

Relationship between Emotional Intelligence and Burnout in non-formal teachers of people with disabilities¹

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Abstract. INTRODUCTION. The direct involvement of professionals who carry out their activity with people with Intellectual Disability can generate a high degree of stress and emotional exhaustion. The objective of this research was to evaluate the relationship between emotional intelligence and dispositional optimism in processes of professional Burnout. METHOD. One hundred forty-four subjects participated in this study, belonging to the Andalusian Association of Organizations in favor of people with Intellectual Disability (Spain). The following instruments were used: Life Orientation Test Revised, Trait Meta-Mood Scale-24 and Maslach Burnout Inventory. The reliability of the scores of each instrument (Cronbach's alpha and Omega coefficient), correlation between the scores in each of the dimensions, an analysis of differences of means (Student's *t* and ANOVA) based on the sociodemographic variables considered, is analyzed as well as a model of structural equations to determine the effects and relationships established by the different constructs under study. RESULTS. The results showed the positive relationship between some of the dimensions of burnout (emotional fatigue, personal fulfilment), emotional intelligence (repair) and dispositional optimism ($p < .05$). An analysis was performed using structural equations, concluding that the indicators with the greatest regression weight are the Burnout variables (depersonalization) and negatively (personal fulfilment). DISCUSSION. The discussion examines whether findings from the study follow the current trend in research conducted in this field. Among the main contributions of this investigation project is the fact that it is one of the first studies where Emotional Intelligence, Burnout and Dispositional Optimism in professionals of non-formal education of people with Intellectual Disabilities are included.

Key words: burnout; dispositional optimism; emotional intelligence; intellectual disability.

[es] Relación entre la Inteligencia Emocional y Burnout en educadores no formales de personas con discapacidad

Resumen. INTRODUCCIÓN. La implicación directa de los profesionales que desarrollan su actividad con personas con Discapacidad Intelectual puede generar un alto grado de estrés y agotamiento emocional. El objetivo de esta investigación fue evaluar la relación entre inteligencia emocional y optimismo disposicional en procesos de Burnout profesional. MÉTODO. En este estudio participaron 144 sujetos, pertenecientes a la Asociación Andaluza de Organizaciones a favor de las personas con Discapacidad Intelectual (España). Se utilizaron los siguientes instrumentos: Life Orientation Test Revised, Trait Meta-Mood Scale-24 y Maslach Burnout Inventory. Se analiza la fiabilidad de las puntuaciones de cada instrumento (alfa de Cronbach y coeficiente Omega), correlación entre las puntuaciones en cada una de las dimensiones, un análisis de diferencias de medias (*t* Student y ANOVA) en función de las variables sociodemográficas consideradas, así como un modelo de ecuaciones estructurales para determinar los efectos y relaciones establecidas por los diferentes constructos a estudio. RESULTADOS. Los resultados mostraron la relación positiva entre algunas de las dimensiones de burnout (cansancio emocional, realización personal), inteligencia emocional (reparación) y optimismo disposicional ($p < .05$). Se realizó un análisis mediante ecuaciones estructurales, concluyendo que los indicadores con mayor peso de regresión son las variables Burnout (despersonalización) y negativamente (realización personal). DISCUSIÓN. En la discusión del estudio se analiza cómo los resultados extraídos siguen la tendencia predominante en investigaciones

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realizadas en este campo. Una de las principales aportaciones de esta propuesta investigadora es ser uno de los primeros trabajos que analizan Inteligencia Emocional, Burnout y Optimismo disposicional en profesionales de la educación no formal de personas con Discapacidad Intelectual.

Palabras clave: burnout; discapacidad intelectual; inteligencia emocional; optimismo disposicional.

Sumario. 1. Introducción. 2. Método. 3. Resultados. 4. Discusión y Conclusiones 5. Referencias bibliográficas.

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1. Introduction

Professionals who develop their educational career with people with intellectual disabilities (hereinafter ID), are often faced with different pressures and situations of great emotional wear, due to high demands related to the development of their activity, lack of autonomy in the delimitation of their functions, lack of institutional support and scarce participation in decision making, as well as the close relationship established with their people in care (Ricci et al., 2020).

These workers must be sensitive to the specific needs of their profession, under increasingly demanding context conditions that require the development of emotional competencies for the management of conflicts, critical situations and frustrations related to their work activity (Delhom et al., 2017). In this regard, professional attrition caused by the imbalance between what is given and received, the level of maximum demand from organisations and responsibility in the care of people with special educational needs, has become a matter of great concern in fields related to non-formal education, health and welfare in the last years (Pérez-Fuentes et al., 2019).

