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Iranian Journal of Language Teaching Research

Urmia University

Professional self-esteem as a predictor of teacher burnout across Iranian and Turkish EFL teachers

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed at measuring the perceived Professional Self-esteem, Emotional Exhaustion (EE), Depersonalization (DP), and Personal Accomplishment (PA) of Iranian (n = 230) and Turkish (n =156) EFL teachers and determining the prediction role of Professional Self-esteem in EE, DP, and PA processes. The Maslach Burnout Inventory-Educators Survey (MBI-ES) was used to measure the perceived burnout levels of the participants, and a shortened English version of Professional Self-esteem Scale developed by Aricak (1999) was employed to measure the participants' self-esteem perceptions in five dimensions of *satisfaction*, *knowledge development*, *commitment*, *adaptation* and *communication*. The internal reliability of the professional self-esteem scale was r = 0.821. The results revealed that professional self-esteem was strongly correlated with EE, DP, and PA burnout. They also showed that EE, DP, and PA processes were better predicted by Satisfaction, Commitment, and Knowledge Development dimensions of Professional Self-esteem in the case of both Iranian and Turkish teachers, respectively. Moreover, the EE and PA prediction variances of Iranian group were greater than that of Turkish group, whereas the DP prediction variance of Turkish group was greater than that of Iranian group. The study highlights the significance of professional self-esteem in education and offers strategies for teachers and authorities to combat burnout for better teacher productivity.

Keywords: Teacher Burnout; Professional Self-esteem; Maslach Burnout Inventory; EFL Teachers; Iran; Turkey

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received: 30 Mar. 2016 **Revised version received:** 31 July 2016

Accepted: 18 Dec. 2016 **Available online:** 1 Jan. 2017

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10.30466/ijltr.2017.20345

Introduction

Burnout is a reaction to chronic occupational stressful conditions and results in emotional depletion, motivational loss and commitment reduction (Maslach & Leiter, 2008; Maslach, Leiter, & Jackson, 2012). Maslach and Jackson (1981) defined burnout as "a syndrome of emotional exhaustion and cynicism that occurs frequently among individuals who do 'people-work' of some kind" (p. 99). They put forward the most widely accepted conceptualization of burnout that has three dimensions: *Emotional exhaustion* (EE) describing feelings of being emotionally overextended and exhausted by one's work, *depersonalization* (DP) defining an unfeeling and impersonal response towards recipients of one's care or service, and *personal accomplishment* (PA) referring to feelings of competence and successful achievement in one's work with people (Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001).

Burnout evolves primarily in individuals who work in human services occupations and is generally related to individual characteristics and situational factors. The individual perspective views burnout as a problem residing entirely within an individual and attributes its causes to the inability of the individual to cope with job stressors, whereas the situational perspective conceptualizes burnout as a form of role-specific alienation and looks for its causes in the situational conditions under which the individual works (Dworkin, 2001; Dworkin, Saha, & Hill, 2003; Maslach & Leiter, 1997).

In the educational area, burnout studies have found data that still stir concern and justify the need to continue research. First, burnout can certainly cause considerable economic costs to employees and employers (Leiter & Maslach, 2005). Second, the teaching profession is one of the most visible professions in any society, and teacher burnout has an alarming effect on teaching quality, student achievement, school climate, and social welfare. Third, there are a lot of studies (Botha, 2006; Feinberg, 2002; Maslach & Leiter, 1997; Sadeghi & Khezrlou, 2016; Soodmand Afshar & Doosti, 2016; Villa & Calvete, 2001) showing that teachers are dissatisfied with their profession because of job stressors, whose consequences are manifested in different types: Physical problems (such as heart diseases, diabetes, high blood pressure, headaches, and respiratory problems), psychological disorders (such as anxiety, depression and frustration), and behavioural changes (such as violence, smoking, alcohol and drug abuse). Taking these reasons into account, the researcher thinks burnout research has the potential to contribute to our understanding of the consequences of chronic stress in the workplace.

Additionally, there is not any study comparatively to focus on teacher burnout and its preventative measures among Iranian and Turkish EFL teachers. Given the fact that all teachers usually experience some level of burnout in their teaching career, EFL teachers are expected to experience more than that of teachers of other subjects, especially in developing countries where notable attention should be paid to educational environments to increase the quality of ELT. According to Khezerlou (2012), 60 per cent of Iranian and 74.4 per cent of Turkish secondary EFL teachers had experienced moderate level of burnout. Finally, our research method provides a new framework for studying teacher burnout. However, the study tries to measure the pervasiveness of perceived teacher burnout and professional self-esteem among Iranian and Turkish secondary EFL teachers, determine the predictors of EE, DP, and PA processes, and examine the burnout processes of Turkish and Iranian teachers for potential similarities and differences. In short, it is hoped that the present study will shed more light on educational issues in ELT contexts and generate more useful information about teacher burnout problems and solutions.

