> | | | | |
| Constant | 1.98 (0.025) | 2.616 (0.175) | 2.42 (0.030) | 2.74 (0.167) |
| Variance school level | 0.006 (0.005) | 0.001 (0.006) | 0.004 (0.008) | 0.002 (0.007) |
| Variance teacher level | 0.261 (0.015) | 0.218 (0.017) | 0.540 (0.030) | 0.510 (0.030) |
| % variance school level | 2.24% | 0.45% | 0.73% | 0.39% |
| Log likelihood | 961.05 | 770.71 | 14010.22 | 1291.46 |

Presented are the (unstandardised) gamma coefficients with the standard errors appearing in parentheses and the variance components.

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

more depersonalized ($y = -0.332$, $p < .001$). Furthermore, when teachers are more ethnically prejudiced, this is associated with more depersonalization towards the students ($y = 0.097$, $p < .01$).

As for reduced sense of personal accomplishment (Table 3), there is a significant association with years of experience ($y = -0.020$, $p < .05$) and with teachability ($y = -0.602$, $p < .01$). Thus, teachers with less experience and teachers who perceive their students as less teachable have higher chances of feeling less able to teach their students. Furthermore, teachers who work in the technical track are less likely to have a reduced sense of personal accomplishment compared to teachers in the general track ($y = -0.364$, $p < .001$).

Regarding emotional exhaustion, we included ethnic diversity in the model (Model 1, Table 4). Teachers who work in more ethnically diverse schools are on average

more emotionally exhausted ($y = 0.478$, $p < .001$). In the second model, we added the teacher level variables. Teaching experience is significantly associated with emotional exhaustion ($y = 0.036$, $p < .01$). Thus, more experienced teachers are more emotionally exhausted than less experienced teachers. The educational level teachers obtained is borderline significantly associated with emotional exhaustion ($y = 0.171$, $p = .052$). Teachers with a bachelor degree are more emotionally exhausted than teachers who have a university degree. Teachers' gender, the grade and the track in which teachers teach are not significantly associated with emotional exhaustion.

In model 2 (Table 4) ethnic prejudice is included. Ethnic prejudice has no significant association with emotional exhaustion. The final model (Model 3) indicated that teachability has a significant effect on emotional exhaustion ($y = -0.468$, $p < .001$).

Table 4
School and teacher level variables for Emotional Exhaustion

| | Model 0 | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 |
|---|---------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| <i>School level</i> | | | | |
| Ethnic diversity | | 0.478 (0.145)*** | -0.478 (0.152)*** | 0.225 (0.149) |
| <i>Individual teacher level</i> | | | | |
| Track: (ref: general track) | | | | |
| Vocational track | | 0.053 (0.116) | 0.024 (0.116) | -0.025 (0.112) |
| Technical track | | 0.104 (0.111) | 0.064 (0.111) | -0.046 (0.108) |
| Gender: women | | 0.059 (0.074) | 0.076 (0.074) | 0.061 (0.072) |
| Teaching experience | | 0.036 (0.013)** | 0.031 (0.013)* | 0.033 (0.013)* |
| Degree (ref: university degree) Bachelor's degree | | -0.174 (0.088)° | -0.169 (0.088) ° | -0.152 (0.086) |
| Grade: (ref: third) | | | | |
| Second and third | | -0.018 (0.075) | -0.014 (0.074) | 0.010 (0.072) |
| All grades | | 0.059 (0.0150) | 0.075 (0.147) | 0.050 (0.143) |
| Ethnic prejudice | | | 0.112 (0.059) | 0.056 (0.58) |
| Teachability | | | | -0.473 (0.078)*** |
| <i>Variance components</i> | | | | |
| Constant | 2.747 (0.038) | 3.041 (0.179) | 3.044 (0.178) | 2.969 (0.171) |
| Variance school level | 0.026 (0.017) | 0.003 (0.023) | 0.004 (0.011) | 0.002 (0.009) |
| Variance teacher level | 0.756 (0.044) | 0.740 (0.044) | 0.741 (0.043) | 0.676 (0.040) |
| % variance school level | 3.32% | 0.40% | 0.53% | 0.29% |
| Log likelihood | 1640.78 | 1509.4285 | 1472.925 | 1430.396 |

Presented are the (unstandardised) gamma coefficients with the standard errors appearing in parentheses and the variance components. Borderline significance. *p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001

Including teachability in the model diminishes the effect of ethnic diversity on emotional exhaustion and turns it insignificant. Thus, teachers are more emotionally exhausted in ethnic diverse schools due to their lower perceived teachability of the students in these schools.

