Research Article / Araştırma Makalesi

PERCEIVED SELF-EFFICACY AND ACADEMICIAN BURNOUT: A RESEARCH ON RELATIONS*

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Abstract
The profession of "teacher" was first defined with the "Muallimlikte Mesleki İhtisas Tesisine Dair Talimat", in 1900, and the authorities, responsibilities, and rights of teachers were determined with this legislation. Teaching is a stressful profession, which affects the learning/teaching process, especially for the academic staff at state universities. The current study was designed to investigate the relationship between perceived self-efficacy beliefs and burnout of EFL instructors. In this research, with a mixed design, first, a teacher self-efficacy scale was applied to examine the perceived self-efficacy beliefs of the instructors. The instructors', who are among the main academic staff at the universities, burnout levels were measured using a burnout scale. Also, semi-structured face-to-face interviews were conducted to support the data from the questionnaires. As a result, it is understood that the instructors feel sufficient in student participation skills, teaching strategies, and classroom management skills. On the other hand, burnout analysis revealed that most instructors experienced moderate burnout, which may mean they sometimes feel entirely burnt out, which is not a continuous process. However, regarding the relationship between self-efficacy and burnout, it is understood that no relationship between situational and seasonal - moderate - burnout and high perceived self-efficacy levels has been observed.
Keywords: Academician burnout, perceived self-efficacy, EFL instructors.

ÖZ YETERLİLİK ALGILARI VE AKADEMİSYEN TÜKENMİŞLİĞİ: İLİŞKİLER ÜZERİNE BİR ARAŞTIRMA

Öz
Öğretmenlik mesleğinin tanımı ilk defa 1900 yılında yürürlüğe giren "Muallimlikte Mesleki İhtisas Tesisine Dair Talimat" ile yapılmış, öğretmenlerin yetki, sorumluluk ve hakları bu talimat ile belirlenmiştir. Öğretmenlik stresli bir meslektir, özellikle de devlet üniversitelerinde görev yapan öğretim elemanları dikkate alındığında ve bu stres faktörü öğrenme/öğretme sürecini etkileyen önemli etmenlerdendir. Bu sebeple, bu çalışma üniversitelerde görev yapan öğretim elemanlarının özyeterlik inanışları ve tükenmişlikleri arasındaki ilişkiyi araştırmak amacıyla tasarlanmıştır. Karma desene sahip bu araştırmada, öncelikle öğretim elemanlarının özyeterlilik inanışlarını inceleyebilmek için bir öğretmen özyeterlik ölçeği uygulanmıştır. Bu ölçeğe ek olarak, öğretim elemanlarının tükenmişlik düzeyleri bir tükenmişlik ölçeği aracılığı ile ölçülmüştür. Anketlerden toplanan bu bilgilerin desteklenmesi için ise öğretim elemanları ile yarı-yapılandırılmış yüz yüze görüşmeler gerçekleştirilmiştir. Araştırmanın sonucunda anlaşılmaktadır ki, öğretim elemanları kendilerini öğrenci katılım becerileri, öğretim stratejileri ve sınıf yönetimi becerileri açısından yeterli hissetmektedirler. Öte yandan, tükenmişlik analizi öğretim elemanlarının çoğunun orta düzeyde tükenmişlik yaşadığını ortaya koymuştur, ki bu durum bazen kendilerini tamamen tükenmiş hissettikleri anlamına gelebilir ancak bu sürekli bir süreç değildir. Fakat, öz-yeterlik ve tükenmişlik arasındaki ilişki incelendiğinde, durumsal ve mevsimsel - orta düzey - tükenmişlik ile yüksek algılanan öz-yeterlik düzeyleri arasında herhangi bir ilişkinin olmadığı anlaşılmaktadır.
Anahtar Kelimeler: Mesleki tükenmişlik, özyeterlik inanışları, öğretim elemanları.

Introduction

Teaching is accepted as a stressful job (Kulavuz, 2006); that's why teachers experience high levels of emotional fatigue, which is the core aspect of teacher burnout (Brouwers & Tomic, 2000). According to Maslach et al. (1996), burnout can be described as a *"psychological syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment that can occur among individuals who work with other people in some capacity"* (p. 20). When these terms are to be explained individually, 'emotional exhaustion' can be defined as the feeling of being affectively overwhelmed, while 'depersonalization' means developing negative responses towards one's own profession (Sunbul, 2014). Lastly, 'reduced personal accomplishment' may refer to evaluating oneself negatively with respect to their job performance (Schaufeli et al., 1993, p. 17).

When the possible causes of teacher burnout are concerned, many studies in the literature provided some external factors leading, such as strict administrational rules, lack of support from colleagues, and hostile working environment (Burke & Greenglass, 1993), students with negative attitudes towards learning (Demirel, 2014) and other physical issues involving crowded classes or poor working conditions (Carson, 2006). On the other hand, some other factors, including emotions, namely anxiety, anger, frustration, guilt, shame, and sadness (Chang, 2009), and negative personality characteristics such as low levels of self-efficacy (Schwarzer & Hallum, 2008) have been reported as internal factors resulting in teacher exhaustion.