Literature review

Burnout and teacher burnout

The concept of burnout first was coined by Freudenberger (1974), an American psychiatrist, during the 1970's to describe emotions of depletion and loss of motivation and commitment among human service workers who had experienced prolonged and extensive stress in their workplace (Maslach & Leiter, 1997; Maslach et al., 2001). In fact, he tried to characterize his own experience of emotional depletion and loss of motivation and the demoralized situations of health workers caring for drug addicts. In his search for possible reasons, he observed that burned-out workers attributed an inordinate sense of importance to their work, thus, working too hard and caring too much. When they had difficulties in fulfilling their roles due to sever demanding situations, they were subjected to burnout (Byrne, 1999). Based on his observations, Freudenberger (1974) viewed burnout from the perspective of an individual and characterized it as one's lack of enough resources to cope with work demands: "A situation in which one loses an idea- the incentive that motivates the person" (p. 160).

The concept was further popularized in social sciences in the writings of Maslach (1976), an American social psychologist, who described the phenomenon from the perspective of a situation rather than that of an individual. In her view, the cause of burnout should primarily be sought in the situational conditions under which an individual works, and it occurs when individuals feel emotionally drained by their work environment and feel that their activities result in no benefit to those they had intended to help. Thus, they lose their feelings of accomplishment and come to blame their clients or themselves for failing to improve (Maslach & Leiter, 1997). Based on the pioneering work of Freudenberger (1974), Maslach (1999) "conceptualized burnout as an individual stress experience that is embedded in a context of social relationships, and thus involves the person's conception of both self and others" (p. 215).

In their attempt to clarify the parameters of the burnout phenomenon, Maslach and Jackson (1981) characterized the term so as to capture the overall state brought about by the compound effects of (a) a sense of being emotionally, mentally and physically drained, (b) a detachment from clients, often accompanied by negative or callous attitudes, and (c) a perceived or experienced lack of accomplishment and diminished productivity accompanied by feelings of incompetence. On the basis of these features they construed burnout as a psychological syndrome that has three dimensions: Emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment (Maslach & Leiter, 1997; Maslach et al., 2001).

In the same vein, teacher burnout refers to a decline in well-being caused by long term stress in the work environment. In psychological models, teacher burnout has been described as the perception of an imbalance between work demands and resources. "When those coping mechanisms fail to stem the demands, stress increases and threatens the teachers' mental and physical well-being ultimately leading teachers to quitting or burning out" (Haberman, 2004, p. 1). The social-psychological models of teacher burnout, on the other hand, focus on the role of situational factors leading teachers to burnout (Brenninkmeijer, VanYperen, & Buunk, 2001). This perspective has generally been characterized based on the social-psychological burnout model of Maslach and Jackson (1981), which includes three dimensions of *emotional exhaustion*, *depersonalization*, and *reduced personal accomplishment*.

The first dimension is characterized by feelings of being emotionally exhausted with one's work when one experiences a depletion of emotional resources. Emotionally exhausted teachers experience increased levels of negative emotions during teaching and feel that they have put all of

their energy into the teaching task and have finally run out of resources (Fivesa, Hammana, & Olivarez, 2007). The second dimension, depersonalization, involves a dehumanized and impersonal view of others. In teacher burnout, depersonalization occurs when the teacher develops negative feelings and cynical attitudes towards his/her students and perhaps even the school community, and accordingly less interacts with them. The final dimension suggests a loss of self-competence on the job and dissatisfaction with one's achievements. Teachers in a state of burnout may evaluate their accomplishments at work negatively, may provide significantly less information, may feel they are no longer doing a meaningful and important job, and may be no longer happy with teaching as a profession (Brenninkmeijer et al., 2001; Fivesa et al., 2007). The results of the emotional exhaustion, negative feelings to others, and negative self-evaluation are a sense of personal distress, a feeling of demoralization, dissatisfaction with one's work, poor performance on the job, poor health, family problems, intention to quit one's job, and failure in life (Brenninkmeijer et al., 2001; Fivesa et al., 2007).

Symptoms of teacher burnout

Burnout is not always easy to distinguish initially because it is a gradual process, yet eventual symptoms are recognizable. According to Feinberg (2002), some of its symptoms include "overwhelming fatigue, inability to express yourself clearly, sleep disturbances, inability to make decisions, loss of objectivity, irritability leading to anger, cynicism, depression, suicidal thoughts, pessimism, fear, feeling ineffective, personal identification with victims, brusqueness, and insensitivity" (p. 9). To categorize symptoms of Burnout, Schaufeli and Enzmann (1998) also examined the works of various scholars such as Freudenberger (1974), Burisch (1993), and Cordes and Dougherty (1993) and compiled a list of 132 symptoms associated with Burnout. They categorized the list into five clusters including: Affective, cognitive, physical, behavioural, and motivational. Finally, Botha (2006) characterized burnout by an assortment of psychological (cognitive and affective), physical and behavioural symptoms.

