

## A Comparative Study of Contextual and Personal Factors Associated with Burnout and Its Consequences: A Case of EFL Teachers in Public Schools and Private Institutes

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**Abstract:** The roles and responsibilities of teachers have undergone massive changes and teachers have been inundated with constant transition and workload. Consequently, the boundaries between work and home have been blurred and teachers are highly required to devote more and more time to their work. Such high expectations could contribute to high levels of stress which, in turn, lead to teachers' occupational burnout. Despite a plethora of research that has investigated the relationship between burnout and various teachers' variables, less is known about how Iranian English teachers at both public high schools and private language institutes perceive the sources and consequences of burnout in their work lives. To bridge the gap, the present phenomenological mixed-methods research was conducted. Questionnaires, interviews, and observations were used for data collection. First, the Maslach Burnout Inventory was distributed to identify burned-out English teachers. Afterward, 62 burned-out English teachers (23 school and 29 institute teachers) were invited for interviews. To triangulate the data, classroom observations were also conducted. The results revealed that although school and institute teachers reported lots of similar sources and consequences for their stress and burnout, several substantial differences were observed due to the varying contexts. Moreover, it was found that both contextual and personal factors led to English teachers' stress and burnout.

**Keywords:** Burnout, Stress, Emotional Exhaustion, Public School English Teachers, Private Language Institute Teachers.

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## Introduction

Teaching has been characterized as one of the most stressful and challenging professions (Mearns & Cain, 2003; Shkëmbi, Melonashi, & Fanaj, 2015). It is “emotionally taxing and potentially frustrating” (Lambert, Kusherman, O’Donnell, & McCarthy, 2006, p. 105). Teacher stress is a worldwide problem (Fisher, 2011), and at least one-third of teachers encounter a high level of work-related stressors (Borg, 1990). The main sources of stress are associated with conflicting roles and high expectation, demotivated students, workload, restricted teacher autonomy, lack of sufficient time, administrator- and colleague-teacher relationships, endless supervision, insufficient resources, underprivileged working situations, and lack of administrative backing (Aydin & Kaya, 2016; Mearns & Chain, 2003). Due to such workplace stressors, teachers experience burnout that is viewed as a universal phenomenon (Badawy, 2015).

Nowadays, English teachers, like other teachers have more accountabilities than before (Mousavi, 2007) since they have been considered as the essential pillars that define the procedures of both learning and teaching (Khani & Mirzaee, 2014) and “have a significant impact on student achievement and school quality” (Scheopner, 2010, p. 261). English teachers, along with masses of responsibilities, are constantly expected to encourage students, engage them in-class tasks, and have positive interactions with all stakeholders such as parents, administrators, and colleagues which, in turn, impact them both mentally and emotionally (Mousavi, 2007).

In Iran, English is considered an international and prestigious language (Sadeghi & Richards, 2015); therefore, thousands of language learners study English in private language institutes. Also, all students study English for three years in public high schools. In high schools, English teachers are required to teach “homegrown textbooks” (Borjani, 2013) that are developed under the supervision of the Ministry of Education, and classes are mainly held and managed in Persian. In contrast, private language institutes use renowned international English books, and classes are mostly managed in English. It seems that private language institutes are more popular and successful than public schools (Borjani, 2013). Due to their popularity, according to Pishghadam and Sahebjam (2012), there is a tough competition among private institutes, which highlights the significant role of English teachers in their learners’ learning process, but at the same time sometimes places unrealistic expectations on teachers from such stakeholders as parents, administrators, and supervisors, which burns them out. Khezerlou (2012) has reported that 60 percent of Iranian EFL teachers experience at least a moderate level of burnout.

Although it is acknowledged that the context plays a vital role in the burnout, less is known about how English teachers perceive and handle their stress and burnout in their work lives. To this end, the present exploratory and comparative phenomenological research was conducted to explore the contextual and personal sources of burnout and its likely consequences in two different contexts.

### **Review of the Related Literature**

A great deal of research has been devoted to teacher burnout, due to its deleterious impacts on educational contexts. The burnout phenomenon is defined as a “syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment among individuals who do ‘people work’ of some kind” (Maslach, 2003a, p. 2). Emotional exhaustion means being physically and emotionally strained, owing to job stress or feeling exhausted (Maslach, 2003b). Depersonalization refers to the development of damaging or pessimistic outlooks or feelings about other people and other facets of the profession (Maslach, 2003b). Reduced personal accomplishment refers to the development of critical self-evaluation or negative opinion about their competence (Maslach & Leiter, 2008).

A line of research has been carried out to explore the sources and consequences of teacher burnout. Owing to the context-sensitivity of the teaching profession, a growing body of literature has attempted to investigate burnout in different educational contexts in various countries. For instance, Van Droogenbroeck, Spruyt, and Vanroelen (2014) examined the role of workload and interpersonal relationships at work in predicting the senior teachers’ burnout in Belgium. The findings revealed that interpersonal relationships among students, colleagues, supervisors, and parents, and teaching along with non-teaching-related workloads were related to emotional exhaustion. Badawy (2015) found that lack of autonomy, innovation, a comfortable physical environment, and supervisor support increased the Egyptian teachers’ burnout. Jacobson (2016) found that an unrealistic workload, student misbehavior, and a lack of attention by administrators were the factors that contributed to American teachers’ burnout. Helou, Nabhani, and Bahous, (2016) found low salary, school settings, collaboration/mentoring, classroom settings, and emotional factors were the main reasons for the Lebanese teachers’ burnout.

Regarding the consequences of teacher burnout, Oberle and Schonert-Reichl (2016) found that when teachers perceived high levels of stress that burned them out, their stress was transferred to their students, and students’ stress increased. Demirdag (2016) found that the

school culture and atmosphere affected the teachers' stress and exhaustion. Their results also indicated that such consequences as intense anxiety, detachment from work, lack of responsibility, and lack of precise goals at work were the causes of teachers' stress and burnout.

In a more recent study, Richards, Hemphill, and Templin (2018) attempted to understand qualitatively how teachers who perceived high and low levels of burnout portrayed their lived experiences in school environments. Through their qualitative analyses, they found that low-burnout teachers thought constructive teaching environments such as positive interactions with students and their families, administrators' supports, and friendly communications with colleagues were influential factors in reducing teachers' emotional exhaustion, increasing their resilience, and balancing the stress of their different roles. In contrast, high-burnout teachers believed that negative teaching environments such as apathetic students and families, lack of principals' support and understanding, lack of positive interactions among colleagues, unrealistic expectation, and enormous responsibilities were the main sources of burnout which, in turn, increased teachers' frustration, restricted the balance among different roles, reduced their resilience, and decreased in their effectiveness. In another study, Cassily (2018) sought to find the nature of teachers' experiences of burnout and the likely connection with their self-efficacy. Her findings indicated a well-established relationship between the burnout and teacher self-efficacy. Through in-depth interviews with three New Hampshire middle school teachers, she found that the teachers' self-efficacy beliefs had a strong relationship with their personal accomplishment in comparison with emotional exhaustion and depersonalization as two other dimensions of burnout. Moreover, long-term exposure to stress, an increased workload, too many roles, and lack of control over classroom management problems were considered as the significant causes of burnout reducing the teachers' self-efficacy.

