



Teacher burnout and participation in professional learning activities: Perspectives from university English language instructors in Turkey

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Abstract

Over the past decades, teacher burnout has attracted teacher education scholars worldwide as regards to its causes, effects, and amelioration. Although the burnout phenomenon is not new, the research on teacher burnout in Turkey is still relatively recent. Providing a perspective from Turkey, in this study, we investigated burnout and participation in professional learning activities among Turkish EFL (English as a foreign language) instructors at university English preparatory programs, a rarely researched group in this area. Quantitative data were collected from 224 Turkish EFL instructors through a questionnaire consisting three sections, including the Maslach Burnout Inventory for Educators. Our analysis revealed that state university instructors (SUEPPI) and private university instructors (PUEPPI) significantly differ in terms of the levels of sense of personal accomplishment and participation in professional learning activities. Our findings suggest that, SUEPPI did not feel as accomplished and did not participate in professional learning activities as frequently as PUEPPI, and instructors' sense of personal accomplishment is positively correlated with their increased participation in professional learning activities.

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1. Introduction

Teacher burnout has attracted the attention of researchers worldwide for a few decades by now. As two of the pioneers of burnout research, Maslach and Jackson (1981) define burnout as “a syndrome of emotional exhaustion and cynicism that occurs frequently among individuals who do ‘people-work’ of some kind” (p. 99). Teaching being one such profession, teachers are also considered to be sensitive to the burnout syndrome because “(1) the relationship between a provider and a recipient is central to the job, and (2) the provision of service, care or education can be fraught with emotional strain” (Maslach & Schaufeli, 1993, p. 4). According to Maslach and Jackson (1981), burnout is a multifaceted phenomenon with three dimensions: (a) emotional exhaustion, referring to the depletion of one’s emotional sources and enthusiasm for teaching; (b) depersonalization, denoting one’s detachment from and development of negative attitudes towards learners; (c) reduced sense of

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personal accomplishment, signaling one's perceptions of under-accomplishment and ineffectiveness in teaching.

Although teacher burnout has been extensively explored in the literature, studies reflecting the Turkish context have been rare (e.g. Cephe, 2010; Mede, 2009). Also, as can be seen from our review of the literature below, the majority of the studies on burnout attempted to find the relationship between personal or organizational variables and burnout. The relationship between teachers' involvement in professional learning activities and their burnout levels seems to be a relatively under-researched area. In an attempt to contribute to the current literature by filling these gaps and providing perspectives from Turkey, we investigated teacher burnout and its relation to teachers' participation in professional learning activities in two relatively different contexts of state versus private university.

1.1. Literature review

1.1.1. Teacher burnout

Although both individual and organizational factors have been studied in their relation to teacher burnout, organizational factors were consistently found to play a role in predicting teacher burnout (Brown, 2012; Burke & Greenglass, 1993; Byrne 1999; Friedman, 1991; Hakanen, Bakker & Schaufeli, 2006; Huberman, 1993; Lackritz, 2004; Mazur & Lynch, 1989). In a school environment, for example, task qualities (such as work overload, types of student behavior, role conflict, type of student), social support, parent/community relationships, and characteristics of the institution could lead to a negative or positive classroom climate, which could affect teachers' exhaustion (Grayson & Alvarez, 2008; Maslach & Leiter, 1999; Rey, Extremera & Pena, 2012; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2009). Likewise, general student misbehavior in a school is a major contributor to high burnout levels in teachers (Blasé, 1982; Brouwers & Tomic, 1999, 2000; Byrne, 1991; Evers, Tomic & Brouwers, 2004; Lopez & Santiago, 2008).

In their comprehensive model of teacher burnout, Maslach and Leiter (1999) point out the simultaneous effect of teacher-student interaction, teachers' personal qualities, school environment, and the larger social context on teacher burnout. In a similar vein, Slegers (1999) suggests that teacher burnout may, to a large extent, be the result of an interaction between personal variables such as gender, age, marital status, years of teaching experience, locus of control, self-esteem, and self-efficacy and organizational variables, such as access to facilities, social support, working conditions, and school structure. Likewise, Friedman (2003) argues that teachers who cannot build organizational interpersonal relations, and who do not receive professional support from their organizations, are likely to feel more professionally unaccomplished and exhausted.