Accordingly, Vandenberghe and Huberman (1999) propose that when teachers face some external demands aforementioned before, "…the individual differences in their responses are due to their stress resource factors" (p. g. 242). Herein, self-efficacy can be accepted as the most affective internal factor (Vandenberghe & Huberman, 1999; p. g. 242). In a similar vein, Schwarzer and Hallum (2008) relate teacher dedication with personal coping resources. Within this perspective, teacher burnout arouses with negative personality characteristics such as low levels of self-efficacy (p. 153). Furthermore, according to Bümen (2010), *"The symptoms of burnout would be reduced in environments in which teachers experience professional growth, self-efficacy, and perceived success in their career progression."* (p. 17).

Considering this, the literature research has been on self-efficacy beliefs and teacher burnout. Some of these studies have investigated only the construct of self-efficacy from different dimensions, such as classroom management (Yılmaz, 2004) or students' literacy gains (Guo et al., 2010). Some others have examined the reasons for teacher burnout or compared the university and high school teachers concerning their burnout levels (Swietochowski, 2011). On the other hand, as the case for the current study, some studies have been carried out to scrutinize the relationship between perceived self-efficacy beliefs and teacher burnout (Brouwers & Tomic, 2000; Friedman, 2003; Mede, 2009; Bümen, 2010; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010; Celikkaleli, 2011; Gunduz, 2012; Boomgard, 2013; Demirel, 2014).

As observed from the literature, it has been revealed that some initiatives should be taken to provide more opportunities to the teachers, contingently by promoting efficacy beliefs.

1.   Literature Review

1.1.   Burnout

With technological advances and working life, burnout has been proven to be a prominent problem employees face (Kulavuz, 2006). As a result of high-stress levels, such people experience exhaustion, which negatively affects their job performance. These negative impacts have led many researchers to focus on the issue of burnout (Shanafelt et al., 2009), and the primary causes of this problem have been investigated to provide in-depth solutions and reasonable precautions to be taken.

According to Maslach and Jackson (1981), accepted as the two majors in burnout research, the term 'burnout' refers to *"a syndrome of emotional exhaustion and cynicism that occurs frequently among individuals who do "people work" of some kind"* (p. 99), which suggests that individuals working with different groups of people are apt to feel burned out.

Similarly, Maslach and Leiter (1997) propose that people start working with high expectations as they feel active, ready to dedicate themselves to their jobs and do what they are supposed to do or even more. However, when confronted with a problem or high levels of stress, they become demotivated and start to feel the symptoms of burnout (Pines, 1993). Moreover, idealistic people are much more prone to experience burnout since their idealism is swept away by a lack of motivation. Such people start feeling estranged from their profession as well as depressed, exhausted, and affectively overwhelmed (Kulavuz, 2006).

When these feelings are concerned, Maslach and Jackson's (1981) proposed a model well-acknowledged by many burnout researchers (Kulavuz, 2006), composed of three interdependent dimensions: *emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment*.

1.1.1. Dimensions of Burnout

Maslach and Jackson (1981), first of all, explain *emotional exhaustion* as the situation in which individuals feel affectively overwhelmed and are not able to psychologically commit themselves to their profession as they did earlier. In the end, they become alienated from their jobs. Secondly, *depersonalization* refers to withdrawal from the working environment, and individuals experiencing depersonalization start developing inhuman relationships with colleagues and attitudes toward people receiving service (Maslach & Jackson, 1986). Finally, also denominated as *'lack of personal accomplishment'* or *'diminished personal accomplishment'* (Kulavuz, 2006), *reduced personal accomplishment* indicates a decrease in productivity. When the employees are unhappy and dissatisfied with their occupations, this may result in insufficient and ineffective efforts. Kulavuz (2006) refers to other scholars like Byrne (1991) and Maslach (1993) in that this dimension may be related to the self-evaluation of individuals since the sense of decreased personal accomplishment may lead employees not to be content about their progress in their jobs (p. g. 11).

As aforementioned above, the central issue of burnout has been investigated both generally (Maslach & Jackson, 1986; Maslach & Jackson & Leiter, 1996; Maslach & Leiter, 1997) and individually from perspectives of different professions, such as medical staff (Kushnir & Cohen & Kitai, 2000; Ozyurt et al., 2006; Prins et al., 2010), academicians (Toker, 2011; Yoleri & Bostancı, 2012), school counselors (Gunduz, 2012), principals (Baş; 2012) and most importantly teachers (Kudwa, 1999; Maslach & Leiter, 1999; Kulavuz, 2006; Brouwers & Tomic, 2000; Kırılmaz et al., 2003; Grayson & Alvarez, 2008; Chang, 2009; Bumen, 2010; Cephe, 2010; Demirel, 2014), which determines the primary concern of the present paper as 'teacher burnout'.

