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# Burnout and job dissatisfaction as negative psychological barriers in school settings: A mixed-methods investigation of Iranian teachers

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## Abstract:

**BACKGROUND:** Despite the multitude of studies comparing teacher burnout with an ample of variables, a need for seeking what English language teachers think about their job and the interfering variables regarding the context seems essential. The aim of this study was primarily to investigate the relationship between teacher burnout and job satisfaction of English language teachers and, then, to find out the impact of teaching experience and gender on teacher burnout and job satisfaction.

**MATERIALS AND METHODS:** It was a mixed-methods study conducted on 103 teachers who were conveniently sampled and were investigated through questionnaires and interviews among high school English language teachers in Sistan and Baluchestan province. The sampling method was purposive, and data were collected through questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. Data analyses were performed using mixed-methods approach.

**RESULTS:** The results revealed a moderate negative correlation between the first two elements of teacher burnout (emotional exhaustion and depersonalization) and job satisfaction ( $P < 0.01$ ), whereas a positive correlation was found between the next element, i.e., personal accomplishments and job satisfaction ( $P < 0.05$ ). Afterward, no statistically significant difference was detected between demographic characteristics (i.e., gender and teaching experience) ( $P < 0.01$ ). Then, 15 teachers voluntarily participated in the interview sessions and expressed their opinions about the way teachers see the environment they work in.

**CONCLUSIONS:** There are factors that influence on the quality of teaching and learning processes and lead to burnout and job dissatisfaction; therefore, it seems advisable to remove them to reduce their negative effects.

## Keywords:

Burnout, job satisfaction, psychology

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## Introduction

The profession of teaching possibly brings about a high level of stress for teachers.

[<sup>1</sup>] Stressful sources such as conditions in which physical, mental, and emotional exhaustions (EEs) cause an intensive dissatisfaction from long-term involvement in emotionally requesting situations and stressful working environments can cause burnout.<sup>[2,3]</sup>

Burnout is defined as a negative psychological experience that is the teachers' reaction to job-related stress.<sup>[4]</sup> Burnout can result in the retirement of experienced and productive teachers ahead of time.<sup>[5]</sup> Inadequate working conditions, relationships between colleagues, school management and administration, and low status are among the factors which influence teacher's burnout and eventually their job satisfaction.

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Burnout includes three components, namely, EE which is the tired and fatigued feelings that occur as emotional energies are drained. When these feelings become chronic, educators often experience depersonalization (DP), that is, indifferent feelings about helping their students learn and grow.<sup>[6]</sup> When educators no longer feel that they are participating in student's development, they may experience a lack of personal accomplishment (PA).

In educational settings,<sup>[7]</sup> Maslach and Leiter developed a working model of teacher burnout. It suggests a stage in which the experience of EE, DP, and PA, preparation, and the involvement in classroom activities reduces while student criticism increases. In responses, students are likely to change their perception of the teacher, their feelings toward the teacher, and their behavior in the classroom, and consequently, students' sense of efficacy in school often declines. In addition, teacher burnout reduces students' motivation, which may decrease learning and engagement.<sup>[8]</sup>

Job satisfaction, which is the positive affect toward employment as defined by<sup>[9]</sup> Mueller and McCloskey, is conceivably a reasonable assessment of how the job confirms to an employee's needs, requirements, or expectations.<sup>[10-12]</sup> There are significant relationships between the variables of job satisfaction and salary. Based on the established findings of the job satisfaction scale, the level of job satisfaction was found to be higher among teachers who receive higher salaries in this study.

Many attempts have been made to investigate the appearance of teacher burnout instructional behavior, for instance, using both teachers' self-reports on their burnout symptoms and student rating on teachers' burnout symptoms.<sup>[13]</sup> Evers *et al.* show that teachers' burnout symptoms are identified and felt by their students. In addition,<sup>[14]</sup> Klusmann *et al.* have reported on the significant correlations between teachers' EE and student's ratings of teaching quality. In comparison to their counterparts with low burnout, teachers with high EE were more prone to obtain lower ratings by students in classroom management, adequate classroom placement, and personal assistance by their teachers. For example, teachers in Australia<sup>[15]</sup> "experience work intensification, EE, as well as dissatisfaction and satisfaction with different aspects of their job."<sup>[16]</sup> EE and DP can be referred to as the main components of teacher burnout factors.<sup>[17]</sup>