Iranian researchers have had noteworthy contributions to qualitative investigations related to teacher burnout and have explored relationships between teacher burnout and educational issues. For instance, Javadi (2014) conducted a study to explore the connection between 143 Language institute teachers' autonomy and their burnout. His findings indicated an inverse relationship between teachers' autonomy and their burnout. In other words, teachers with low autonomy experienced a higher degree of burnout. While Shamsafrouz and Haghverdi (2015) found that English teachers' burnout did not impact their performance significantly, Heidari and Gorjian (2017) reported that teachers' levels of burnout

significantly influenced their EFL learners' achievement. In a recent research, Roohani and Dayeri (2019) conducted a mixed-methods study to explore the relationship between EFL teachers' motivation and burnout in Khuzestan and Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari provinces. Their quantitative analysis showed that highly motivated teachers experienced lower levels of burnout. Besides, the qualitative analysis of their data gathered through interviews revealed that unrealistic workload, low payment, and lack of job security were the important factors contributing to teacher burnout.

As almost all the existing research regarding teacher burnout in Iran, to the best of the researchers' knowledge, has been carried out quantitatively, some important questions have remained unresolved. To respond to such questions, first, it is required to deepen our understanding of the nature of burnout by examining this phenomenon in a real-life context, namely, public high schools and private language institutes. Accordingly, due to the context-sensitivity of the teaching profession, this study was an attempt to conduct a comparative and exploratory phenomenological research in Iran to gain a deeper understanding of teacher burnout through exploring the contextual, personal, social, and cultural factors. Furthermore, the current study was planned to provide empirical evidence regarding the sources and consequences of teacher burnout through classroom observations. Therefore, the current study addressed the following research questions:

1. What factors do Iranian English teachers teaching in public high schools and private language institutes perceive to espouse their stress and burnout in their work lives?
2. What factors do Iranian English teachers teaching in public high schools and private language institutes perceive to dwindle stress and burnout in their work lives?

## **Methodology**

### ***Participants***

The current study was conducted in Mazandaran, Iran. According to the objectives of the study, English teachers were drawn from many public high schools and private language institutes of Sari, Babol, Ghaemshahr, and Babolsar cities. The study was initiated by distributing a questionnaire to a sample of 396 public high schools and private language institutes English teachers, from among whom 371 returned the questionnaire. After reviewing and analyzing the received answers, those which had not been completed as instructed were removed from the dataset. Of the 356 remaining ones, 152 (42.69%) were from public high school teachers and 204 (57.31%) from private language institute teachers.

One hundred and twenty seven (35.67%) of the English teachers were male and 229 (64.32%) were female. After identifying highly burned-out teachers, 27 high school teachers, and 36 private language institute teachers were invited for interviews and classroom observations. Of the 27 invited, 23 (85%) of the high school teachers consented to be interviewed for the current study. As to the institute teachers, 29 (80.55%) agreed to participate in the interview.

### *Instruments*

Three instruments were used to gather the data: the Maslach burnout inventory, semi-structured interviews, and observations.

### *Teachers' Burnout Scale*

The teacher burnout was measured by the Maslach Burnout Inventory-Educator's Survey (MBI-ES) (Maslach, Jackson, & Schwab, 1996). The MBI-ES encompasses 22 items categorized into three sub-dimensions as Emotional Exhaustion (EE), Depersonalization (DP), and Personal Accomplishment (PA). The scales were 0 = Never, 1 = Seldom, 2 = Now and then, 3 = Regular, 4 = Often, 5 = Very often 6 = Always. The reliability of each sub-dimension in this scale was estimated: emotional exhaustion .90; depersonalization, .79; and personal accomplishment, .71. As illustrated in Table 1, three score cutoff points for each burnout sub-scale were suggested. While high scores for EE and DP sub-scales indicate high burnout, low scores for PA show high burnout.

**Table 1.** Mean scores for three levels of burnout

<b>Burnout Dimensions</b>	<b>Range</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>Moderate</b>	<b>High</b>
Emotional Exhaustion (EE)	0-54	0 -16	17 – 26	27 and over
Depersonalization (DP)	0-30	0 – 6	7 – 12	13 and over
Personal Accomplishment (PA) *	0-48	39 and over	32 – 38	0- 31

### *Interviews*

The researchers developed a semi-structured interview protocol for collecting the data (see the Appendix). The interview questions were validated with some colleagues and faculty members to find out their strengths and weaknesses. Then, a pilot study was run for further revisions. Each in-depth and face-to-face interview lasted 30-45 minutes. The researcher

took notes to record her impressions about facts, comments, or other details that she found out noteworthy. Besides, to enhance the trustworthiness of this qualitative study, the researcher used member checking.

### ***Observations***

Three central areas of focus, including teacher-student interaction, teacher instruction, and student engagement in learning were identified for classroom observations. The researcher took part in 13 English classes in high schools and 11 classes in private institutes. Besides, field notes were applied to record more data on teachers' behaviors, class facilities, atmospheres, books, etc. To be more efficient and relevant, the researcher spent more than a month to develop a checklist in advance. Regarding validity, seven university professors were asked to provide their instructive feedback on the clarity of directions, content, comprehensibility, etc. Concerning reliability, Cronbach's Alpha was computed as the reliability index of the checklist ( $\alpha=0.77$ ). The checklists were completed while classes were observed and recorded.

### ***Data Collection and Analysis***

The procedures of data collection took more than eight months (from October 2018 to May 2019). A quantitative approach was used to analyze the collected questionnaires. The data were put into the SPSS 25. After analysis, 63 teachers who experienced high levels of occupational burnout were identified and invited for interviews. All the interviews were recorded for the subsequent transcriptions. An expert statistician was asked to analyze the collected data. The statistician employed the iotype software for transcribing the interviews. After the transcription of the interviews, the statistician analyzed the interviews using inductive analysis and the constant comparative method, considered as standard qualitative methods (Patton, 2014; Strauss & Corbin, 2015). To confirm the validity of interpretations, 25% of the responses were double-checked. Afterward, descriptive statistical operations were used to analyze the data gathered through the checklists.

### ***Results and Discussion***

The analysis of the qualitative data in this study resulted in the development of several main themes and the associated subthemes which are presented and discussed in the following paragraphs. To respond to the two questions posed in this study, both public high school and

private language institute teachers' perceptions regarding the causes of burnout and its likely consequences are presented and explained.

### *Sources of Burnout*

To answer the posed questions, first, high burned-out school and institute teachers were identified through MBI-ES. As shown in Table 2, the mean scores for all three dimensions of burned out for both school and institute teachers are high.