1.1.2. Teacher Burnout

Teacher burnout is regarded as the primary concern in this current research, given its recognition as the most critical form of burnout due to its substantial impact on the field of education (Demirel, 2014). This viewpoint is corroborated by Brouwers and Tomic (2000), who assert that individuals working in the teaching profession are particularly vulnerable to experiencing burnout. This type of burnout can give rise to significant consequences, affecting not only the professional trajectory of the teachers but also the educational outcomes of their students, given that it unfolds within the context of classroom instruction (Cephe, 2010, p. 25).

Teaching is a stressful profession as teachers should be up to date to meet students' needs and expectations of both the parents and school administration (Kulavuz, 2006; p. g. 12), which indicates that teachers have three-dimensional responsibilities; that is to say, they are directly accountable towards students, parents and school administration (Grayson & Alvarez, 2008).

Examined from the point of each burnout dimension, Kulavuz (2006) suggests that teachers with emotional exhaustion feel that they cannot stand their students and they do not want to do anything to meet their needs. Such teachers also believe that all of their resources are consumed. Moreover, these teachers cannot feel close to not only their students but also the parents of those students and their own colleagues. What is more, when these teachers feel a sense of reduced personal accomplishment, they end in ineffective teaching styles with unsuccessful learning outcomes (p. g. 13).

Maslach and Leiter (1999) put forward a model for the possible causes and effects of burnout syndrome on the education process. According to this model, the most crucial dynamic in the outbreak of teacher burnout is the interaction between students and teachers (Maslach & Leiter, 1999) because burnout is believed to be an issue "contributing to both teachers' and students' behavior and experience" (Demirel, 2014; p. g. 31). To explain, teachers may reflect some negative behaviors towards students as a symptom of burnout syndrome, and in turn, those students may misperceive their teachers. They do not continue behaving properly, and their academic success turns into failure, causing them to feel more overwhelmed (Kulavuz, 2006). Furthermore, this model also suggests that personal features influence teacher burnout. Specific characteristics may make teachers more susceptible to teacher burnout. Motivation can exemplify this aspect. Teachers with low and high motivation do not indicate the same levels of burnout syndrome. The probability of quitting is higher for a teacher with a low level of motivation than the high-level ones (Kulavuz, 2006; Hoigaard et al., 2011; Demirel, 2014). The last crucial point is that the school environment has a significant impact on teacher burnout. Kulavuz (2006) suggests that big class sizes, excessive workload, bad student manners, administrative/colleague support, and several roles teachers own can all be accepted as the problems teachers face in the school environment, and each of these factors may lead a teacher to feel burned out.

From another point of view, Kudwa (1999) refers to Clouse and Whitaker (1981) to explain the process of teacher burnout. They present that teachers lose their motivation and enthusiasm when they realize that they are not satisfied in terms of expectancies. Then, feeling miserable and frustrated, these teachers keep their distance from the working environment; in other words, they become alienated.

When the major factors leading to teacher burnout are concerned, Cephe (2010) provides a detailed categorization. He divides these factors into micro and macro variables and presents four different groups within these variables: academic, administrative, governmental, and personal.

Besides, Kulavuz (2006) classifies the major factors as personal (individual), that is, internal factors; and organizational (institutional); that is, external factors. Personal factors like age, gender, work experience, locus of control and self-efficacy/esteem are changeable from teacher to teacher. Therefore, though the school environment is the same, the level of burnout experienced by different teachers may vary from individual to individual. On the other hand, organizational factors are composed of variables resulting from the institution they work for. Such factors may be listed by Kulavuz (2006) as follows: workload, social support, school structure, classroom environment, disruptive student behavior, and role conflict/ambiguity. Also, as mentioned in Kulavuz's thesis, these factors cannot be controlled by the teacher, which is why they are more influential in leading to burnout when compared to personal factors.

1.2. Self-efficacy Beliefs

'Self-efficacy' is a term coined by Bandura (1997) within the perspective of his "Social Cognitive Theory". As Bandura (1997) defines, self-efficacy is people's perceptions of their ability to perform an action with the purpose of being successful in reaching a specific goal, which basically focuses on the idea that "not one hopes to do- or what one says he/she will do, but on what one truly expects to do".

As Demirel (2014) suggests, since self-efficacy is the belief that leads to power and self-confidence, resulting in a good performance, in terms of personal accomplishment and self-fulfillment, the ones with stronger perceived self-efficacy beliefs have more advantages than the ones with weaker ones (p. g. 12). All in all, self-efficacy ensures the necessary motivation one may need to take action. The reason behind this may be that if people are not in high expectations of the positive results of their efforts, it may be much harder for them to put up with the difficulties they face (Pajares, 2003).

Moreover, there are some sources according to which Bandura (1994) categorized self-efficacy. The first one is the mastery experiences-successes and failures, which suggests that people are influenced by their own successes and failures. Successes encourage the development of a strong sense of efficacy, whereas failures discourage people, especially before a structured sense of efficacy is established. The second source that strengthens the self-efficacy beliefs is the indirect experiences provided by social models. Bandura (1994) suggests that by observing others similar to themselves, people make judgments about their own efforts to master an action. In Bandura's (1994) own words, *'The greater the assumed similarity, the more persuasive are the models' successes and failures.'* The third factor contributing to the self-beliefs of efficacy concept is social persuasion (verbal persuasion), which means that people tend to show more outstanding efforts to master an activity when provided with verbal inducement. The last source leading to the successful development of self-efficacy is the somatic and emotional conditions like *stress, tension, fatigue, aches, and pain*, which people intensely rely on for evaluation of their future performance. Bandura (1994) suggests that negative emotional states may debilitate people while positive feelings help them develop favorable attitudes towards their capacities of action.

