

## On the Relationship between Biographical Variables and Iranian EFL Teachers' Burnout and Stressors

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### Abstract

Occupational stress and professional burnout are of great concern in educational jobs. Teachers serve one of the most stressful professions. Prolonged stress at work can lead to burnout which causes absenteeism and job dissatisfaction. This problem will impair the quality of teaching. The aim of this study was to investigate the sources of stress and burnout levels of Iranian English teachers using the Boyle's stress and Maslach Burnout Inventory. The teachers who are in the higher levels of occupational experience presented higher levels of job stress, apart from marital status, level of teaching, and degree of education. Based on the results of this study, it appeared that Iranian English teachers in this case seemed not to have lost their sense of self-efficacy, competence and achievement. Female and male teachers showed moderate degree of personal accomplishment. Increasing the hours of teaching per week leads to increase depersonalization of the teachers. The other biographic factors have no effect on depersonalization. Increasing the hours of teaching per week increases the emotional exhaustion but there is no relationship with the other variables.

**Keywords:** burnout components, stressors, biographical variables, EFL teachers

### 1. Introduction

Burnout, a concept coined during the 1970's, is a concern across many disciplines and of international interest. The term originally used to refer to the negative effects of chronic drug abuse, was applied by Fredenberger to describe the psychological state of human service workers under severe and prolonged stress (Soderfelt, 1995). Based on the pioneering work of Researchers constructed burnout as a psychological syndrome that has three dimensions: *emotional exhaustion* referring to feelings of being emotionally drained by intense contact with other people, *depersonalization* referring to negative attitudes or callous responses toward people, and *reduced personal accomplishment* referring to a decline in one's sense of competence and of successful achievement in working with people (Maslach, 1982; Maslach & Leiter, 1997; Maslach, Schaufeli & Leiter, 2001). Outcomes of burnout in the work place are generally linked to costly increases in turnover, absenteeism, and reduced productivity for the individuals and the organization. Burnout is related to stress and it appears that the concept of burnout is a useful way of conceptualizing stress experienced by the staff of professions. High levels of occupational stress often leads to professional burnout. Cooper (1988) in his classification of several occupations in terms of the degree of stress that they cause on the employees, has indicated that, as far as the occupations of social welfare are concerned, teachers experience the highest levels of stress (in second place came the job of the social workers).

The international concern with teacher stress and burnout stems from the evidence that prolonged occupational stress can lead to both mental and physical ill-health and also a concern that this problem will impair the quality of teaching. If teachers are expected to continue teaching year after year with enthusiasm, then they need burnout prevention strategies. Teachers must learn how to physically and psychologically deal with stress. The aim of the study was to investigate the specific sources of stress experienced by Iranian English teachers, the degree of professional burnout and the effects of variables such as gender, age, marital status and teaching experience on their burnout levels, and also to compare the level of burnout in Iranian teachers with that of international norms.

## 2. Literature Review

Teacher stress and burnout have emerged over the past 30 years as a serious concern for teachers, students and parents. According to the international literature, teachers may experience more work-related stress than many other occupational groups (Kyriacou, 1987). Teachers experience higher levels of stress and distress than the general population (Dewe, 1986, Kyriacou, 1987). Freudenberger (1977) and Maslach (1976) coined the term burnout to describe a particular kind of stress response experienced by those working in the helping professions, such as nurses, social workers, police officers and educators.

Research on burnout has generally come from a psychological orientation, which views burnout as a failure to cope with job stress. This approach defines burnout as a loss of idealism and enthusiasm for work that is manifested by exhaustion, depersonalization, depression, low morale and emotional withdrawal (Maslach & Jackson 1981). It is an approach which regards the causes of stress as being related to work overload, role conflict and role ambiguity (Dworkin, 1997).

Because of this focus, the emphasis of most psychological research sees burnout as an inability to cope with an array of life stressors. This approach tends to ascribe 'blame' for burnout to the victims of burnout and proceeds them to offer of a panoply of strategies to enhance coping ability (Abel & Sewell 1999; Cedoline 1982; Farber 1997; Gold & Roth 1993; Pines 1993; Shaw, Bensky, & Dixon 1981; and Swick & Hanley 1983).