**Table 2.** Mean Scores on the MBI-ES for Burned-out Teachers

Burnout dimensions	School teachers	Institute teachers
	Mean scores	
Emotional Exhaustion	38.22	46.78
Depersonalization	15.51	20.84
Personal Accomplishment	27.86	26.53

The first question in this study addressed the factors that Iranian English teachers teaching at public high schools and private language institutes thought to increase their stress and burnout in their work lives. Five major themes, including the school atmosphere and job characteristics, material and technologies, student-related factors, economic and social factors, and family-related factors were identified (Table 3).

### **Workplace Atmosphere and Job Characteristics**

#### *Lack of Administrators' Support*

The first major theme posed by both the school and institute teachers was associated with the atmosphere of workplaces and job descriptions. Nearly all teachers mentioned a lack of administrators' support and sympathy as the main stressors in their work lives increasing their emotional exhaustion. Maryam, a school teacher (school), explained her challenges in her school, "I teach in a school where my principal is so controlling and critical. She does not care about the teachers who are sick or have family problems". Hora, a private language institute teacher (institute), stated "managers only want the best academic achievements of their students. They do not care about their teachers, their needs, or their well-being". Many teachers also stated that when they felt physically or emotionally exhausted, they needed to be supported by their administrators. There does not seem to be such support in many



situations. Once teachers feel unsupported and unrecognized, in the long run, their stress and exhaustion could surge, which can ultimately bring negative consequences not only for the teachers but also for the students and schools/institutes. The findings in this study mirror a previous study conducted by Van Droogenbroeck *et al.* (2014), in which they found that lack of mental or emotional support of the administrators contributes to teachers' burnout.

### ***Too much Stress***

Too much stress for preparation, test development, paper correction, and students' achievements was the next sub-theme that many of the teachers in both contexts maintained as the main factor for their emotional exhaustion and frustration. Fereshteh (school): "I think my stress never ends. There are a lot of things for being stressed out at work such as developing many tests, students' low scores, my principals' complaints, etc.". Nader (institute) believed that students' achievements were the main sources for his stress at work, because his manager judged teachers just by their students' successes or scores, which was not fair at all. The findings indicated that once teachers have a lot of workloads and cannot find enough time to deal with them, they get stressed out. Another reason which can be suggested for the findings may be that when teachers are judged merely by their students' scores, and their attempts and burden are not seen or appreciated, they may get frustrated and emotionally exhausted, which, in turn, can result in their occupational burnout.

### ***High Expectations***

Almost all the participants believed that students, principals/managers, and parents had too many unrealistic expectations. Hossein (school) described the situation by saying that 'Parents expect teachers to teach not only the school subjects but also values, ethics and life issues.' Hana (institute) elaborated that "Generally, my manager and parents expect all teachers to behave like psychologists and be very patient with all misbehavior of their students. Or whenever parents like, they call and talk about their students' problems". Many teachers believed that administrators and parents expected teachers did miracles about students' low scores or performances. Such high and varying expectations that other stakeholders have from teachers are beyond their power and may put them under high pressure. Once they cannot come up to those expectations, they get stressed out and feel emotionally exhausted. This finding is consistent with the study of Richards *et al.*, (2018),

who recommend that too many expectations make teachers feel emotionally exhausted which, in turn, increases burnout.

### ***Many Roles and Responsibilities***

Nearly all participants perceived that they had too many roles and responsibilities inside and outside of classes which made them exhausted. Shervin (institute) said: ‘I always have lots of nerve-ending tasks. It is too demanding and time-consuming to manage all these responsibilities.’ Most of the teachers explained that they had several roles at home along with all those they have at work such as being teachers, consultants, psychologists, etc. which made them always so drained and exhausted. This result may be explained by the fact that once teachers as human beings have many seen and unseen roles or responsibilities in both their work and personal lives, particularly when they cannot handle them, they gradually develop critical self-evaluation which can increase their exhaustion and frustration.

### ***Considering English as a Non-core Subject***

While many high school teachers perceived that English was seen as a non-core subject, almost all institute teachers sought English was seen as a highly prestigious subject. School teachers stated that in comparison with subjects such as math, physics, chemistry, and biology, English is considered a marginalized subject. Numerous school teachers stated that not only principals but also many students and their parents thought that English was not an important subject, so they did not take this course seriously. Several teachers also complained that when there were some cultural events, principals reduced the hours of English classes which made teachers feel more stressed out because they had to run to finish the book. This result may be explained by the fact that once teachers feel they are treated as marginalized ones, or English is considered as a second class course, they feel more devalued which eventually makes them more emotionally exhausted. This finding is in agreement with Richards et al.’s (2018) findings.

### ***Lack of Autonomy***

Half of the high school teachers and most of the institute teachers complained about the lack of autonomy at their workplaces. Teachers were dissatisfied with all the limitations and they thought their managers were too controlling and difficult. Several institute teachers also complained about the lack of security and privacy due to video-recorded classes. Some

teachers explained that once they were continually observed and dictated for many issues, they thought they were treated such as a robot because they had no power, will, and creativity. The current finding aligns with earlier research documenting that teachers' lack of autonomy in their workplace increases their burnout (Javadi, 2014). One possible reason is that once administrators restrict teachers' autonomy, they lose their motivation as they cannot have any innovations in their work. Besides, when managers usurp their power, teachers may develop deleterious or pessimistic outlooks towards their administrators which can make them more discontent and drained.

### ***Lack of Pertinent Training Courses***

Half of school and institute teachers believed that some workshops or training courses were essential to empower their teachers for new classroom challenges. Many teachers believed that since students, their needs, and expectations changed dramatically, sometimes, they did not know how to overcome some obstacles raised in classes. One possible explanation might refer to the fact that academic training empowers teachers, increases professional development, improves their effectiveness and confidence, and reduces their stress and frustration which, in turn, may increase their well-being and performances.

### ***Lack of Insurance and Job Security***

It is worth mentioning that there were three subthemes that only institute teachers mentioned. Nearly all institute teachers thought that a lack of insurance and job security were the main reasons for their stress and exhaustion. Many teachers thought that having taught English for over a decade without any insurance was really discouraging and frustrating. Forozan explained, 'I have been working for fifteen years, and managers do not insure me. My ex-employer provided insurance for some teachers, but he thought he bought them.' Moreover, almost all teachers perceived that they were always apprehensive and insecure because there were no contractions. No doubt, once institute teachers are constantly concerned whether or not they have any classes for the next term, along with lots of common workplace and life problems, they get more disappointed and exhausted which may increase their pessimistic feeling toward their profession and their apathy toward other stakeholders. In accordance with the present result, the previous study indicated that teachers' feelings of job insecurity significantly increase their feelings of disappointment and burnout (Roohani & Dayeri, 2019).