1.2.1. Academician Self-Efficacy Beliefs

Together with their academic abilities, self-efficacy beliefs determine how teachers handle each and every situation they face while teaching; thus, teacher beliefs lead the path to the teaching process.

As Demirel (2014) defines, teacher self-efficacy is *'having the self-confidence on oneself for completing the task of teaching and having the desired outcomes'* (p. g. 13). Likewise, Tschannen Moran and Hoy (2001) relate teacher self-efficacy with crucial educational outcomes like *'teachers' persistence, enthusiasm, commitment and instructional behavior'* as well as the student outcomes like *'achievement, motivation, and self-efficacy beliefs'* (p. g. 783).

Furthermore, Tschannen Moran and Hoy (2001) describe the features of a teacher with high self-efficacy as follows: They are more broad-minded with high levels of planning and organizational skills. Moreover, these teachers generally show tolerance towards their students when they make mistakes since they are learning from their mistakes; in this way, they are rather supportive and understanding. Also, such teachers are enthusiastic about teaching and dedicated to their students (p. g. 783-784).

Overall, self-efficacy, lack of which might result in an ineffective teaching process regardless of teachers' academic knowledge, competence, or even experience, is a crucial factor affecting the teaching/learning process (Tschannen et al., 2001; İnceçay & Dollar, 2012; Turgut, 2013; Demirel, 2014). Additionally, the deficiency of self-efficacy may result in *'the feeling of inadequacy and insufficiency, intolerance, depression, and burnout'* (Demirel, 2014; p. g. 15), and teachers having such feelings might quit teaching (Hoigaard et al., 2011). Similarly, according to Bandura (1997), a connection exists between self-efficacy and stress; hence, teachers with low self-efficacy tend to experience more stress than others, which may suggest a link between burnout and self-efficacy (p. g. 20).

1.3. Self-Efficacy Beliefs and Burnout

As researchers like Demirel (2014), Bümen (2010), Schwarzer and Hallum (2008), Kulavuz (2006), and Vandenberghe and Huberman (1999) suggest the deficiency of self-efficacy and negative feelings

about it may lead the path to stress, resulting in burnout in teachers. In furtherance, as Hoigaard, Giske and Sundsli (2011) state, *"Proposed work engagement and teacher efficacy are positively related to job satisfaction but negatively related to job burnout and the intention to quit."* (p. g. 1).

Considering all these, investigating the relationship between self-efficacy and burnout may help to get through the teacher burnout syndrome and provide some coping strategies.

1.3.1. Research on the Relations Between Self-Efficacy Beliefs and Burnout

The relationship between self-efficacy and teacher burnout has attracted great attention in the field, and many studies have been conducted on such a relationship, especially focusing on teacher burnout and self-efficacy beliefs.

In 2000, Brouwers and Tomic conducted research involving 243 secondary school teachers. They used Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analyses to explore the nature and timing of connections between teachers' perceived self-efficacy in classroom management and the three aspects of burnout. Their findings revealed that self-efficacy played a role in reducing depersonalization and had a positive association with personal achievement. Conversely, they observed an inverse correlation with emotional exhaustion. In conclusion, they suggested that when addressing teacher burnout, it is important to take into account the role of self-efficacy in classroom management.

With a similar purpose, Evers, Brouwers and Tomic (2002) carried out a study with 490 teachers working in a study-home system and tried to understand how those students cope with stress as an indicator of burnout. The findings were compatible with Brouwers and Tomic's (2000) in that self-efficacy was in negative relation to depersonalization and emotional exhaustion but positively associated with personal achievement.

In another study conducted with 322 Israeli teachers by Friedman (2003), efficacy was categorized into three factors; namely, organizational influence efficacy, task efficacy, and consideration efficacy. The organizational influence efficacy and consideration efficacy were found to be the indicators of exhaustion, underachievement, and depersonalization as the three dimensions of burnout syndrome. However, task efficacy had no impact on burnout concerning self-efficacy. The overall result was that *'...lower the sense of self-efficacy, the higher the perceived burnout.'* (p. g. 191).

Apart from that, examining the relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and burnout is attached great importance in Turkey as it is in different countries, and there are many studies carried out on the issue (Mede, 2009; Çelikkaleli, 2011; Demirel, 2012).

For instance, Mede (2009) explored the connection between self-efficacy and the three facets of burnout. The study involved 63 Turkish English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instructors working in an Istanbul University preparatory school, who completed the Maslach Burnout Inventory-Education Survey developed by Friedman (1999). The findings indicated a significant association between perceived self-efficacy and burnout, particularly in relation to the support received from school principals and colleagues.