Compared to numerous studies on burnout in K-12 settings, research on teacher burnout in higher education settings is relatively scarce and recent. In their comprehensive review of twelve studies conducted with university staff in different countries, Watts and Robertson (2011) concluded that student-related variables, and faculty members' age and gender still play a role in predicting teacher burnout. The review also points to the need for comparison across different university contexts and for multi-site studies. Additionally, surveying 265 university faculty members, Lackritz (2004) found that while the time that faculty members allocate to research and professional development activities do not show significant correlations with any dimensions of burnout, Number of Students Taught as well as Teaching Load, Time Grading, or Office Hours contributed to higher levels of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization. Lackritz's results suggest that faculty members' teaching versus research (considered as two separate types of responsibilities) could act differently as predictors of burnout. Moreover, in their study of the relationship between career fit and burnout, Shanafelt et. al. (2009)

revealed that faculty physicians spending 20% of their time doing work that they perceive to be meaningful, had considerably lower levels of burnout compared to others. Also, in their study of 193 professors and research faculty at University of Seville in Spain, Navarro, Mas and Jimenez (2010) found that perceived personal competence was positively correlated with personal accomplishment and negatively with the other dimensions of burnout. Likewise, Otero-Lopez, Marino, and Bolano (2008) carried out a large-scale study involving 813 university professors in Spain. Their analyses showed that while social support from friends and family and optimism were the factors that correlated with all dimensions of burnout, other personal, occupational and non-occupational factors did have some influence on burnout as well. They concluded that networks of social support and the belief that things will work out should be strengthened. The results of these studies show that levels of teacher burnout cannot be explained by one single factor, and the school climate as well as working conditions play a role.

Studies of teacher burnout at the tertiary level in Turkey are even more recent. Karabiyik, Eker, and Anbar (2008) found that perceptions of the work environment, administrative workload, academic workload, and promotion and evaluation were among factors affecting faculty burnout in their sample. In his study with 37 preparatory school English instructors, Cephe (2010) reported that 48.6% suffered severely from burnout. He also found that the lack of a positive and high quality administrative team is perceived to be the most important reason for burnout by all participants. Bilge's (2006) study of 194 academics including lecturers, instructors and research assistants demonstrates that 'the academics who find their jobs meaningful, who find encouragement for professional development ... experience burnout less.' (p. 1157). A recent study by Toker (2011) reports that research assistants experience higher levels of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization compared to associate professors and professors.

We hypothesize that attitudes towards and experiences of school environment are undoubtedly influenced by broader educational policies and the socio-cultural context in which the school is placed. In this respect, public and private universities display essential structural, organizational, and financial differences worldwide. In the Turkish context, for example, public universities offer education with considerably low fees compared to private universities. However, as the demand for higher education increases and the public universities could only accept limited numbers of students, private universities are becoming popular, especially among high-income families. Private university staff members, in general, earn more compared to public university staff members. According to Baş and Ardiç (2002), private university staff exhibit higher levels of job satisfaction than public university staff members in Turkey. For these reasons, comparing the burnout levels among these two groups of instructors could give further insights into broader school environments and conditions as regards to their contribution to teacher burnout.

1.1.2. Teacher professional development

As Johnson (2009) puts it "traditionally, the professional development of teachers has been thought of as something that is done by others for or to teachers." (p. 95). This view has considerably changed to include teachers' own experiences and classrooms as an important part of their professional development. Professional learning at the workplace mainly takes place during teachers' daily practices at school through interaction and collaboration with others (Meirink et al. 2009). Teachers are also expected to engage in individual professional development activities outside school such as workshops, journal writing, action research, peer observation, collaborative study groups, and reflection in order to keep updated with the recent developments in the field, put these into practice, and reflect upon their own performance as teachers (Diaz-Maggioli, 2003; Richards & Farrell, 2005).

The relationship between professional development opportunities and teacher burnout has also been of interest. As a case in point, Miller (1999), in her case study of a high school, reported that increased opportunities of professional development positively influenced the way teachers felt about their work. In the study, teachers were encouraged to engage in professional development activities within the frame of a larger school reform. Miller concludes that teacher professional learning activities can serve as “buffers against burnout” (p. 156) by means of focusing teacher’s attention to better practice. Results of a similar study carried out with counselors show that professional growth could be a strategy to avoid burnout (Manguson, Norem, & Wilcoxon, 2002). With a group of 144 primary school teachers, Ozer and Beycioglu (2010) found that teachers’ attitudes towards professional development were positively correlated with personal accomplishment.

However, participation in professional learning activities, after all, could be, as Kwakman (2003) suggests, a personal choice. Kwakman documented that participation in professional learning activities seems to be more influenced by personal factors of individual teachers than by any other. The study findings add that low feelings of personal accomplishment are correlated with lower levels of participation in professional learning activities.