### ***Teaching at Inappropriate Levels***

More than half of the institute teachers stated that teaching at inappropriate levels made them feel ashamed and devalued. Alireza elaborated on the situation by saying that, 'I am 46 years old, and I have an MA degree. I am teaching kids, but I really can't tolerate all that noise in classes. It makes me irritated and embarrassed.' Nasrin explained, 'I have a PhD degree. In private institutes, managers merely think about their benefits and give me lots of kids' classes just to advertise for their institutes and attract more students. I feel ashamed to say I teach kids.' This finding was unanticipated and one possible explanation might be connected to this widespread thought in their culture that teachers who lack enough knowledge or experience teach lower levels. Therefore, they felt ashamed and had a hidden fear of being judged as disqualified teachers which, in a long run, increases their frustration and disappointment.

### ***Lack of Annual Leave***

Finally, institute teachers mentioned that a lack of annual leave is a cause of exhaustion and frustration. Sana explained, 'my husband and children constantly complain about not having any specified leave for travel and doing some hobbies. In private institutes, it is really hard to take a leave.' Several teachers noted that they just wanted to have a fixed annual leave, maybe just for one or two weeks in a year. It helped them plan with their families for that leave, and it reduced the pressure from both their family members and managers. This finding was unexpected and may suggest that when there is no fixed leave for teachers to refresh and reenergize themselves, they feel more emotionally exhausted. This finding also was tightly related to the particularities of their educational contexts as almost all language institutes in Iran are governed by private investors. Therefore, the lack of governmental observance on these institutes along with the vast number of graduated and unemployed English students make the situation much worse for institute teachers.

## **Material and Technology**

### ***Lack of Educational Technology***

The second major theme was associated with the material and technology applied in both schools and institutes. While nearly all high school teachers complained about the basic technology, more than half of institute teachers complained about the lack of appropriate and latest technology. Zahra (school) explained, 'there is an old laptop that is always crashed. Even if the computer works, the speakers don't work.' Many teachers believed they were

always asked for the best performances, but administrators did not care about the appropriate technological learning resources. Such findings may indicate that when teachers feel less efficient due to the lack of resources, they feel stressed out because in Iran education is mainly product-oriented. This result agrees with the findings of the previous study, as they found that technologies are seen as significant resources that can increase teacher efficiency and reduce teachers' burnout (Cassily, 2018). This difference among institute and school teachers about the basic and latest technologies may be explained by the fact that high schools are controlled by the government and there is a tight budget for schools, while institutes are governed by private sections so owing to intense competition, they have to provide the basic equipment.

### ***Overcrowded and Unequipped Classrooms***

Nearly two-thirds of high school and institute teachers complained about overcrowded classrooms. They stated that teaching and controlling twenty or thirty students in one class were really burdensome, particularly in unequipped classes. They believed that in oversized classes, there are many students with various needs, proficiency levels, and behavioral problems so teaching seems more arduous and frustrating. It is noteworthy to mention that just school teachers complained about the lack of good heating and cooling systems. They said students were always complaining about feeling hot or cold, so they got so bored. Fozieh (school) elaborated that 'due to the lack of well-ventilated classes, the unpleasant odors make both students and teachers uncomfortable and put them in a bad mood.' These results match those observed in Badawy's (2015) findings since she found that a lack of a comfortable physical environment increases teacher burnout. This result may be explained by the fact that in overcrowded classrooms, besides some other problems like insufficient resources, it is beyond the means of a teacher to establish good relationships with all students, provide their various needs, and facilitate their learning; so, teachers may feel more exhausted.

### ***Outdated English Books***

Several school and institute teachers mentioned that using outdated English books or teaching one book for over a decade made them really frustrated and demotivated since there was nothing new to learn. Some teachers noted about there were some obsolete contents in the books that they have to explain them to students. One possible explanation is that textbooks play a key role in any educational context and outdated books may reduce teachers'

motivation or pose some challenges to teachers' ability to attain their academic goals which may ultimately increase their frustration and reduce personal achievements. In other words, outdated books or teaching the same book for decades might contribute to some negative emotions which eventually increase their professional burnout.

### ***Linguistic Mistakes and Lack of Functional Use***

Two issues that high school teachers raised were many grammatical and vocabulary mistakes in their new textbooks and the absence of platforms for functional use of English. Many school teachers complained about several grammar and vocabulary mistakes as well as many vague pictures in the textbooks. These findings were unanticipated as it is not expected to have such mistakes in a serious context like schools. Regarding the lack of appropriate platforms for functional use of English, more than half of the high school teachers believed that functional use of English was overlooked in Iranian schools because English was associated with the concept of linguistic imperialism and hegemony. Consequently, policy-makers think that treating English as a foreign language may promote foreign cultural hegemony. It seems that such challenges, in the long run, reduce the teachers' achievement and increase their exhaustion, which can lead to teacher burnout.

### ***Student-related Factors***

Regarding the third major theme, both school and institute teachers mentioned the same factors contributing to their stress, deleterious feelings, and reduced efficiency.

### ***Students' Misbehavior***

Nearly all English teachers stated that misbehavior such as disrespectful behavior, inattention, defiance, talking, and using smartphones made them exhausted and frustrated. Many teachers believed that students changed a lot and became ruder, more defiant, and aggressive and create more serious challenges for them. Some teachers stated that due to students' disruptive behavior, they felt more demotivated and inefficient. Sometimes, they felt teaching was merely wasting the time and energy as they saw no improvement in their students. This result substantiates the findings of the previous work in that they have found students' disruptive behaviors increase teachers' burnout (Jacobson, 2016; Roohani & Dayeri, 2019).

### ***Varied Proficiency Levels***

Many English teachers complained about students at varied proficiency levels since they noted that instructing those students and facilitating their learning made teaching more demanding and exhausting, particularly with all those insufficient resources. Several teachers thought that teaching in those classes required a lot of innovations and formal training which was a really energy-depleting task. Once they could not achieve their planned goals they felt less efficient and start evaluating themselves negatively. They also believed that handling such classes required teacher professional development through some in-service training or some relevant workshops. This remark may be explained by the fact that because of insufficient teaching resources and incongruous support, when teachers have classes with diverse students' needs and tough situations to tolerate, they may undergo huge pressure and diminish their efficacy, which can result in their burnout.

### ***Apathetic Students and Parental Apathy or Interference***

While half of the school teachers perceived that demotivated students and their parents' apathy were another sources of exhaustion, more than half of the institute teachers thought that demotivated students and parents' interference made them mentally worn out. Hussein (school) elaborated that "last week, two moms asked, 'What are the advantages of studying and going to university?' Their sons could not find any job. Maybe, they were right, but it is not my duty to make both students and their parents motivated". In contrast, the institute teachers faced other parental issues. There have been many students in English classes just because of their parents' insistence. These demotivated teens did not study because they wanted to show their parents their defiance and stubbornness. Several teachers said that some parents wanted to come to their classes to see how they taught or performed. This issue is consistent with the findings of a study carried out by Richards *et al.*, (2018) in which they found parental indifference or their interference increased the teachers' emotional exhaustion and stress.