7 Discussion

This study analysed how the multi-ethnic school context is related to three dimensions of teacher burnout: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced sense of accomplishment. In addition, we investigated two possible explaining mechanisms: teachers' perceptions of students' teachability and teachers' degree of ethnic prejudice. First of all, our findings indicate that there are

some contextual differences between the three dimensions of burnout. Emotional exhaustion is related to the school context, whereas explanations why teachers feel more depersonalized or have a lower sense of personal accomplishment are situated at the individual teacher level. Hence, this study shows the importance of distinguishing between the dimensions of burnout, corresponding with other studies (e.g., Lee & Ashforth, 1996; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010) that consider and measure burnout as a multifaceted concept. Emotional exhaustion is considered the core element of burnout and also its most clear manifestation (Maslach et al., 2001). Furthermore, it is related the strongest to job performance compared to the other two dimensions (Cropanzano, Rupp & Byrne, 2003). Due to the importance of emotional exhaustion as an indication of

burnout and its association with the school context, it is necessary to take the schools characteristics into account when researching processes of burnout in general as well.

The main finding of this study is that the schools' ethnic diversity contributes to emotional exhaustion due to teachers' lower perceived teachability of the students. A study by Van Maele and Van Houtte (2011) has already shown that in schools with more ethnic minority students, teachers evaluate their students as less teachable. The present study adds that this lower perception of teachability results in a higher likelihood of teachers struggling with feelings of emotional exhaustion. Teachers feel that the students in these schools are more difficult to teach which puts a strain on their emotional wellbeing. Nevertheless, this study shows that if teachers consider their students as more teachable in these schools, teachers are less emotionally exhausted.

Firstly, perceptions towards all students in ethnically diverse schools could be more negative since teachers might take over the idea that these schools are more difficult and even problematic contexts, as this is ingrained in public discourse and by policy makers (Agirdag, Van Avermaet & Van Houtte, 2012). Even before entering the school, these negative and stereotyped perceptions already circulate as teachers indicate they would feel higher levels of burnout in an ethnically diverse school (Glock et al., 2019). Secondly, perceptions towards ethnic minority students, although dependent on the specific ethnic minority group, are more negative (Tettegah, 1996). Hence, creating awareness on the importance of teachers' perceptions of the students and providing opportunities to amend negative teacher perceptions could lower teachers' feelings of emotional exhaustion. These perceptions could be improved by strengthening teacher-student relations and by increasing multicultural teacher training (Friedman, 1995; Horenczyk & Tatar, 2002). However, schools with a high amount of ethnic diversity can in fact pose challenges for teachers, which they do not always feel equipped to handle (Tatar & Horenczyk, 2003). Challenges are for

example more teaching effort for foreign speaking students (Ballet et al. 2006), more interethnic conflicts (Goldsmith, 2004) and more students with a low socioeconomic status, which teachers also consider to be less teachable (Van Houtte, 2003).

Consistent with the study of Betoret (2009), perceptions of teachability are associated with all three dimensions of burnout in our study. Hence, next to teachers' emotional exhaustion, both depersonalization and reduced sense of accomplishment are directly associated with teachability. Teachers who perceive their students as less teachable feel more depersonalized, perceive a larger distance towards the students and feel less confident in their teaching. It might be the case that they ascribe the difficulty to teach these students to their own teaching skills.