Sources of teacher burnout

Burnout is generally perceived to develop over time through many different causes. In fact, it can be argued that anything to which our stress mechanisms respond inappropriately may result in burnout (Maslach et al. 2012). It is usually postulated that burnout involves the contribution of factors that are either internal or external to an individual. For instance, Maslach et al. (2001) claim that burnout is the result of a lack of fit between work demands and resources and assert a burnout model including both internal and external resources.

Although the burnout model of Maslach et al. (2001) includes both internal and external resources to an individual, they put more emphasis on external sources. That is, they indicate that the primary sources of burnout do not reside in individuals, but in situational conditions or organizational factors such as workload, lack of social support, unfairness, bureaucracy, unsuitable policies and procedures, lack of role or responsibility clarity, and confusing goals. Moreover, Byrne (1999) identifies three categories of factors that have a bearing on burnout: Background (such as gender, age, grade level, and years of experience), personality (features that are unique to an individual), and organizational factors (which relate to an organization). However, the study tries to capture the notion of burnout in individual or personal characteristics: Those factors that are unique to an individual in the workplace such as attitudes, talents, interests, personality, self-esteem, physical appearance, and interaction with the environment (Allik & McCrae, 2004).

Professional self-esteem and teacher burnout

Self-esteem is generally defined as a global self-evaluation. It indicates the extent to which an individual believes the self to be capable, significant, successful and worthy. Psychologically, it is a state of mind that prepares the person to respond according to expectations of success, acceptance, and personal strength (Leary & McDonald, 2003). This view of self-esteem is known as the global self-esteem which is usually measured by Rosenberg's self-esteem scale (Rosenberg, 1965). It is often contrasted with more specific or domain-related self-esteem such as physical appearance self-esteem, academic self-esteem, and social self-esteem. Professional self-esteem as a domain-related self-esteem describes the importance and value one attaches to one's profession and is related to professional adaptation and satisfaction (Aricak & Dilmac, 2003; Koc, 1994).

Whether self-esteem is considered from a global or domain-related perspective, it has been argued that individuals with low self-esteem are emotionally more vulnerable and interact less adequately with others in their workplace. For example, Rosse, Boss, Johnson, and Crown (1991) posit that individuals with low self-esteem tend to be less effective in interpersonal relationships and may be predisposed both to depersonalize people and to experience feelings of incompetence in their relationships with others. Furthermore, they may have fewer resources to help them cope with these feelings and stressors that produce burnout. Finally, individuals with low self-esteem tend to be extremely dependent on others for validation, thus, making them particularly vulnerable in the emotionally charged environments that are characteristic of burnout. Therefore, people with low morale and low self-esteem are more susceptible to burnout (Roloff & Brown, 2011).

Perception of high self-esteem, on the other hand, has been associated with positive characteristics such as initiative, strong coping skills, feelings of confidence, feeling of worthiness, persistence in the face of challenges, feeling of positive regard about oneself, feeling of happiness, and longevity (Baumeister, Campbell, Krueger, & Vohs, 2003). People with high self-esteem feel good about themselves, feel a sense of belonging and security, and respect and appreciate others. They also tend to be successful in life because they feel confident in taking on challenges and risking failure to achieve what they want. Moreover, they have more energy for positive pursuits (Janssen, Schaufeli, & Houkes, 1999). In this regard, Hobfoll and Freedy (1993) argue that individuals with high self-esteem are expected to be 'less shaken' by job stressors and accompanying consequences. Similarly, Maslach (1993) highlights the importance of self-esteem in burnout by pointing out that the occurrence of burnout involves a process of self-evaluation and self-conceptualization.

There also exists some evidence that self-esteem is related to burnout. In their study of self-esteem among police officers (n = 1,163) and hospital employees (n = 494), Rosse et al. (1991) reported significant correlations between self-esteem and all three burnout dimensions (EE ► r= 2 .43, DP ► r= 2 .31, and PA ► r= 2 .42). Similar results had also been reported by Golembiewski and Kim (1989) who had found that self-esteem acts both as an antecedent and as an effect of burnout. Furthermore, Villa and Calvete (2001) studied self-concept in relation to burnout among secondary school teachers (n =278). The results of their study showed that teachers with positive self-concept believed that they were able to influence student performance and experienced lower level of burnout, while teachers with negative self-concept were found to perceive dissatisfaction with their job. Moreover, Cowin (2001) found that low self-concept among nurses implicated in high stress, increased burnout, attrition, and low professional status. Finally, Zamanirad and Rohany (2010) examined the relationship between burnout and self-concept among Iranian prospective teaches and found a significant relationship between them.