Taking a different approach, Demirel (2014) conducted a study involving both pre-service and in-service teachers to investigate the link between the perceived self-efficacy beliefs of pre-service teachers and the levels of burnout among in-service teachers. The results showed that pre-service teachers exhibited a high degree of self-confidence and readiness for their future careers. In contrast, in-service teachers generally displayed low levels of burnout. The researcher attributed this result to the subjects' lack of experience and youthfulness. Consequently, no discernible relationship was identified between the two groups.

1.4. Significance of the Study

As obvious from the literature, prior research has underscored the significance of teachers' beliefs and their levels of burnout in the realm of education (Kulavuz, 2006; Mede, 2009; Bümen, 2010; Çelikkaleli, 2011; Demirel, 2014). Consequently, this study aims to make a meaningful contribution to the field by providing valuable insights into teachers' perceived efficacy and their experiences of burnout. By delving into these aspects, we can gain a better understanding of teachers' engagement in their professional roles and work toward its enhancement and restoration.

At a more localized level, this research intends to benefit English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instructors at a state university's school of foreign languages by prompting them to reflect on their personal beliefs about language teaching. Moreover, it seeks to underscore the significance of these beliefs in shaping their commitment to their teaching duties. Additionally, this study may serve as an indicator of burnout levels among these instructors, potentially necessitating further actions to address this issue.

Given these objectives, the primary aim of this research is to investigate the self-efficacy beliefs and burnout experiences of EFL instructors employed at the preparatory school of a state university in Turkey. A secondary goal is to explore the relationship between these instructors' perceived self-efficacy beliefs and their levels of burnout.

Within this perspective, the following research questions guide the study:

1. What are the self-efficacy beliefs of instructors at the SFL at a state university?
2. What are the burnout levels of instructors at the SFL at a state university?
3. Is there a relationship between instructors' perceived self-efficacy beliefs and their burnout levels?

2. Methodology

2.1. Participants and Setting

The sample employed in the present study consisted of 25 Turkish EFL instructors working at the School of Foreign Languages (SFL) at a state university in Turkey (The Ethical Permission has been taken from the Committee of Ethics at Kütahya Dumlupınar University; 14.04.2022; 2022/04). The School of Foreign Languages provides a one-year intensive English program to students from different departments. Students are placed according to their proficiency levels, but the workload does not differ according to these levels. Each level has 22 hours of English per week. There are two courses instructors are responsible for, namely the main course (18 hours per week), for teaching integrated skills, and the academic skills (4 hours per week), for helping students in a structured writing process. At the end of the two-semester year, students take a proficiency exam determining whether they are proficient enough, in terms of English, to start studying in their own departments. The cut-off score is 65 out of 100. Students scoring below 65 must take the next proficiency exam until they get at least 65.

2.2. Instruments

In order to carry out quantitative analysis, two different scales have been administered to the EFL instructors in the current study. First, to collect data on teachers' perceived self-efficacy beliefs, the Turkish version of the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale was given to the participants. The scale was originally developed by Tschannen-Moran, & Hoy (2001) as a 9-point Likert scale, and the Turkish version was provided by Çapa, Çakıroğlu and Sarıkaya (2005). The questionnaire is composed of 24 items in total, and the reliability of efficacy scores was calculated by the developers as .93. The scoring process is the same as the original scale as represented:

Efficacy in Student Engagement - Items 1, 2, 4, 6, 9, 12, 14, 22

Efficacy in Instructional Strategies - Items 7, 10, 11, 17, 18, 20, 23, 24

Efficacy in Classroom Management - Items 3, 5, 8, 13, 15, 16, 19, 21

To gather data on the levels of burnout among teachers, the Turkish version of the Maslach Burnout Inventory-Educators Survey was administered to the participants. This questionnaire comprises two sections: the initial part requests personal information such as gender, marital status, department, age, educational qualifications, and years of teaching experience. The second section encompasses the actual Maslach Burnout Inventory.

The Maslach Burnout Inventory was originally developed by Maslach and Jackson (1981) with the primary aim of assessing the overall burnout levels experienced by employees. This questionnaire consists of 22 items, which are categorized into three subscales representing different dimensions: *emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment*. As noted by Demirel (2014), elevated scores in emotional exhaustion and depersonalization, along with low scores in personal accomplishment, serve as indicators of the presence of burnout syndrome (p. g. 49). The items are separated into categories as follows:

 Emotional exhaustion: Items 1,2,3,6,8,13,14,16,20

(Scores: 27 or over High/ 17-26 Moderate/ 0-16 Low)

Depersonalization: Items 5,10,11,15,22

(Scores: 13 or over High/ 7-12 Moderate/ 0-6 High)

Personal accomplishment: Items 4,7,9,12,17,18,19,21

(Scores: 0-31 High/ 32-38 Moderate/ 39 or over Low

As reported by Demirel (2014), the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) was translated into Turkish specifically for application within the medical field. In her study, Demirel found reliability coefficients of .83 for Emotional Exhaustion (EE), .65 for Depersonalization (DP), and .72 for Personal Accomplishment (PA) in this Turkish version of the MBI.