Numerous studies address the causes and effects of stress in the work place. These studies included information on the characteristics of the environment as stressors, on the different perceptions and appraisals of stressful situations, on the individual's reactions to stress, and on how to reduce stress (e.g., Schaufeli, Maassea, & Sixma, 2014; Hakanen, Schaufeli, & Aholo, 2008). The professional and personal concerns that seem to produce stress among teachers are teachers salaries, teacher training, the status of the profession, and feelings of inadequacy as a teacher (Rudd & Wiseman, 1962).

Stress and burnout among teachers has been associated with many factors, a fact that has been investigated by many researchers. Boyle (1995) identified five components that affect teacher stress levels which are: 1. Student misbehaviour (lack of respect from students, maintaining discipline), 2. lack of time and resources (large classes, time to create good lessons, meet with parents), 3. professional recognitions (growth opportunities, low salaries, lack of recognition from good work), 4. poor relationship with colleagues, 5. work load.

Khezrlou (2013) tried to measure the perceived burnout levels of Iranian and Turkish EFL teachers, determining the self-efficacy predictors of EE, DP and PA processes of burnout, and determining what role they play cross-culturally. The results revealed a moderate significant difference between Iranian and Turkish groups only in EE processes, two subscales of NTSES as the dominant predictors of EE, DP and PA processes, and three subscales of NTSES as discriminatory predictors in EE, DP and PA processes across the groups.

In another study, Motallebzadeh, Ashraf, and Tabatabaee Yazdi (2014) investigated the relationship between the self-efficacy of Iranian English teachers and their reports of burnout, using two questionnaires in Khorasan Razavi, Iran. The result showed that the participants' self-efficacy has a reverse relationship with their burnout. In addition, a significant relationship was observed between teachers' age, gender, and their reports of burnout.

Yet in another study in the context of Iran, Sadeghi and Khezrlou (2014) conducted a research to extend prior studies on teacher burnout by exploring factors which contribute to Iranian English language teachers' feelings of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment. Findings revealed that English teachers were experiencing high levels of reduced personal accomplishment and emotional exhaustion. From among age, gender, marital status, and level of education, only the level of education had a significant, moderate, and positive relationship with burnout.

However, to the researchers' best knowledge, there is no study investigating the relationship between teachers' biographical variables, burnout components, and stressors and comparing such issues with standard norms. As a result, an attempt has been done in this study to extend previous literature by measuring the above mentioned issues.

## 3. Research Questions

- 1) Are there any significant differences regarding the biographical variables on the stress levels of the Iranian EFL teachers?
- 2) Are there any significant differences regarding the biographical variables on burnout components?
- 3) Is there any relationship between EFL teachers' burnout and stress?
- 4) Do the Iranian teachers suffer from burnout more than the international norms?

## 4. Methodology

### 4.1 Participants

More than one hundred male and female Iranian English teachers from Esfahan, Iran were asked to participate in this study. They were from different age ranges and teaching experiences. Table 1 shows different variables, demographic categories, and the frequency and percentage of each variable of the participants of the study.

**Table 1.** Biographical Variables of the Participants

Variables	Demographic Categories	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Males	38	34.5
	Females	72	65.5
Age Groups	26- 34	71	64.5
	35- 44	26	23.6
	Over 45	10	9.1
	Missing	3	2.7
Marital Status	Married	84	76.4
	Single	24	21.8
	Missing	2	1.8
Teaching Experience	10	52	47.3
	11- 20	48	43.6
	21-30	9	8.2
	Missing	1	0.9
Teaching Hours per Week	12- 24	68	61.8
	25- 36	31	28.2
	Over 37	9	8.2
	Missing	2	1.8
Level of Teaching	High school	48	43.6
	Guidance school	61	55.6
	Missing	1	0.9
Academic Degree	Associative Degree	12	10.9
	Bachelor of art	88	80.0
	Master of art	9	8.2
	Missing	1	0.9

### 4.2 Instruments

A two part questionnaire consisting of 36 items was given to the subjects to measure stress and burnout. The first part of the questionnaire was related to teacher stress. Using Boyle's, et al. (1995) occupational stress inventory (OSI), the subjects were asked to answer 18 items. This study was based on 51 sources of stress devised by Kyriacou and Sutcliffe(1978). Five components were examined in relation to teacher stress; which include: workload, student misbehaviour, professional recognitions, time/resource (classroom) difficulties and poor colleague relations. All questions were scored on a five point Likert type scale ranging from no stress, mild stress, moderate stress, much stress to extreme stress (0- 4).