These studies indicate the significance of self-esteem in burnout, and they also suggest the importance of rebuilding self-esteem as part of the rehabilitation of burned-out employees. Thus, the study tries to explore whether EFL teachers' evaluation of their profession would relate to their

EE, DP, and PA burnout processes. To this end, a shortened English version of Professional Self-esteem Scale developed by Aricak (1999) was used to measure the participants' self-esteem perceptions in five dimensions of (a) satisfaction, (b) knowledge development, (c) commitment, (d) adaptation, and (e) communication. Hence, the study aims at answering the following research questions:

1. Is there any significant relationship between the professional self-esteem perceptions of Iranian and Turkish EFL teachers and their EE, DP and PA burnout levels?

2. How well do the dimensions of professional self-esteem (i.e., satisfaction, knowledge development, commitment, adaptation, and communication) predict the EE, DP, and PA processes of Iranian and Turkish teachers?

3. To what extent do the professional self-esteem's dimensions account for the prediction variance of EE, DP, and PA burnout of Iranian and Turkish teachers?

Methodology

Participants

The participants of study were Iranian and Turkish secondary EFL teachers in state schools during the 2011-2012 academic year. Collectively there were 124 high schools in the study (Iranian $n = 68$ and Turkish $n = 53$) in which approximately 677 teachers had been employed. A total of 583 anonymous questionnaires (representing 86.11% of the population) were sent to all teachers in the randomly selected schools. On the whole, 427 questionnaires were returned, of which 386 questionnaires (Iranian $n = 230$ and Turkish $n = 156$) were included in the study, while 41 ones were excluded because of missing data.

Instruments

Three types of questionnaires were used in the study: (A) *A Socio-demographic Tool* was used to get the background information of the participants. (B) *The Maslach Burnout Inventory-Educators Survey (MBI-ES)* was employed to measure self-perceived burnout levels of EFL teachers in three dimensions of EE, DP and PA. It includes 22 items (EE = 9 items, DP = 5 items and PA = 8 items) asking the respondents how often they experience burnout-relating feelings through a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 0-6 (where 0 = never and 6 = every day). The EE subscale assesses the feelings of being emotionally exhausted or overextended (e.g., "I feel used up at the end of the workday"). The DP subscale evaluates the feelings of impersonal response toward people (e.g., "I feel I treat some students as if they were impersonal objects"). The PA subscale measures the feelings of successful achievement (e.g., "I feel very energetic"). High internal consistency (EE = 0.90; DP = 0.79; PA = 0.71) and test-retest reliability (EE = 0.82; DP = 0.60; PA = 0.80) were reported for the subscales by Maslach, Jackson, and Leiter, (1996). However, the obtained reliability estimates of the subscales in this study were EE ($r = 0.882$), DP ($r = 0.722$), and PA ($r = 0.745$).

(C) A shortened English version of Professional Self-esteem Scale (16 items) was adapted from Aricak (1999) to measure the participants' self-esteem perceptions in five dimensions of (a) *satisfaction* (positive regards of teachers to teaching and their work), (b) *knowledge development* (teachers' desire to develop skills necessary in their job), (c) *commitment* (a sense of preparing for the work and performing a qualified work), (d) *adaptation* (feeling of adapting oneself to work conditions), and (e) *communication* (teachers' desire to impart and share their knowledge, information, and experience to and with others). The original Professional Self-esteem Scale of Aricak (1999) is in Turkish and consists of 14 positively worded and 16 negatively worded items

based on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1-5 (where Strongly Agree=5, Agree= 4, Undecided=3, Disagree=2, and Strongly Disagree= 1). A Cronbach Alpha coefficient of r= 0.93 and a test-retest reliability coefficient of r= 0.90 were reported for the scale by Aricak (1999). However, following advice from experts at English department of Hacettepe University, some items were discarded and the total number of items (i.e., 30) was reduced to 24. Then, they were adapted to the goals of the study. Based on the feedback from the pilot study among 50 Iranian EFL teachers, the questionnaire was finally reduced to 16 items in five dimensions. The internal consistency reliability of the 16 items was r= 0.821, indicating a very high reliability index for the measure (see appendix).

Data collection and analysis procedures

Prior to collecting data, official permission was obtained from the educational ministries of Iran and Turkey. Web-based (n = 47) and paper-based (n =339) survey modes of collecting data were employed in the study, which was done between October 2011 and February 2012. The Iranian data were collected from North West provinces of East Azerbaijan, West Azerbaijan, Ardebil, Zanjan, Qazvin, and Tehran, whereas the Turkish data were mainly collected from four urban regions of Ankara (i.e., Mamak, Çankaya, Altındağ, and Balgat). Besides, some data were collected through Internet from Istanbul, Izmir, and Konya in Turkey. The collected data were entered into the SPSS version 17.0 for Windows for further analysis. Nationality and professional self-esteem were the independent variables of the study, while the three burnout levels (i.e., EE, DP, and PA) were the dependent variables. Inferential statistics, including Pearson correlation, ANOVA and multiple regressions, were used for determining burnout levels and explaining these processes across Iranian and Turkish Teachers.