1.1. Burnout syndrome or professional attrition

Burnout syndrome is a term developed in the 70s in order to address chronic stress, lack of interest in work and lifestyle. It is associated with social-emotional, cognitive and behavioural symptoms, which professionals experience in different areas, and which is characterised by three main factors: Emotional fatigue or the inability to cope with the day-to-day; Personal fulfilment or the person's assessment of him/herself; Depersonalisation or the disinterested and distant attitude towards the people under attention (Maslach, et al., 2001).

Some studies explain the incidence of this symptomatology in care professionals, as a consequence of the stressful effects on the development of daily activity over time (Moreto et al., 2018). Other studies, point out that people who are exposed to long term stress will not necessarily develop Burnout. If emotional management is determined by the development of needed coping skills, it is possible that positive mechanisms are produced to neutralise the negative effects of stress (Martínez-Monteaagudo et al., 2019). That is, personal effectiveness will be determined by the emotional capacity to adjust and manage work demands (Arvidsson et al., 2016). Many studies focused over the last years in variables that may contribute to the prevention or decrease of the effects of Burnout, as well as those personal resources that facilitate a better functioning and well-being at work (Gómez-Perdomo et al., 2017). These variables can be found to a lesser or greater extent, represented by the emotional competences and personal psychological asset of the person (Mérida-López & Extremera, 2017).

Emotional competences constitute a key part of the individual's core, and it is decisive for a good adjustment in the context where he/she performs (Cobos-Sánchez et al., 2017). Then, it contributes to the improvement of psychological and emotional self-control to face difficulties (Gavín-Chocano et al., 2020). The hierarchical use of emotions will be determined by the sum of previous experiences and acquired baggage. In this way, people with better adaptive and regulatory capacities, based on reflection and critical thinking, will be more emotionally competent than people who are not able to manage their emotions in critical situations (Barker & Mills, 2018).

1.2. Emotional Intelligence

Emotional competencies acquire their meaning and origin in the concept of Emotional Intelligence (hereinafter EI), offering a diversified theoretical framework in perception, facilitation, understanding and emotional regulation (Fiori & Vesely-Maillefer, 2018).

The concept of EI has been defined as the ability of people to perceive and manage emotions, the recognition of the emotions of others, placing emphasis on the information received in an adaptive way, to guide their actions (Mayer et al., 2016). Then, it has become a suitable variable to measure the different events in people's daily lives (Gómez-Romero et al., 2018). Interest in this construct has increased over the last years, mainly due to the search for suitable tools capable of measuring the impact of each of its factors (Extremera et al., 2020). It provides

criteria which have served as a link to the different EI conceptualisations and diversify two clearly differentiated models: “trait model” and “ability model” (Fernández-Berrocal et al., 2018). The “trait model” (Bar-On, 1997; Petrides & Furham, 2001) combines emotional competencies with personality characteristics. EI is understood as the combination of mental abilities and personality traits (Mayer et al., 2008), to be assessed with typical performance tests; the most widely used is the Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory -EQi- (Bar-On, 2006). On the other hand, the ability model (Mayer et al., 2016) is considered by EI as the capacity to perceive, understand and manage emotions, through four basic competences: perception, understanding, facilitation and emotional regulation (Norboevich, 2020).

This research bases its content on the “ability model”, which notes the necessary relationship between these variables, and understands that the acquisition of emotional competencies for the prevention of Burnout can be decisive for coping with the stress derived from work activities with optimism (Beauvais et al., 2018; Cazalla-Luna & Molero, 2016; Vizoso-Gómez & Arias-Gundín, 2018). Specifically, previous studies concluded the positive relationship between EI as a preventive factor in symptoms of burnout, anxiety and stress (Barraza-López et al., 2017). Unlike other studies from our research group (Gavín et al., 2020), this paper uses an ability model of EI and it includes optimism as one of the variables most closely related to EI.

1.3. Dispositional optimism

Another concept that has gradually acquired relevance in different areas related to the professional activity and the individual’s emotional well-being is the Theoretical model of dispositional optimism (Scheier & Carver, 1985). This is defined as the individual’s positive perception of future events (Knowlden et al., 2016; Vizoso-Gómez & Arias-Gundín, 2018), and a proactive attitude to stressful situations or actions that put their well-being at risk (Gavín-Chocano et al., 2020), whether emotionally and behaviourally; thus, this can lead to motivation or overall assessment of their decision-making capacity, creativity, satisfaction or enthusiasm for their professional practice (García & Forero, 2016). Therefore, the goals and objectives set are perceived as achievable, and it uses all necessary ways to achieve them. In this regard, the disposition to optimism has been positively related to self-efficacy in the development of the professional activity (Feldman & Kubota, 2015) and low levels of anxiety (Pino et al., 2016). Emotionally intelligent people are also more optimistic (Cazalla-Luna & Molero, 2018; Di Fabio et al., 2018; Gavín-Chocano, 2018). The expectations generated about achieving the objectives set become an incentive that encourages the use of all necessary effort to achieve them.