The second part of the questionnaire comes from Maslach's Burnout Inventory (1986). It is a 18 item measure that examines three components of burnout: Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization and Reduced personal accomplishment. Frequency of burnout symptoms is measured on a 6-point scale ranging from 1 to 6.

### 4.3 Procedure

Participants were contacted in two different meetings of guidance and high school English teachers in Education Department of Esfahan, Iran. In the meetings the purpose of the study was explained to them as well as what was required from the teachers. It was explained that this was a study that the researchers were doing just for a research and it is not related to formal investigations of education department. Each participant answered the questions in 30 minutes in the same meeting.

After collecting the data from 110 subjects, there were two dependent variables, i.e. stress and burnout and 7 independent variables, i.e. gender, age, marital status, years of teaching experience, hours of teaching per week, academic degree and level of teaching. Data were inserted to SPSS software and analyzed by one way ANOVA and Pearson product moment correlation coefficient.

## 5. Results

### 5.1 Responses to Occupational Stress Inventory (OSI)

Regarding the first research question, the participants' answers to the first part of the questionnaire were analyzed. Table 2 shows the relationship between the participants' gender and different sources of stress.

**Table 2.** Different Sources of Stress in two groups of males and females

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Heavy workload	Male	37	6.7297	1.4269	.2346
	Female	70	5.6143	2.2152	.2648
Students misbehavior	Male	35	12.7714	3.0398	.5138
	Female	69	12.0145	2.5581	.3080
Classroom resources	Male	37	5.5946	1.6408	.2697
	Female	72	5.5833	1.6251	.1915
Professional recognitions	Male	33	25.2121	4.5809	.7974
	Female	62	21.9355	5.4136	.6875
Poor relationship with colleagues	Male	36	5.3056	2.2145	.3691
	Female	71	5.2958	1.5711	.1865

As Table 2. indicates, workload and professional recognitions have significant difference between males and females because the probability under 5% significance levels of workload and professional recognitions is less than (0.05) at the level of 95% confidence.

However, the common sources of stress for both genders are of the same importance order (from the most important to the least important):

1. Professional recognitions
2. Student misbehaviour
3. Workload
4. Classroom resources
5. Poor colleague relations

Then, the relationship between other biographical variables (i.e., age, years of teaching experience, marital status, level of teaching, hours of teaching per week, and academic degree) and stressors was analyzed and the results has been shown in the following tables.

**Table 3.** The description of age groups and stressors

Age Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
26 – 34	56	53.0536	7.9531	1.0628	50.9237	55.1834	36.00	72.00
35 – 44	22	49.4091	10.5635	2.2521	44.7255	54.0927	14.00	63.00
Over 45	9	60.0000	5.7446	1.9149	55.5843	64.4157	53.00	68.00
Total	87	52.8506	8.8980	.9540	50.9541	54.7470	14.00	72.00

**Table 4.** The relationship between age groups and stressors

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	722.900	2	361.450	4.989	.009
Within Groups	6086.157	84	72.454		
Total	6809.057	86			

Tables 3 and 4 show that the amount of stress in different ages is different. The results of one way ANOVA ( $F=4.99$ ,  $Sig.<0.05$ ) indicates a significant difference of stress. The teachers at the age of 45 and over are the most stressful teachers. The teachers at the age of 35-44 experience lower amount of stress than the other two groups.

**Table 5.** The relationship between stress and years of teaching experience

Variables	Correlation coefficient(r)	Sig.
Years of experience and stress	0.29	0.006

Based on Pearson correlation coefficient test, it was concluded that there is a positive correlation ( $r=0.29$ ) between years of experience and levels of stress, in a way that by increasing the years of experience, stress increases.

**Table 6.** The relation between marital status and stress

Variables	Correlation coefficient(r)	Sig.
marital status and stress	-0.09	0.31

Table 6 illustrates that there is a negative correlation between the variables marital status and stress ( $r=-0.09$ ,  $Sig.=0.31>0.05$ ). There is no significant difference between single and married teachers and experiencing different amount of stress.

**Table 7.** The relationship between level of teaching and stress

Variables	Correlation coefficient(r)	Sig.
Level of teaching and stress	0.12	0.23

Table 7 shows that there is no significant correlation between level of teaching and stress because:  $Sig.=0.23>0.05$ . It shows that the teachers who teach in guidance school and high school experience similar sources of stress.