As for our other explaining mechanism suggested by Kalin (1996), ethnic prejudice, our results show that ethnic diversity does not lower ethnic prejudice, which consequently does not reduce teacher burnout levels. The first assumption, based on the intergroup contact theory (Allport, 1954) that ethnic diversity would lower ethnic prejudice is not affirmed. Only when teachability is added in the analysis, there is an effect of ethnic diversity on ethnic prejudice. Thus, teachers who consider their students as more teachable, are less likely to be ethnically prejudiced in schools with a higher proportion of ethnic minority students (Vervaeke, D'hondt, Van Houtte & Stevens, 2016). Hence, Flemish urban schools do not appear to consolidate the right conditions where intergroup contact reduces teachers' ethnic prejudice and increase teacher wellbeing. However, of the three sub dimensions of burnout, holding ethnic prejudices is associated with more feelings of depersonalization towards the students. While actively categorizing students to an outgroup and having ethnically prejudiced conceptions, teachers distance themselves from the students and may become more and more alienated from their work context (Kumashiro, 2000). Hence, not only for the students, but also for teachers themselves, holding ethnic prejudices seems to have negative consequences. Although our

results show that teachability perceptions and ethnic prejudice are separate processes, teachers' ethnic prejudice might strengthen negative teachability perceptions of ethnic minority students and increase burnout levels.

Furthermore, some individual teacher characteristics are associated with the three dimensions of burnout. Teaching experience affects all burnout dimensions: teachers with more experience have higher chances of feeling both emotional exhaustion and depersonalization than less experienced teachers. An explanation is that emotional exhaustion and depersonalization are the result of a long term process of chronic stressors and are therefore more likely to occur later in a teachers' career. However, more experienced teachers have a higher sense of accomplishment compared to less experienced teachers. Those less experienced teachers feel more insecure about their teaching abilities and are also the ones who leave the profession most often, at a much higher rate than more experienced teachers (Ingersoll, 2001).

As for the other individual teacher characteristics, we found that male teachers feel significantly more depersonalized from their students compared to female teachers, corresponding with the study of Ingersoll (2001). Surprisingly, teachers who work in the technical track seem to feel more of a sense of personal accomplishment compared to teachers who only work in the academic track. The social learning theory from Bandura (1997) could provide a possible explanation for this association since it reasons that the mastery of more demanding tasks, such as teaching in technical schools, expands feelings of efficacy. For emotional exhaustion and depersonalization we did not find an effect of the track in which the teacher works.

This study has several limitations. Firstly, this research is based on a cross-sectional sample. Teacher burnout is a process which comes into being quite slowly (Friedman, 2000) yet this study was not able to consider the developmental aspects of burnout symptoms. Hence, a longitudinal study that tracks the evolution of the burnout dimensions over time can shed a light on how it fluctuates

within schools. It can determine the causality in the associations we found and take into account that between-school differences might be more likely among teachers who have taught in the same school for a longer period of time (Klusmann, Kunter, Trautwein, Lüdtke & Baumert, 2008). In addition, the majority of the American studies focusing on teacher wellbeing in ethnically diverse schools take up the ethnicity of the teacher (Haberman, 2005). Findings have demonstrated that on the one hand, ethnic minority teachers have more multicultural competences as they may operate as role models and cultural translators (Howard, 2010). On the other hand, these teachers often feel pressured as the spokesperson of the ethnic minority group (Haberman, 2005). Yet due to the small amount of ethnic minority teachers in our sample (and in Flemish education in general), we were not able to include this variable in the analysis.

Future research should concentrate on whether there is a difference in burnout between white and ethnic minority teachers and how this is related to the ethnic school composition. In this study, we analysed the actual ethnic diversity that is present in schools and its effect on teachers. However, since perceptions of teachers seem to matter for their wellbeing, we also suggest future studies focus on the perceived student diversity according to teachers since teachers differ in their conceptions of schools with many ethnic minority students (Betoret, 2009).

Another suggestion for future research could explore further which intergroup conditions create reduced ethnic prejudice and possibly a lower burnout prevalence among teachers. As shown by Stearns and colleagues (2014) the schools' organizational culture moderates the negative effect of the ethno-racial mismatch between teachers and students on white teachers' job satisfaction. This organizational culture entails the role of the schools' organizational culture, which entails the existence of a professional community with a clear vision, school pride and a sense of belonging. A second condition which might be necessary to reduce prejudice and increase wellbeing may be the general

school view on multiculturalism. For example, if teachers perceive their school environment as assimilationist, they appear to have a higher level of diversity related burnout (Dubbeld et al., 2019; Tatar and Horenzyck, 2003). Hence, the schools' professional environment, which is supported by the principal and by colleagues, is also a relevant factor to investigate.