1.2. Research questions

With an attention to university level English language instructors and their work conditions, the following research questions were explored in this study:

1. What are the perceived qualities of the working conditions of State University English Preparatory Program Instructors (SUEPPI) and Private University English Preparatory Program Instructors (PUEPPI)?
2. Is there a significant difference between State University English Preparatory Program Instructors (SUEPPI) and Private University English Preparatory Program Instructors (PUEPPI) in terms of teacher burnout and participation in professional learning activities (PPLA)?
3. Is there a relationship between participation in professional learning activities (PPLA) and teacher burnout on the basis of a sample of State University English Preparatory Program Instructors (SUEPPI) and Private University English Preparatory Program Instructors (PUEPPI)?

2. Method

2.1. Setting

In Turkish educational context, University English Preparatory Program (UEPP) refers to one-year intensive English classes offered by universities, especially by those which offer full or partial English-medium instruction. After students are placed in a degree program, those below a certain English proficiency level are required to take intensive English language classes for a year in the UEPP. The course load differs depending on the proficiency level, beginners having the most intensive study program, mostly over 25 hours of English per week. The courses focus on the improvement of basic English communication skills as well as academic English.

The requirement to teach at a UEPP is a four-year undergraduate degree, preferably one in English language teaching or related areas. Aside from teaching, instructors may be asked to take on additional responsibilities such as preparing tests, adapting or evaluating materials, and developing the curriculum, in addition to their regular, weekly teaching load. The proficiency level that instructors

teach could be chosen by the instructor or assigned by the administration. Although some instructors may engage in other academic activities such as obtaining a master's or doctoral degree, presenting at conferences or publishing academic work, instructors' main duties involve teaching, and they are not required to conduct research or engage in academic publishing.

2.2. Sample / Participants

224 Turkish EFL instructors working at 15 different UEPPs in Istanbul (Five state, ten private) voluntarily participated in this study. Table 1 below provides an overview of the participants' profiles.

Table 1. Overview of participants

	Groups	N	%
Age	21-30	82	36.8
	31-35	61	27.8
	36-40	31	13.9
	Over 40	48	21.5
Gender	Female	180	80.4
	Male	44	19.6
Teaching Experience	0-5 years	70	31.3
	6-10 years	67	29.9
	11-15 years	38	17.0
	16-20 years	21	9.4
	Over 20 years	28	12.5
Type of University	State	77	34.4
	Private	147	65.6

As the Table 1 illustrates, seventy-seven of the participants (34.4%) were recruited in a state university, whereas 147 (65.6%) worked in a private university. Of the 224 respondents, 180 were female and 44 were male. The participants whose ages ranged from 23 to 30 constituted the largest group (36.8%), whereas the ones between 36 and 40 constituted the smallest group (13.9%). Seventy of the instructors had up to five years of teaching experience, whereas 67 of them had six to 10 years, 38 of them 11 to 15 years, 21 of them 16 to 20 years and 28 had been involved in teaching for over 20 years.

2.3. Data Collection Procedures

This study employed a survey design utilizing quantitative techniques for data collection and analysis. A total of 400 questionnaires were sent to 15 different English Preparatory Schools in universities in Istanbul, and 224 of them were returned, with a 56% return rate. All these 224 instructors from state and private universities in Istanbul, Turkey, voluntarily completed our questionnaire, which consisted of three sections: (1) multiple-choice items to obtain demographic information and information on working conditions; (2) Maslach Burnout Inventory-Educators Survey (Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1996), to measure burnout; (3) Kwakman's (2003) Inventory for the Teachers' Participation in Professional Learning Activities to measure the frequency of the participants' participation in professional learning activities (PPLA).

2.4. Instruments

Our questionnaire consisted of three sections. Section 1 included 27 multiple-choice items on age, gender, educational background, and teaching experience of the participants as well as items inquiring about selected qualities of the instructors' working conditions such as teaching load, social and technical facilities available in the university, and professional development opportunities. Section 2 included the Turkish version of Maslach Burnout Inventory-Educators Survey (Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1996) with 22 Likert-type items to measure the three dimensions of burnout: emotional exhaustion (EE), depersonalization (DP) and personal accomplishment (PA). The nine items on EE subscale describe feelings of fatigue, anxiety and overload. The DP scale contains five items on negative attitudes towards students or coworkers. The eight items on the reversed PA scale aim to measure perceived sense of achievement in one's job performance. Each participant received a separate score on each of the dimensions. The items were scored on a seven-point scale ranging from 'never' (0) to 'every day' (6). High scores on EE and DP, and low scores on PA are interpreted as high levels of burnout. Baysal (1995) and Girgin (1995) established the reliability and validity of the Turkish version of MBI for educators. The instrument was found to be reliable with .74, .75, and .77 reliability coefficients for EE, DP, and PA, respectively. Also, convergent validity of the Turkish version was established with .74 for EE, .70 for DP, and .68 for PA (Girgin, 1995). The results revealed no significant difference between the Turkish and English versions.