Taking into account these considerations, this study focuses its content on the group of non-formal education professionals of the Andalusian Association of Organisations in favour of people with ID (Full Inclusion), which is an organisation that brings together 140000 people with ID or development, 235000 family members, 40000 professionals and 8000 volunteers who support them. In this context, it is necessary to understand the impact that the acquisition of emotional resources by direct care professionals may have on the educational development of disadvantaged groups.

The objectives set out in this research in general are: (a) Analysing the existence of significant correlations between EI evaluation instrument factors (TMMS-24), Burnout (MBI-HSS) and dispositional optimism (LOT-R), respectively; (b) Determining the existence of significant differences in the dimensions of the instruments considered (TMMS-24, MBI-HSS and LOT-R) and the socio-demographic variables gender, age and years of professional experience; (c) Determining the effect of the EI and Burnout variables on the dispositional optimism of professionals in the non-formal education sector who attend people with ID.

2. Method

The development of this study was based on a quantitative, non-experimental, cross-sectional and correlational empirical research. Based on the criteria, both longitudinal and sampling measures were established, through comparative strategies. The goodness of fit and reliability of the tests were established through the Cronbach Alpha and Omega coefficient, which is also known as Jöreskog’s Rho (McDonald, 2013).

2.1. Participants

A non-probabilistic sampling of an incidental type was used. The participants were 144 direct care professionals from the Andalusian Association of Organisations in favour of people with ID (Full Inclusion), an institution made up of 124 entities in Andalusia (Spain) that base their action on improving the life conditions of people with ID and their families, by contributing, from its ethical commitment, through support and opportunities, for each person with ID or developmental disabilities and their family to develop their CV project, as well as to promote their inclusion as full citizens in a fair and supportive society. By sex, the participants are 117 women, which means 81.25% and 27 men 18.75%. The age range is between 22 and 63 years, with an average of 39.35 (± 9.06) and an average of 10.31 (± 7.21) years of professional experience. A convenience and not probabilistic of casual type sampling was developed. The sample consisted of those professionals who voluntarily agreed to answer the different questionnaires, considering

only the respondents' answers to all instruments. Thus, 31 of the 124 entities belonging to the association participated in the study. This represents 25% (see Table 1).

Table 1. Sample descriptives data

Variables	<i>n</i>	%
Gender		
Woman	117	81.25
Man	27	18.75
Age		
22-35 years	48	33.30
36-49 years	77	53.50
50-63 years	19	13.20
Professional experience		
0-13 years	105	72.90
14-27 years	35	24.30
28-39 years	4	2.80

2.2. Instruments

In order to carry out the study, three socio-demographic variables were included with the aim of collecting relevant information relating to gender, age and professional experience, with the intention of analysing the existence of significant differences according to these variables.

Life Orientation Test Revised (LOT-R). The Spanish version of the Life Orientation Test Revised -LOT-R- (Scheier et al., 1994) was used to assess dispositional optimism (Remor et al., 2006). This scale has ten items that measure the degree of optimism („I am always optimistic about my future“) or pessimism („I never expect anything to go my way“) of the individuals. The response format is based on a five-point Likert-type scale. It has 10 items, three out of ten evaluate the degree of the subject's positivism, three the degree of the subject's pessimism and the rest of the items are „filled in“ the questionnaire. The participants will indicate the level of agreement or disagreement in each statement, from 0 (very much in disagreement), to 4 (very much in agreement). Higher valuation is associated with higher dispositional optimism. The internal consistency reliability (α) reported by the authors is $\alpha=.78$; the reliability of the scores in our study is $\alpha=.75$ and the Omega reliability (ω) is $\omega=.82$, respectively.

Trait Meta-Mood Scale-24- (TMMS-24). To assess EI, we used the TMMS-24, by Fernández-Berrocal et al. (2004), which includes three dimensions (attention, clarity and emotional repair). This tool has been used in many social science research settings. In the sample under study the reliability of the scores for each subscale is $\alpha=.85$ for attention, $\alpha=.86$ for clarity and $\alpha=.84$ for repair, respectively. The Omega coefficient (ω) is also reported, considering the weighted sum of the variables in order to reflect the true level of reliability. These are: attention $\omega=.86$, clarity $\omega=.75$ and repair $\omega=.83$.

Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI-HSS). The Spanish version of the MBI-HSS (Gil-Monte, 2002) has been used for the Burnout. This instrument consists of 22 items with Likert-type answers, where the three dimensions of the instrument (Emotional fatigue, Depersonalisation and Personal fulfilment) are evaluated. This questionnaire has been used in different studies on the topic (Andreychik, 2019; Liébana-Presa et al., 2017; Nespereira-Campuzano & Vázquez-Campo, 2017). The internal consistency values reported by the authors include Emotional fatigue $\alpha=.90$, Depersonalisation $\alpha=.79$ and Personal fulfilment $\alpha=.71$ for each subscale. In our sample the reliability (α) of the scores for each subscale of the MBI is $\alpha=.88$, $\alpha=.36$ and $\alpha=.81$ and $\alpha=.67$, with the Omega reliability (ω) of $\omega=.77$, $\omega=.68$ and $\omega=.76$, respectively.

2.3. Procedure and data analysis

The study was conducted after obtaining prior informed consent from each participant. Non-probabilistic, incidental sampling was used. The participants were duly informed of the process to be followed, confidentiality and anonymity of the information collected. Likewise, the ethical standards and guidelines of the Declaration of Helsinki were followed. Each of the tests was conducted individually. All information regarding the purpose of the study was sent from the Andalusian Association of Organisations in favour of people with ID (Full Inclusion), together with an introductory cover letter stating the general objectives of the study. Data collection was monitored by a member of the research team with those who were responsible for the entities. Beforehand, the purpose of the study and the methodology to be followed were explained. The questionnaires were handed out following the established criteria; first the LOT-R, followed by the TMMS-24, and then the MBI. Despite choosing this sequence, this order does not change the expected result.

From the data collected, the descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) were obtained, analysing each instrument's score reliability, internal consistency, Cronbach's alpha and omega coefficient and the correlation between the resulting scores in each of the dimensions. An analysis of differences in means according to gender was then carried out (Student test of difference in means for independent tests). For the comparative analysis between age and years of professional experience variables, a univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed. The assumptions of data independence, normality and goodness-of-fit were checked in all cases through the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. In order to report the effect size, an ANOVA was performed.

Finally, a structural equation model was made to determine the effects and relationships established by the different constructs under study. In all cases a 95% confidence level was used (significance $p < .05$), using the SPSS 25.0 program (IBM, Chicago, IL) and AMOS 25, to obtain the results of the tests indicated above.

3. Results

The results set out below support each of the objectives set out above, thereby ensuring that each of the responses is consistent.

3.1. Relationship between life satisfaction, burnout and emotional intelligence

Firstly, we present the correlation matrix, descriptive statistics and the reliability (Cronbach alpha and Omega coefficient). The details of the correlations, the value of the Pearson r statistic and significance are also reported in the Table 2.

Table 2. Internal consistency, means, standard deviation and correlations (r Pearson)

Variable	α	ω	M (SD)	OPT	AT	CL	PF	EF	DES	REP
OPT										
95% CI	.75	.82	23.67 (\pm 4.16)	-	-.07	-.44**	.47**	.25**	-.30**	.28**
Upper					.09	.56	.59	-.09	-.14	.42
Lower					-.23	.30	.33	.40	-.44	.12
AT										
95% CI	.85	.86	26.08 (\pm 6.12)		-	.28**	.21*	.06	.13	.10
Upper						.31	.24	.28	.29	.19
Lower						-.04	-.07	-.03	-.02	-.13
CL										
95% CI	.86	.75	29.68 (\pm 5.29)			-	.48**	-.27**	-.19*	.33**
Upper							.60	.12	-.02	.47
Lower							.35	-.42	-.34	.18
PF										
95% CI	.84	.83	31.06 (\pm 5.31)				-	-.24**	-.08	.27**
Upper								-.08	.08	.41
Lower								-.39	-.24	.11
EF										
95% CI	.88	.77	17.26 (\pm 10.96)					-	.38**	-.35**
Upper									.51	-.20
Lower									.23	-.48
DES										
95% CI	.36	.68	5.15 (\pm 4.58)						-	-.24**
Upper										-.08
Lower										-.39
REP										
95% CI	.81	.76	40.06 (\pm 6.19)							-
Upper										
Lower										

Note: (1) Mean=M, Standard Deviation=SD, Confidence intervals= CI, Dispositional Optimism=OPT, Burnout Emotional Fatigue=EF, Depersonalisation=DES, Personal fulfilment=PF, Emotional Intelligence Attention=AT, Clarity=CL, Repair=REP (2) *= $p < .05$; **= $p < .01$.

