



EFL Teachers' Burnout Levels and Their Commitment to Iran Language Institute: A Case Study

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Abstract

Teachers play an important role in providing training and upbringing services for the educational community. However, burnout is rampant among teachers in professional contexts. Therefore, it is necessary to identify the factors that lead to burnout and to investigate approaches to reduce the impact of these factors on teachers' burnout levels. The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between burnout and foreign language teachers' commitment to teaching service in Iran Language Institutes. In this study, we used observation, semi-structured interviews and Maslach burnout questionnaire (MBI), and Meyer and Allen's organizational and job commitment questionnaire (OOC) to assess the variance of teacher burnout and its relationship with teachers' commitment. English language teachers ($N = 100$) in Mazandaran province were invited to participate in this study. Data analysis showed that there was a negative relationship between teacher burnout and their commitment to teaching English. Descriptive statistics show that male teachers have more burnout than female teachers. Structural equation modeling (SEM) was performed for causal analysis. The concepts of organizational and job commitment and educational policy and burnout research were discussed. Accordingly, educational policymakers are suggested to provide programs to familiarize teachers with the syndrome and help them reduce burnout, which maximizes their performance in the classroom.

Keywords: burnout, English language teacher, teachers' commitment, teachers' role

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Introduction

Burnout refers back to the extinguishing of a hearth place or the breaking of a candle. Freudenberger borrowed the period "Burnout" from the unlawful drug section, the time accounts for the overpowering results of long-time period use of the drug; burnout was defined as emotional exhaustion, loss of motivation, and decreased dedication amongst volunteers on the unfastened health center wherein he labored as a counseling psychiatrist (Freudenberger, 1974). "Burnout" syndrome came in vogue (Schaufeli et al., 2009). Through the interview, observation, and use of psychometric research, Maslach and Jackson (1981) advanced a tool for measuring burnout amongst human-provider employees. Their research brought about a brand new definition of burnout that went past intellectual burnout. They outlined it as a multidimensional shape inclusive of three dimensions: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment. Emotional exhaustion means a reduction in the capacity to meet the socio-emotional and psychological needs of others (Hanson, 2021); depersonalization or cynicism; the depersonalization of pessimism or callousness towards others - a persistent negative attitude (Hanson, 2021); and reduced personal accomplishment or academic inefficiency: this trouble refers to a feeling of dissatisfaction with productivity or competence at work (Hanson, 2021). Burnout has been described as a lack of doing a job properly due to various stressors in the job (Hanson, 2021; McCullough et al., 2021; Van Droogenbroeck et al., 2021). This concept was previously related to work stressors but was later introduced to examine the stressful conditions in the teaching profession in the educational environment (Moneto, 2011).

Commitment research in the workplace (Meyer et al., 1993) has a common relationship with professionalism and identity, and two concepts have been considered in the English language teaching domains (e.g., Marr & English, 2019; Richards, 2008; Stapleton & Shao, 2018; Varghese et al., 2016). In particular, teacher commitment reflects teachers' sense of loyalty and commitment to the institution in which they serve (Day, 2008; Dee et al., 2006). Commitment has long been an influential concept in public education research but has received much less attention in language education research (Moodie, 2019). Fathi and Rostami (2018) defined teaching commitment as the power of feeling one's belongs to a particular school. In short, commitment is an important element for teacher training because it eventually puts motivation into action, can predict voluntary behavior in the workplace, and relates various components of commitment, such as the efforts made in an organization (Moodie, 2020, p.3). Therefore, the purpose of this research paper is to unfold the relationship between the professional and organizational commitment of English language teachers and their burnout based on observations, semi-structured interview, and surveys. In this regard, the following research question is proposed:

RQ1: Is there any significant relationship between EFL teacher burnout and their teaching commitment?

RQ2: What are the potential reasons for EFL teachers' burnout and the decline of EFL teaching commitment?

