

ARTIGO<https://doi.org/10.22481/praxisedu.v16i38.6017>**MODELLING THE CONSTRUCT OF BURNOUT PREVENTION: THE CASE OF SUPERVISORS' PERCEPTIONS**

MODELANDO LA CONSTRUCCIÓN DE LA PREVENCIÓN DEL AGOTAMIENTO: EL CASO DE LAS PERCEPCIONES DE LOS SUPERVISORES

MODELANDO A CONSTRUÇÃO DA PREVENÇÃO DE BURNOUT: O CASO DAS PERCEPÇÕES DOS SUPERVISORES

Farzaneh Sabokrouh

Islamic Azad University, Iran

Seyyed Ayatollah Razmjoo

Shiraz University - Iran

Farzaneh Dehghan

Amirkabir University of Technology – Iran

Resumo: A sobrecarga de trabalho do professor pode causar desafios para os professores, levando a esgotamento a longo prazo, se não forem abordados. Consequentemente, o presente estudo tem como objetivo examinar as fontes de prevenção de burnout das perspectivas dos supervisores de EFL (inglês como língua estrangeira). Os participantes foram 85 supervisores iranianos de EFL, cujo trabalho era observar e dar feedback aos professores sobre seu desempenho no ensino em vários níveis de proficiência linguística, do nível básico ao avançado. Um projeto de método misto seqüencial foi empregado neste estudo. Primeiro, a coleta de dados qualitativos foi realizada por meio de entrevistas com 30 participantes, a fim de determinar as fontes de prevenção de burnout na perspectiva dos supervisores. A seguir, foi elaborado um questionário de prevenção de burnout, utilizando os resultados das entrevistas, após o qual foi aplicado aos demais participantes. Os dados coletados foram analisados por fatores para identificar os componentes do construto de prevenção de burnout. Os resultados da análise de conteúdo dos dados da entrevista indicaram que o apoio dos professores de seus colegas, a situação menos estressante e a satisfação no trabalho foram as principais fontes de prevenção de burnout. A análise fatorial mostrou as mesmas fontes de burnout que os principais componentes do construto de prevenção de burnout. As conclusões deste estudo enfatizam a contribuição do apoio educacional e emocional dos professores, proporcionando um local de trabalho construtivo e saudável, bem como a renda desejável como formas de prevenção do esgotamento nos professores de EFL.

Palavras-chave: Burnout, prevenção de burnout, fontes de prevenção de burnout, construção de prevenção de burnout

Abstract: Teacher work overload can cause challenges for teachers leading to burnout in the long term if not addressed. Consequently, the present study aims at examining the sources of burnout prevention from EFL (English as a foreign Language) supervisors' perspectives. The participants were 85 Iranian EFL supervisors whose job was observing and giving feedback to teachers about their teaching performance at various levels of language proficiencies from elementary to advanced levels. A sequential mixed method design was employed in this study. First, collection of qualitative data was performed using interviews with 30 participants in order to determine the sources of burnout prevention from supervisors' perspectives. Next, a burnout prevention questionnaire was designed using the results of the interviews, after which it was administered to the remaining participants. The collected data were factor analyzed to identify the components of burnout prevention construct. Results of content analysis of the interview data indicated that teachers' support from their colleagues, less stressful situation, and job satisfaction were the main sources of burnout prevention. Factor analysis showed the same sources of burnout as the main components of the burnout prevention construct. The findings of this study emphasize on the contribution of teachers' educational and emotional support, providing constructive and healthy working place, as well as desirable income as ways for prevention of burnout in EFL teachers.

Keywords: Burnout, burnout prevention, sources of burnout prevention, burnout prevention construct

Resumen: La sobrecarga de trabajo de los docentes puede ocasionar desafíos para los docentes que provoquen agotamiento a largo plazo si no se abordan. En consecuencia, el presente estudio tiene como objetivo examinar las fuentes de prevención del agotamiento desde las perspectivas de los supervisores EFL (inglés como lengua extranjera). Los participantes fueron 85 supervisores de EFL iraníes cuyo trabajo consistía en observar y dar retroalimentación a los maestros sobre su desempeño docente en varios niveles de dominio del idioma, desde los niveles de primaria hasta los avanzados. En este estudio se empleó un diseño secuencial de método mixto. Primero, la recopilación de datos cualitativos se realizó mediante entrevistas con 30 participantes para determinar las fuentes de prevención del agotamiento desde la perspectiva de los supervisores. A continuación, se diseñó un cuestionario de prevención de agotamiento utilizando los resultados de las entrevistas, después de lo cual se administró a los participantes restantes. Los datos recopilados fueron analizados por factores para identificar los componentes de la construcción de prevención de agotamiento. Los resultados del análisis de contenido de los datos de la entrevista indicaron que el apoyo de los maestros por parte de sus colegas, la situación menos estresante y la satisfacción laboral fueron las principales fuentes de prevención del agotamiento. El análisis factorial mostró las mismas fuentes de agotamiento que los componentes principales de la construcción de prevención de agotamiento. Los hallazgos de este estudio enfatizan la contribución del apoyo educativo y emocional de los maestros, proporcionando un lugar de trabajo constructivo y saludable, así como ingresos deseables como formas de prevención del agotamiento en los maestros de EFL.

Palabras clave: Burnout, prevención de burnout, fuentes de prevención de burnout, construcción de prevención de burnout.

Introduction

Teachers can be considered one of the major factors in the success or failure of educational systems (Kuntz, Näswall, & Bockett, 2013). Thus, it is of vital importance to investigate those variables which can impact teachers' performance. One of the most significant influencing factors on teaching performance is burnout. Due to its crucial

significance, burnout has been subject to many studies (e. g., Bastas, 2016; Buonomo, Fatigante, & Fiorilli, 2017; Fernet, Guay, Senécal, & Austin, 2012; Heidari, & Gorjian, 2017; Kuntz, Näswall, & Bockett, 2013; Maroofi, & Ghaemi, 2016; Paula, & Antonino, 2011; Shamsafrouz, & Haghverdi, 2015; Steiner, 2017).

The investigation of the factors affecting job burnout plays a major role to the achievement of organizational goals. It is found that the more an individual is involved in a certain task, the more productive, self-sufficient, and satisfied they feel with their job (Aflakseir & Nemati, 2018). On the contrary, there are various reasons leading to job burnout which can adversely affect workers' performance (Steiner, 2017). Different research works have indicated that when workers do not possess a transparent definition of the actions which are essential to accomplish a determined task, their levels of job satisfaction would be probably influenced in a negative way (Edmonson, 2006; Rostami & Ghanizadeh, 2015). In addition, bad interpersonal relationships with co-workers are another reason of job dissatisfaction. Weak or unsupportive communications along with problems with co-workers and/ or supervisors result in negative psychological conditions leading to job dissatisfaction (Belias & Koustelios, 2014; Zarafshan, Mohammadi, Ahmadi & Aarsalani, 2013).

Among the various factors affecting teacher's performance, burnout seems to be one of the most prominent ones. According to Friedman (1995), there are two factors that cause burnout among teachers, first, environmental factors that include supervisory, physical, social, educational factors, and so on; second, individual factors which are associated with the individual's occupation and family. According to Kassabgy, Boraie, and Schmidt's theory (1996), there are different factors affecting teachers' burnout in work place such as payment, promotion, nature of work, co-workers, autonomy, and institutional support. As Demirel and Cephe (2010) concluded in their study, academic issues, including hours of teaching, proficiency levels of students, and the offices the teachers were performing their duties at like testing, materials and teacher development had a significant role in the development of burnout among instructors. Nguyen (2013) found out in his research work that the pre-service EFL teachers in the experimental group supposed they received higher levels of psychosocial support from their peers than the members of the control group. The study confirmed the empirical evidence regarding the implementation of a peer mentoring model for pre-service EFL teachers over the practicum and emphasized on the requirement for a reform in the practicum.

In a more recent study, Atmaca, Ç. (2017) found a fairly close positive association between depersonalization and emotional exhaustion along with a strong positive relationship between the intrinsic and extrinsic dimensions of job satisfaction. Several components, including shareholders, self-efficacy, physical conditions as well as the social environment of the school played a significant role in teachers' burnout. Obviously, education is not only a matter of efficient teaching or materials; it is also concerned with the design of a system that is able work independently from the individuals and promote in a sustainable manner. Effective teaching is not possible for the teachers if they are not supported in terms of academic and administrative aspects (Aflakseir & Nemati, 2018). For this reason, all the components of an educational system should focus on the creation of an efficient atmosphere through which the teachers can show their best performance and conditions in which the learners can develop their attitudes through investment in their skills as well as knowledge (Belias & Koustelios, 2014).

Recently, Rashtchi and Mashhoor (2019) stated in their study that personality traits can play a role in the prediction of teachers' inclination toward burnout. Depending on their personality traits, teachers may react to teaching challenges differently. Moreover, the way teachers deal with teaching challenges determines the degree of burnout they experience. In another study in the local context of Iran, Roohani and Dayeri (2019) have pointed out several job- and person-related factors, such as the lack of job security, low payment, and excessive workload, as the possible causes of burnout among the Iranian EFL teachers.

Although a significant number of studies has been carried out regarding job burnout, most of them have considered the quantitative dimensions and examined the association of this variable and other variables, including job stress (Sadeghi, 2016), teacher's attitudes and other organizational or personal variables (Khajavy, Ghonsooly & Fatemi, 2017; Rashtchi and Mashhoor, 2019). A review of the previous studies indicates that although many have focused on teachers' burnout and its different causes, none of the previous studies had investigated the construct of burnout from the perspectives of supervisors. Furthermore, majority of these studies have concentrated on the sources of burnout and a limited number of them had been performed on prevention of burnout. Consequently, the present research aims at determining the main factor(s) which may help to prevent burnout among Iranian EFL teachers from supervisors' perspectives. Accordingly, the following research questions were raised:

RQ1: What are Iranian EFL supervisors' perceptions of the sources which can prevent teacher's burnout?

RQ2: What are the components of the construct of teacher's burn-out prevention from the Iranian EFL supervisors' perspective?

Method

Participants

Participants of the study included 85 EFL teacher supervisors who were chosen by convenient sampling technique in Tehran, Iran. The researcher had to use convenient sampling as it was not possible to choose the supervisors randomly. These supervisors were working in a variety of foreign language institutes in Tehran. They were periodically observing the teachers' classrooms and had the job of ensuring the proper act of teaching English by the teachers. They were also teaching English but their main duty was observation and giving feedback to teachers about their teaching performance. These supervisors were chosen by the language institutes in this job due to their long teaching experience, education, and success in providing good quality instruction. They were also mainly older than other teachers (mean age=34) and had good management skills.

Instruments and Materials

Interviews

The first part of the study was started with collecting qualitative data on the supervisors' perceptions of sources of burnout prevention. Out of the total number of participants only 30 supervisors agreed to attend in interviews and answer the questions in person. Thus, the semi-structured interviews (see Appendix A) were carried out with these 30 supervisors individually during a period of 2 weeks. In the interviews, supervisors were asked to talk about teachers' burnout experiences, the causes of burnout and how burnout can be prevented. The interviewer also had an active role in the interviews and asked as many follow up questions as needed to get richer data on sources of burnout prevention. Since the interviewees were free to give their ideas and the interviewer extended the talk with the follow-up questions, the interview needed thirty to fifty minutes to complete. It should be noted that all the talks were recorded for content analysis.

Burnout prevention questionnaire

Based on the analysis of interview data, the sources of burnout prevention were identified. These sources of burnout prevention were used to design a questionnaire for the purpose of identifying the components of the burnout prevention. In other words, a pool of statements that reflected the sources of burnout prevention were created and turned out into a questionnaire. To this end, each statement was accompanied by sets of Likert type of options i.e. strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree and the list of statements were formatted into a questionnaire (see Appendix B). The questionnaire was also provided for two experts in the field of TESOL to give their opinions regarding its content. After reviewing the content of the questionnaire and making the necessary changes both in terms of content and wordings, the final draft was pre-pared. This final draft included 19 items (statements) that were piloted on 20 EFL supervisors for reliability estimation. According to the results of Cronbach's alpha the questionnaire showed reliability index of 0.86 which is considered acceptable for reliability.

Procedure

Iranian EFL supervisors from several language institutes in Tehran were contacted and asked for cooperation. Utmost care was taken to include supervisors from different locations in Tehran to have a representative sample of Iranian supervisors in Tehran. After seeking their consent, their time for having interviews was checked. Totally 30 supervisors were managed to have interviews for the purpose of learning about their perceptions of sources of burnout prevention. Interviews were carried out during a two-week interval and each interview needed about 30 to 50 minutes. In the interviews, the interviewer started the interviews by introducing himself and giving explanations about burnout and its signs. Next, the interviewees talked about their own and teacher colleagues' experiences of burnout. Moreover, the participants were expected to provide their opinions regarding the sources of burnout and how it could be addressed. During the interviews, the interviewer helped the interviewees to better express their opinions about sources of burnout prevention by giving clues about possible causes and sources of burnout and also sources of burnout prevention. All the discussions were recorded using a cellphone and were transcribed for content analysis. The purpose of content analysis was to identify the sources of burnout prevention which was done by coding the data, searching for themes within codes, and reviewing and confirming the

themes. The analysis was done by two analysts to ensure the reliability of content analysis. To measure the reliability, after the analysis, agreements and disagreements between the researcher and the research assistant were calculated using Holsti's (1969) coefficient of reliability which indicates the number of agreements per total number of coding decisions. The value was 0.87, which indicated excellent agreement.

After identifying the sources of burnout prevention in the form of themes, a burnout questionnaire was designed. The purpose of designing the questionnaire was to identify components of burnout prevention as perceived by Iranian EFL supervisors. To design the questionnaire, the sources of burnout prevention identified in content analysis were taken into account and accordingly a pool of statements reflecting the sources of burnout were constructed. The statements come from three sources i.e. information from recorded interviews, brainstorming and expert consultation. Some of the statements that reflected sources of burnout prevention could be found in the ideas expressed by the supervisors in the interviews. In the brainstorming, all the ideas that came to mind of the researcher reflecting the sources of burnout prevention were written down in the form of statements. Next, the list of the statements and sources of burnout preventions were given to two experts in the field of TESOL to further enrich the list of statements by addition of novel sentences or modification of the current ones. All these statements were formatted into a questionnaire by adding a five point Likert Type scale (strongly agree to strongly disagree).

Out of 85 participants, 30 participated voluntarily in the interviews and the remaining 55 ones who did not agree to interview for their personal reasons completed the burnout questionnaire. The data collected from the completed questionnaires were entered in SPSS data editor sheet for statistical analysis. The statistical analysis included factor analysis using principal component analysis for the purpose of extracting the components of burnout prevention construct.

Results

Based on the analysis of interview data, three sources of burnout prevention emerged. These sources which were actually the emergent themes are reported in Table 1. The themes emerged after convergence of the subthemes which were the product of commonalities in the initial codes in the interview transcriptions. The initial codes included

isolation, removing negative feelings, dealing with conflict in classrooms, help from colleagues, dealing with work pressures, etc. which led the appearance of the subthemes.

Table 1: The Themes and Subthemes after Analysis of the Interview Data

Subthemes	Themes
Training and feedback Emotional support Help and solutions in teaching methods Flexibility in timetables and teaching programs	Support
Healthy relationship with other teachers Less challenge with students Having fun and relaxing environment	Less stressful situations
Adequate income Equality and respect Recognition and rewards Job promotion	Job satisfaction

The results of content analysis on interview data indicated that the main sources of burnout prevention are support, less stressful situations, and job satisfaction. In the support category, it was found that as long as teachers are supported with training and feedback, emotional support, teaching methods and techniques, and flexible time table, teachers would experience less pressure in dealing with challenges in teaching career and emotional crisis. In other words, teachers have to deal with many issues and in case they feel that they are all alone in dealing with these issues, they would suffer from inadequate resources in dealing with all those challenges. Such mismatch between the amount of challenges at work and the available resources either psychological or physical resources can impel the teachers toward burnout experience. Some quotations of the teachers regarding these factors are given below:

Example1.

“Some teachers are dissatisfied when they are supervised more than others. It seems that they think there’s something wrong with their education. They think emotional support means that you should just make them happy at any cost. They are easily annoyed by their behavior. In my opinion this can cause burn out in long run”.

Example2.

“One of the good things that our institute does is holding classes and educational meetings for teachers, during which they can exchange ideas and brainstorm regarding educational issues. Less experienced teachers try to use the experience of others and address some of their problems. This way, more experienced teachers feel responsible regarding their colleagues and try to guide them. I think such classes help in prevention of burnout because they provide the teachers with a more ensuring environment in which they can rely on their peers’ assistance when necessary”.

The next category for sources of burnout prevention was less stressful situations. In this category, it was assumed that stress gradually consumes the energy of the teachers and makes them vulnerable to burnout. The interview data showed that sources of stress for teachers are unhealthy relationship with other teachers, challenges with students, and formal and strict situations at work. With regard to unhealthy relationships, supervisors pointed to the teachers underestimating and questioning other teachers’ skills and knowledge and seeing other teachers as their rivals. Such issues can turn into conflict and destructive competition between teachers and finally put more and more stress on teachers. As an example one of the supervisors referred to what one of the more experienced teachers complained about as: *“why did you select her to teach this level? She is not experienced enough for this level. I remember when I started teaching here you showed me a list of levels I should go through, but now you have neglected the same rules and have given her a higher level to teach. It’s not fair!”*

The teachers also stated that dealing with students’ misbehaviors, students’ lack of motivation, and disobedience were sources of stress and pressure. Finally, they believed that lack of fun in working place can worsen the teachers’ stress and perceived workload. They thought that providing a relaxing and fun atmosphere can reduce the teachers’ perceived stress and ultimately reduce the chance of burnout experience. The same fun atmosphere was also counted as a way to build more friendly and intimate relationship with other colleagues. Accordingly, it was concluded that burnout can be prevented by building healthier relationship with colleagues, less challenge from students, and having fun and relaxing atmosphere at work. Regarding the term “fun” they meant a place free from boredom, fatigue, tension, in which there were opportunities to connect, bond, and learn from others at work. One of the teachers stated in this regard that *“I worked somewhere else before, but I didn’t like it at all. You know the rooms were gloomy and made me feel bored. There was a kind of*

heavy atmosphere and you couldn't feel relaxed even at your break. I preferred to spend my time speaking with students at the break or going through some works."

The final category of sources of burnout prevention was job satisfaction that dealt with teachers' sense of satisfaction from their teaching career. In this category, one of the sources of burnout was quoted dissatisfaction that came from inadequate income, inequality and lack of respect at work place, lack of recognition and rewards, and lack of job promotion. In this regard one of the teachers stated that *"I have to do this work, because I can't find any other jobs! Who likes to work with such a low income? We have to deal with different students at different ages for almost nothing. I have had some crowded classes with the same pay as the classes which were less crowded. When I told to them that it takes more of my energy, they simply replied you should teach to every number of students! But it's unfair in my opinion."* The supervisors believed that burnout can be prevented when teachers are satisfied with their teaching career and this satisfaction could partly come from their income per working hours. They also believed that the amount of payment for teaching, which is a demanding and stressful job, is low and this low income can virtually bring dissatisfaction and burnout. A better income can compensate part of the difficulties and challenges of teaching career and may reduce the chance of burnout among the Iranian EFL teachers. As one of the teachers who was satisfied with the income said: *"Fortunately my institute cooperates with teachers regarding their income. They have a high understanding and consider all the conditions when they are going to pay. When we have more students in a class, they pay us a percentage. Even if the number of our students increases, they give us financial rewards. This gives us enough motivation to focus on our teaching and try to attract more students."* Another source of dissatisfaction was lack of equality and respect from administrators of the language institutes. Based on supervisors' statements, some teachers are not happy with the way teachers are treated by the language institutes. Allegedly, some teachers believe that certain teachers receive more respect, benefits and salary for no good reasons. Apparently, some teachers have better relationship with institutes' manager and administrators and because of that they can be put in classrooms with better locations have access to better classroom times and even receive more salary. In addition, the teachers seemingly expect to be better recognized for their work and efforts by receiving rewards and being appreciated publicly and privately. Finally, the supervisors believed that job promotion is another source of satisfaction while without it, teachers may experience boredom, feel lack of progress, and success and finally experience burnout. They thought that when teachers can be promoted to higher positions like teaching at

more advanced levels, becoming teacher leader, supervisors, etc. burnout is less likely to be experienced by Iranian EFL teachers.

Another aim of the study was to explore the components of the construct of burnout prevention from supervisors' perspective. To this end, a questionnaire covering all the sources of burnout prevention was developed and then administered to 55 EFL supervisors for factor analysis. The factor analysis was done using principal component analysis in SPSS 22. As the first step of factor analysis, the factorability of the data was established using KMO measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of sphericity (see Table 2). Based on the results of KMO measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of sphericity the data obtained after the burnout questionnaire administration were suitable for factors analysis. The KMO measure of sampling adequacy was 0.86 which was above the minimum value of 0.6 and Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant ($p \leq 0.05$).

Table 2: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.869
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1.311E3
	df	171
	Sig.	.000

After ensuring about the factorability of data, identification of factors or components was done by consulting the eigenvalues, eigenvalue scree plot, and matrix of component loadings. Table 3 shows the eigenvalues and the variances explained and Figure 1 shows the screen plot of the eigenvalues.

In Table 3, it is shown that the first three components have eigenvalues greater than 1. The first component had an eigenvalue of 8.31 that included 43.74% of the variances, the second component had an eigenvalue of 4.66 that included 24.56% of the variances, and the third component had an eigenvalue of 3.20 that included 16.87 % of the variances. Totally, the three components accounted for 85.18% of all the variances. Figure 1 also shows that three factors have eigenvalues above 1 and there are three big changes in slopes in the curve that support a three component solution for the construct of burnout prevention from supervisors' perspectives.

Table 3: Eigenvalues and the Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	8.31	43.747	43.747	8.31	43.747	43.747	6.37	33.564	33.564
2	2	24.563	68.311	2	24.563	68.311	7	27.464	61.027
3	4.66	16.870	85.180	4.66	16.870	85.180	5.21	24.153	85.180
4	7	2.391	87.571	7			8		
5	3.20	2.059	89.631	3.20			4.58		
6	5	1.853	91.484	5			9		
7	.454	1.487	92.971						
8	.391	1.440	94.411						
9	.352	1.109	95.520						
10	.283	.859	96.379						
11	.274	.687	97.066						
12	.211	.643	97.709						
13	.163	.506	98.215						
14	.131	.437	98.652						
15	.122	.376	99.028						
16	.096	.346	99.374						
17	.083	.271	99.645						
18	.072	.214	99.859						
19	.066	.141	100.000						
	.052								
	.041								
	.027								

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

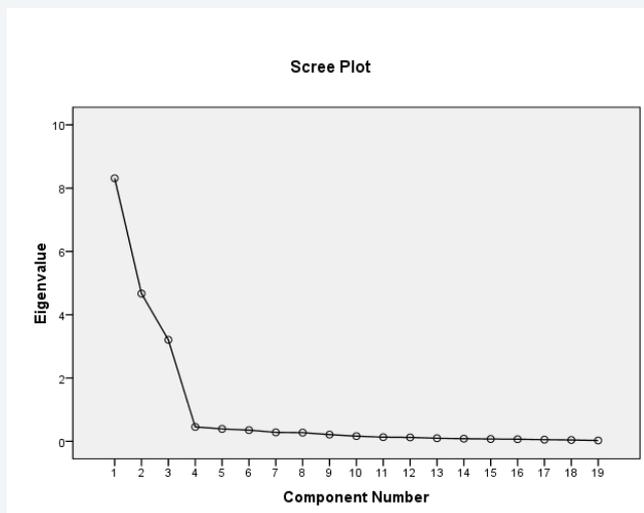


Figure 1: the scree plot of the burnout prevention construct

In order to understand how the three components of the burnout prevention are constructed, the component matrix (see Table 4) was consulted. The examination of the component matrix showed that three components corresponded perfectly to the three main sources of burnout prevention identified in the interview analysis.

Table 4: Component Matrix of Burnout Prevention Construct

	Component		
	1	2	3
Item1	.947	.946	.950
Item2	.941	.919	.883
Item3	.908	.915	.875
Item4	.942	.858	.885
Item5	.940	.858	.813
Item6	.936	.930	.820
Item7	.920		
Item8			
Item9			
Item10			
Item11			
Item12			
Item13			
Item14			
Item15			
Item16			
Item17			
Item18			
Item19			

Discussion

Results of the study indicated that Iranian EFL supervisors believe in three sources of burnout prevention, including support, less stressful situations, and job satisfaction. Factors analysis showed that these sources of burnout prevention constituted the three component model of burnout prevention. These sources of burnout were in close association with burnout factors because the supervisors thought that in order to prevent burnout, measures that cause burnout should be blocked. For instance, the supervisors thought that lack of support for dealing with many challenges of teaching career is a burnout factor. Teachers may face pressures due to workload and challenges in teaching certain parts of syllabus. A teacher in need of help but without any support would feel helpless and gradually experience burnout.

Gruenert and Whitaker (2015) and Larrivee (2012) have also pointed out that negative attitudes toward colleagues and work in general contribute to burnout.

In the same vein, unhealthy relationships between teachers, an unfriendly work place, and troublesome students would create a stressful situation for the teachers and ultimately lead to burnout. Dissatisfaction with teaching career was another burnout factor according to the supervisors. They believed that low income in proportion to amount of work done, lack of respect, lack of recognition and appreciation, and lack of promotion could cause dissatisfaction and in long term burnout. Accordingly, they thought that in order to prevent burnout, burnout factors should be eliminated or diminished.

In literature, burnout has been defined 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” (Maslach, 1993). In emotional exhaustion which is the fundamental dimension of burnout (Ghanizadeh & Jahedizadeh, 2016), teachers feel that they don't have the energy and resources to deal with the challenges of their work. This lack of energy can be due to physical, affective, and cognitive strain because of the consistent work pressures and demands (Maslach et al. 2001). The main sources of burnout prevention found in the current study also match with the factors attributed to burnout. For instance, lack of support, stressful situations, and job dissatisfaction were found as the sources of work pressure and demands that can lead to emotional exhaustion in long term. In some studies, in line with the results obtained in the present paper, teaching has been counted as one of the stressful jobs (Leiter et al., 2014) and demands for managing areas out of teachers' control can lead to anxiety and frustration (Brown, 2012; Sterrett, Sclater, & Murray, 2011). Moreover, Ratcliff, Jones, Costner, Savage-Davis, and Hunt (2010) have pointed to students' misbehavior as a source of anxiety and burnout and Aloe, Amo, and Shanahan (2014) reported that teachers have to deal with many discipline related issues for providing a better learning situation, which are again consistent with the findings of the present study. Based on the studies by Leiter and Maslach (2011) and Marzano & Heflebower (2012), isolation, unmanageable workload, lack of support from colleagues and administrators, no chance in getting promotion, classroom management issues are factors affecting burnout.

Burnout and the factors contributing to burnout is not a new topic, but there is evidence that burnout rate is increasing (Jacobson, 2016). Therefore, the current study makes unique contribution to the educationalists' understanding regarding burnout prevention in

Iranian context of the foreign language teaching. The present study dealt with sources of burnout prevention which is somewhat different from the studies on factors contributing to burnout (e.g. Clandinin, 2014; Gruenert & Whitaker, 2015; Marzano & Heflebower, 2012). Although factors contributing to burnout can be seen as clues to burnout prevention, it still needs further clarification about the factors contributing to burnout can be considered for burnout prevention. However, the present study specifically attended to burnout prevention sources that can directly inform the ELT practitioner and decision makers about measures that can be used for preventing burnout.

Conclusion

Due to the fact that burnout has a negative effect on teaching performance, it is recommended that teachers' support, less stressful situations, and job satisfaction as sources of burnout prevention are given adequate attention in Iranian foreign language institutions. Although it cannot be claimed that these sources of burnout prevention are the most comprehensive ones, they are some of the most directly related sources of burnout prevention to Iranian context of foreign language teaching. These sources of burnout prevention have been identified from direct quotations of EFL supervisors who are directly in contact with teachers and this gives further credibility to their direct relation to teachers' burnout prevention. At a more global level, the findings of the study highlight the role of teachers' educational and emotional support, providing constructive and healthy working place, and adequate income as ways for prevention of burnout in foreign language teachers. Although in different foreign language contexts worldwide, different factors might contribute to burnout prevention, it should be kept in mind that the sources of burnout prevention found in the current study are mainly related to burnout factors in global literature on burnout.

Limitations

The present study is subjected to some limitations which might affect the results of the research. First of all is the matter of the participants. It is obvious that the more the participants we have, the more reliable statistical consequences will result, but the present study has only focused on the teachers practicing at the private language institutes during a single period of time. Therefore, the range and variety of the participants are constrained to a

limited population and context. Moreover, it is worth mentioning that the teachers working at the public schools or those with different social as well as educational backgrounds are excluded in this study due to administrative limitations. Moreover, the study has been carried in a single city, with its specific context and influencing factors. All of these factors make generalization of the results difficult.

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Appendix A

Interview questions

Have you or your colleagues ever experienced burnout?

What is your perception of burnout?

What do you think causes burnout?

Do you think that there are sources that can prevent burnout?

What are those sources of burnout prevention? Can you give some examples?

Appendix B

Burnout Prevention Questionnaire

	Items	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Support	Supporting teachers with teaching techniques may help to prevent burnout.					
	Emotional support and encouragement may help to prevent burnout.					
	Periodical workshops and trainings may help to prevent burnout.					
	Helping teachers with their problems and challenges may help to prevent burnout.					
	Having flexible classroom hours for teachers may help to prevent burnout.					
	Listening to teachers' needs and taking care of their needs may help to prevent burnout.					
Lack of stressful situation	Constructive relationships between teachers may help to prevent burnout.					
	A friendly atmosphere in work place may help to prevent burnout.					
	Teachers respecting each other may help to prevent burnout.					
	Students respect may help to prevent burnout.					
	Motivated students may help to prevent burnout.					
	Having a fun and relaxing atmosphere may help to					

	prevent burnout.					
Job satisfaction	Increase in income may help to prevent burnout.					
	Receiving equal respect from administrators may help to prevent burnout.					
	Receiving equal attention from administrators may help to prevent burnout.					
	Rewards and appreciation may help to prevent burnout.					
	Being recognized as a more potent and successful teacher may help to prevent burnout.					
	Being promoted to teach at more advanced level may help to prevent burnout					
	Being promoted to supervisor or other administrative roles may help to prevent burnout.					

SOBRE OS AUTORES:

Farzaneh Sabokrouh

PhD candidate in TEFL, Qeshm Branch, Islamic Azad University, Qeshm, Iran. E-mail: farzanehsabokrouh@yahoo.com

 <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-6048-1086>

Seyyed Ayatollah Razmjoo

Associate Professor, Dept. of Foreign Languages & Linguistics, Shiraz University, Shiraz, Iran. E-mail: arazmjoo@rose.shirazu.ac.ir

 <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-6542-9399>

Farzaneh Dehghan

Assistant Professor, Amirkabir University of Technology, Tehran, Iran. E-mail: fdehghan175@gmail.com

 <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-3249-7771>

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