The results point to a statistically significant ($p < .01$) relationship between the variables Dispositional Optimism and two of the dimensions of EI, Clarity and Repair. There is also a relationship between dispositional optimism

and the variables of Burnout, Emotional Fatigue, Depersonalization and Personal fulfillment ($p < .01$), as well as a significant relationship between the variables of EI Attention and Clarity ($p < .01$), and Attention and Reparation ($p < .05$), Clarity and Reparation ($p < .01$). We also found significant differences between the variables of EI and Burnout, Clarity and Emotional Fatigue ($p < .01$), Clarity and Depersonalization ($p < .05$), Clarity and Personal fulfillment, Reparation and Emotional Fatigue, Reparation and Personal fulfillment (both $p < .01$). Finally, there are relationships between the variables of Burnout, Emotional Fatigue and Depersonalisation, Emotional Fatigue and Personal fulfillment, Depersonalisation and Personal fulfillment (all of them $p < .01$).

3.2. Differences according to socio-demographic variables.

To determine the mean differences in relation to the gender variable, we used Student *t-test* for independent samples (Table 3). The results indicate that there are only significant differences in one of the Burnout variables of the MBI instrument, Depersonalization ($t_{141} = 7.489$; $p < .01$), with higher scores obtained in men than in women.

Table 3. Mean differences according to gender (t Student)

Variables	Men (n=27)	Women (n=117)	$t_{(141)}$	p	Effect (d)	95% CI	
	$M (SD)$	$M (SD)$				Lower	Upper
OPT	23.11	24.68	-9.328	.069	.417	-3.257	.231
AT	(±3.78)	(±3.74)	-3.736	.529	.165	-3.557	1.620
CL	25.25	26.25	12.663	.521	.567	-5.078	-.700
REP	(±6.11)	(±5.95)	7.126	.603	.318	-3.774	.702
EF	27.73	30.60	4.119	.471	.186	-3.450	5.826
DES	(±5.08)	(±5.04)	7.489	.000**	.360	-.890	2.976
PF	30.17	31.79	-3.368	.848	.016	-2.647	2.601
	(±5.09)	(±5.08)					
	18.37	16.42					
	(±10.26)	(±10.64)					
	6.12	4.65					
	(±3.53)	(±4.55)					
	40.28	40.38					
	(±5.69)	(±6.09)					

Note: (1) Mean=M, Standard Deviation=SD, Dispositional Optimism=OPT, Burnout Emotional Fatigue=EF, Depersonalisation=DES, Personal fulfillment=PF, Emotional Intelligence Attention=AT, Clarity=CL, Repair=REP (2) *= $p < .05$; **= $p < .01$.

For the remaining Burnout variables, no significant gender differences were found in the MBI instrument ($t_{141} < 2.0$; $p > .05$ ns). There are also no significant differences in any of the EI variables of the TMMS-24 instrument ($t_{141} < 2.0$; $p > .05$ ns) and Dispositional Optimism ($t_{141} < 2.0$; $p > .05$ ns) in relation to gender (See Table 4). The effect size is small in the variables AT, EF and PF ($d < 2$), and medium in the rest of the variables considered.

Table 4. Mean differences according to age (ANOVA)

Variable	22-35 years $M (SD)$	36-49 years $M (SD)$	50-63 years $M (SD)$	$F_{(3,141)}$	p	Effect η^2
OPT	23.48	23.66	24.16	.179	.836	.003
AT	(±4.19)	(±4.31)	(±3.57)	2.889	.059	.039
CL	27.77	25.36	24.74	.658	.519	.009
REP	(±6.65)	(±5.93)	(±4.67)	.615	.542	.009
EF	30.21	29.21	30.26	.205	.815	.003
DES	(±5.15)	(±5.51)	(±4.75)	.104	.901	.001
PF	30.96	30.82	32.32	1.880	.156	.026
	(±5.21)	(±5.44)	(±5.14)			
	18.08	16.88	16.68			
	(±11.89)	(±10.78)	(±9.55)			
	5.23 (±5.12)	5.01	5.53			
	39.92	(±4.52)	(±3.40)			
	(±5.10)	40.73	37.68			
		(±6.06)	(±8.57)			

Note: (1) Mean=M, Standard Deviation=SD, Dispositional Optimism=OPT, Burnout Emotional Fatigue=EF, Depersonalisation=DES, Personal fulfillment=PF, Emotional Intelligence Attention=AT, Clarity=CL, Repair=REP (2) *= $p < .05$; **= $p < .01$. (3) The effect size is expressed by the Cohen coefficient.