Literature Review

Teacher Burnout

Teacher burnout reflects on physical, emotional, and mental fatigue (Lavy, 2022), and thus the inherent stressors of education often lead to burnout. Although stress is an unaffected aspect of life that can have both positive and negative consequences, burnout occurs when stress accumulates continuously (Hanson, 2021). The teaching profession has historically been ranked as one of the highest stress-related occupations, with which most teachers report low dissatisfaction (Brasfield et al., 2019). Burnout has been identified as a major cause of erosion in previous research (Perrone et al., 2019). U.S. Department of Education, Office of Postsecondary Education (2017) reported that 46 states have shortages of teacher educators. Research conducted in recent months by Pressley (2021) on the factors contributing to teacher burnout during the Covid-19 period addressed the challenges that teachers faced during the Covid-19 epidemic. Therefore, the aim was to gain insight into the effect of Covid-19 on Teacher burnout used by 359 teachers across the United States, and the electronic study included four Covid-19 anxiety scales. The results showed that teachers had high stress during the Covid-19 epidemic with new educational requirements and concerns arising from the current state of education and new demands (Pressley, 2021). In education sectors, burnout usually leads to two consequences for an employee: 1) decreased job quality performance and 2) tendency or desire to leave the job. Teachers who experience burnout are not surprised to find lower job performance (Perrone et al., 2019). Teacher burnout is the reaction and mode of the work pressure that people revel in and has significant negative results on individual effects consisting of wellbeing, health, and work commitment (Yung et al., 2017). In a longitudinal study, Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2020) analyzed the relationship between teachers' perception of job demand and job resources in the school environment with the dimensions of job burnout, depressed mood, job satisfaction, and the motivation to leave the teaching profession. Participants were 262 Norwegian High School teachers, data were analyzed using confirmatory factor analysis and SEM analysis. Teacher burnout may be the result of long-term occupational stress, and stressful working conditions, often termed job demands, be associated with measures of burnout. Saloviita and Pakarinen (2021) studied teacher burnout and its three sub-domains across several teachers, student-, and organization-level variables, including teacher category, class size, number of students with support needs, attitudes towards inclusive education, and availability of support. The participants were 4567 Finnish Primary School teachers consisting of 2080 classroom teachers, 1744 subject teachers, 438 special-class, and 305 resource room teachers. Teachers also suffered the highest level of burnout compared to other workers in human services (Ghanizadeh & Jahedizadeh, 2014; Saloviita & Pakarinen, 2021).

Teachers are likely to experience different levels of depersonalization, emotional fatigue, and personal success at the same time (Bettini et al., 2017). However, teacher stress is positively associated with teachers' burnout variables, emotional fatigue, and depersonalization, but will be negatively related to personal success (Park & Shin, 2020).

Teaching Commitment

Teaching commitment refers to occupational and organization commitment in the field of education, despite its importance – especially in certain occupations, such as teaching (e.g., Habib, 2020; Lavy & Bocker, 2018). Previous studies have shown that employees' sense of meaning in the workplace is associated with favorable work-related outcomes, including increased job commitment (Littman-Ovadia et al., 2017). Commitment at the organizational level refers to the connection that an employee has with his organization. When organizational commitment applies to teachers, it refers to teachers' commitment to the school in the form of a psychological contract that has overt and covert commitments to the school and shows their physiological relationship (Mokhtar et al., 2021). In this regard, Habib (2020) conducted a study to measure the relationship between secondary teacher burnout and their job commitment, using two questionnaires responded by 200 schoolteachers to uncover that there was not a significant relationship between teacher burnout and their professional commitment. Berkovich and Bogler (2020) stated that Meyer and Allen (1997) suggested three components to commitment: affective, normative, and continuous. Affective Commitment (AC) is an emotional attachment that refers to identity, participation, and enjoyment. Normative Commitment (NC) is an obligation that is applied to employees with normative pressures and Continuous Commitment (CC) results from the awareness of costs and penalties resulting from leaving the organization or profession. As may be visible, various factors with different structures can cause teacher burnout. One potential issue playing a role in teacher burnout is EFL Teaching commitment and their role, which determines how teachers behave in their classrooms, their concepts, and strategies of teaching. As a key concept in organizational structures, commitment has long been associated with burnout in various fields of work. Health organizations and schools are among the leading areas in which the level of professional commitment and burnout is studied (Akdemir, 2019). The finding indicated that there was a negative and significant relationship between the levels of teacher burnout and their levels of organizational commitment. In other words, the lower the burnout rate of teachers is, the higher their level of organizational commitment is. In addition, organizational commitment plays an important role as a predictor of teacher burnout levels. The fact that teachers have a higher level of organizational commitment leads to a reduction in burnout (Arik & Turunc, 2016; Bulut, 2017). Therefore, Royaei et al. (2020) maintain that teaching goal and teaching commitment are integrated since teachers' experience put an effect on the clarification and contextualization of their teaching goals, so teacher commitment would increase or decrease.