To enhance the research and bolster the questionnaire findings with qualitative insights, semi-structured interviews were conducted with a subset of the study's participants. Initially, participants provided demographic information encompassing gender, age, educational background, department, years of teaching experience, and years in their current profession. Subsequently, factual data related to teaching, such as instructional hours, monthly income, working conditions, and similar aspects, were gathered. Finally, participants were invited to share their perspectives on various questions regarding the characteristics of an ideal student or teacher, the qualities of an effective teacher, and the challenges they encountered in their roles.

3.   Findings

3.1.   Quantitative Findings

3.1.1. Teachers' Beliefs on Teaching

The "Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TTSES)" was administered to the participants with the aim of gathering information regarding the self-efficacy beliefs held by instructors employed at a state university. This investigation was conducted to address the primary research question, namely, "What are the self-efficacy beliefs of instructors?"

The scale identified three distinct dimensions of self-efficacy, and the subsequent analysis was structured accordingly: Efficacy in Student Engagement, Efficacy in Instructional Strategies, and Efficacy in Classroom Management. Each of these subcategories consists of eight items, totaling 24 items in all. Each item can be rated on a scale ranging from 1 (indicating the least efficacious) to 9

(representing the most efficacious), resulting in a possible range of scores from 8 (the lowest) to 72 (the highest) for the entire scale.

Table 1: Teachers' Self-Efficacy Beliefs

	N	Mean	SD	Std. Error Mean
Student Engagement	19	49.16	11.395	2.613
Instructional Strategies	19	56.04	8.998	2.065
Classroom Management	19	57.75	9.074	2.082
TOTAL	19	54.31	9.822	2.253

In the process of analyzing the subscales, we considered the mean scores, standard deviations, and standard error mean scores. A careful examination of Table 1 reveals that the mean scores generally fall within a significant range across the entire scale. This suggests that instructors employed in the preparatory school environment possess a considerable level of confidence in their self-efficacy beliefs. Furthermore, when scrutinizing the mean scores, it becomes evident that teachers performed exceptionally well in the "Efficacy in Classroom Management" subscale (Mean = 57.75; Standard Deviation = 9.074), while their performance was comparatively less strong in the "Efficacy in Student Engagement" subscale (Mean = 49.16; Standard Deviation = 11.395). This disparity implies that instructors tend to feel more effective when it comes to managing the classroom. Conversely, in terms of student engagement, their perceived efficacy appears to be somewhat lacking, despite the relatively high scores.

3.1.2. Teachers' Burnout Levels

The participants were administered the "Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI)" to assess whether instructors were experiencing symptoms of teacher burnout. This instrument also served the purpose of examining the levels of burnout among the study's subjects. To achieve this, the second research question, "What are the burnout levels of instructors?" was formulated.

During the process of analyzing and interpreting the gathered data, the participants were grouped into distinct categories using Maslach's established classification system, referred to as the "MBI – Human Services/Educators Scoring Key." This approach was instrumental in classifying participants into different categories indicating varying degrees of burnout, taking into account their individual scores.

To initiate the analysis, it is reasonable to present the participants' data categorized according to their levels of burnout, which can be classified as low, moderate, or high. Among the 19 participants, the analysis revealed that 2 instructors were classified as experiencing a low level of burnout, while 3 teachers were identified as having a high level of burnout. Notably, the majority of the participants (N=14) fell into the category of moderate burnout levels.

Apart from that, when the mean scores of each sub-dimension of MBI were concerned, it became evident that personal accomplishment (PA) is the highest sub-scale with a mean score of 4.19 (SD= 1.12). It is followed by emotional exhaustion (EE) with a mean score of 2.59 (SD= 1.31), and the last sub-scale was depersonalization (DP) with a mean score of 1.55 (SD= 1.33) (Table 2). All of these mean scores indicate that the scores are clustered around the middle, signaling the prevalence of a moderate level of burnout.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of MBI

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Dev.
EE	19	0.55	5.22	2.59	1.314
DP	19	0	4.6	1.55	1.33
PA	19	1.875	5.75	4.19	1.12

3.1.3. Relationship Between Burnout and Self-Efficacy

The main concern of the present study was to investigate the relationship between instructors' self-efficacy and burnout levels. In order to investigate the relationship between these self-efficacy and burnout constructs – each dimension considered separately – individual bivariate correlations were carried out. As demonstrated in Table 2, a weak positive correlation exists between perceived self-efficacy and overall burnout scores (r=.168). When each dimension was examined separately to have a deeper understanding, not totally different findings were observed. When the relation between self-efficacy and emotional exhaustion was concerned, a weak positive correlation between these constructs was found (r=.100), although it was not statistically significant.

Moreover, when the relationship between self-efficacy and depersonalization dimension was examined, it became evident that there was a weak negative correlation between them (r= -.217), which suggests that the more efficacious an instructor is, the less depersonalized s/he feels. However, it should be kept in mind that these results are not statistically significant, indicating that it may be difficult to generalize these results to the whole population. Similarly, the relationship between self-efficacy and personal achievement didn't prove to be statistically significant even though it was a moderately positive relationship (r=.423).