The third section of the questionnaire examined the level of participation in professional learning activities among these instructors, through Participation in Professional Learning Activities (PPLA) inventory originally developed by Kwakman (2003). Kwakman identified 21 professional learning activities in three categories; collaborative, individual and instructional. Kwakman's inventory was translated into Turkish and adapted considering the Turkish context; the Turkish version revealed internal consistency reliability with a coefficient of .86 (Kulavuz, 2006). The final Turkish version of the PPLA inventory that was used in this study had 24 items scored on a four-point scale ranging from 'hardly ever' (1) to 'quite often' (4). Each participant was given a total score, ranging from 24 to 96.

2.5. Data analysis

In order to analyze the data, SPSS statistical software was utilized. To examine the perceptions of the working conditions in each type of university, descriptive statistics for the means and standard deviations on the working conditions items in the questionnaire were obtained. To identify the differences among SUEPPI and PUEPPI in terms of teacher burnout and participation in professional learning activities, Independent samples t-test, and Mann-Whitney U test, (the non-parametric version of the independent samples t-test for non-normally distributed variables) was conducted (Field & Hole, 2003; Huck, 2004). The alpha level was adjusted at .01 for each analysis (Huck, 2004). The normality and homogeneity of variance assumptions of the independent samples t-test were checked via Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and Levene's test, respectively. Finally, the relationship between teacher burnout and PPLA was explored through a Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. To find the amount of shared variance, the coefficient of determination was also calculated for this question.

3. Results

3.1. Workplace conditions in state vs. private universities

Our first research question, which stated “What are the perceived qualities of the working conditions of State University English Preparatory Program Instructors (SUEPPI) and Private University English Preparatory Program Instructors (PUEPPI)?” investigated the possible similarities and differences in terms of the working conditions in state and private universities as perceived by these English instructors. Our main questionnaire explored these similarities and differences through a variety of multiple-choice questions. Table 2 below presents the means and standard deviations of these conditions as perceived by the instructors who participated in our questionnaire.

Table 2. Means and standard deviations of reported working conditions of SUEPPI and PUEPPI

	Groups		PUEPPI		MPS*
	SUEPPI M	SD	M	SD	
Teaching load per week (<i>1=5-10 hrs, 6=over 30 hrs</i>)	2.44	.77	3.42	1.08	6
Total workload per week (<i>1=5-10 hrs, 6=over 30 hrs</i>)	2.90	.78	5.20	.94	6
Perceptions of monthly income (<i>1=very low, 5=very high</i>)	2.10	.80	2.55	.64	5
Perceptions of relationship (<i>1=quite negative, 5=quite positive</i>)					
- between instructors & directors	3.56	.91	3.87	.90	5
- btw directors & students	3.58	.80	3.89	.72	5
- among instructors	3.86	.78	4.07	.82	5
- between instructors & students	3.72	.70	3.80	.77	5
Perceptions of professional relationship among instructors (<i>1=competitive, 2=collaborative, 3=not sure</i>)	2.20	.50	2.20	.42	3
Perceptions of general behavior of students (<i>1=quite undisciplined, disrespectful and uncontrolled, 5=quite disciplined, respectful and controlled</i>)	3.25	.79	3.20	.77	5
Technical facilities provided for instructors (<i>1=quite insufficient, 5=quite sufficient</i>)	2.10	.81	2.92	1.26	5
Social facilities provided for instructors (<i>1=quite insufficient, 5=quite sufficient</i>)	1.77	.74	2.45	1.25	5
Professional activities provided for instructors (<i>1=not frequent and underqualified, 4=frequent and qualified</i>)	2.04	.93	2.49	1.14	4
Perceived general stress in the working environment (<i>1=quite relaxed, 5=quite stressful</i>)	2.63	.76	3.04	1.01	5

*Maximum possible score on the item

Looking at the table above, with the exception of the perception of the professional relationship among instructors at school, SUEPPI and PUEPPI differ in their perceptions to some extent. SUEPPI perceive to be paid lower but teach fewer hours and work for less number of hours per week compared to PUEPPI. SUEPPI seem to spend around 10-20 hours at school mostly teaching, whereas PUEPPI's

workload extend beyond teaching, as they reported that their perceived workload is 30 hours or more per week. This may show that PUEPPI might have additional duties at school other than teaching. In terms of the relationships among people at school and the perception of the students' general behaviour patterns, the mean differences between the groups are relatively low. However, these differences seem to be relatively more for the last four items of the questionnaire, suggesting that the technical and social facilities provided for the instructors are perceived to be more sufficient at private universities. The professional development activities provided or designed for the instructors at private universities are also perceived to be more frequent and of higher quality than the ones perceived by the instructors at state universities. Overall, these descriptive statistics inform that working conditions at the private universities as perceived by the instructors may be more conducive to professional development opportunities as the instructors are provided with more technical and social facilities, and have a chance to spend more time in their professional environments engaging in not only teaching but also in other professional activities.

