

The influence of personality factors on demand perception during teacher induction



Manuela Keller-Schneider, Zurich University, Institute of Psychology, Prof. em. Dr. F. Stoll / Pädagogische Hochschule Zürich | Switzerland

Theoretical background: In the biographically important phase of induction teachers are challenged by new requirements. Hericks (2006)¹ describes four ranges of tasks, indispensably mastered in teacher induction: Person and vocational role – Teaching – Interaction – Cooperation in the Institution. During the induction phase as developmental task, competences have to be expanded and adapted (Neuweg 2003², Dick 1994)³ within all four ranges. Perception of demands can be individually different, depending on the appraisal of requirements and resources. By mastering the demands, teachers can be challenged differently. Do personality aspects have an impact on this individually different perception? The study represented here concerns with requirements in teacher induction and examines whether personality factors or the stage of development of competences have a significant influence on the individually different emphasis of requirements. The poster focuses on effects of personality factors.

Method: 80 occupation-related requirements identified by content analysis were subjectively estimated under the aspects of importance, competence and demand by two groups of teachers (160 beginners and 140 experienced teachers) of the elementary and secondary school in the canton of Zurich, Switzerland. Scales for Personality Factors (BFI, Rammstedt & John, 2005)³, Coping Styles (CISS, Endler & Parker, translated by Kälin 2003)⁴ and Self-efficacy (Schmitz & Schwarzer, 2000)⁵ are employed. Results from a factor analysis show four scales of demands, focused on induction phase. The effects of personality factors, coping strategies and self-efficacy on demands are examined by regression analysis. The result of the cluster analysis shows six patterns of demand perception in teacher induction.

Results: Results of factor analyses regarding perception of the 80 requirements show different structures for beginners and experienced teachers. Thus, the developed four scales of demands (with 2 to 4 subscales) refer only to the beginners, and the experienced teachers were excluded from further examinations. Comparing the two samples is not possible with these beginner-referred scales.

Effects of Personality Factors, Coping strategies and Self-efficacy on Demands:

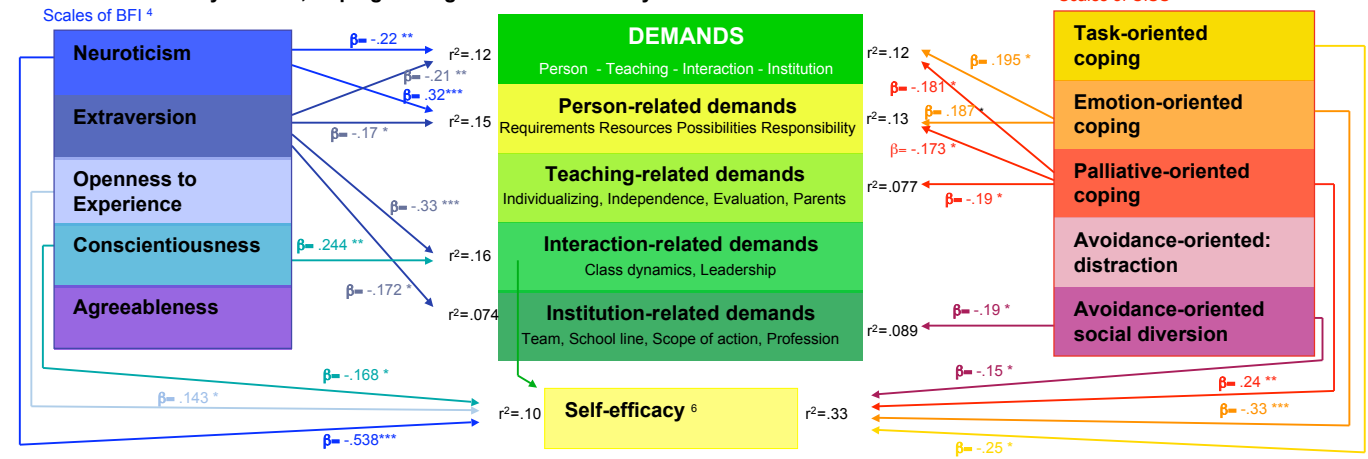


Fig. 1: Effects of personality factors, coping strategies and self-efficacy on demands in teacher induction.