Burnout in teachers has been the center of attention for education professionals, resulting in teaching to become a high-risk profession. Teachers' chronic stress may affect the processes of both teaching and learning. At times, burnout may force teacher to decide on early retirement or try to find jobs in private sectors.<sup>[18]</sup>

Research has indicated that stress and burnout can have an influence on the amount of time and energy spent on job-related tasks and decrease effectiveness in working with students.<sup>[6]</sup> The link between stress, job satisfaction, and work environment is crucial to the study of burnout.<sup>[19]</sup> Furthermore, burnout destroys the psychological, mental, and physical health of the afflicted person.<sup>[20-22]</sup>

In studies of teacher burnout and stress factors, researchers observed that teacher burnout can be provoked by organizational features such as number of students, professional recognition or prestige expenditure, working conditions, level of specialization, students' demographics, lack of resources, relationship with colleagues and social support,<sup>[23]</sup> exploration of the implications of mental health in terms of incidence of mental distress among teachers,<sup>[15]</sup> and work intensification as a feature of teachers' job.

In light of what has been mentioned concerning factors influencing a teacher's performance, this study seeks to find out whether teacher burnout (EE, PA, and DP) can have any relationship with job satisfaction in general, and their correlation regarding gender and teaching experience in particular, and also to understand how English language teachers see the environment they work in Sistan and Baluchestan high schools.

## Materials and Methods

### Participants

Through purposive and convenience sampling method, among 150 English language teachers, 103 teachers who filled the questionnaires, including both genders (males,  $n = 41$ ; females,  $n = 62$ ) with different teaching experiences, participated in this study in Sistan and Baluchestan province, Iran. They were aged between 25 and >55 years. Out of the 103 teachers, 17 (16.5%) had teaching experience below 5 years, 15 (14.6%) had 5–10 years, 2 (23.3%) had 11–15 years, 16 (15.5%) had 16–20 years, 17 (16.5%) had 21–25 years, 11 (10.7%) had 26–35 years, and 3 (2.9%) had 31 years and above. From this population, 15 teachers consented to participate in the interview phase voluntarily.

### Instruments

This study used two types of data collection tools including questionnaires and interview.

### Teacher Burnout Questionnaire

The questionnaire utilized in this study was Maslach Burnout Inventory Educatory Survey (MBI-ES), which was developed and published in 1986, the second edition of MBI manual.<sup>[24]</sup> The MBI-ES measures the same three burnout dimensions as the original MBI. The MBI-ES is

nearly identical to the MBI except that the use of the term "recipient" has been changed to student.<sup>[25]</sup>

### Job Satisfaction Questionnaire

Job satisfaction was measured using a 20-item questionnaire from Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire. As a general measure of job satisfaction was desired, any item that referred to a specific job characteristic was eliminated from the scale. It is one of the most widely used questionnaires for examining job satisfaction.

### Interview

In order to understand how the variable of burnout affects teachers, 15 teachers were interviewed. Open-ended questions investigated their attitude toward their job, their salary and job security, their social and occupational status, the effects that all these factors had on their job satisfaction, and burnout. By conducting these interviews, teachers' opinions about how they see the environments they work in were investigated.

### Procedures of data collection

#### Pilot study

A pilot study was carried out in order to check the reliability, accuracy, and validity of the questionnaires and to improve their quality before proceeding to the large-scale study. Before the initiation of the study, the validity of the questionnaires was examined by consulting with seven experts in this field. Then, reliabilities of the questionnaires were examined using Cronbach's alpha. A total of thirty sets of questionnaires were used to perform the pilot study. They were distributed among male/female English language teachers at a high school who were teaching at grades one and two in several cities in Sistan and Baluchestan province. All the thirty sets of questionnaires were collected back from the respondents, and their reliability indices were examined using Cronbach's alpha for teacher burnout ( $r = 0.74$ ) and job satisfaction questionnaire ( $r = 0.70$ ), which indicated a fairly high reliability index.