Method

The design of this study was a sequential mixed-method using observation, questionnaires, and interviews. The reason for using the mixed method research in the present study was that combining both quantitative and qualitative designs provides a broader and clearer understanding of research (Creswell, 2009). In the mixed method research of the present study, the exploratory strategy approach was considered. The sequential exploratory strategy consists of one stage of collecting

and analyzing qualitative data, then the second stage of collecting and analyzing quantitative data, which is based on the results of the first qualitative stage. At this stage, as in the research strategy of the present study, the researcher must make key decisions about either the initial qualitative aspects or the next quantitative stage (Creswell, 2009).

Participants

130 EFL teachers who were invited for participating in this study were from English language institutes in Mazandaran, but 100 participated in this study. Their selection was based on convenience sampling and the participation was entirely voluntary. The statistical demographic evidence of the participants, such as Iran Language Institute (ILI) teachers, gender, age, field of study, years of teaching, and the latest degree is reported in Table 1. Based on the evidence obtained, except for 1 person, all respondents (99 people) were ILI teachers. We randomly selected and observed 20 teachers’ online classes and four teachers agreed on attending semi-structured interviews.

Table 1

EFL teachers Demographics

| Teachers | A | B | C | D |
|-----------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Gender | Male | Male | Female | Female |
| Age | 31-35 | 36-40 | 36-40 | 31-35 |
| Field | Relevant | Relevant | Relevant | Relevant |
| Years of teaching | 11-15 | 16-20 | 16-20 | 11-15 |
| Highest qualification | M.A. | B.A. | M.A. | M.A. |

Materials and Instruments

The materials and instruments used for data collection were observation, Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) (Maslach & Jackson, 1981), occupational and organizational commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991) questionnaire, and the semi-structured interview.

Observation

Observation has been used for 20 online one and a half hour class sessions with four different EFL teachers (two male teachers and two female teachers). This process was observed based on the questionnaire.

Table 2*Summary of Observation Session*

| Teachers | A | B | C | D |
|-----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Procedure | Teacher activity was medium, teacher interaction with students was average, student interaction with the teacher was good, but didn't have very close friends in the class. He had a calm personality. | He was very active in the class; also had a lot of interaction with the students, the student's relationship with teachers was good and, had a close friends in the class. He had an intimate and energetic personality. | Teacher activity was relatively good. The teacher did her best to communicate well with the students, the student's relationship with the teacher was good, and she had a serious personality. | The whole class was quiet and all activities, communication, behavior, and interactions were done in complete peace. She had a very kind and calm personality. |

Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI)

The participants completed the Maslach Burnout Inventory questionnaire (Maslach & Leiter, 1997) (See Appendix A), representing three subscales: Emotional Exhaustion (9 items, 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 13, 14, 18, 20), measuring feeling of fatigue at work (e.g. "I feel emotionally drained from my work"); Personal accomplishment (8 items, 4, 7, 10, 12, 17, 16, 19, 21), assessing feeling of achievement of teacher (e.g. "I deal very effectively with the problem of my student"); and Depersonalization (5 items, 5, 9, 11, 15, 22), reflecting teacher's impersonal response to students (e.g. "I don't care what happens to some students"). All the items in the questionnaire were related to a 7-point Likert scale: never, rarely, low, sometimes, medium, high, and always. The reliability of the original and present survey administration is provided in Table 3. The reliabilities of a few factors for the MBI scale in the original and present study are indicated in Table 3.