Apart from that, if each dimension of burnout is to be correlated, the relationship proved non-significant results with low positive correlations. For emotional exhaustion and depersonalization, the correlation was .277; for depersonalization and personal achievement, the correlation was -.092 - suggesting almost no relationship -; finally, for emotional exhaustion and personal achievement, the correlation was -.124.

Table 3: Findings of Bivariate Correlations

	TTSES	MBI (Total)	EE	DP	PA
TTSES	-	.168	.100	-.217	.423
MBI (Total)		-	.853**	.561*	.267
EE			-	.277	-.124
DP				-	-.092
PA					-

*Note 1: ** Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed).*
*Note 2: * Correlation is significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed).*

Overall, not a significant relationship between perceived self-efficacy and burnout constructs has been observed in the present analysis. In order to have an in-depth analysis and provide a better understanding of the phenomenon, semi-structured interviews were carried out.

3.2. Qualitative Findings

Semi-structured interviews have been conducted to triangulate the gathered data and provide insight into the self-efficacy and burnout phenomena. 4 instructors among 19 were interviewed for these purposes. The subjects, here, are entitled as T1, T2, T3, and T4 for anonymity issues.

Some general aspects influential for the relationship between burnout levels of instructors and their perceived self-efficacy were determined according to the interviews (Other aspects are not focused on as they are not concerned with the relationship between burnout levels and perceived self-efficacy.). The aspects taken out of interviews are identified as follows: student motivation, students' attitudes toward learning, students' proficiency levels, and heavy workload. However, it should be kept in mind that, overall, the participant interviewees concluded that all the problems they face are not only external but also seasonal.

3.2.1. Student Motivation

All of the subjects interviewed mentioned 'demotivated students' as an indicator of instructors' inefficaciousness. As they state, instructors struggling to teach such students generally feel stuck because they believe they did everything possible to involve them in the class. This situation demotivates the teachers in turn, resulting in teachers preferring to make less effort for teaching. T1 stated that:

"... the thing that affects teachers negatively is students being unwilling/unmotivated to learn. ...This situation leads teachers to do less in class, like not trying to prepare extra materials or bothering to help students to learn. They even do not want to come to school."

T2 noted that:

"Students believe that lessons are a burden for them, so they just give up and don't want to do anything to learn, which demotivates and upsets me..."

As can be understood, teachers are negatively influenced by students' demotivation, which results in the fact that they feel they do not need to be efficacious for such learners.

T3 commented that:

"I know what my students want and what they don't, so keeping that in mind, I just gave up worrying and getting demotivated because of such issues... I do what I can do; if they do not want to do anything, I just give up and go on with my way..."

From this excerpt, it becomes evident that T3, although getting a little irritated, cannot go on with what she should do according to her schedule but just gives up on teaching, which implies that these teachers are aware of the fact that they are not sufficient in motivating their students and involving them into the lesson.

3.2.2. Students' Attitudes Toward Learning

Similar to the problem of student demotivation, their attitudes towards learning may have an impact on teachers feeling burned out. T2 claimed that changing students' perceptions about learning was sometimes difficult, especially concerning language learning. Since these are university students, their previous teachers determine their learning concepts. Therefore, when they encounter a different approach or perspective in learning, they might put up resistance.

"...when we think about their rooted behaviors/attitudes, which might have negative connotations, sometimes can be eliminated but sometimes cannot... Sometimes with such attitudes, they expect

teachers will rule out everything, but they do not do anything... This results in negatively for teachers..."

This excerpt implies that when teachers are responsible for everything in class, they may feel under pressure, resulting in being not competent enough to handle teaching.

Additionally, T1 pointed out that:

"...students' attitudes towards learning determine the way the teachers approach them; that is to say, if they behave inappropriately like being disrespectful or taking no account of you, this may be a disadvantage of being a teacher..."

With this quotation, T1 provided the positive and negative points of being a teacher and defended that students with inappropriate behavior are, unfortunately, one of the problematic issues in teaching, identifying this situation as a disadvantage.

3.2.3. Students' Proficiency Levels

Since this study was conducted in a prep school of a state university, teachers were responsible for different proficiency level students. From the interviews, it became clear that there are two levels of proficiency classes in the school, namely A - identified as starter and B - as elementary. When the instructors were asked whether they wanted to change the levels of their classes, they all stated to prefer higher-level students. T1 acknowledged that:

"...I would like to teach higher levels of students to be able to speak English without any concern and lead interactive debates for my career development."

T3 commented that:

"... higher level of classes can be much more motivating, that is they are learning faster, you can base your teaching on their previous learning and in the end you can easily get feedback as they clearly show what they have learned... They are also much more motivated to practice writing, for example... I wish I had a B class..."

From both of these excerpts, it is clear that with higher levels of students, teachers feel more efficacious because there are many things to do with them as T1 provides, debates or as such speaking activities; as T3 claims, exercises requiring application of what is learned in the evaluation process. Although all these views indicate putting more burden on teachers, it appears that they feel much more sufficient while teaching.