### Procedures of data collection related to questionnaires

The researcher distributed the questionnaires at high schools after getting authorization from the education office of each city and negotiating with the high school's authority for their distribution. The questionnaires were distributed among high school male/female English language teachers. A total of 150 questionnaires were distributed among the high school teachers in the cities of Zahedan, Zabol, Khash, Nookabad, Saravan, Iranshar, Nikshar, Ghasreghand, Konarak, and Chabahar, out of which 112 questionnaires were collected back. Few questionnaires were left out due to incomplete responses. Finally, only 103 questionnaires

were compiled and introduced to IBM SPSS Statistics software, version 20 (IBM Corp, Armonk, NY, USA). The questionnaire collection procedure lasted 4 months.

### Procedures of data collection related to interview phase

The qualitative method contained a semi-structured interview containing ten questions related to burnout and job satisfaction, which were answered by 15 teachers from both genders. In order to collect data, the researcher traveled to several cities of Sistan and Baluchestan province and had interviews with the interviewees. The researcher interviewed 15 volunteered teachers, considering their attendance at the high school and their teaching schedule. First, the teachers were allowed to take a look at the questions and then answered them. It took 20–35 min to interview each teacher. Teachers differed with regard to the time it took to respond to the questions, with some of them providing shorter answers, while others providing longer, more complete responses. Because it was easier for them to express themselves using their mother tongue, teachers expressed their opinions in Persian language while their speech was recorded by a digital voice recorder and then typed verbatim, and finally introduced to MAXQDA12 (VERBI software company, GmbH, Berlin, Germany), to be analyzed qualitatively. Data collection lasted approximately 2 months.

## Results

### Quantitative results

The relationship between teacher burnout and its components with job satisfaction was investigated using the Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient [Table 1]. Preliminary analyses were performed to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity. There was a strong negative correlation (according to Cohen 1988, pp. 79–81<sup>[26]</sup>) between job satisfaction and EE,  $r = -0.55$ ,  $n = 103$ ,  $P < 0.01$ , with high levels of job satisfaction associated with lower levels of EE. A medium negative correlation between job satisfaction and DP was detected,  $r = -0.40$ ,  $n = 103$ ,  $P < 0.01$ , with high levels of job satisfaction associated with lower levels of DP. Afterward, there was a positively low correlation between job satisfaction and PA,  $r = 0.21$ ,  $n = 103$ ,  $P < 0.05$ , with higher levels of job satisfaction associated with higher levels of PA.

In general, there was a medium negative correlation between job satisfaction and burnout,  $r = -0.39$ ,  $n = 103$ ,  $P < 0.01$ , with high levels of job satisfaction associated with lower levels of burnout.

In order to answer the second research question, an independent sample *t*-test was conducted [Table 2].

The results indicated that there was no statistically significant difference in burnout for males (mean = 59.2, standard deviation [SD] = 11.56) and females (M = 60.45, SD = 11.43;  $t(103) = -0.575, P < 0.05$ ).

A one-way between-group ANOVA was conducted to explore the impact of teaching experience on burnout. The participants were divided into seven groups according to their years of teaching experience (below 5 years, 5–10, 11–15, 16–20, 21–25, 26–30, and above 31 years of teaching experience). The results revealed that there was no significant difference at  $P < 0.05$  level in burnout for the seven groups,  $f(6,103) = 0.52$  [Table 3].

**Table 1: The correlation between teachers' burnout and job satisfaction**

Components	Job satisfaction
Emotional exhaustion	$r = -0.55^{**}$ Significant=0.000
Personal accomplishment	$r = 0.21^*$ Significant=0.03
Depersonalization	$r = -0.40^{**}$ Significant=0.000
Burnout	$r = -0.39^{**}$ Significant=0.000
Total	$n = 103$

\*\* $P < 0.01$ , \* $P < 0.05$

**Table 2: Independent sample t-test related to burnout and job satisfaction among teachers regarding gender**

Components	Gender	n	Mean	SD	df	t	Significant
Burnout	Male	41	59.12	11.56	101	-0.575	0.56
	Female	62	60.45	11.43			
Job satisfaction	Male	41	63.17	20.19		-0.87	0.38
	Female	62	66.58	18.74			