Table 3*The Reliability of the MBI Scale*

| Factors | Reliability in the original study | Reliability in the present study |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Emotional Exhaustion | 0.76 | 0.89 |
| Depersonalization | 0.73 | 0.88 |
| Personal Accomplishment | 0.63 | 0.90 |

The descriptive statistics of the focused variable (Burnout Questionnaire) in the lowest value of this variable amongst respondents is 6 and the highest value is 75. The suggested ranking of individual burnout objects was ($M = 27.53$, $SD = 13.57$). According to Maslach et al. (1996), excessive ranking is indicative of burnout. Conversely, an excessive ranking in the non-public accomplishment subscale suggests a low degree of burnout. Maslach et al. (1996) maintained that every subscale rating may be categorized as representing low, slight, or excessive burnout. According to the calculations, there is the highest incidence of burnout with a rank of 132 (max) and lack of burnout with a rank of zero (min), thus showing that participants with a rank between 6 (min) and 75 (max) are affected by mild burnout. Sato et al. (2022) examined Teacher Motivation and perceived burnout of EFL teachers during Chile in the Coved-19 pandemic; the model considered the impact of COVID-19, indicating that although COVID-19 did not impact Teacher Motivation very much, it indirectly predicted burnout via Teacher Motivation.

Occupational and Organizational Commitment (OOC) Survey

An adaption of the Affective, Continuance, and Normative occupational and organizational scales (Meyer & Allen, 1991) was used to measure English language teachers' commitment. The questionnaire has widely been endorsed in several professions and cultures and has been found to have acceptable psychometric properties, which are rated on a 5-point Likert scale from 0 = strongly disagree to 4 = strongly agree. These cases were organized in such a way that the school was called an organization and teaching was called an occupation. The tool consists of six scales: (1) AC to occupation (questions 1, 2, 3; $\alpha = .849$; for example, "I am enthusiastic about teaching profession"); (2) AC to organization (questions 10, 11, 12; $\alpha = .803$; for example, "at school I do not feel part of the family - reverse case"); (3) NC to the occupation (questions 7, 8, 9; $\alpha = .807$; for example, "a sense of responsibility to the teaching profession to continue it"); (4) NC to the organization (questions 16, 17, 18; $\alpha = .665$; for example, "this school deserves my loyalty"); (5) CC to occupation (questions 4, 5, 6; $\alpha = .726$; for example, "changing careers would be difficult for me right now"); (6) CC to the organization (questions 13, 14, 15; $\alpha = .728$; for example, "if I decide, I want to leave school, my life will be very disrupted") (See appendix B). The Meyer scale was 6 items each (Meyer et al., 1993), but since the full review included other dimensions that measure a wide range of teacher characteristics, it was decided to increase the number of Meyer items for brevity and ease of completion by teachers. The overall reliability of the OOC scale was $\alpha = 0.77$. The descriptive statistics of the focused variable (commitment) in the minimum value of this variable amongst respondents is 24 and the maximum value is 60. Also, this variable has a Mean of 43.48 and a Standard Deviation of 7.98.

Semi-Structured Interview

For this study, semi-structured interviews were used for seeking further information about the purpose of the study. The semi-structured interview allows the researchers to collect open-ended data to explore four English language teachers' feelings and beliefs about a particular topic (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019). Interviewees were those teachers whose classes were observed by the first

researcher. The semi-structured interview content designed for teachers by the researchers had 10 identical questions, five questions about burnout, and five questions about commitment (See Appendix C). Coded 0-2 (negative perspective = 0, positive perspective = 1, no idea = 2)

Procedure

Data collection for this study started from October to December 2021. After a brief explanation of the purpose of the research and coordination with the headquarters in the capital and Mazandaran Provinces, all teachers voluntarily received the Maslach Burnout Scale (MBI-ES) and the Commitment Scale. To collect reliable data, the researchers explained the purpose and instructions of completing the questionnaire and asked 130 EFL teachers not to write their full names to align with the anonymous protocol. 100 teachers responded to the online questionnaire. They only had to provide demographic information such as gender, age, teaching background, and level of education. To analyze the data in this study, the answers obtained from the questionnaires were tabulated and analyzed using SPSS software. A structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis was performed to investigate the cause-and-effect relationship between teachers' burnout and commitment variables and demographics. Finally, 20 teachers' classes were observed and then they were invited to attend in the interview. Thus, four teachers agreed to participate the interview session to ameliorate the research process. We have used different data sources such as observation, questionnaire and interviews to solidify findings of the study (Creswell, 2009).