3.2. Burnout and participation in professional learning activities in state vs. private university instructors

Our second research question investigated if there is a significant difference between the State university English Preparatory Program Instructors (SUEPPI) and Private University instructors (PUEPPI) in terms of teacher burnout and their participation in professional learning activities (PPLA). The means and standard deviations among both groups in terms of these variables are presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Means and standard deviations of SUEPPI and PUEPPI on EE, DP, PA and PLA

	Groups									
	SUEPPI				PUEPPI				MPS*	
	M	SD	Min.	Max.	M	SD	Min.	Max		
EE	20.33	10.44	3	54	18.74	10.37	0	46	54	
DP	5.08	5.09	0	24	4.83	4.92	0	24	30	
PA	33.61	7.48	14	48	36.73	6.71	19	48	48	
PLA	58.78	9.21	41	80	65.74	10.44	47	92	96	

*Maximum possible score on the item

As can be seen above, feelings of emotional exhaustion (EE) and depersonalization (DP) were higher among SUEPPI compared to PUEPPI. Also, state university instructors felt lower sense of personal accomplishment (PA) and participated in professional learning activities (PPLA) less than the private university instructors. In order to understand if these observations are statistically significant or not, an independent samples t-test was conducted for the PA variable, as it was normally distributed in our data, and Mann-Whitney U test was conducted for EE, DP, and PPLA, as these variables were not normally distributed. Table 4 below shows the results obtained through the independent samples t-test for the difference between SUEPPI and PUEPPI in terms of personal accomplishment.

Table 4. T-test results for the difference between SUEPPI and PUEPPI in terms of personal accomplishment

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. 2-tailed
Total PA	Equal variances	2.607	.108	-3.007	219	.003

Score	assumed			
	Equal variances	-2.902	140.576	.004
	not assumed			

Levene’s test for equality of variances indicates that the two groups are homogeneous in terms of PA ($F=2,607$; $p>.01$). The t-test reveals that private university instructors, PUEPPI ($M=36.73$, $SD=6.71$) feel significantly more accomplished than state university instructors, SUEPPI, ($M=33.61$, $SD=7.48$) do, $t_{219} = 3,007$, $p <.01$, $r = .19$. In addition, according to the Mann-Whitney U test conducted for EE, DP and PLA, SUEPPI ($Mdn=19$) did not differ from PUEPPI ($Mdn=17$) in terms of emotional exhaustion ($U = 5116,5$, ns). Similarly, there was no significant difference between SUEPPI ($Mdn=4$) and PUEPPI ($Mdn=3$) as regards to depersonalization ($U = 5514$, ns , $z = -.31$). However, the two groups, SUEPPI ($Mdn=58$) and PUEPPI ($Mdn=65$), significantly differed in terms of their participation in professional learning activities ($U = 3552$, $z = -4,45$, $p<.001$), suggesting that private university instructors participated in professional learning activities significantly more than the state university instructors.

Overall, the results of the independent samples t-test and the Mann-Whitney U test support that private university instructors (PUEPPI) not only felt significantly more personally accomplished but also participated in professional learning activities significantly more than state university instructors(SUEPPI), and these two groups did not significantly differ from each other in terms of emotional exhaustion or depersonalization.

3.3. Relationship between teacher burnout and participation in professional learning activities

Our final research question explored whether or not a relationship existed between the dimensions of burnout (EE, DP, PA) and participation in professional learning activities (PPLA) in this sample, as it stated “Is there a relationship between participation in professional learning activities (PPLA) and teacher burnout on the basis of a sample of State University English Preparatory Program Instructors (SUEPPI) and Private University English Preparatory Program Instructors (PUEPPI)?” Table 5 below displays the intercorrelation matrix for these variables, obtained through a calculation of Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient.

Table 5. Correlations between the dimensions of teacher burnout and teachers’ participation in professional learning activities

	1	2	3	4
1. Emotional Exhaustion (EE)z	1.00	.55*	-.37**	-.13*
2. Depersonalization (DP)		1.00	-.34**	-.14*
3. Personal Accomplishment (PA)			1.00	.37**
4. Participation in Professional Learning Acts. (PPLA)				1.00

*Correlation is significant at the .05 level 2-tailed.