SD=Standard deviation

**Table 3: One-way analysis of variance related to burnout among teachers regarding teaching experience**

Variable	Teaching experience (years)	n	Mean	SD	Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean square	F	Significant
Burnout	Below 5	17	58.29	8.02	Between group	420.293	6	70.049	0.52	0.79
	5-10	15	59.20	13.24						
	11-15	24	57.79	10.31						
	16-20	16	63.62	7.13						
	21-25	17	60.52	17.67						
	26-30	11	61.63	9.62						
	31 and above	3	60.63	12.70						

SD=Standard deviation

**Table 4: One-way analysis of variance related to job satisfaction among teachers regarding teaching experience**

Variable	Teaching experience (years)	n	Mean	SD	Source	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Significant
Job satisfaction	Below 5	17	63.64	16.94	Between group	1296.972	6	216.162	0.56	0.75
	5-11	15	68.80	18.49						
	11-15	24	63.48	20.59						
	16-20	16	59.87	18.76						
	21-25	17	69.58	18.81						
	26-30	11	68.90	25.01						
	31 and above	3	61	13.85						

SD=Standard deviation

In order to detect the impact of teaching experience on job satisfaction, another one-way between-group ANOVA was conducted [Table 4]. The results showed that there was no significant difference among the seven groups  $f(6, 103) = 0.56$ .

### Qualitative results

The fourth research question attempts to find answers for the way English language teachers think about their working environment regarding teacher burnout and job satisfaction. To do so, ten questions were asked through interviews, and then teacher's opinions were categorized and codified using MAXQDA12 software. In the following section, some examples related to each question are presented.

Interviewer: Q1 – *In general, how would you describe your school environment regarding the feeling of stress?*

Example 1: Participant a:

*It depends on the teacher, whether he/she can control the class and have enough knowledge about the subject, then you do not have any stress. I personally do not have any stress. If you have years of teaching experience, you will experience much less stress.*

The qualitative analysis of teachers' opinions related to this question revealed that among the defined codes, the code "no stress" had the highest frequency. Most teachers did not have stress and they believed that teachers with more job experience and knowledge would feel less stressful. Sometimes teachers feel stress, however, they should control it so that it may not be transferred to their



students and may not affect the process of teaching in class.

Interviewer: Q2 – *As an English teacher, do you feel burnout at work?*

Example 2: Participant a:

*As I said, the working environment and students have a direct impact on teaching procedures and the teacher's mental and psychological status. In my opinion, regarding the present educational system, this kind of burnout is significant.*

Example 3: Participant a:

*If one has enthusiasm in teaching, s/he won't feel fatigue. I myself don't feel exhausted. During my*

*career, I've not experienced burnout.*

The results revealed that among the defined codes, two codes were the most frequent. Some English language teachers felt burnout, whereas others did not. The inappropriate education system, student's laziness, nonstandard criteria for evaluation of teacher's effort, long working hours, work pressure, and insufficient salary were among the most referred reasons of teacher burnout in Iran. These factors influence teacher's well-being and comfort, and consequently result in burnout. Their own personal enthusiasm and interest in teaching the English language were among the teachers' main reasons for not suffering from burnout.

Interviewer: Q3 – *If you could change anything about your work environment that would help you reduce burnout, what would you do?* Example 4: Participant a:

*I think there are a lot of things that the teacher can do to reduce stress and exhaustion of the classroom environment. The teacher can create a happy and interesting class for the students through vibrant activities, showing videos, having conversations, showing pictures and doing many other tasks in an attractive and interesting way.*

Changing the classroom environment, using multimedia, changing the education system, and reducing teaching hours were among the most common defined codes. English language teachers can utilize multimedia such as films, games, and flashcards in the class. Teachers' use of multimedia in the classroom allows students to enjoy more while also motivating them and helping them to learn better. Using multimedia throughout the class improves the class environment and makes it more interesting, not only for students, but also for teachers. It ultimately reduces teacher burnout and leads to affective learning. Therefore, the teacher can creatively make

changes in the class environment, which could mostly be achieved through utilizing multimedia. Another code to which most teachers referred to was changing the educational system.