3.2.4. Heavy Workload

Three instructors out of four stated during the interview that they were teaching at least 22 hours a week. The teacher who was not teaching at those hours was on maternity leave, so she does not have such a responsibility. When the other three were taken into consideration, all of them pointed out that their workload was heavy. They cannot find any time to lean on each and every student in their classes. Moreover, this high number of working hours requires different classes; that is to say, these teachers have to be responsible for at least 3 or 4 classes, which puts an enormous burden on them. In the end, as they claimed during the interviews, they cannot have much time for such activities as preparing extra materials, grading writing assignments, checking quizzes and midterms, spending quality time with colleagues – sharing views/perspectives – and personal/career development concerns.

As an example, when they were asked whether they could focus on their own personal development, T2 stated:

"*...because of the heavy workload, we cannot spare time for personal and career development… Therefore, I cannot attend such conferences and seminars... I would like to attend those conferences because I know I lack some skills, but I don't have much time to do so...*"

In a similar vein, T4 put forward:

"*...We are responsible for many class hours here; this is because we are instructors, but in an ideal working environment, it shouldn't be like that... We shouldn't come to school at 8 in the morning and leave school at 8:00 in the evening because we are human beings and this decreases the performance... I lose all my energy here... It wears me out...*"

With these excerpts, it is clearly implied that these teachers do not feel efficacious because of their heavy workloads. They believe that to be able to serve each and every demand of not only students but also institutions, they need a much more accessible schedule.

Furthermore, one of the teachers (T3) claimed that their heavy workload also affects their relationship with their colleagues:

"*...I am not content with the school environment here... There is no interaction and communication between instructors, which results from our heavy workloads and the physical conditions as we have separate rooms, each; but we never do anything together like going out to dinner, having a casual meeting, going to a picnic, etc... We do not have any communication, which influences the education here negatively since we are unaware of each other... We do not try to solve problems together or even share our problems...*"

As can be understood, teachers feel insufficient about not only the teaching process continuing within the school but also their communication/interaction with their colleagues because of the heavy requirements of the school.

When all of these aspects, namely student motivation, students' attitudes toward learning, students' proficiency levels, and heavy workload, are put aside, it has become evident from subjects' interviews that all burnout issues teachers experience are proven to be discontinuous. That is to say, there are problems encountered throughout a semester; however, they do not go on depressing teachers. As T4 pointed out:

"*...We are generally really motivated and energetic at the beginning of the semesters, hmm hopeful… In the middle, when some difficulties are encountered, we just give up... Towards the end of the semesters, we get motivated again because it is just the end...*"

This excerpt may conclude that burnout is experienced seasonally or in certain situations, but instructors do not feel worn-out all through their careers; it appears that they don't give up totally and surrender themselves to burnout.

4.   Discussion and Conclusion

The outcomes of this research offer significant insights into the connection between instructors' perceived self-efficacy and burnout within the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching. The findings suggest that, on the whole, instructors exhibit a strong sense of confidence in their self-efficacy beliefs, particularly in the domain of classroom management. Concurrently, they tend to experience moderate levels of burnout, a phenomenon that appears to be more situational or seasonal rather than a continuous and constant process.

The interviews with the instructors shed light on some factors influencing their self-efficacy and burnout experiences. Student motivation, attitudes towards learning, and proficiency levels were identified as significant factors affecting instructors' sense of efficacy. Instructors reported feeling less efficacious when dealing with demotivated students and facing resistance in changing students' learning perceptions. Additionally, the heavy workload emerged as a crucial factor contributing to

burnout, impacting instructors' ability to engage in personal and career development and affecting their overall well-being and relationships with colleagues.

The lack of a significant relationship between self-efficacy and burnout suggests that the experienced burnout levels do not necessarily depend on the instructors' perceived self-efficacy. Other external factors seem to play a more critical role in shaping their burnout experiences. These results align with previous studies that have also shown complex interactions between internal factors like self-efficacy and external factors like workload and student-related challenges in influencing burnout levels among educators.

In conclusion, this research provides a comprehensive examination of the relationship between perceived self-efficacy and burnout among EFL instructors. The study's quantitative analysis revealed that the instructors generally have positive self-efficacy beliefs, particularly in classroom management, while experiencing moderate levels of burnout, which is situational rather than continuous.

The qualitative findings from the interviews further highlighted the impact of external factors on burnout and self-efficacy, including student motivation, attitudes towards learning, proficiency levels, and the heavy workload faced by instructors. These findings emphasize the importance of considering both internal and external factors in understanding and addressing burnout in the teaching profession.

Overall, this study contributes to the growing body of research on teacher well-being and professional development, particularly in the context of foreign language education. The results can inform educational institutions and policymakers about the challenges faced by EFL instructors and the potential areas for intervention to improve their well-being and enhance their professional performance. By addressing the identified factors contributing to burnout, teacher education programs can better prepare instructors to face the demands of their profession and foster a more supportive and conducive teaching environment.

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