## **Social and Economic Factors**

### ***Low Salary***

All teachers believed that having low salaries in the worst economic situation stressed them out. Therefore, many teachers, mostly the male ones, had to work overtime or had to have a second job to afford their high costs of living. Mohammad (school) discussed the bad

economic situation by saying that “inflation is too high. Everything becomes at least doubled or tripled except our salaries. I teach at least 10 hours every day, but I can’t make ends meet”. Generally, once teachers cannot make ends meet, they have to find a second job or work overtime. Consequently, they do not have enough time to prepare for their classes or refresh themselves, so they are more vulnerable to exhaustion and frustration when they classroom challenges. The findings of the current study are consistent with those of Helou *et al.*, (2016) who found low salary upsurges in burnout.

### ***Lack of Friendly Relationship***

Nearly all school and institute teachers perceived lack of friendly relationships among colleagues and administrative as well as lack of collaboration as the main causes of stress and emotional exhaustion. Nader (school) discussed how his unfriendly principal created a cold and depressing atmosphere in the school, “my principal is extremely unapproachable and autocratic. He always oversteps the bounds of his power, which exhausts and demoralizes the teachers”. Many of the teachers complained about unfriendly colleagues and toxic competitions which discouraged and fatigued them. This is in line with Badawy’s (2015) findings that distant and cold relationships with colleagues and supervisors and a lack of supportive work context make teachers feel emotionally exhausted and burns them out.

### ***Toxic Cultures***

Many school and institute teachers perceived the toxic cultures in workplaces as further reasons for feeling emotionally drained and exhausted. Akram (institute) noted that “an unhealthy atmosphere in my institute is that teachers are always guilty until it is proved that they are innocent, particularly about learners’ scores”. Sadegh (school) explained that “instead of a culture of collaboration, there is a culture of fierce competition. This culture increases jealousy and hostility among teachers”. Several teachers also complained about other views such as “a good teacher is someone who is too lenient, gives high grades, and never complains about anything”. The current result is in line with Demirdag’s (2016) findings; he found that negative school cultures increase teacher burnout. One possible explanation is that negative workplace cultures such as lack of trust, appreciation, collaboration, and support deteriorates teachers’ emotions regarding their accomplishments.



### ***Lack of Deserved Social Status***

In contrast to institute teachers who considered their social position as a positive factor, nearly half of the school teachers perceived a lack of deserved social status as a source of their frustration and discouragement. They complained about undesirable attitudes in society about high school teachers. Hossein argued that by saying “There is a culture of mistrust in our society toward school teachers. Many think teachers do not teach well or do not cover all the important points in the classes to make students sign up in their private classes”. This culture of mistrust makes them emotionally exhausted.

### **Family-related Factors**

#### ***Many Responsibilities***

Most English teachers complained about too many responsibilities at home. Several teachers said that home doing household chores, taking care of children’s schoolwork, providing spouses’ needs, and handling family problems were never-ending tasks, which were depleting and frustrating. Several teachers, especially the female ones, said they felt distressed and frustrated when they went home, since they did not know how to prioritize their home responsibilities and work tasks. It is evident that when teachers are overloaded at home and work and they do not receive enough support from family members, they become emotionally exhausted and eventually feel burnout (Richards et al., 2018).

#### ***High Expectations and Lack of Compassion***

Many teachers also stated their family members’ high expectations and lack of compassion, understanding, and help made them really drained and lonely. Several teachers wished they had more attentive and compassionate spouses to mentally relax them. Others believed that as they were working to support family members financially, they had to involve in-home chores more. This finding indicates once teachers are not supported or understood at home, they felt more emotionally exhausted and dissatisfied, which can make them burned out.

#### ***Lack of Socialization***

Nearly half of the teachers thought they did not have enough time to socialize or refresh themselves. Several teachers perceived themselves to be burned-out, and they needed some time to be emotionally boosted for their profession. Aho (school) noted that she wanted a vacation to reduce her tension and stress. As a single mom, she had to work hard to support

her family. Some teachers thought that their workloads at work and home upset their social life. They wanted a more active social life that allows them to go to parties to unwind themselves. In other words, human beings as social creatures need social communications to decrease their stress and boredom. The present findings are consistent with those of Zhouchun (2011).

Comparing school and institute teachers' perceptions about the sources of stress and burnout in their work lives revealed that there was a consistency of attitudes toward the main themes. As it is illustrated in Table 3, the observed differences were merely in some sub-themes. For instance, regarding the causes of burnout, while only institute teachers mentioned such factors as lack of job security and insurance, lack of annual leave, and assigning teachers to inappropriate classes as some sources of their stress and frustration, school teachers stated when the administration considered English as a non-core subject, which affected their social status, they felt exhausted and devalued. Without question, the work context plays a central role in contributing to such differences. One likely reason is that schools are administered by the public sector; whereas, the institutes are run by the private sector. While schools are supported by the government, which provides teachers with insurance, leave, and etc., the private institutes may evade such responsibilities. Consequently, the institute teachers become emotionally exhausted and dissatisfied.

**Table 3.** Sources of Burnout Perceived by Public School and Private Institute English Teachers

Theme	Sources of burnout in schools	Theme	Sources of burnout in institutes
School atmosphere and job characteristic	Lack of principals' support and sympathy (95%) Too much stress for: preparation, test development, paper correction, students' achievement etc. (91%) Principals, students, and parents' high expectations (91%) Too many roles and responsibilities (86%) English as a non-core subject (69%) Lack of autonomy (52%) Lack of pertinent and clear training (52%)	School atmosphere and job characteristic	Managers, learners, and parents' high expectations (96%) Lack of Job security and insurance (92%) Too much stress for: preparation, test development, paper correction, students' achievement etc. (89%) Lack of managers' support and sympathy (89%) Lack of autonomy (82%) Too many roles and responsibilities (79%) Lack of pertinent and clear training (58%) Applying teachers in inappropriate levels (58%) Lack of annual leave (55%)
Material and technology	Lack of the basic technology for teaching (86%) Books with many grammatical and vocabulary mistakes (73%) Overcrowded classrooms and lack of equipment (69%) Unprepared platform for functional use of language (65%) Outdated books or teaching one for decades (39%)	Material and technology	Lack of appropriate technologies for teaching (68%) Overcrowded classrooms (65%) Outdated books or teaching one for decades (34%)
Students-related factors	Students' misbehaviors (91%) Lack of homogeneity in students' levels (78) Demotivated students and parents' apathy (52%) Language learners' culture (43%)	Students-related factors	Students' misbehaviors (82%) Lack of homogeneity in learners' levels (82%) Demotivated students and parents' interference (65%) Language learners' culture (34%)
Social and economic factors	Low Salary and having a second job (100%) Lack of friendly relationships and collaboration (91%) School culture and atmosphere (60%) Lack of deserved social status (47%)	Social and economic factors	Low Salary and working a lot (100%) Lack of friendly relationships and collaboration (92%) Institute culture and atmosphere (72%)
Family-related factors	Too many responsibilities and roles at home (73%) Family members' high expectations and lack of compassion and help (60%) Lack of time to refresh and socialize (47%)	Family factors	Too many responsibilities and roles at home (72%) Lack of time to refresh and socialize (72%) Family members' high expectations and lack of compassion and help (65%)

### Consequences of Burnout

The second question dealt with burnout consequences for English teachers. After analyzing the data, three major themes and several sub-themes emerged. As illustrated in Table 4, the major themes included the consequences for schools/institutes, students, individuals, and families. There was a consistency of opinions among school and institute teachers about the repercussions of feeling stressed out and emotionally exhausted in and outside schools.