Data Analysis

In exploring the relationships between commitment and burnout, structural equation modeling (SEM) was used (RQ1 and RQ2). The first stage involved the imputation of missing data for those participants who skipped some items (Mode of missing items = 1). Second, the data were analyzed and imputed using the multiple imputation procedure of IBM SPSS. For all scales, linear factors were estimated using exploratory factor analysis and saved for use in SEM. To answer the first research question, bivariate correlations (Pearson, two-tailed) were explored among the subscales of commitment and burnout. With no empirical evidence or theoretical framework that can be used to hypothesize a structural model, the relationship between teaching commitment and teacher burnout was examined separately from the SEM. Instead, an exploratory associative design was chosen. We drew on the dataset to respond to the second research question. Thus, we initially coded the observed classes, and then closely watched the observation to decipher elements contributing to the findings of this study. After that, we extracted those confusing situations that ran in the classrooms. Then, we invited the four teachers to watch together and asked for further clarity. At the same time, we transcribed the interviews to compare and contrast teachers' burnout and their commitment and looked for recurring themes, which led to two overall categories: emotional exhaustion and dependent commitment.

Results

Quantitative Result: Addressing the First Study Question: Correlational Result of Burnout and Commitment

In the first phase of the present study, researchers examined the rate of teacher burnout ($M = 27.53$, $SD = 13.57$) and their teaching commitment ($M = 43.48$, $SD = 7.98$). Multiple correlations were performed to investigate the relationship between burnout and commitment. Using the numerical correlation coefficient from -1 to 1, the result indicated that the proximity of one of the two ends of the interval, respectively, suggests the depth of direct correlation and the depth of inverse correlation, and its proximity to the queue indicates no correlation. The presence or absence of correlation also can be tested. Thus, with the preliminary assumption of no correlation, if the value is much less than 0.05, we reject the preliminary assumption and conclude that a linear relationship is assumed between the two variables.

Table 4

The Correlation Coefficient for Burnout and Commitment

| Variable | | Burnout Questions | Commitment Questions |
|----------------------|---------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| Burnout Questions | Pearson Correlation | 1 | -.425** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .000 |
| | N | 99 | 98 |
| Commitment Questions | Pearson Correlation | -.425** | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | |
| | N | 98 | 99 |

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

As shown in Table 4, many significant correlations were identified. The dimensions of burnout of English teachers had a different relationship with their commitment. The statistically significant negative relationship between burnout and commitment variable was identified. The Pearson correlation coefficient is -0.425, which was observed at $p < .05$, indicating a fantastically vulnerable correlation on the contrary direction. Also, the obtained negative value indicates that the two variables of burnout and work commitment are in the opposite direction, albeit weakly. As a result, it could be stated that a vulnerable increase in burnout results in a decline in work commitment. Reflecting on the consequences of burnout clearly shows that one of the most common consequences of burnout is a decrease in task hobby and commitment (Ghanizadeh & Jahedizadeh, 2015).

Qualitative Results: Addressing the Second Research Question: Burnout, Commitment, and Interview

Recognizing the potential reasons for EFL teachers' burnout and decline in EFL teaching commitment, the researchers sought a discrepancy between the teachers' observations and the teachers' questionnaire. The teachers replied to the questionnaire, and no discrepancies were observed. A summary of the observation period is provided earlier in Table 2. The observations were based on the burnout questionnaire (teacher activity, teacher interaction with student, student relationship with teacher, and close friendship in class). The analysis of interview data resulted in 16 codes with four overall categories—Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization, Personal Accomplishment, and Commitment—based on the observations, teacher B and C, who are on the excessive level based on observation factors, and teacher A and teacher D, who are at a medium level based on observation factors. As a result, the burnout and commitment questionnaire was carried out uniformly amongst all four teachers. To unfold any inconsistent teaching behavior through observation as responses in the questionnaire, teachers were invited to provide clarity and the interview questions were divided into burnout and commitment variables.

According to the analysis of the qualitative data of the interviews, there was a close relationship between job burnout and commitment. Teachers described several intrinsic reasons for their teaching, including interest, the exciting nature of English, and the moral value of teaching. Most English-speaking interviewees with low levels of burnout cited an internal reason for teaching English. For example, a 37-year-old English teacher who had independent motivation stated: "Teaching is the main part of life now because I teach about 12 hours a day. A day without teaching makes me feel useless." However, this teacher said: "I sometimes feel frustrated because I should teach the same content so many times and I'm not allowed to change the way of teaching."

However, another teacher with a high level of burnout pointed out small salary has reduced his commitment to teaching over time. Teacher B mentioned,

I entered the job with a commitment, I loved teaching English, but now I get a small salary, which makes me non-committal. . . . If they [principals] give financial support to English teachers, especially in institutions, we will work with more commitment.

Another teacher, teacher D who reported a relatively high level of burnout in her survey, declared, "Teaching English could be fun, depending on some factors such as its payment, and . . . the work environment."

There were other reasons for English teachers that can be considered under the heading of specified regulations. The interviewees agreed with the fact that teaching has positively affected various aspects of their lives, especially their social relationships. As one of them said,

I am doing my best every day. I know that I am at the beginning of my way of English teaching. I always tell my students that there is no end to anything and we should try hard until the last day of our lives.

They also stated that they chose this job intending to make an impact on their lives. For example, one teacher with high commitment stated, “I teach from dawn to dusk and this can make me used up but my love in teaching helps me summon up my energy for the following day”.

Teachers' self-expectations of teaching and professional ethics seem to have been important for some respondents with high or low burnout, so accountability can be traced in English teachers' responses. One of the respondents, teacher A said, “I feel happy. My students are an important part of life, I live with them every day, I feel responsible for them. Being with them makes my day”.

Overall, both types of burnout and commitment dominated the sub-themes identified by English teachers with high / low commitment, high / low burnout to teaching English.

Table 5 indicates that teacher A Emotional Exhaustion > Personal Accomplishment and Depersonalization < Personal Accomplishment; Teacher B Emotional Exhaustion < Personal Accomplishment and Depersonalization < Personal Accomplishment; Teacher C Emotional Exhaustion < Personal Accomplishment and Depersonalization < Personal Accomplishment; and Teacher D Emotional Exhaustion > Personal Accomplishment and Depersonalization < Personal Accomplishment, although there were some themes from commitment (f = 15). Among them, Teacher D (with maximum EE) has minimum Commitment and Teacher B (with medium EE) has a maximum commitment in the questionnaire.

Table 5

| Variables | Teacher A | Teacher B | Teacher C | Teacher D |
|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Burnout | EE = 29 | EE = 13 | EE = 5 | EE = 30 |
| | DP = 8 | DP = 9 | DP = 0 | DP = 4 |
| | PA = 21 | PA = 18 | PA = 19 | PA = 21 |
| Commitment | 32 | 48 | 37 | 27 |

Note: Emotional Exhaustion (EE), Personal Accomplishment (PA), Depersonalization (DP)

A higher emotional exhaustion leads to a higher level of burnout. Also, the higher the personal accomplishment, the farther away the person is from burnout (Maslach et al., 1996). Teachers also experience more burnout and less commitment. The results show that with increasing burnout, there is a decline in job commitment. In the interviews of all four teachers, in which the questions in the variable (burnout and commitment) are presented in the same way, the responses were mostly in the interest of teaching, interest in the English language (Affective Commitment), interest in the institution of the Iranian Language Institute, because of the largest and oldest private one in Iran (Normative & Continuance Commitment), and interest in students (Affective Commitment). This type of commitment is the most general form of organizational commitment in teaching.

Discussion

Burnout among teachers deserves special attention because research has shown that burnout is associated with inefficiency (Mokhtar et al., 2021). In the last two decades, the teaching profession has been known as one of the most stressful jobs, the risk of which causes various branches of burnout (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2020). Berkovich and Bogler (2020) state that burnout is related to different organizational factors. Accordingly, this study began to show the extent to which English language teachers experienced burnout and how it could be related to its accrual factor. To this end, the present study, first, sought to help us understand the levels of burnout in English language teachers and its possible underlying causes in a specific context in Iran. Overall, the results showed that this sample of English language teachers showed a burnout index in MBI. By reporting high levels of teacher burnout, it can be argued that English language teachers in this study in the northern context in Iran generally reported less fatigue and less personal competence (Ghanizadeh & Jahedizadeh, 2014). In-depth qualitative analysis showed that demographic factors (Highest Qualification, Age, Gender, Field of Study, and Years of Teaching) show an equal relationship with the dimension of burnout and commitment among English teachers. The second research question addressed the nature of ILI-EFL teachers' burnout for teaching commitment. The finding of this study identified commitment among English language teachers, and the reason for teachers' commitment was determined through the analysis of qualitative data. The qualitative findings showed that all participants in the commitment process were dependent, and the majority of English teachers in the target community were committed to organization and teaching, but quantitative findings showed a negative relationship between burnout and commitment. This finding is congruent with previous research such as Akdemir (2019) and Ghanizadeh and Jahedizadeh (2014) in that regulation seems to be a controlled commitment that can be the main predictor of the dimensions of English teachers' burnout. There are similarities and differences between the present study and previous research, which should be noted. Initially, the learners of this study were adult English teachers (TEFL) similar to Akdemir (2019) and Ghanizadeh and Jahedizadeh (2014). Second, like Royaei et al.'s (2020) study, questionnaires, and interviews were used as research data collection tools and demographic information such as age, degree, and teaching experience. The sample consists of 90 EFL teachers from various foreign language institutes in Mashhad, Iran.

Mokhtar et al. (2021) beautifully stated that teachers with high levels of commitment work more diligently, show stronger dependence on the curriculum, and are more willing to accomplish teaching goals than teachers with low levels of commitment. The level of teacher burnout is sensitive to almost all the variables of the teacher, student, and the level of the organization that is working (Saloviita & Pakarinen, 2021). In addition, many researchers, such as Akdemir (2019), Arik and Turunc (2016), and Bulut (2017) worked on burnout and commitment. It is clear that burnout and commitment are issues that have attracted the interest of researchers and experts.

Over the past decades, most research on the history of burnout has continued to focus on work / environmental factors as the approximate cause of burnout. Over the past decades, much research has been done to indicate the role of social support, which plays the cause of burnout. Studies have been conducted on the impact of support from caregivers, colleagues, friends, family, organizations, unions, and others. However, many experimental studies were significantly associated with social support and burnout (Royaei et al., 2020; Perrone et al., 2019). Burnout has significant costs in terms of health and organizational consequences (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2020; Lavy, 2022). Based on the results of this study, it seems that the decline of burnout among teachers deserves special attention. Accordingly, educational policymakers are advised to provide programs to familiarize teachers with the syndrome and help them reduce burnout and stress. These programs can be divided into two designated treatments: 1) action plans to diagnose burnout, and 2) palliative programs include: counseling courses and indirect treatments focusing on social support. These programs should consider the causes of burnout and its growth. Previous research has shown that emotional burnout is a major predictor of burnout (Ghanizadeh & Jahedizadeh, 2014).

Conclusion

This study has contributed to the relationship between burnout and the commitment of EFL teachers to teaching in private institutions. This mixed-method study explores burnout and the role and professional teaching commitment of a sample of EFL instructors at the Iranian Language Institute. This study contributed to the literature and can be promising in that it has been applied with a variable-oriented approach to the commitment of English teachers to teach.

The findings showed that most English language teachers had an independent and impersonal commitment and in line with the variable-based results, a high form of commitment was revealed in teachers. Intrinsically, the results showed that many English teachers in the present study have a combination of independent and controlled commitment to English language teaching. There was a negative relationship between EFL teachers' burnout and their commitment.

Qualitative analysis also supported the idea that burnout experience plays a role in commitment. However, the predictive power of English teachers' burnout does not appear to be strong in explaining the variance of their commitment. Therefore, the findings provide empirical evidence for the importance of burnout versus L2 teachers' commitment to understanding and improving teachers' burnout and fatigue from teaching. The contribution is that ILI policymakers can make decisions about maximizing the quality of teaching and the teacher recruitment. Future research, using more comprehensive plans, can examine which teachers are more professional and prone to stay in the profession. In addition, some psychological factors of teachers such as mental health and personality factors of students are identified and their relationship with burnout of EFL teachers should be investigated.

The results of this study can provide educational implications for increasing the awareness of English teachers in understanding the rate of burnout and

commitment. Burnout is a psychological structure for managing anxiety. One possible plan for burnout management is to encourage teachers to participate in weekly orientation programs that include stress management. The finding of this study is limited to one English language Institute and the gender difference was not taken into account. Future research can cover a larger population with different cultures and gender to generalize the findings.

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Appendices

Appendix A

MBI Questionnaires

This tool is a questionnaire that is based on a new estimate of the phenomenon of burnout and teaching commitment and has 30 questions. 22 questions measure emotional exhaustion, depersonalization phenomena, and lack of personal success and 18 questions measure Occupational and Organizational commitment in the framework of your professional activity. The first page contains questions related to burnout and the second page includes questions related to commitment. Elahe Asadi, M.A. student of English language teaching at Rudaki University.

* Please answer all questions and do not leave the question unanswered.

* Please be honest in answering the questions

* Personal profile participants will be kept confidential by the researcher.

* If you have any theoretical questions or questions that come to your mind, add them at the end of the questionnaire; the researcher will welcome them.

Demographic Question:

I am an ILL (Iran Language Learning) Teacher. Yes No

Name: Gender: Male Female

Age: Highest Qualification: B.A. M.A. Ph.D.

Subject Field: Related Unrelated Years of Teaching:

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| Burnout Questions |
| 1. I feel that the job of a teacher has psychologically taken away my strength and power. |
| 2. At the end of a working day, I feel abused. |
| 3. In the morning, when I have to go to work, I feel tired of going to work. |
| 4. I can easily understand my students' feelings. |
| 5. I feel I treated some students as if they were impersonal objects |
| 6. Working with students for the whole day is hard and exhausting for me. |
| 7. I feel I can easily deal with my students' problems. |
| 8. I feel that my job has exhausted me psychologically. |
| 9. I have been indifferent to others since I chose this job. |
| 10. I feel that because of my job (due to the teacher's direct relationship with the students) I have a positive impact on my students' lives. |

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|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 11. I'm worried that my job will make me hard-hearted towards people. |
| 12. I feel full of strength and energy. |
| 13. My job has made me feel empty and useless. |
| 14. I feel like I'm doing my job hard. |
| 15. I really do not care what happens to some of my students. |
| 16. It is difficult to deal directly with some students and it puts me under a lot of stress. |
| 17. I can easily provide a calm environment for my students. |
| 18. After working with my students, I feel happy and cheerful. |
| 19. The job of a teacher has had important and valuable achievements for me. |
| 20. I feel I have reached the end of the line. |
| 21. I face many emotional and psychological problems in my career. |
| 22. I feel that my students blame me for some of their problems and blame me. |

Appendix B

OOQ Questionnaire

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| Commitment Questions |
| 1. Being in the teaching profession is important to my self-image |
| 2. I am proud to be in the teaching profession. |
| 3. I am enthusiastic about the teaching profession. |
| 4. Changing professions now would be difficult for me to do. |
| 5. Too much of my life will be disrupted if I were to change my profession. |
| 6. Changing professions now would require considerable personal sacrifice. |
| 7. I feel a responsibility to the teaching profession to continue it. |
| 8. Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel that it would be right to leave the teaching profession now. |
| 9. I am in the teaching profession because of a sense of loyalty to it. |
| 10. I do not feel like part of the family at Iran Language Institute (ILI). |
| 11. I do not feel emotionally attached to this Institute. |
| 12. I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my institute. |
| 13. It would be very hard for me to leave my institute right now, even if I wanted to. |

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| 14. Too much in my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my institute now. |
| 15. I feel that I have too few options to consider leaving this institute. |
| 16. This institute deserves my loyalty. |
| 17. I would not leave my institute right now because I have a sense of obligation to the people in it. |
| 18. I owe a great deal to my institute. |

Appendix C

Semi-Structured Interview

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| Dear colleagues The following questionnaire aims to assess your feelings and opinions as EFL teachers towards your job and your organization. All information that is collected in this study will be treated confidentially. You are guaranteed that you will not be identified in any report of the results of the study. |
| Burnout Questions Have you ever felt frustrated in teaching (English)? If yes, what issues do you think make you or other teachers feel frustrated? Have you ever been used up at the end of a workday? If yes, what problems caused this situation? Do you feel happy after working closely with your students? Or, it doesn't matter to you? Please explain your reason Do you care about your students' emotional problems? How do you deal with these problems? Can you understand how they feel about things? Have you ever felt you are at the end of the rope in your profession? If yes / no, why? |
| Commitment Questions Why do you teach at Iran Language Institute (ILI)? Do you think teaching at the ILI can help you to learn new things? How? Do you think teaching (English) can help you to learn new things? How? Do you consider teaching (English) as an important life goal? Will you become disappointed with yourself if you don't teach? |

Authors' Biography



Elahe Asadi is MA student of ELT at Tonekabon Higher Education Institute. She has been working on Teacher Education and Burnout, in particular.



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