In order to contrast the homogeneity of covariance matrices of the variables age and years of professional experience of the participants, three intervals were determined for the age of (22-35 years, 36-49 years and 50-63 years) and for the years of professional experience (1-13 years, 14-27 years and 28-39 years), through the ANOVA conducted (See Table 4). In the dispositional optimism dimension ($F_{(3,141)} = .179$; $p > .05$ ns) no significant differences were found in relation to age. In the Burnout dimension in the MBI instrument and the EI in the TMMS-24 instrument no significant differences were found either ($F_{(3,141)} < 2.0$; $p > .05$ ns). The effect size is small in all cases (η^2), following the classic criteria of Cohen (1988).

The differences according to the years of professional experience (See Table 5) determined that there are no significant differences in the variable Dispositional Optimism ($F_{(3,141)} = 1.663$; $p > .05$ ns). Significant differences are only found in the subscale of Burnout, emotional fatigue ($F_{(3,141)} = 3.748$; $p = .026$). The rest of Burnout subscales determine that there are no significant differences ($F_{(3,141)} < 2.0$; $p > .05$ ns). In all dimensions of EI from the TMMS-24 instrument no significant differences were found either ($F_{(3,141)} < 2.0$; $p > .05$ ns).

The Tukey HSD test reports significant differences between the 1–13-year-old and 14–27-year-old participants in favour of 14-27 years. Similarly, the evidence found in the Games-Howell post-hoc test indicates that the group (14-27 years) in the development of their professional activity was the one that obtained the highest score ($d = .84$; 95% CI: -3.71 - 5.94). The effect size is small in all cases (η^2).

Table 5. Mean differences according to years of professional experience (ANOVA)

Variable	1-13 years M (SD)	14-27 years M (SD)	28-39 years M (SD)	$F_{(3,141)}$	p	Effect η^2
OPT	23.57	24.34	20.50	1.663	.193	.023
AT	(±3.90)	(±4.17)	(±8.88)	1.143	.322	.016
CL	26.54	24.74	25.75	2.571	.080	.035
REP	(±6.27)	(±5.57)	(±6.50)	2.328	.101	.032
EF	30.13	28.89	24.75	3.748	.026*	.050
DES	(±4.87)	(±6.03)	(±7.22)	.581	.561	.008
PF	31.15	31.43	25.50	2.905	.058	.040
	(±5.50)	(±4.27)	(±6.80)			
	16.57	17.69	31.50			
	(±10.95)	(±10.05)	(±11.35)			
	5.15	4.89 (±4.82)	7.50			
	(±4.57)	39.74	(±1.73)			
	40.43	(±6.89)	33.00			
	(±5.82)		(±6.37)			

Note: (1) Mean=M, Standard Deviation=SD, Dispositional Optimism=OPT, Burnout Emotional Fatigue=EF, Depersonalisation=DES, Personal fulfilment=PF, Emotional Intelligence Attention=AT, Clarity=CL, Repair=REP (2) *= $p < .05$; **= $p < .01$. (3) The effect size is expressed by the Eta Squared (η^2).

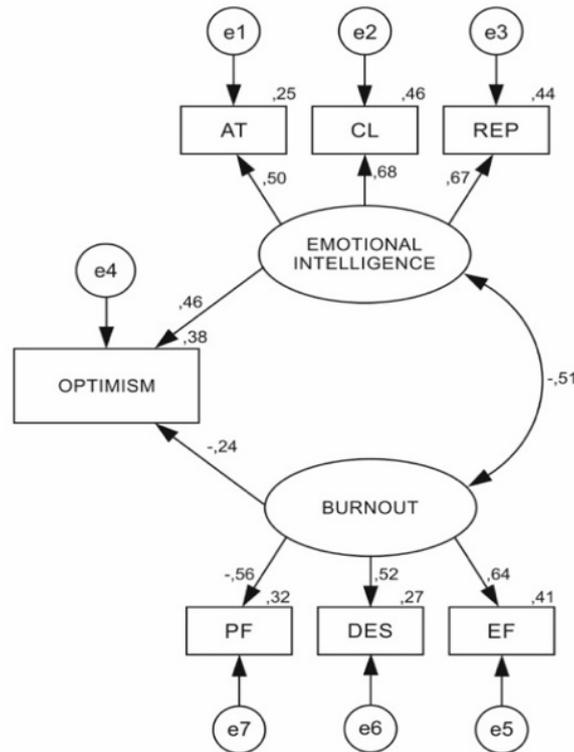
3.3. Structural Equation Model

In order to analyse the relationships between the variables involved in this study (EI, Burnout and Dispositional Optimism), we conducted a structural analysis through structural equation analysis. One of the reasons for using this model is its ability to evaluate the relationships in a comprehensive way, providing a transition from exploratory to confirmatory analysis (Hair et al., 2017).