### Consequences for Schools/Institutes

#### Lack of Preparation

More than half of the teachers admitted that it was demanding to be always well-prepared for classes. They illuminated that since they were so drained and frustrated, and had many roles and responsibilities in and out of their classes, it was difficult to be well-prepared. Majid (institute) explained that "... my classes are mainly in upper and advanced levels. When I am not ready, I make mistakes and have to correct myself in the following sessions". Several teachers admitted that once they did not spend enough time on their preparation, they could

not teach the lessons well and faced several challenges. This finding is consistent with that of Heidari and Gorjian (2017) in which they found that teacher burnout wilted the quality of their instruction and performance. This finding may indicate once teachers are emotionally exhausted, they may lack enough empathy for students and suffer from personal accomplishment.

### ***Feeling Isolated***

Another problem that both school and institute teachers noted was connected to feeling isolated at work. Many teachers believed that unfavorable relationships with their colleagues, snobbish behavior, lack of trust, and lack of close ties with administrators made them feel lonely and isolated. Several teachers said that they felt too upset and stressed out when they were going to school or institute because they felt lonesome. This result ties well with some previous studies that found out lack of close and friendly relationship among colleagues made them feel lonely, which could increase their stress levels (Jacobson, 2016), and eventually, the augmented stress levels would contribute to burnout.

### ***Feeling Detached***

It is interesting to mention that only the school teachers pointed that they felt detached from teaching and looked forward to being retired. Some teachers felt they were disconnected from their teaching, education, and school contexts. One possible explanation is that when the tenured school teachers feel emotionally exhausted or stressed out, and don't have to worry about unemployment, they look forward to being retired.

### ***Consequences for Students***

Regarding the consequences for students, many English teachers, both in the schools and institutes perceived the same consequences.

### ***Feeling Callous and Cynical***

While approximately two-thirds of the school teachers had callous and cynical attitudes toward students, about half of the institute teachers felt depersonalized. Several teachers thought that they should not have involved their emotions in teaching because if they teach by their heart and spend all their time and energy but no one valued them; they felt more emotionally exhausted and depersonalized. Some teachers believed that they had to treat

some disruptive students as impersonal objects in order to surpass mental block. Others believed they had to be more detached, and apathetic; as sometimes they could not do anything for their children, let alone for hundreds of students in their classes. One possible explanation for this finding might relate to the fact that after several years of teaching, once the teachers have not met their professional expectations, or have not been appreciated for their attempts in or out of educational contexts, they lose their drive, enthusiasm, and dedication.

### ***Lack of Friendly Relationships***

Several high school and institute teachers mentioned that when they were stressed or frustrated, they couldn't establish friendly or close relationships with their students. Teachers also noted that when they were emotionally healthy, they could manage their relationships with students and handle students' problems more functionally. But once they were emotionally exhausted or depersonalized, they were less flexible, and students' misbehavior bothers them greatly; hence, they established weaker relationships. One possible reason might be attributed to the fact that when students show disrespect for their teachers, disdain their power, or devalue their attempts, teachers develop negative feelings toward them. Therefore, they become unwilling to make friendly relationships. This finding mirrors a previous study carried out by Helou et al. (2016).

### ***Lack of Incentive for Students' Motivation***

Several teachers mentioned that once they lacked enough motivation for their work due to masses of problems, how they were required to motivate their students. Javad (institute) noted that "... theoretically speaking, motivating students seems to be easy, but in practice, it is too complex. We have to consider many factors such as students' age, personality, and family background into account to motivate them. It is a hard-hitting responsibility". Many teachers asserted that sometimes, they wanted to motivate their students, but the old techniques did not work well. Others thought it is not the teachers' responsibility to motivate students at all. Taking teachers' opinions into account, it seems essential that educational policy-makers and administrators should care about teachers' well-being and improve teachers' professional development which is closely related to teachers' motivation, and then they expect highly motivated students.

### *Imparting Their Stress*

Finally, several teachers stated that sometimes they unintentionally imparted their worries, stress, or boredom to their students. Foroozan (institute) explained that "... I am under a lot of pressure from my manager for students' scores. I have to overstate the significance of my work to make students take the lessons and exams more seriously. But this overstatement stresses some students out and causes parents' complains". Interestingly, several teachers asserted that stress was an important element for many students, since they were too easygoing and carefree. This finding is in agreement with Oberle, and Schonert-Reichl's (2016) findings.

Although school and institute teachers perceived the same consequences regarding their students, in all sub-themes institute teachers' percentages were lower than their counterparts. This difference might be explained by their different work contexts. Institutes are run privately, and teachers are not tenure. They are always under scrutiny, are criticized for undesirable behavior, and can get fired simply. Therefore, institute teachers feel more insecure about their careers, and they are more cautious about their behaviors. Some institute teachers asserted that they would not care to motivate their students or establish close relationships with them, but they were continuously required to be more friendly, motivated, and compassionate to keep the students for the institutes and to stay in their jobs.

## **Consequences for Individual Teachers**

### *Physical and Emotional Problems*

The majority of the teachers complained about physical and emotional problems such as demotivation, emotional exhaustion, neck pain, backache, headache, throat problems, voice strain, sleep difficulty, and anxiety. Many teachers said that they took a glass of hot water to their classes for their cough or voice problems during teaching. Several teachers stated that they suffer from mental and emotional problems such as mental block, emotional clutter, disappointment, and frustration. The findings provide parallel evidence with the findings of van Tonder and Williams (2009), who reported that there are approximately 100 physical health problems related to teacher burnout as well as several emotional problems (Maslach, 2003a, 2003b).

### ***Constant Complaints***

Another problem posed by the teachers was associated with their constant complaints about work-related problems. Several teachers noted that sometimes they themselves got tired of their complaints. Many teachers, mainly institute ones, said that their family members objected to their complaints. Family members told them that they were tired of listening to their constant complaints, their discontent, and dissatisfaction. They were asked to stop complaining or leave their job. It seems that when teachers suffer from exhaustion, disappointment, and dissatisfaction, their complaints may serve as a technique that purges all those emotions and relieve teachers' tensions. Besides, it is essential that policy-makers and administrators pay attention to teachers' emotions if they want to increase teachers' effectiveness as well as students' academic achievements.