Types of Demand Perception and values in personality and coping strategies

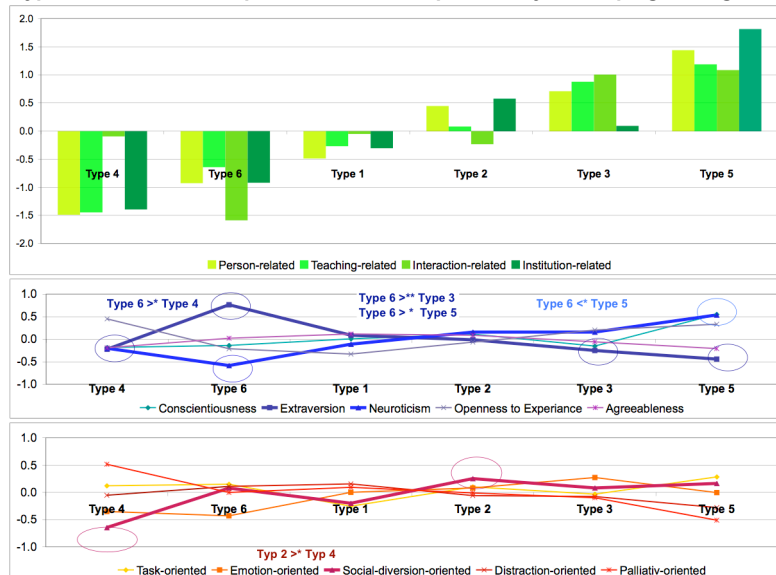


Fig. 2: Types of perception of demands: means of personality factors, demands and coping styles

Limitations:

- The scales of profession-related demands fit only for beginner teachers. In the sample of experienced teachers a different structure was found. On a more general level a common structure for both phases was found.
- With a larger sample the effects of personality dimensions and coping styles on each of the six types of demand perception could be checked.
- A longitudinal study could focus on individual developments

Literature:

- Hericks, U. (2006). Professionalisierung als Entwicklungsaufgabe. Wiesbaden: VS.
- Neuweg, G. (2001). Könnerschaft und implizites Wissen. Münster: Waxmann.
- Dick, A. (1994). Vom unterrichtlichen Wissen zur Praxisreflexion. Bad Heilbrunn: Klinkhardt.
- Rammstedt, B. & John, O. (2005). Kurzversion Big Five Inventory. Diagnostica, 51, Heft 4, S. 195-206.
- Kälin, W. (1995). Deutsche 24-Item Kurzform des "Coping Inventory for Stressful Situations" (CISS) von Semmer N.S. & Parker J.D.A. (unveröffentlichter Fragebogen, Bern: Universität, Institut für Psychologie)
- Schmitz, G.S., & Schwarzer, R. (2000). Selbstwirksamkeitserwartungen von Lehrern. Zsch für Pädagogische Psychologie, 14(1), 12-25.

Types of Perception of demands

- Type 1:** Challenged slightly below the average, with balanced coping strategies and personality dimensions
- Type 2:** Challenged slightly above the average, most by person-related and institution-related demands, with balanced coping strategies (social diversion slightly increased) and balanced personality dimensions
- Type 3:** Challenged above average (institution-related demands on the average), with balanced coping strategies (emotion-oriented coping slightly increased) and balanced personality dimensions (extraversion slightly below average)
- Type 4:** Challenged below average (interaction-related demands on the average), with high emotion-oriented and low social diversion-oriented coping, with balanced personality dimensions (openness slightly above average)
- Type 5:** Challenged clearly above average (very high in interaction-related demands), with balanced coping strategies (lowest in palliative and distraction-oriented), with neuroticism above average and extraversion below average
- Type 6:** Challenged heavily below average (very low in interaction-related demands), with balanced Coping strategies (emotion-oriented low), with extraversion above average and neuroticism below average

Discussion:

- Neuroticism and extraversion have an impact on perception of demands in general (Fig. 1) and on person-related demands. High interaction-related demands are influenced by low extraversion and high conscientiousness. Low extraversion seems to be an unfavourable aspect of personality to master demands in teacher induction.
- High emotion-oriented and low palliative-oriented coping have an impact on high demands in teacher induction phase (Fig. 1). High emotion-oriented coping seems to be an unfavourable coping strategy to master demands during teacher induction.
- Types of perception differ by extent of demands and by pattern of demands perception (Fig. 2). Interaction- and institution-related demands show an effect on type-allocation.
- The most challenged group of teachers in induction phase, Type 5, shows an unfavourable type of mastering challenges, with high neuroticism and low extraversion, relatively high task-oriented and low palliative-oriented coping.
- One of the low challenged group (Type 6) with very low extension in interaction-related demands shows high extraversion and low neuroticism. It seems to be a favourable type to master the challenges in teacher induction phase.
- Educational level, sex of the teacher, function at school, class size and school size don't show any effect on the extent of demands nor on the type of demand perception.
- Neuroticism shows a high negative effect on self-efficacy, together with conscientiousness (negative) and openness (positive) - a unfavourable combination of personality dimensions.
- Aspects of personality show an effect on mastering the demands of teacher induction as a developing task. The diagnosis of personality dimensions could be helpful for young people in occupation choice.

Contact: m.keller-schneider@phzh.ch.