**Table 8.** The relationship between hours of teaching per week and stress

Variables	Correlation coefficient(r)	Sig.
hours of teaching and stress	0.15	0.16

According to Table 8, because Sig. is bigger than 0.05, there is no significant correlation between hours of work and stress among teachers. It shows that teachers who work more than the others, experience the same amount of stress. Statistically, the teachers who work less hours don't experience lower among of stress.

**Table 9.** The relationship between academic degree and stress

Variables	Correlation coefficient(r)	Sig.
Education degree and stress	-0.004	0.9

Table 9 shows that there is no relationship between academic degree and stress because  $Sig.=0.9>0.05$ . The teachers with different degrees of education, experienced the same amount of stress.

## 5.2 Response Categories for Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization and Personal Accomplishment on the Maslach Burnout Inventory-Educators' Survey( MBI)

**Table 10.** Response Categories of the Maslach Burnout Inventory-Educators' Survey

Response Category	Depersonalization	Personal Accomplishment	Emotional Exhaustion
High	13 or over	0-13	27 or over
Moderate	7-12	14-38	17-26
Low	0-6	39 or over	0-16

Note: The numerical values for the personal accomplishment subscale are reversed. A score of less than 32 on the personal accomplishment sub-scale indicates a high degree of personal accomplishment.

**Table 11.** The difference of burnout components between males and females

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Depersonalization	Male	29	8.9655	5.3484	.9932
	female	34	5.2059	1.9506	.3345
Personal accomplishment	Male	28	26.0357	8.8086	1.6647
	female	50	31.4800	7.1264	1.0078
Emotional exhaustion	Male	27	23.4444	9.1875	1.7681
	female	36	19.2500	7.2875	1.2146

**Table 12.** One way analysis (ANOVA) burnout components of males and females

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
	F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
								Lower	Upper	
D.	Equal variances assumed	26.474	.000	3.816	61	.000	3.7596	.9851	1.7897	5.7295
	Equal variances not assumed			3.587	34.338	.001	3.7596	1.0480	1.6306	5.8887
P.A.	Equal variances assumed	2.967	.089	-2.970	76	.004	-5.4443	1.8330	-9.0951	-1.7935
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.798	46.945	.007	-5.4443	1.9460	-9.3592	-1.5294
E.E.	Equal variances assumed	2.905	.093	2.021	61	.048	4.1944	2.0753	4.461	8.3443
	Equal variances not assumed			1.955	48.332	.056	4.1944	2.1451	-.1178	8.5067

Based on Table 12. there is a significant difference of three burnout and females because in every section the Sig. of the test is less than 0.05.

It shows that males and females experience different amount of burnout in their jobs. Female subjects experience more personal accomplishment than male ones. Male participants experience depersonalization and emotional exhaustion more than the females. More or less, the subjects in this study experience moderate level of burnout. But females present low level of depersonalization.

**Table 13.** One way analysis (ANOVA) of burnout in different ages

		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Depersonalization	Between Groups	.727	2	.364	.019	.981
	Within Groups	1138.256	59	19.292		
	Total	1138.984	61			
Personal accomplishment	Between Groups	157.573	2	78.786	1.171	.316
	Within Groups	4912.954	73	67.301		
	Total	5070.526	75			
Emotional exhaustion	Between Groups	111.908	2	55.954	.831	.441
	Within Groups	3906.453	58	67.353		
	Total	4018.361	60			

The results of Table 13 based on one way ANOVA shows that there is no significant correlation between different components of burnout in different ages. For all the components in different year groups the Sig. of variables is more than 0.05.

**Table 14.** The relationship between burnout and years of teaching experience

Variables	Correlation coefficient(r)	Sig.
Depersonalization and years of teaching	0.16	0.2
Personal Accomplishment and years of teaching	0.03	0.84
Emotional Exhaustion and years of teaching	- 0.005	0.97

According to the findings of Table 14, there is no significant correlation between different components of teachers' burnout and years of teaching experience. As it is presented statically in the table, the Sig. of three components and years of teaching experience is more than 0.05 which shows a lack of statistical correlation between these two variables.

**Table 15.** The Relationship between burnout and marital status

Variables	Correlation coefficient(r)	Sig.
Depersonalization and marital status	- 0.008	0.95
Personal accomplishment and marital status	- 0.06	0.61
Emotional Exhaustion and marital status	- 0.23	0.07

In terms of marital status and three components of teachers' burnout, statically significant differences weren't found between single and married teachers and experiencing of burnout. For all the components of teachers' burnout and marital status the significance level of probability is more than 0.05 that illustrates statistically, there is no correlation between these variables.