**Correlation is significant at the .01 level 2-tailed.

As the table above suggests, a weak negative correlation was found between EE and PLA ($r = -.13$), and between DP and PLA ($r = -.14$). To find the shared variance between these pairs, coefficients of determination were calculated. The results were negligible ($r^2 = .01$). However, instructors’ personal accomplishment (PA) is found to be positively correlated with their levels of participation in professional learning activities (PPLA) ($r = .37$, $p<.01$). This suggests that as the instructors’ PPLA increases, their personal accomplishment (PA) also increases. Additionally, according to our calculation of coefficients of determination, PPLA and PA have 13% shared variance ($r = .13$),

meaning that 13% of the variability in these instructors' sense of personal accomplishment can be explained by their participation in professional learning activities.

4. Discussion

The findings of this study revealed that Turkish EFL instructors working at state universities had significantly lower sense of personal accomplishment, and they participated in professional learning activities less than their colleagues working at private universities. As the relationship between instructors' sense of personal accomplishment and their participation in professional learning activities was significant, providing instructors with more professional learning opportunities and creating more supportive and professional learning environments in schools could contribute to instructors' increased sense of personal accomplishment.

Our findings also support previous literature in the sense that work environment is an important factor on burnout (Pietarinen, Pyhältö, Soini & Salmela-Aro, 2013). They acknowledge the role of supportive school environment –where there is a sense of community and professionalism- on reducing the likelihood of burnout as was argued by Friedman (1999). In accordance with Leithwood et al.'s (1999) findings, we also found that sufficient resources influence teachers' sense of personal accomplishment positively.

Moreover, in this study, the overall difference in working conditions (state vs. private) only predicted personal accomplishment and not the other two dimensions. This supports the argument that each dimension of burnout must be modeled as separate constructs as the predictors of these dimensions could be different from each other (Byrne, 1999, Schaufeli & Salanova, 2007, Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010, 2014). According to Maslach and Leiter (1999), while emotional exhaustion and depersonalization develop in a sequential order, personal accomplishment develops separately because it is more linked to different factors in the working environment (Leiter, 1993).

Finally, the results of this study indicated a significant positive correlation between personal accomplishment and participation in professional learning activities, with a 13% shared variance. That is, as instructors participate more in professional learning activities, their sense of personal accomplishment increases; and vice versa. Therefore, encouragement and support for professional learning activities could contribute to efforts in alleviating teacher burnout.

5. Conclusions

There are a few implications of this study for teacher burnout and professional development not only for English language instructors, but also for the teachers in general. First of all, it is apparent that collegial and collaborative school environment where teachers or instructors are encouraged for professional learning contributes to teachers' better perceptions of their work environment and personal accomplishment. As our findings suggest, increasing the qualities of the work environment towards those that are conducive to professional learning and development, as well as providing incentives for participation in professional learning activities would likely increase teachers' professional development and personal accomplishment, leading to decreased levels of burnout. Therefore, to reduce feelings of burnout, teachers should be encouraged to take part in such professional learning activities such as reading professional journals, participating and presenting in conferences, and even pursuing a higher degree in their area.

A final implication for the alleviation of burnout relates to building a sense of community in the workplace (Kinman, Wray & Strange, 2011). As our findings also suggest, teachers not only feel more belonged and perceive more support from their colleagues, but also are more willing to show such support and care to their colleagues when they feel a sense of community in their workplaces. Such sense of community could be built by providing teachers more opportunities where they interact not only professionally but also socially. Organizing social gatherings where teachers have a chance to get to know each other personally is one way to achieve this purpose. Also simple considerations such as creating shared spaces among instructors that will help them engage in small casual talk and not feel isolated during the day is another way to plant the seeds of such a sense of community.

The target population of the present study was a sample of 224 Turkish EFL instructors working at university English preparatory programs in Istanbul. Therefore, the results of the study can only be generalized to this group of instructors and findings should be interpreted accordingly.

Further studies on teacher burnout could consider longitudinal designs for a broader understanding of the phenomenon. When such a study is conducted at different time intervals over a year, it would provide insights into if time of the semester would be a factor in the increased or decreased feelings of burnout among teachers. The inconsistency of the results in burnout studies may indicate that burnout levels change, and cross-sectional studies would only present a limited picture of the phenomenon. In this sense, surveys should also be complemented with qualitative data for a deeper understanding of burnout.

Finally, we recommend that more qualitative studies be conducted to understand the burnout phenomenon at deeper levels as to the lived experiences of teachers coping with burnout. Such in-depth longitudinal qualitative studies could help us gain deeper insights into not only the complex nature of burnout phenomenon, going beyond the predictors of it, but also how it develops over time, how it is perceived by teachers, and what strategies help ameliorate it. Such information would further help administrators in developing concrete ways to support their teaching staff rather than marginalizing them as burned-out teachers.

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Appendix A. The questionnaire-English version

Dear Colleague,

The aim of this questionnaire is to investigate some problems with regards to teaching at University English Preparatory Programs in Istanbul. It is important that you give correct and sincere answers in order for the study to achieve its aim and for the working conditions of the Turkish EFL instructors working at University English Preparatory Programs to be better recognized.