With regard to changing the education system, some teachers believe that the education system should undergo fundamental changes because teachers cannot make changes by themselves. When the education system changes, the teachers' method of teaching will also change and, consequently, teachers will feel less burnout.

Example 5: Participant a:

*In our country, English language is not a second language (i.e., it is a foreign language). Whatever we do, the learner is not able to learn better. One individual cannot make a difference. Education officials must start making changes.*

Interviewer: Q4 – *What kind of external factors affect your work burnout?*

Teachers believed that external factors are important, and factors, that is, the school principal, the availability of equipment, and even learners' parents, are among the most common external factors affecting their work burnout. Teachers attempt to control outside factors. Some teachers strongly believed that they would not allow any of these external factors to affect their teaching process.

Example 6: Participant a:

*Yes, it is certainly effective. If the school authorities do not provide a suitable mental and psychological situation for the teacher, it will affect the teacher's teaching. If my teaching aids are not prepared well, it makes me nervous.*

A number of teachers declared, "no affect." Teachers should put external factors aside and not allow these problems to impact their work.

Example 7: Participant a:

*Not at all. External problems are separated from issues inside the class. Teaching removes outside fatigue.*

The following questions tried to find answers related to teachers' job satisfaction.

Interviewer Q5 – *Is teaching English a very interesting job?*

In general, English language teachers were interested in teaching English. Most teachers strongly believed that

their own interest in teaching English language makes their job satisfactory, and they noted that teaching difficulties are alleviated mostly because of their interest in English language.

Example 8: Participant a:

*Teaching English is excellent. If you are interested in it and master the subject, it can be an interesting and high-class job.*

Example 9: Participant b:

*Due to its importance all over the world, teaching English is certainly significant, and being interested in one's job is definitely important, and this is also true in the teaching career.*

Interviewer Q6 – *Do you have peace of mind at your work?*

Most teachers have peace of mind, but they have different perceptions about calmness. Some of them feel calmness due to having a good command of knowledge and competence in teaching, some teachers feel it because they see their student's progress, and others feel comfort because of their interest in teaching. Some teachers do not have peace of mind mostly because the teaching career is not prestigious with a sufficient salary, and the issue is worse when students do not work hard and progress is slow.

Example 10: Participant a:

*Naturally, there is calmness. Depending on the study time I have during 24 h, I try to learn some methods and implement them. When I succeed in this regard, I naturally feel more relaxed.*

Example 11: Participant b:

*Mental relaxation still depends on external factors. I myself have mental relaxation, even if I have problems, I try to be relaxed, so I can teach well.*

Interviewer Q7 – *Do you have enough motivation to study and improve your knowledge of the language?*

Teachers mostly have enough motivation to improve their own level of knowledge because they are personally interested in English and believe that as they have much up-to-date information they would have more self-confidence and hence be more successful in teaching and also impact student's motivation and learning. Few teachers did not have any motivation for improving their knowledge as they believed that in the current

education system no attention would be paid to the level of teacher's knowledge.

Example 12: Participant a:

*Yes, definitely. If the teacher's language knowledge is not high, s/he will not be able to teach the content.*

Some teachers lose their motivation because they feel that the education system will not reward them for their effort. In fact, the only criterion for teacher evaluation is students' scores, according to which teacher's efforts may be rewarded.

Example 13: Participant a:

*Unfortunately, our efforts as teachers in the classroom are not seen and most often the teacher's*

*assessment criterion is the pass score of the students. The authorities also want it this way.*

Interviewer Q8 – *Do you feel excited after teaching?*

Studying the defined codes related to this question showed that some teachers have positive excitement when they see their student's improvement in English, whereas others become frustrated when students do not perform well on their lessons and no improvements are made. These issues are distressing for the teacher and will ultimately affect the teachers to a degree that makes them frustrated.