**Table 16.** The relationship between burnout and level of teaching

Variables	Correlation coefficient(r)	Sig.
Depersonalization and level of teaching	- 0.11	0.4
Personal accomplishment and level of teaching	0.18	0.12
Emotional Exhaustion and level of teaching	0.1	0.42

According to table 16, the significance level of probability for all variables is more than 0.05. It shows that statistically, there is no correlation between three components of teachers' burnout and level of teaching. Since the significance level of probability is more than 0.05 we can not conclude statistically there is correlation between variables.

**Table 17.** The relationship between burnout and academic degree

Variables	Correlation coefficient(r)	Sig.
Depersonalization and degree	- 0.08	0.53
Personal accomplishment and degree	- 0.23	0.04
Emotional Exhaustion and degree	- 0.16	0.21

Table 17 shows significant correlation between personal accomplishment and degree of education. The significance level of probability for the variables personal accomplishment and degree of education is less than 0.05 indicating a statistical relationship between these variables. The two other variables i.e. depersonalization and emotional exhaustion don't illustrate a statistical relationship with degree of education because the significant level of probability is more than 0.05.

**Table 18.** The relationship between burnout and hours of teaching per week

Variables	Correlation coefficient(r)	Sig.
Depersonalization and hours of teaching	0.43	0.001
Personal accomplishment and hours of teaching	- 0.23	0.04
Emotional Exhaustion and hours of teaching	0.27	0.03

According to the results of Table 18, there is a correlation between three components of teachers' burnout and the hours of teaching per week. For all three components of teachers' burnout and hours of teaching per week the significance level of probability is less than 0.05 that indicates the correlation between these variables. Depersonalization and Emotional exhaustion have a positive correlation with the hours of teaching per week but the correlation between personal accomplishment and the hours of teaching per week is negative.

### 5.3 The Relationship between EFL Teachers' Burnout and Stress

The aim of the third research question of this research was to find out if any relationship exists between stress and burnout. The results of such analysis are depicted in Table 19.

**Table 19.** The relationship between teachers' stress and burnout

		Stress	Burout
Stress	Pearson Correlation	1.000	.402(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.005
	N	89	47
Burout	Pearson Correlation	.402(**)	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.005	.
	N	47	50

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

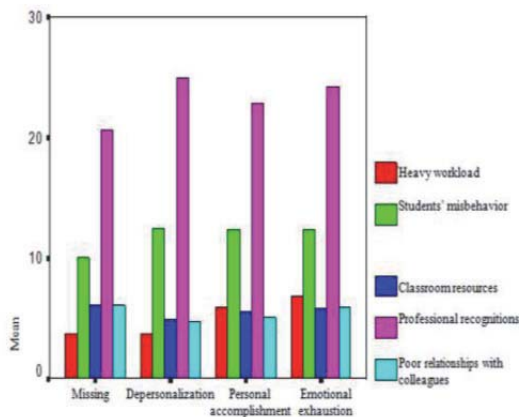


Figure 1. The relationship between teachers' stress and burnout

As the table demonstrates the significance level of probability is less than 0.01 (Sig. = 0.005 < 0.01). It shows that there is a positive correlation about 0.4 at the significant level of 0.01 for two variables. The more is the teachers' stress, the more is the teachers' burnout. Decreasing the stress causes the reduction of burnout.

#### 5.4 A comparison of Respondents' Scores to US National Norms

To answer the fourth research question, which aimed to investigate the level of Iranian burnout compared with the international norms, the participants' responses to MBI survey were compared with that of US national norms. The results are presented in table 20.

**Table 20.** A comparison of Respondents' Scores to US National Norms

Burnout Scales	Iranian Teachers n = 110		US National Norms n = 4163
Depersonalization	Male	8.9655	11.00
	Female	5.2059	
Personal Accomplishment	Male	26.0357	33.54
	Female	31.4800	
Emotional Exhaustion	Male	23.4444	21.25
	Female	19.2500	

Compared to US national norms (Maslach et al, 1996), Iranian male teachers are above the average for emotional exhaustion and below the average for other components.