### ***Consequences for Family***

Concerning family consequences, the high school and institute teachers perceived similar problems with their families.

### ***Family Members' Complaint and Dissatisfaction***

Many teachers stated that their family members complained a lot about their lack of boundaries between work and family lives. They thought that they wanted to do so, but it was impossible. Several teachers also said that their spouses and children felt neglected and annoyed. Others mentioned that their family members constantly asked them to leave their profession. It is evident once teachers spend most of their time on working, they are not able to meet their family members' needs. Thus, they begin to complain about lack of attention, presence, etc.

### ***Being Impatient***

Another perceived consequence was related to the teachers' impatience and intolerance at home. More than half of the participants believed their exhaustion, frustration, and worries at work were the foremost reasons for their impatience and intolerance at home. Many teachers said that they were fed up with many difficult challenges and problems that made them emotionally exhausted and worn-out. Some teachers noted that even in their happiest moments, their brain is overwhelmed with lots of work challenges. This result indicates that once teachers suffer from emotional problems such as mental block and emotional clutter,

they become more impatient and intolerant. This result aligns with an earlier study documenting that teachers who experience burnout or chronic stress are more impatient and intolerant towards their family members (Maslach, 2003a).

### *Lack of Quality Time*

Finally, more than half of the teachers admitted that did not spend quality time with their family members. Several teachers asserted that they were at home physically, but mentally they were so overwhelmed with their work that they forgot their home chores. Some teachers told since they were so busy, they broke their promises repeatedly which made them feel a pang of consciousness. This result may be explained by the fact that when parents could not fulfill their family members' emotional or physical needs, in the long run, they felt guilty and emotionally exhausted.

Overall, comparing the two results for the second question revealed that both school and institute teachers shared similar consequences for their emotional exhaustion and their work-related stress (Table 4). One possible explanation for these results might be attributed to the fact that all teachers, as human beings, have similar reactions to enormous or constant pressure and stress. Put it differently, there are several consequences that are linked to burnout victims no matter what the professions are (Maslach, 2003a).

**Table 4.** *Consequences of Burnout Perceived by Public School and Private Institute English Teachers*

Theme	Consequences of teacher burnout in schools	Theme	Consequences of teacher burnout in institutes
School consequences	Feeling unprepared for the class and lack of good instruction (65%) feeling isolated at work (52) Feeling detached from teaching and waiting to be retired (52%)	Institute consequences	Feeling unprepared for the class and lack of good instruction (55%) Feeling isolated at work (51%)
Students consequences	Feeling callous and depersonalized toward students (73%) Lack of friendly relationship (65%) Lack of motivation for encouraging students (65%) Transferring their stress and boredom to students (52%)	Students consequences	Feeling callous and depersonalized toward students (65%) Lack of close relationship with student (58%) Transferring their stress and boredom to students (55%) Lack of motivation for encouraging students (51%)
Individual consequences	Being demotivated, and frustrated (78%) Suffering from physical health issues (73%) Complaining a lot about work problems (52%)	consequences	Being demotivated, exhausted, and frustrated (82%) Suffering from physical health issues (75%) Complaining a lot about work problems (68%)
Family consequences	Family members' complaints and discontent (78%) Being impatient or intolerant (60%) Lack of quality time for family and feeling burden of guilt (56%)	Family consequences	Family members' complaints and discontent (82%) Being impatient or intolerant (68%) Lack of quality time for family and feeling a twinge of conscience (65%)



### *Classroom Observations*

Finally, observations were conducted to triangulate the collected data from surveys and interviews with the participants' perceptions about the sources and consequences of burnout in their work-life experiences.

Regarding the sources of stress and burnout, in line with the teachers' interviews, many classrooms lacked appropriate equipment. At schools, for instance, classes were too crowded and lacked air-conditioners, and in some classes, there were terrible smells, so students felt uncomfortable. In most schools, there were one or two obsolete laptops; teachers had to turn them on and off several times to use them. In contrast, all classes in the institutes were equipped with televisions or computers and there were air conditioners, but classes were crowded. These findings were in line with interviews.

Concerning the consequences of stress and burnout, the observations were beyond the researcher's expectations. Table 5 displays the descriptive statistic of burned-out teachers' performances in three realms. Regarding teacher-student interactions, all classes enjoyed safe and non-threatening environments. Most of the observed teachers in both schools and institutes seemed to have established supportive and positive relationships with students. While in the institutes, students had several pair or group work, public school students had few opportunities to work collaboratively. This finding could be explained by the nature of schoolbooks which lack enough pair or group work. Besides, teachers in both settings were calm, compassionate, and patient. Students interacted freely with their teachers. It is noteworthy to mention that there were some inconsistencies between interviews and observations as teachers stated that sometimes they could not establish positive relationships with students, got angry quickly, felt frustrated or bored, were not prepared for classes, etc. These findings may be due to two reasons. First, it could be referred to the presence of the researcher that both students and teachers were influenced and watched out their behavior. The second reason could be explained by the fact that in almost all sessions, teachers are not exhausted and stressed out.

With regard to teachers' instructions, most of the teachers instructed students well. There were two items that school teachers had low percentages, including using various instructional resources and different instructions (Table 5). Such finding can be attributed to the public school contexts because once schools lack various resources, teachers have no other alternatives and may feel high stress. Moreover, it may highlight the need for some in-service classes to improve teachers' efficiency in classroom instructions. Interestingly, nearly

all the school and institute teachers instructed their students clearly, helpfully, and patiently. Almost all teachers managed their class time effectively. These surprising findings were contradictory to previous interviews. Such discrepancies might be due to the fact that although teachers are burned-out, frustrated, and dissatisfied, they care about moral and ethical principles in classes.

Regarding teachers' abilities to engage students, more than half of school and nearly all institute teachers displayed satisfactory performances. For instance, as shown in Table 5, the majority of the teachers attempted to motivate students to speak, encourage them to be active, provide feedback, explain, and support. Most of the time when students needed help, they were ready to assist. This mismatch between what teachers stated in their interviews and what was seen in-class observations, as mentioned before, might be explained by the presence of the researcher, or their own moral consciousness.