Example 14: Participant a:

*Yes, when I enter my class with great excitement to teach, students improve and that makes me happy. I get motivated.*

Example 15: Participants b:

*See, IQs differ. You can't expect all the students to study in a similar manner. They aren't the same. One student learns faster, another slower, and some don't even understand. But when they learn well, I feel excitement.*

Interviewer Q9 – *Is the course book up-to-date and efficient enough to help the students to learn*

*English?*

New books are better than old books and help students learn more affectively. English language books are written based on the communicative method, but this method could not be utilized at high schools, partly because of the lack of time and equipment. Teachers prefer the communicative language teaching (CLT)

method. In fact, they teach books which are written based on the CLT method, but in fact they do not follow the CLT principles. CDs of the book should be available for students. Although the books have become updated, teachers still teach grammar translation method (GTM).

Example 16: Participant a:

*Newly published books are apparently based on the CLT approach, but when we investigate, we can see that, unfortunately, GTM is used. Books in our neighboring countries, Afghanistan and Pakistan, have been localized with regard to their beliefs. Each Muslim must have such books at hand.*

Example 17: Participant b:

*In fact, these books are based on the communicative approach and must definitely be taught based on this approach. However, due to lack of sufficient resources, time limit in schools, and lack of proficient teachers, this issue has been facing serious problems.*

Interviewer Q10 – *Is there a difference between methods of teaching English at high schools and institutes?*

Teachers have enough time and equipment at institutes, and they use original books and also employ different methods for teaching. They pay more attention to the speaking skill and, therefore, students make better accomplishments at institutes. At schools, teachers do not have enough time and equipment. In high schools, teachers do not pay attention to the students' level of English; there is an assigned syllabus that teachers should follow, and the sessions are 90 min, which are very limited. In fact, they only aim to complete the assigned book by the end of the year. The final exam is more important than the Student's learning.

Example 18: Participant a:

*It differs drastically. In high schools, a specific book is presented and the learners' language proficiency is not important. What is important is covering the book till the end of the educational year. For the Ministry of Education, students' learning is not prioritized, but only whether the book is covered or not. Teaching methodology definitely differs depending on the class level.*

## Discussion

Stress and burnout can affect the amount of time and energy spent on job-related tasks and reduce effectiveness when working with students. According to the results of the current study, English teachers with higher PA had higher job satisfaction. On the other hand, more EE and DP among English teachers led

to greater job dissatisfaction. In the qualitative phase, English teachers argued on the most frequent reasons of job dissatisfaction and burnout in their working environment. In line with the present study,<sup>[27]</sup> Fiorilli *et al.* found a positive correlation between EE and DP, whereas there was a negative correlation between PA with the other two subscales of burnout.

The present study does not confirm the findings of Lackritz<sup>[28]</sup> and Schwarzer and Hallum<sup>[29]</sup> as they revealed that women experienced higher levels of EE and men experienced higher levels of DP, while there were no significant differences among teachers regarding gender in the current study. In the present study, EE also led to job dissatisfaction.<sup>[19]</sup> PA has only a modest negative correlation with the two other dimensions of burnout. Here, it was found that PA had a small positive correlation with job satisfaction.<sup>[30,31]</sup>

These findings partially confirm some studies which found no meaningful difference in teacher burnout in terms of gender, while some studies, for example,<sup>[32]</sup> Bibou-Nakou *et al.* found that male teachers reported higher levels of burnout than female teachers, whereas the present study found no correlation between gender and burnout. Moreover, the results of this study completely reject the findings of Maslach<sup>[33]</sup> and Poulin and Walter<sup>[34]</sup> as certain demographic variables such as age, marital status, and gender were found to be related to teachers' burnout and their job satisfaction. In this study, no significant differences were detected in gender and teaching experience with burnout and job satisfaction, while the findings of this study lend support to the finding of Fiorilli *et al.*'s<sup>[27]</sup> study, in which no significant relationship was identified between the three dimensions of burnout (age, gender, and length of teaching experience).