To further explain teacher burnout, future research should also incorporate role conflict and role overload (Dworkin, 1987), as the most hardworking teachers with perfectionistic concerns often develop a burnout (Zhang & Cham, 2007). Role conflict means that teachers feel they have conflicting job demands, contributing to their stress level. Teachers may experience a role conflict when they initiate their career as very engaged to help socially disadvantaged students, but then realize this is often difficult within certain school contexts (Quartz & Group, 2003). Role overload is the situation where teachers are assigned more work than they can handle, often due to the working conditions in a school (Simon & Johnson, 2015).

This study has several implications for the educational practice. Through the mechanism of perceived teachability, teachers evaluate students and adjust their behavior and feelings towards the students. Unlike some psychological studies have suggested (e.g., Gold, 1985), individual teachers who are struggling with burnout are not personally accountable for not being able to 'cope with job stressors'. Teachers feel more supported in contexts where teachers positively evaluate their students, especially in ethnically diverse schools. Other research suggests that it is essential to guide teachers, both with their culturally responsive teaching skills as by providing a sounding board for teachers' concerns (Tatar & Horenzyck, 2003). Increasing the cultural responsivity of teachers to deal with ethnic minority students within a multicultural school context may enhance teachers' perceptions of the students and reduce symptoms of burnout (Horenzyck & Tatar, 2002). As for pre-service teachers, merely increasing contact with ethnic minority students will not decrease ethnic

prejudice. However, creating interventions and courses in teacher education that aim to provide awareness on stereotypical and ethnically prejudged conceptions of students, could improve the educational conditions for both teachers and students (Tran & Young, 1994). However, teachers are not only responsible for this multicultural approach combatting prejudice to increase student and teacher wellbeing (D'Angelo & Dixey, 2001). The school principal and policy should also support multicultural teaching practices such as addressing ethnic prejudice, evaluating school guidelines and involving all parents in school activities.

It is important to point out that ethnic diversity of the student population is not a problem that needs to be fixed, but teachers should teach in a way that works well in a culturally diverse classroom, both for all their students and themselves. This way schools can evolve into institutions that cherish ethnic diversity as a resource for learning (Vedder et al., 2006). In sum, we argue that if teachers have a higher teachability conception of the students and teacher-student relations are strengthened, teachers who work in ethnically diverse schools can thrive, feel engaged and consequently lower their chances of feeling emotional exhaustion.

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Een tweede hypothese onderzoekt of er net een lagere mate van burn-out in etnisch diverse scholen is bij leerkrachten omdat ze minder etnische vooroordelen hebben, wat leidt tot betere relaties met hun leerlingen. Aan de hand van een multilevel analyse onderzochten we scholendata van 635 leerkrachten in 45 secundaire scholen in Vlaanderen. De bevindingen tonen aan dat leerkrachten in scholen met een hoge mate van etnische diversiteit meer emotioneel uitgeput zijn omdat ze hun leerlingen als minder onderwijsbaar inschatten. Dit wijst op het belang van positieve percepties van leerlingen en voldoende ondersteuning van leerkrachten in cultureel responsief lesgeven.

Burn-out; leerkrachten; etnische diversiteit; onderwijsbaarheid; etnische vooroordelen

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Nederlandstalige samenvatting

Wakkert etnische diversiteit op school het vuur van leerkrachten aan of dooft het dit uit?

De meeste studies tonen aan dat leerkrachten in etnisch diverse scholen hun job vaker als een stressor ervaren, hoewel andere studies tonen dat deze leerkrachten een hogere mate van welbevinden hebben. Deze studie onderzoekt wat de associatie is tussen etnische diversiteit op school en dimensies van burn-out bij leerkrachten, namelijk emotionele uitputting, depersonalisatie en persoonlijke onbekwaamheid. Er worden twee mogelijke hypothesen onderzocht. De eerste hypothese die onderzocht wordt, is dat leerkrachten in etnisch diverse scholen een verhoogde kans op burn-out hebben omdat ze de onderwijsbaarheid van leerlingen lager inschatten op deze scholen, wat gepaard gaat met minder goede leerling-leerkracht relaties.