Therefore, we represent graphically the causal impact of some variables over others based on a theoretical articulation of the model (See Figure 1). Thus, Chi-square obtains an associated value of p that is significant ($\chi^2 = 30.616$; $gl = 12$; $p = .002$), although this value is probably conditioned by the sample size, and it is necessary to analyse other indicators. The relationship established between the variables of EI and optimism (P.R.E. = .46), is higher than the relationship between Burnout and optimism (P.R.E. = -.24), because it has negative value.

Therefore, we observe the standardised weights of saturation between the latent variables and each one of its indicators, in addition to the optimism construct, where the global adjustment of the model is reasonable (CFI = .901, IFI = .908, GFI = .903, RMSEA = .064). Similarly, the RMSEA value does not exceed the acceptable maximum of .08 (Mathieu & Taylor, 2006).

Figure 1. SEM Model



Regarding the regression weights and standardised regression weights (see Table 6), they are established by a significance level of .005 (5% probability of error), which determines the indicators with the highest regression weight for the variables below this value, corresponding to two of the Burnout and EI factors: Depersonalisation (4.018) and Clarity (3.934), and negatively Personal fulfilment (-4.138), respectively.

Table 6. Regression weights and standardized regression weights

Relations between variables		Estimates	RWES	CR	<i>p</i>	SRW
AT	<--- IE	1.000	.132	3.934	***	.502
CL	<--- IE	.476	.085	4.018	***	.679
REP	<--- IE	1.000	.120	-4.138	***	.665
CE	<--- BURNOUT	1.000	.149	3.732	***	.639
DES	<--- BURNOUT	.342	.077	-1.858	***	.523
RP	<--- BURNOUT	-.498	3.604	-3.398	***	-.563
OPT	<--- IE	.555				.459
OPT	<--- BURNOUT	-.142				-.239
IE	<--> BURNOUT	12.245				-.512

Note: (1) Regression Weights=RW, Standardized Regression Weights=SRW, Error Estimate= ES, Critical Ratio=CR.

Similarly, between EI and Dispositional Optimism (3.732) and negatively between EI and Burnout (-3.398). The rest of the variables are not significant because the Critical Ratio (CR) is lower than 2 (Andrade & Cobas, 2005), and these scales have no convergent validity (absolute value higher than 2 means that the parameter is significantly different from 0 at the .005 level with only a 5% probability of error).

4. Discussion and conclusions

The development of emotional competencies of non-formal education professionals who attend to people with ID is not only considered essential for individuals' health and well-being as a preventive measure against Burnout (Nespereira-Campuzano & Vázquez-Campo, 2017), but also for the group where they carry out their educational

activity, due to their sensitivity, responsibility and repercussion of the actions carried out (Puertas-Molero et al., 2019).

The aim of this study was to determine whether there is a relationship between the variables of EI, Burnout and dispositional optimism. Firstly, in addition to verifying the reliability of each of the instruments used through Cronbach alpha, the Omega coefficient was used, by working the weighted sum of each variable and overcoming the limitations that could affect the proportion of the variance (Dominguez-Lara & Merino-Soto, 2015).

According to the results obtained, the statistically significant relationship between Dispositional Optimism, EI and Burnout in all its dimensions was evidenced. This result is similar to that found in other investigations that relate professional attrition with a higher or lower level of professionals' EI, and in turn, with dispositional optimism (Moral-Jiménez & Ganzo-Salamanca, 2018). Similarly, the relationship between Burnout and EI, argues this relationship for the different strategies that people have to cope with adverse situations through an adaptive behavior (Cejudo et al., 2016), thereby achieving a higher degree of optimism for the development and achievements of their activity towards people with ID (Authors, 2020). This association links the efforts made by individuals when they perceive that the objectives are achievable. On the contrary, the deficit in emotional understanding and regulation can be a trigger for greater stress and professional burnout (Liébana-Presa et al., 2017).