The findings of this study revealed that there is no significant relationship between burnout and job satisfaction regarding teachers' experiences. Considering demographic characteristics, this result is not in line with the results of Chang,<sup>[35]</sup> in which the varieties of demographic characteristics have been found to relate to burnout. These characteristics included sociodemographic levels of education and job-related characteristics (grade level taught and years of teaching experience).<sup>[13]</sup> Teachers' burnout is hardly correlated with teaching experience, but factors such as attitudes or coping strategies have an impact on it. According to Dworkin *et al.*,<sup>[36]</sup> there are several possible explanations to state that the relationship between length of teaching experience and the different dimensions of burnout is linear. Allie conducted a study on regular and special education teachers to measure the effect of job stress and personal life stress on job performance, burnout,

and job satisfaction.<sup>[37]</sup> The findings revealed that special education teachers had less job stress than regular teachers. A strong relationship was found between job stress, job dissatisfaction, and EE.<sup>[38]</sup> Kyriacou and Sutcliffe studied the relationship between stress and job satisfaction. Stressors were found to be negative and significantly correlated with job satisfaction. Interestingly, in the present study, most teachers reported no significant stress in their classes and believed that teachers with more job experience and knowledge do not feel stress and in stressful situations, they should manage it.

Poor working conditions, school management, and low status are among factors that have an impact on teacher burnout in the study by Blandford (2012).<sup>[5]</sup> With regard to English teachers in Iran, the inappropriate education system, student's laziness, nonstandard criteria for evaluation of teacher's effort, long working hours, work pressure, and insufficient salary were listed as reasons for teachers' burnout.

In the current study, it was opined that employing multimedia in the classroom would reduce burnout, and this finding rejects the results of French *et al.*<sup>[39]</sup> regarding teachers' use of technology and the nature of stress association with the use of technology in the classroom. The results of the present study showed that teachers' job satisfaction and situational factors such as working environment and type of school are related to burnout and job satisfaction.<sup>[40]</sup> Satisfied teachers differ from dissatisfied teachers regarding job performance, which may be due to the overall level of job satisfaction.

The results of the present study partially confirm the findings of studies by Ketheeswaran<sup>[12]</sup> and Shourbagi and Bakkar<sup>[10]</sup> which revealed some significant relations between job satisfaction and the salary variable. According to a finding by Filiz,<sup>[11]</sup> similar results were also obtained, that is, teachers who get higher salaries tend to have a higher level of job satisfaction.<sup>[41]</sup> The literature pertaining to burnout suggests that students' disruptive behaviors could be a threat to teachers' goal achievement and lead to burnout.<sup>[42,43]</sup> Teachers reporting high levels of burnout are often less tolerant of student conduct, which may contribute to problematic student behavior through teachers' inability to mediate and calmly pacify potentially volatile situations.<sup>[13]</sup> Teacher's burnout reduces students' motivation, which may decrease learning and engagement. In this study, some teachers had lost their motivation because they thought that there was an imbalance in the effort–reward mechanism of the present educational system. The findings of the study also showed that long working hours and work pressure are among the factors which lead to teacher

burnout.<sup>[44]</sup> Time pressures and increasing job demands are among other factors that further increase teachers' risk of burnout.

Finally, as it was mentioned, many factors may lead to teacher burnout, such as different personal characteristics, age, sex, levels of education, grade level taught, years of experience, classroom atmosphere, physical fatigue, and illness. In future studies, these influencing factors can be applied to teachers who teach English language to other groups and levels such as kids or university students to observe the extent to which these factors lead to instructors' burnout.

## Conclusions

The results of the current study reveal that burnout is clearly an important problem in the teaching profession. This issue is very noteworthy with regard to English language teachers' at schools and education systems. The findings also revealed that environmental or situational factors cause burnout in English language teachers. Experienced teachers have less stress than younger teachers. English language teachers feel burnout mostly because of factors such as the education system, inadequate salary, students who do not comprehend lessons, and external factors. Moreover, teachers would not feel burnout during the first years of teaching, but as they teach during a long period of time and through the years, they experience it more and more. Some teachers do not feel relaxed at work mostly because of internal and external factors such as the community and parents, lack of equipment, and type of school. Although there have been many problems in the English education system, some teachers are not influenced by these factors mostly because of their personal interest in English language, so they have job satisfaction. In general, an English teacher who feels burnout has a low level of job satisfaction, which ultimately influences his/her quality of teaching. These factors could have a great influence on the teaching process, transfer of information, students' learning, and consequently on the quality of teaching. Teachers are the main medium for the progress of young students who are intended to create a bright future for our country; therefore, it seems advisable to remove the reported problems as obstacles in successful enhancement of the teaching career.

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## Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts of interest.

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