Results

The following analyses were run in the study.

Professional self-esteem and burnout levels

To investigate the relationship between the teachers' burnout levels and their professional self-esteem perceptions, a Pearson Product-Moment correlation was run. The results indicated a strong negative correlation between the teachers' professional self-esteem perceptions and the burnout levels of EE (r= -0.427, p< 0.001) and DP (r= -0.530, p< 0.001). A strong positive correlation was also observed between the teachers' professional self-esteem perceptions and the burnout level of PA (r= 0.602, p< 0.001). See Table 1.

The correlation between the EE, DP and PA levels of Iranian and Turkish teachers and each dimension of professional self-esteem was also checked. As shown in table 1, there was no significant relationship between *EE* burnout and the *Communication* dimension (r= -0.074; p< 0.001), indicating that the teachers did not experience emotional exhaustion as a result of not imparting their knowledge and experience to the students.

Table 1
Correlation of Professional Self-esteem and its Dimensions and EE, DP and PA levels for Iranian and Turkish Groups

Subscales		Satisfaction	Development	Practice	Adaptation	Communication	Professional Self-esteem
EE	Pearson Correlation	-.582**	-.216**	-.347**	-.285**	-.074	-.427**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.145	.000
	N	386	386	386	386	386	386
DP	Pearson Correlation	-.331**	-.366**	-.467**	-.369**	-.335**	-.530**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	386	386	386	386	386	386
PA	Pearson Correlation	.398**	.524**	.498**	.356**	.338**	.602**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	386	386	386	386	386	386

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

Moreover, the correlation between the EE, DP and PA levels and professional self-esteem and its dimensions were examine for Iranian and Turkish teachers individually.

Table 2
Correlation of Professional Self-esteem and its Dimensions and EE, DP and PA levels for each Group

	Subscales		Satisfaction	Development	Practice	Adaptation	Communication	P. Self-esteem
Iranian	EE	Pearson Correlation	-.648**	-.292**	-.345**	-.355**	-.115	-.511**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.081	.000
		N	230	230	230	230	230	230
	DP	Pearson Correlation	-.275**	-.341**	-.442**	-.356**	-.323**	-.503**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
		N	230	230	230	230	230	230
	PA	Pearson Correlation	.417**	.511**	.509**	.341**	.294**	.603**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
		N	230	230	230	230	230	230
Turkish	EE	Pearson Correlation	-.525**	-.126	-.379**	-.218**	-.014	-.347**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.118	.000	.006	.860	.000
		N	156	156	156	156	156	156
	DP	Pearson Correlation	-.471**	-.426**	-.521**	-.419**	-.368**	-.604**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
		N	156	156	156	156	156	156
	PA	Pearson Correlation	.358**	.549**	.477**	.386**	.424**	.604**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
		N	156	156	156	156	156	156

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

As shown in table 2, EE burnout did not correlate significantly with the Communication dimension among both Iranian and Turkish groups (Iranian r= -0.115, p> 0.05; Turkish r= -0.014, p> 0.05). Furthermore, no statistically significant correlation was observed between EE burnout and the Development dimension among Turkish teachers (r= -0.126, p> 0.05), indicating that lack of interest to develop job skills did not lead them to emotional exhaustion.

Predictors of burnout processes

The results of multiple stepwise-method regression analyses for determining the role of the five dimensions of *Professional Self-esteem* in predicting EE burnout across Iranian and Turkish teachers revealed a significant linear relationship between EE and *Satisfaction* (t = -12.337; P = 0.000, P< 0.05) and *Adaptation* (t = -4.975; P = 0.000, P< 0.05) dimensions among Iranian participants and between EE and *Satisfaction* (t = -5.947; P = 0.000, P< 0.05), *Commitment* (t = -3.134; P = 0.000, P< 0.05) and *Communication* (t = 2.036; P = 0.043, P< 0.05) dimensions among Turkish participants. See Table 3.