This questionnaire has 3 parts. It takes 15-20 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

Thank you very much for contributing to this study by filling out this questionnaire.

PART 1:

1. Your gender:
 - a. Female
 - b. Male
2. Your age:
 - a. 23-30
 - b. 31-35
 - c. 36-40
 - d. Over 40
3. Marital Status:
 - a. Married
 - b. Single
 - c. Other:
4. Do you have any academic degree diploma, certificate, DELTA, CELTA, MA, PhD, etc.?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. If yes, specify:.....
5. How long have you been teaching?
 - a. 0-5 years
 - b. 6-10 years
 - c. 11-15 years
 - d. 16-20 years
 - e. Over 20 years
6. How long have you been teaching at your current university?
 - a. 0-5 years
 - b. 6-10 years

- c. 11-15 years
 - d. 16-20 years
 - e. Over 20 years
7. Your current university is a :
- a. State university
 - b. Private university
8. How many hours a week do you **teach** at school?
- a. 5-10
 - b. 11-15
 - c. 16-20
 - d. 21-25
 - e. 26 and 30
 - f. Over 30
9. How many hours a week do you **work** at school teaching + office hours + meetings etc. total amount of time that you **have to** spend at school?
- a. 5-10
 - b. 11-15
 - c. 16-20
 - d. 21-25
 - e. 26-30
 - f. Over 30
10. To which English proficiency level are you teaching? Please consider your students' English proficiency level at the time you start teaching to them. You can circle more than one choice if you are teaching to different levels at the same time.
- a. Beginner
 - b. Pre-Intermediate
 - c. Intermediate
 - d. Upper-Intermediate
 - e. Advanced
11. If you were asked, to which English proficiency level would you prefer to teach the next term?
- a. Beginner
 - b. Pre-Intermediate
 - c. Intermediate
 - d. Upper-Intermediate
 - e. Advanced
 - f. Does not matter
12. Do you work in any of the offices at your department Materials Development Office, Testing Office, Curriculum Development Office, etc.?
- a. Yes
 - b. No

13. In your opinion, your total monthly income plus the other family members' income is:
 - a. Very low
 - b. Low
 - c. Enough
 - d. High
 - e. Very high
14. In your opinion, the relationship between the administrators and instructors at your school at the preparatory program is:
 - a. Quite negative
 - b. Negative
 - c. Partly positive
 - d. Positive
 - e. Quite positive
15. In your opinion, the relationship between the administrators and students at your school is:
 - a. Quite negative
 - b. Negative
 - c. Partly positive
 - d. Positive
 - e. Quite positive
16. In your opinion, the relationship among the instructors at your school is:
 - a. Quite negative
 - b. Negative
 - c. Partly positive
 - d. Positive
 - e. Quite positive
17. In your opinion, the **professional** relationship among the instructors at your school is:
 - a. Mostly competitive
 - b. Mostly collaborative
 - c. Not sure
18. In your opinion, the relationship between the instructors and students at your school is:
 - a. Quite negative
 - b. Negative
 - c. Partly positive
 - d. Positive
 - e. Quite positive
19. How would you define the general student behavior at your school?
 - a. Quite undisciplined, disrespectful and uncontrolled
 - b. Undisciplined, disrespectful and uncontrolled
 - c. Partly disciplined, partly respectful and partly controlled
 - d. Disciplined, respectful and controlled

- e. Quite disciplined, respectful and controlled
20. In your opinion, the technical facilities computers, internet, video, DVD, OHP, photocopy, etc. at your school provided for the instructors are:
- Quite insufficient
 - Insufficient
 - Partly sufficient
 - Sufficient
 - Quite sufficient
21. In your opinion, the social facilities sports facilities, social activities, etc. at your school provided for the instructors are :
- Quite insufficient
 - Insufficient
 - Partly sufficient
 - Sufficient
 - Quite sufficient
22. The professional development activities designed for the instructors at your school are:
- Not frequent and underqualified
 - Frequent but underqualified
 - Not frequent but qualified
 - Frequent and qualified
23. The professional development activities designed for the instructors at your school are:
- Always compulsory
 - Usually compulsory
 - Usually optional
 - Always optional
24. In your opinion, your work environment is generally:
- Quite relaxed
 - Relaxed
 - Partly stressful
 - Stressful
 - Quite stressful
25. Do you think of leaving your current school within the next two years?
- Yes
 - No
 - Not sure

If your answer is yes, please answer the questions **26 and 27**; if it is **no**, you can go on with **Part 2**.