The second objective of this study was to determine the relationship between the instruments considered and the socio-demographic variables of gender, age and years of professional experience. With regard to the socio-demographic variable gender and dispositional optimism, no significant differences were found, not even with EI, the scores were higher in women than in men, confirming the data obtained in other studies (Fernández-Berrocá et al., 2018). It is possible that the differences in relation to gender are conditioned by the greater number of women in the sample, which may affect the results (Gavín-Chocano et al., 2020). If significant differences were found in the Burnout variable (depersonalization) and gender, their incidence was higher in men than in women. These data are consistent with other studies where this variable, characterised by the development of distant and cold attitudes towards another person, was higher than men, as well as the variable emotional fatigue (Erbil et al., 2016). In other words, it is women who show a greater sense of belonging to the institution where they carry out their training activity, as well as demonstrating a higher level of EI in all its variables with the group under study (Extremera et al., 2020).

With regard to the socio-demographic variable age, no significant differences were found in any of the dimensions of dispositional optimism, EI and Burnout, with the older professionals displaying a greater disposition to optimism and EI for the clarity and repair variables. This finding is consistent with other research that points to the relationship of these variables with emotional balance caused by background and previous experiences (Rodríguez-Flores & Sánchez-Trujillo, 2018). However, with regard to the Burnout variable (depersonalisation), there is statistically significant relationship with age. Extended contact significantly affects the loss of perspective, increasing distance as age increases (Pulido-Acosta & Herrera-Clavero, 2017). These data are consistent with the results obtained in our research, where the professionals with more years of professional experience are those who present the greatest emotional fatigue derived from the loss of enthusiasm, as they corroborate that the objectives set a priori do not materialise (Rodríguez-Flores & Sánchez-Trujillo, 2018). These may have achieved a greater emotional balance which in many cases may trigger a distancing by perceiving that professional goals are far from the expectations generated over the years. In this context, most research on Burnout, points out that the emotional competencies acquired over the years are protection and resistance factors against the stressors derived from the work activity (Peñalva-Vélez et al., 2017), and this circumstance is not binding with the age and years of professional experience. In our case, individuals with fewer years of professional experience are those who score highest on each of the EI indicators.

With regard to the third and last objective, this study analysed the validity of the instruments considered with SEM, with a moderate model adjustment initially highlighted. However, it should be noted that despite the accuracy of the data obtained and the simplicity of the proposed model, the sample size and its representativeness do not guarantee the generality of the results (Vargas-Halabí & Mora-Esquivel, 2017). Several studies argue its use in small samples, as it is more flexible, without the need to assume the normal distribution of data (Hair et al., 2017). Positive relations are established in the Burnout variable, Depersonalization (4.018) and negative, in the Personal fulfilment variable (-4.138). Also, between EI and Dispositional Optimism (3.732) and negatively, EI and Burnout (-3.398). From the present study, an analysis of the moderate progressive and absolute adjustment values is shown, coinciding with other investigations, where EI is related to a greater or lesser level of attrition in professionals in the field of education (Mérida-López et al., 2020). Other studies focus their content on the level of acquired emotional competencies needed for optimum adaptive behaviour as a preventive measure against burnout (Usán-Supervía et al., 2018). This data is relevant and provides evidence about the value of dispositional Optimism to manage high levels of Emotional fatigue caused by work-related stressors of non-formal education professionals working with people with ID (Vizoso-Gómez & Arias-Gundín, 2018).

It is pointed out that each one of the results extracted follows the predominant trend in research carried out in this field. Although the reliability and internal consistency in the instruments considered was calculated, the likelihood of bias in the information, given the sample size and context where they develop their activity, should be taken into consideration in further research. However, the novelty of our research proposal is based on the fact that it is one of the first studies that includes EI, Burnout and Optimism in the provision of non-formal education for people with ID.

Further studies will be of interest to explore other constructs such as resilience in relation to burnout and emotional intelligence (Raetze et al., 2021).

This study has some limitations. Firstly, the size of the sample may condition the generalisation of the results. This weakness should also be considered in the context of structural models, where the choice of sample causes controversy as there is still no consensus among specialists (Kline 2015; Vargas-Halabí & Mora-Esquivel, 2017). Secondly, due to the cross-sectional design of the analyses carried out, it is not possible to clarify the exact benefits that EI may have on Burnout; as it acts as an exogenous variable, the response variable is dispositional optimism, so longitudinal studies should be carried out to determine the causality and incidence in these professionals.

However, despite certain limitations, this study offers the possibility of opening up future lines of research in this regard, due to the nature of the variables involved and the complementarity between EI, Burnout and the direct effect of dispositional optimism are important for the development of professional activity. The development of emotional skills can be appropriate for the prevention of stress, which considerably improves people's quality of life (Pulido-Acosta & Herrera-Clavero, 2017). The influence of variables such as EI on professional activity is a complex phenomenon, where the implementation of other variables such as job performance could give consistency to further research (Moral-Jiménez & Ganzo-Salamanca, 2018).

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