Table 3
Predictors of EE Processes across Ir. & Tr. Groups

Subscales	**Ir.**				**Tr.**			
	Beta	**t**	**Sig.**	**R^2**	**Beta**	**t**	**Sig.**	**R^2**
1. Satisfaction	-.603	-12.337	.000	.350	-.439	-5.947	.000	.158
2. Knowledge Development	-.019	-.349	.727	-	.088	.892	.374	-
3. Commitment	-.017	-.301	.763	-	-.249	-3.134	.002	.044
4. Adaptation	-.243	-4.975	.000	.057	-.063	-.781	.436	-
5. Communication	.044	.863	.389	-	.148	2.036	.043	.019
All subscales	Total R^2 = .477				Total R^2 = .323			

The results also showed that the dimensions accounted for 47.7 per cent of the EE subscale's total prediction variance in the case of Iranian and 32.3 per cent in the case of Turkish teachers. Moreover, *Satisfaction* was the strongest predictor of EE among both Iranian and Turkish teachers (Iranian ►t = -12.337, Beta = -0.603 and Turkish ►t = -5.947, Beta = -0.439). See Table 3.

Moreover, the results disclosed a significant relationship between DP and *Commitment* (t = -4.990; P = 0.000, P< 0.05), *Adaptation* (t = -2.761; P = 0.006, P< 0.05), and *Communication* (t = -2.334; P = 0.020, P< 0.05) dimensions in the case of Iranian participants and between DP and *Satisfaction* (t = -4.371; P = 0.000, P< 0.05), *commitment* (t = -4.077; P = 0.000, P< 0.05), and *Communication* (t = -2.905; P = 0.004, P< 0.05) dimensions in the case of Turkish participants. See Table 4.

Table 4
Predictors of DP Processes across Ir. & Tr. Groups

Subscales	Ir.				Tr.			
	Beta	t	Sig.	R^2	Beta	t	Sig.	R^2
1. Satisfaction	-.117	-1.877	.062	-	-.309	-4.371	.000	.078
2. Knowledge Development	-.062	-.853	.394	-	-.083	-.875	.383	-
3. Commitment	-.321	-4.990	.000	.082	-.310	-4.077	.000	.067
4. Adaptation	-.178	-2.761	.006	.025	-.140	-1.844	.067	-
5. Communication	-.148	-2.334	.020	.018	-.202	-2.905	.004	.034
All subscales	Total R^2 = .253				Total R^2 = .381			

The results also demonstrated that the dimensions explained 25.3 per cent of the DP subscale's total variance in the case of Iranian and 38.1 per cent in the case of Turkish teachers. Moreover, *Commitment* was the strongest predictor of DP among both Iranian and Turkish teachers (Iranian ►t = -4.990, Beta = -0.321 and Turkish ►t = -4.077, Beta = -0.310). See Table 4.

Finally, the results showed a significant relationship between PA and *Satisfaction* (t = 3.898; P = 0.000, P< 0.05), *Knowledge Development* (t = 5.363; P = 0.000, P< 0.05), and *Commitment* (t = 4.298; P = 0.000, P< 0.05) dimensions among Iranian participants and between PA and *Satisfaction* (t = 3.566; P = 0.000, P< 0.05) and *Knowledge Development* (t = 7.346; P = 0.000, P< 0.05) dimensions among Turkish participants. See Table 5.

Table 5
Predictors of PA Processes across Ir. & Tr. Groups

Subscales	Ir.				Tr.			
	Beta	t	Sig.	R^2	Beta	t	Sig.	R^2
1. Satisfaction	.221	3.898	.000	.041	.239	3.566	.000	.053
2. Knowledge Development	.320	5.363	.000	.077	.492	7.346	.000	.228
3. Commitment	.268	4.298	.000	.050	.140	1.600	.112	-
4. Adaptation	.070	1.177	.240	-	.128	1.742	.084	-
5. Communication	.039	.663	.508	-	.138	1.672	.097	-
All subscales	Total R^2 = .392				Total R^2 = .355			

The results also revealed that the dimensions explained 39.2 per cent of the PA subscale's total prediction variance in the case of Iranian participants and 35.5 per cent in the case of Turkish ones. Moreover, *Knowledge Development* was the strongest predictor of PA among both Iranian and Turkish teachers (Iranian ► t = 5.363, Beta = 0.320; Turkish ► t = 7.346, Beta = 0.492). See Table 5.

Discussion

It was shown that professional self-esteem was related to emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment processes of Iranian and Turkish EFL teachers. In particular, emotional exhaustion and depersonalization were negatively correlated with professional self-esteem, while personal accomplishment was positively correlated with it (See tables 1 & 2). This means that the more the teachers sensed professional self-esteem, the less they experienced emotional exhaustion and committed to student depersonalization, and the greater they tried to develop their competence and feel successful achievement in their work. This finding confirms the assumption that self-esteem, regardless of its conceptualization, is an important construct in burnout processes and emphasizes on the conclusion made by Rosse et al. (1991) and Golembiewski and Kim (1989) that self-esteem may be an important factor in predicting who will be more likely to develop burnout. Moreover, it supports the view that teachers with high self-esteem can easily cope with work problems and consequently reduce burnout better than teachers with low self-esteem (Baumeister et al., 2003; Janssen et al., 1999; Maslach, 1993; Zamanirad & Rohany, 2010).