## **6. Conclusion and Discussion**

### *6.1 The relationship between occupational stress and biographical data*

Two important stressors for men and women Iranian English teachers are professional recognitions and student misbehaviour. The result of tables proves lack of any significant relationship between material status, level of teaching, hours of teaching per week and education degree. The single and married teachers with different education degree, hours of teaching per week and level of school, experience the same amount of stress.

Age and years of experience are the only factors that affect the teachers' stress in this study. The teachers at the age group of 35-44 showed higher levels of stress than the other groups. Finally, the teachers who are in the higher levels of occupational experience presented higher levels of job stress, apart from marital status, level of teaching, and degree of education.

### *6.2 The relationship between professional burnout and biographical data*

Burnout is related to a number of maladaptive coping mechanisms such as aloofness, feeling of weariness expressed by willingness to disengage and reduce the intensity of contact the individual has with the recipients of his/her services, self-dissatisfaction, discontent (Friedman, 1995).

Depersonalization, can lead teachers to adopt negative and cynical attitudes towards their problems. In this study, female teachers have low depersonalization but males presented moderate level of it. Also, hours of teaching per week affect depersonalization. Increasing the hours of teaching per week, increases depersonalization of the teachers. The other biographic factors have no effect on depersonalization.

The second component of burnout is feeling of reduced personal accomplishment. According to Maslach and Jackson's definition (1986), this suggests possible feelings of unhappiness and a tendency to evaluate oneself negatively, particularly with regard to one's work. Based on the result of this study, it appeared that Iranian English teachers in this case seemed not to have lost their sense of self-efficacy, competence and achievement. Female and male teaches showed moderate degree of personal accomplishment. They feel exhilarated by working with students and energetic about their work.

Emotional exhaustion is a key aspect of the burnout syndrome and individuals experiencing a high level of it consider that they are no longer able to give themselves at a psychological level. The indication is that the males teachers of this sample are emotionally exhausted and overextended by their work. Females reported significantly lower levels of emotional exhaustion but both groups are at the range of moderate. Also, increasing the hours of teaching per week increases the emotional exhaustion but there is no relationship with the other factors. Therefore the related null hypotheses are confirmed.

Regarding the relationship between the teachers' age and their burnout level, the findings of the present study is in accordance with that of Sadeghi and Khezrlou (2014), but in contrast with that of Motallebzadeh, et. al. (2014). Considering teachers' gender, the other biographical variable studied in the present study, the results obtained were in line with those of Anderson and Iwanichi's (1984), but in contrast with those of Borg and Riding (1991), Boydak (2009), Check and Okwo (2012), Motallebzadeh, et.al. (2014), and Sadeghi and Khezrlou (2014). The results obtained for the relationship between the teachers' level of education and their burnout, were in contrast with those of Sadeghi and Khezrlou (2014), Maslach (1986), and Sas, Boros and Bonchis (2011). However, for other biographical variables there was lack of literature to be compared with the outcomes of the present study.

### *6.3 The relationship between Burnout and Stress*

Theoretically it has been proved that stress and burnout are integrated (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). In the present study it has been proved empirically that there is a positive relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' burnout and stress level, and hence, the findings are in line with the underlying theories.

### *6.4 The Comparison between Iranian EFL Teachers Burnout Level and the International Norms*

The obtained results indicated that Iranian EFL teachers' burnout level, in terms of emotional exhaustion, is higher than the standard norms, and in other burnout components is below the average. The possible reason for this may rely on different sources of stress (e.g., lack of students' respect, low income, lack of recognition for good work, increased hours

of work per day, lack of pupils' progress, etc.) Iranian EFL teachers may face them. Since stress causes burnout, the teachers should learn strategies to cope with these stressors by which control burnout.

The importance of this study lies in its contribution to the understanding of occupational stress and professional burnout in Iranian English teachers. Naturally, additional studies involving more items expressing the specific sources of stress and other methods of data collection such as personal interviews with the teachers and observations of the teachers in their work settings are useful to research the concepts of stress and burnout much better. It is possible to conduct a research to investigate the coping mechanisms the teachers employ in order to deal with stress and burnout. The identification of the factors which lead to stress will help to from suggestion and propositions for the most effective stress intervention.

It is hoped that the results of this study will be the first stage of a more systematic investigation of this significant problem in teachers. In our teacher education classes, we need to instruct our teachers about stress and burnout in teaching profession. We should also provide them with suggestions and strategies for coping with stress. When planning in-service education activities for teachers, educators may use the results of this research for their planning activities.

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