**Table 5. Descriptive Statistics of School and Institute Burned-out Teachers' Performances**

Categories	Items	School		Institute	
		F	P	F	P
Teacher-student interaction	Teacher establishes a safe, and non-threatening environment in the class.	13	100%	11	100%
	Teacher interacts positively and friendly with students.	10	76%	9	81%
	Teacher expresses behaviors that indicate care and concern about students.	9	69%	8	72%
	The teacher treats students with respect and patience.	9	69%	8	72%
	Teacher establishes active and collaborative learning.	7	53%	9	81%
	Students communicate with their teacher easily.	10	76%	10	90%
	Teacher is assertive but compassionate and sympathized.	9	69%	9	81%
	Teacher stays calm and in control always.	13	100%	11	100%
Teacher instruction	The teacher instructs students clearly.	10	76%	9	81%
	Teacher is prepared for the course.	12	92%	10	90%
	Teacher uses a variety of effective instructional resources.	6	46%	9	81%
	Teacher uses a variety of instructions to meet students' needs.	7	53%	8	72%
	Teacher answers students' questions patiently and helpfully.	10	76%	9	81%
	Teacher checks students' learning and comprehension.	8	61%	9	81%
	Teacher is enabled to deal with learning challenges that students make.	10	76%	9	81%
	Students are clearly instructed for their home assignments.	12	92%	10	90%
Teacher manages time and class effectively.	12	92%	10	90%	
Student engagement	Teacher motivates and encourages students to speak or be active.	8	61%	8	72%
	Students work well in groups or in pair.	8	61%	9	81%
	Students are monitored while doing pair or group work.	8	61%	9	81%
	Teacher provides extra help for weak students or groups.	8	61%	9	81%
	Students get attention, feedback, and explanation.	9	69%	9	81%

## Conclusion and Implication

As the findings revealed, Iranian English teachers in both public high schools and private language institutes mostly stated the same sources and consequences for their burnout. All teachers mentioned factors associated with school atmosphere and job characteristics,

material and technology, students, family, and social and economic situations as the main sources of burnout. Along with lots of similarities, both teachers also reported some different factors related to their specific contexts. Some particular factors that just public high school teachers declared were teaching a non-core subject, books with many grammatical and vocabulary mistakes, an unprepared platform for functional use of language, and a lack of deserved social status. In contrast, institute teachers reported a lack of their job security and insurance, the lack of annual leave, and applying teachers at inappropriate levels as the different sources of their burnout. It was concluded that these differences were associated with different workplaces as public schools were supported by the government while private institutes were managed by private sectors.

Regarding the consequences, except feeling detached from teaching and waiting to be retired for high school teachers, other consequences were reported the same. Based on the findings, teachers' burnout contributed to several consequences for schools/institutes, students, individual teachers, and family. Many teachers reported that their stress and burnout led to some emotional, mental, and physical exhaustion which, in turn, not only reduce their effectiveness in the profession but also result in several problems in their personal lives. It is generally concluded that although burnout is somewhat context-sensitive, the nature of this phenomenon seems to share lots of similarities regardless of settings.

Such conclusions provide important implications for policymakers and administrators. Policymakers could take such results into account to apply some necessary decisions for educational contexts such as modifications in school equipment and material, and providing some pertinent workshops for teachers' professional development which, in turn, not only reduce teachers' stressors but also increase their academic successes. Administrators can also provide more friendly and healthy environments in their workplaces and support their teachers both mentally and academically to augment both their teachers' and their students' academic performances.

While this study makes a notable contribution, it is essential to consider the limitations which further researchers could address. First, as this phenomenological study was conducted only in one province and the participants, although enough for a qualitative study, were few, the obtained results may not be overtly generalized. Moreover, although qualitative studies yield rich data and deepen our understanding, the bias of observations or interviews might be taken into consideration. Further research can be done in other Iranian provinces or other educational contexts to provide a more complete picture of this phenomenon.

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## Appendix

## Interview Protocol

سوالات مصاحبه یا معلمان انگلیسی
<p>1. کمی درباره سابقه ی تدریس زبان انگلیسی خود بفرمایید؟</p> <p>2. چرا زبان انگلیسی را برای تدریس انتخاب کردین؟ چه ویژگی در تدریس این درس برای شما جذاب بود؟</p> <p>3. کمی درباره تدریس زبان انگلیسی در مدرسه / موسسه بفرمایید؟</p>
الف. حثت استرس و فرسودگی شغلی
<p>1. به نظر شما تدریس زبان انگلیسی چه تفاوتی با تدریس سایر درس ها دارد؟</p> <p>2. به نظر شما معلم زبان انگلیسی در کلاس با چه استرس هایی مواجه می شود؟ می توانید از تجربه ی شخصی خود یک مثال بزنید؟ (برای مثال استرس مدیریت دانش آموزان و ایجاد ارتباط با آنها، استرس عدم آشنایی با برخی از فرهنگ ها، استرس عدم آگاهی کافی در مورد بعضی از گرامرها)</p> <p>3. به نظر شما چه عواملی باعث استرس و خستگی مزمن در معلمان انگلیسی در مقایسه با معلمان سایر دوروس می شود؟</p> <p>4. تا چه اندازه عوامل محیطی نظیر جو حاکم بر موسسه/مدرسه، روابط بین همکاران و رابطه با مدیریت، امکانات کلاس ها و... بر استرس و خستگی شما تاثیرگذار هست؟ و چگونه؟</p> <p>5. تا چه اندازه عوامل اقتصادی می تواند بر استرس و خستگی شما به عنوان معلم زبان انگلیسی تاثیر بگذارد؟ و چگونه؟</p> <p>الف. عوامل فرهنگی چطور؟ و چگونه؟</p> <p>ب. عوامل اجتماعی چطور؟ و چگونه؟</p> <p>ج. عوامل سیاسی چطور؟ و چگونه؟</p> <p>6. به نظر شما عوامل خانوادگی و یا فردی تا چه اندازه می تواند در استرس و خستگی معلمان نقش ایفا نماید؟ می توانید از تجربه ی شخصی خود یک مثال بزنید؟</p>
ب. عواقب فرسودگی شغلی
<p>1. در پایان روز کاری، وقتی به منزل می روید چه احساسی دارید؟ و یا تا چه اندازه احساس خستگی و یا بی حوصله گی می کنید؟</p> <p>2. تا چه اندازه احساس می کنید تدریس زبان موجب احساس خستگی و یا مشکل فیزیکی خاص در شما شده؟ می توانید از تجربه ی شخصی خود یک مثال بزنید؟</p> <p>3. تا چه اندازه شما در شغل خود به عنوان معلم احساس موفقیت می کنید؟ می توانید از تجربه ی شخصی خود یک مثال بزنید؟</p> <p>الف. تا چه اندازه در زندگی تحصیلی شاگردان خود تاثیرگذار هستید؟ و چگونه ؟</p> <p>ب. تا چه اندازه می توانید برای زبان آموزان محیط آرامی را برای یادگیری فراهم سازید؟</p> <p>4. به نظر شما تا چه حد یک مدرس می تواند زبان آموزان با رفتارهای ناهنجار را در کلاس کنترل کند؟</p> <p>5. به نظر شما تا چه حد یک مدرس می تواند زبان آموزان بدون انگیزه را به یادگیری علاقمند نماید؟</p> <p>6. تا به حال به ترک شغل معلمی و یا تغییر شغل خود اندیشیده اید؟ چه عواملی منجر به این تصمیم شده است؟</p> <p>7. به نظر شما خستگی و استرس معلم زبان چه عواقبی را در کلاس درس به همراه دارد؟ در زندگی شخصی چطور؟</p>