With regard to research question two, the findings demonstrated the highest degree of prediction between EE and *Satisfaction* for Iranian (*Beta*= -0.603, *P*=0.000) and Turkish (*Beta*= -0.439, *P*=0.000) teachers, which indicates that the teachers who were less satisfied with their job experienced a higher degree of emotional exhaustion (see table 3). This result was in line with the study of Villa and Calvete (2001) who had observed that secondary school teachers dissatisfied with their job experienced higher level of EE burnout. However, the finding is at odds with the study of Lee and Ashforth (1996) who found that job satisfaction correlates comparatively highly with all the three burnout dimensions but most highly with depersonalization (27% shared variance) followed by exhaustion (20% shared variance) and reduced personal accomplishment (16% shared variance). Like other studies (Belicki and Woolcott, 1996; Cowin, 2001; Maslach et al., 1996; Maslach et al., 2001; Sadeghi & Sa'adatpourvahid, 2016), the study highlights the contribution of job dissatisfaction to burnout. Therefore, Iranian and Turkish teachers should principally be encouraged to increase their job satisfaction through meeting their desires and needs to avoid EE burnout among them.

A significant relationship was also observed between EE and *Adaptation* among Iranian participants and between EE and *Commitment* and *Communication* among Turkish ones, meaning that Iranian teachers could not adapt themselves well to their work conditions to overcome emotional exhaustion, while emotional exhaustion of Turkish teachers was due to inadequate work preparation and their inability to impart knowledge to students. To this end, Iranian teachers should also be motivated to embrace new work conditions and Turkish teachers motivated to develop new techniques and strategies of performing a qualified work and imparting knowledge.

Furthermore, the results disclosed the highest degree of prediction between DP and *Commitment* (Iranian *Beta*= -0.321, *P* = 0.000; Turkish *Beta*= -0.310, *P* = 0.000) for both teacher groups (see table 4). That is to say, Iranian and Turkish teachers committed to student depersonalization mainly as a result of not preparing themselves well for their work. Studies have also provided evidence that burned-out teachers tend to be less productive, creative, and committed (Lee & Ashforth, 1996; Maslach & Leiter, 1997). As studied by Schaufeli and Buunk (1996) and Soderfelt and Soderfelt (1995), poorly committed people may be more likely to suffer from the consequences of burnout to a greater extent than individuals who exhibit higher levels of commitment to their work. Consistent with this assumption, the study has provided evidence that burnout can bring about reduction in the degree of commitment and supports the view that commitment is a significant determinant of burnout. Hence, as an intervention of DP, Iranian and Turkish teachers should chiefly be required to present a more qualified work performance in their classes.

Although the strong predictor of DP was common among the Iranian and Turkish groups, the prediction patterns of them were different. As shown in table 4, satisfaction and communication were also associated with depersonalization of Turkish teachers, suggesting that the obtained result may not merely be attributed to the direct effect of commitment on DP. Since the Beta value of satisfaction, the strong predictor of EE, (Turkish *Beta*= -0.309, *P*=0.000) is almost as great as commitment, it can be concluded that EE had an indirect effect on DP among Turkish group, that is, Turkish teachers have certainly utilized depersonalization as a coping strategy to overcome emotional exhaustion. This finding clearly highlights the importance of differentiating between burnout forms in diverse cultural groups. However, Turkish teachers should increase their job satisfaction to get away from emotional exhaustion and student depersonalization, and Iranian teachers should also be helped enough to improve their work adaptability for the same reason.

Finally, the results revealed that the strong predictor of PA was *Knowledge Development* (Iranian *Beta*= 0.320, *P*=0.000; Turkish *Beta*= 0.492, *P*=0.000) among both groups (see table 5). This means that Iranian and Turkish teachers did not develop skills necessary in their job, and accordingly experienced PA burnout. As in DP processes, the Beta value of satisfaction (Turkish *Beta*= 0.239, *P*=0.000) was greater than that of the other two dimensions in PA processes of Turkish teachers. So, it can be concluded that there is also the weight of EE on PA among Turkish teachers. Such a prediction pattern puts job dissatisfaction in the first place as the cause of teacher burnout and presents EE as the main form of burnout among Turkish EFL teachers. Similarly, satisfaction can be considered as the determinant factor in burnout processes of Iranian teachers, when taking into account its Beta values in EE and PA. This finding confirms the studies of Brenninkmeijer et al. (2001) and Fivesa et al. (2007) who had found that dissatisfied teachers evaluated their accomplishments at work negatively and avoided to update their knowledge.