26. What are your reasons for leaving your current school? You can circle more than one choice below.
- Economic reasons
 - Academic/professional reasons
 - Retirement

- d. Other:
27. Do you plan to work at another university after you leave?
- a. Yes, I will work in a private university.
 - b. Yes, I will work in a state university.
 - c. No, I won't work in another university.
 - d. Not sure

PART 2:

Please indicate **how often you feel** the way the following items suggested, by putting the most suitable number on the spaces provided next to each item.

0	1	2	3
Never	A few times a year or less	Monthly or less	A few times a month
4	5	6	
Every week	A few times a week	Every day	

1.I feel emotionally drained from my work.
2.I feel used up at the end of the workday.
3.I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning.
4.I can easily understand how my students feel about things.
5.I feel I treat some students as if they were impersonal "objects".
6.Working with people all day is really a strain for me.
7.I deal very effectively with the problems of my students.
8.I feel burned out from my work.
9.I feel I'm positively influencing other people's lives through my work.
10.I've become more callous toward people since I took this job.
11.I worry that this job is hardening me emotionally.
12.I feel very energetic.
13.I feel frustrated by my job.
14.I feel I am working too hard on my job.
15.I don't really care what happens to some students.
16.Working with people directly puts too much stress on me.
17.I can easily create a relaxed atmosphere with my students.
18.I feel exhilarated after working closely with my students.
19.I have accomplished many worthwhile things in this job.
20.I feel like I'm at the end of my rope.
21.In my work, I deal with emotional problems very calmly.

22.I feel my students blame me for some of their problems.

PART 3:

Please indicate how often you perform the activities below by putting a sign under the relevant number.

1 = Hardly ever 2 = Sometimes 3 = Often 4 = Quite often

	1	2	3	4
1. Collegial classroom observation				
2. Preparing lessons with colleagues				
3. Asking pupils feedback				
4.Using colleagues' materials in own lessons				
5.Supporting colleagues' in teaching problems				
6.Giving opinion to school management				
7.Reading professional journals				
8.Sharing ideas about pupil counseling				
9.Joining a committee at the school				
10.Experimenting with new teaching methods				
11.Sharing ideas about educational improvement				
12.Talking about teaching problems with colleagues				
13.Adapting way of teaching to pupils' needs				
14.Sharing way of teaching with colleagues				
15. Reflecting individually on a lesson				
16. Constructing lesson materials				
17. Sharing ideas about education with colleagues				
18. Studying teaching manuals				
19. Studying subject matter literature				
20. Helping students learn study skills				
21. Participating in conferences on the subject matter				
22. Participating in workshops/ seminars/ meetings organized at the school				
23. Keeping a teaching journal / diary				
24. Keeping a collaborative journal with colleagues (Sharing your journal with colleagues)				

Öğretmenlerde Tükenmişlik ve Mesleki Öğrenme Etkinliklerine Katılım: Türkiye'deki İngilizce Okutmanlarından Perspektifler

Öz

Son yıllarda öğretmenlerde tükenmişlik konusu, nedenleri, etkileri ve iyileştirilmesi yönlerinden öğretmen eğitimi alanında çalışan araştırmacıların ilgisini çekmiştir. Tükenmişlik yeni bir fenomen olmamasına rağmen, Türkiye'de öğretmenlerde tükenmişlik konusundaki araştırmalar oldukça yenidir. Bu çalışmada, görece üzerinde daha az araştırma yapılmış bir grup olan, Türkiye'de üniversitelerin İngilizce hazırlık birimlerinde görev yapan İngilizce okutmanlarının tükenmişlik düzeyleri ve mesleki öğrenme etkinliklerine katılımlarını inceledik. Nicel veri Maslach Eğitimciler için Tükenmişlik ölçeğinin de aralarında bulunduğu üç bölümden oluşan bir anket aracılığıyla İstanbul'da çalışmakta olan 224 yerli (Türkiye uyruklu) hazırlık okutmanından toplanmıştır. Bulgular, devlet üniversitesi ve özel üniversite İngilizce hazırlık okutmanları arasında kişisel başarı hissi ve mesleki öğrenme etkinliklerine katılım arasında anlamlı farklılıklar olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. Sonuçlara göre, devlet üniversitesi İngilizce hazırlık okutmanları, özel üniversite İngilizce hazırlık okutmanlarından daha az kişisel başarı hissetmekte ve mesleki öğrenme etkinliklerine onlar kadar sık katılmamaktadırlar. Ayrıca sonuçlar katılımcıların kişisel başarı hissini, mesleki öğrenme etkinliklerine katılımıyla ilişkili olduğunu göstermiştir.

Anahtar sözcükler: öğretmenlerde tükenmişlik, mesleki öğrenme, mesleki gelişim, öğretmen eğitimi, özel üniversite, devlet üniversitesi

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