In short, regarding the prediction variance of EE, DP, and PA subscales (research question three), the results illustrated that the dimensions of professional self-esteem accounted for 47.7, 25.3, and 39.2 per cent of EE, DP, and PA subscale's total prediction variance in the case of Iranian participants and 32.3, 38.1, and 35.5 per cent in the case of Turkish participants, respectively. As shown above, the EE and PA prediction variance of Iranian group were greater than that of Turkish group, that is, 47.7 % Iranian teachers' emotional exhaustion and 39.2 % their work accomplishment could be attributed to the professional self-esteem. This implies that professional

self-esteem as a prediction model of burnout was a fitted one for the prediction of EE and PA burnout among Iranian teachers. Contrarily, the DP prediction variance of Turkish teachers was greater than that of Iranian ones, meaning that professional self-esteem was a suitable model for Turkish teachers in predicting their DP burnout.

Conclusion and implications

The study attempted to measure the perceived EE, DP, and PA burnout levels of Iranian and Turkish EFL teachers and to explore which of these burnout processes is better predicted by the *Professional Self-esteem* dimensions of (a) Satisfaction, (b) Knowledge Development, (c) Commitment, (d) Adaptation, and (e) Communication across the groups. The findings revealed that emotional exhaustion and depersonalization were negatively correlated with professional self-esteem, while personal accomplishment was positively correlated with it among Iranian and Turkish teachers. Moreover, job dissatisfaction was the principal determinant of teacher burnout, and EE was the frequent form of burnout among the teachers, especially Turkish ones. Based on the results of this study, it can be concluded that there was almost a similar prediction pattern of burnout among Iranian and Turkish teachers. Finally, Professional Self-esteem was a better prediction model of EE and PA burnout for Iranian teachers, whereas it was an appropriate model for the prediction of DP burnout of Turkish teachers.

The study has a number of pedagogical implications for EFL teachers, administrators, educational authorities, and burnout researchers. The first and the most important is that it sheds light on the dilapidation and decay in the educational systems of Iran and Turkey; thus, decision-making authorities can benefit from the results for increasing teacher productivity through setting more flexible and fair regulations. The findings can also help educational administrators diagnose the burnout sources in educational settings to prevent or reduce teacher burnout. Moreover, they can grow awareness of teachers to develop coping strategies to combat burnout. Finally, researchers interested in the field can get insightful information about the burnout processes of Iranian and Turkish EFL teachers in a new framework.

In spite of some useful findings, some limitations of the study need to be acknowledged. The first limitation of the study was its reliance on self-report data. In fact, the accuracy of the results depended on the degree to which participants had willed to disclose honestly their behaviours and feelings. Therefore, the reported results may not reflect the participants' actual thoughts; thus, the accuracy of the findings may be affected negatively. Second, there were diverse conceptualizations of self-esteem in the literature, causing confusion about and blurring its borderline with other concepts such as self-concept and self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997; Harter, 1999). To meet the purpose of the study, a shortened English version of professional self-esteem scale was adapted from Aricak (1999) which had not been administered before. Therefore, the validity and/or reliability of the measure may not be rigid; thus, the results should be approached with caution when deriving conclusions. Finally, the participants were English language teachers in Iranian and Turkish secondary state schools during the 2011-2012 academic year; therefore, the results should not be generalized beyond the teachers in the regions, fields, and time periods studied. In short, the author believes that there is need to follow the study with other groups to verify the reliability and validity of the measure and procedures.

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Appendix
Professional self-esteem measure

The scale was used to measure the professional self-esteem perceptions of EFL teachers about their work. The measure includes 1**6** items.

		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Dear respondent, The following statements concern with your personal feelings about your work. Please indicate how strongly you as a high school English teacher agree or disagree with each statement. The information you provide will be confidential. Thank you for your cooperation. Please, use this scale:		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	I am a teacher who prepares very well for the work I do.	1	2	3	4	5
2	I can make up my mind without too much trouble for changes in my work.	1	2	3	4	5
3	I am enthusiastic to learn new skills necessary to my work.	1	2	3	4	5
4	I'm pretty happy with my job.	1	2	3	4	5
5	I am able and eager to impart what I know to others.	1	2	3	4	5
6	I never worry about any changes in my work.	1	2	3	4	5
7	I study frequently to keep my knowledge up-to-date.	1	2	3	4	5
8	I often get discouraged with what I am doing.	1	2	3	4	5
9	I sometimes do research to increase the quality of my work.	1	2	3	4	5
10	It takes me a long time to get used to anything new in my work.	1	2	3	4	5
11	I don't mind if someone needs my work experience and knowledge.	1	2	3	4	5
12	There are many times when I'd like to leave my job.	1	2	3	4	5
13	I feel I'm not doing the best work that I can.	1	2	3	4	5
14	I am able to face new challenges of my job on my own.	1	2	3	4	5
15	I take criticism well and learn from it.	1	2	3	4	5
16	I feel I am goal-oriented in my work.	1	2	3	4	5

Please add any comments you wish about this part:

