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در صورتی که وجود آمدن هر گونه مشکل و پرسش در زمینه دسترسی، نهایه و استفاده از مطالب الکترونیکی و دیجیتالی به‌درك اختلاف‌های ممکن، مشاهدات، مطالعات دیگر و یا هم‌نامه با پیگیری شده.

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Faculty of Language and Literature
Department of English Literature and Linguistics

A Thesis
Submitted to the Postgraduate Studies Office in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of M.A. in
Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL)

Title:
Academic Optimism and Teacher Efficacy as Predictors of Burnout: A Structural Equation Modeling Approach

By:
Shohreh Rezaei

Supervisor:
Dr. Jalil Fathi

July, 2019
In the Name of God
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The above thesis was evaluated and approved by the following members of
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Abstract

Given the theoretical and practical shift of orientation, mostly in mainstream of education, towards acknowledging the teachers as the key elements of any pedagogical program, a growing research base has increasingly substantiated that teachers are among the most significant players affecting student achievement. As a result, teacher-related variables have enjoyed much popularity over the recent decades in both mainstream education and English Language Teaching (ELT). Numerous educational researchers have increasingly employed self-efficacy theory over the last decade to investigate job burnout as well as to examine the role of self-efficacy in the creation of job burnout, a construct defined as ‘a crisis of self-efficacy’. Teacher self-efficacy is conceptualized as a personal resource factor which may hinder the experience of job stress and, thus, make the formation of burnout less likely. Academically optimistic instructors are motivated to practice a strong effort and are resilient in the face of problems. Low academic optimism results in feelings of burnout and a decrease in teachers’ feeling of satisfaction, motivation, and self-efficacy. As an attempt to shed more light on teacher-related variables in EFL context, this study examined the role of teacher self-efficacy and academic optimism as predictors of burnout among Iranian EFL teachers. In so doing, a sample of 143 Iranian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers completed three validated surveys measuring these constructs. Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was used as the data analysis procedure. The findings revealed that academic optimism accounted for 10.3% of the variance in teacher burnout, whereas teacher self-efficacy accounted for 16.5% of the variance. Although each of them had a unique impact on teacher burnout, teacher self-efficacy outweighs academic optimism in predicting teacher burnout. Finally, the theoretical and pedagogical implications were discussed.

Keywords: Teacher self-efficacy, academic optimism, teacher burnout, EFL teachers, SEM
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List of Abbreviations

Total AO: Total Academic Optimism
Total SE: Total Teacher Self-Efficacy
ESL: English as a Second Language
EFL: English as a Foreign Language
TSE: Teacher Self-Efficacy
AO: Academic Optimism
AE: Academic Emphasis
CM: Classroom Management
IS: Instructional Strategies
SE: Student Engagement
IP: Instructional Practices
TE: Teacher Efficacy
TT: Teacher Trust
BO: Burn-Out
Chapter 1: Introduction
1.1 Overview
In chapter one the explanations of the concepts, the problem, and significance of this study are presented. In the end, the key terms definitions, research questions and hypotheses, and the limitations and delimitations of the study will finish this chapter.

1.2 Background of the Study
There has been a fundamental scientific and feasible conversion of focus towards admitting that instructors are among the main constituent of any educational plan. There are many important factors that foster students’ success, one of them is instructors that help students come up with a better achievement. (Ferguson, 1991, 1998; Goldhaber, 2002; Sanders, 1998, 2000). Wright, Hom, and Sanders (1997) also believe “more can be done to improve education by improving the effectiveness of teachers than by any other single factor” (p. 63). It was noticed that instructors are focal to comprehension and modifying the modality of English language instructing by second language instructor tutors, that is apart from the method or materials they use. (Freeman Johnson, 1998).

Considering a new orientation in English language instructing, post-method education assists instructors to explore their potentials as professionals and permits them to see language instructing and learning from a new outlook. Therefore, more attention should be paid to the function of instructors in ELT in particular. The importance of instructor related variables was investigated by a considerable amount of studies, some of important variables are: the relationship among teacher burn-out (Jennet et al., 2003); teachers’ sense of efficacy (Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, & Hoy, 1998); and academic optimism. (Woolfolk Hoy, Hoy, & Kurz, 2008, p. 45)

Instructors’ opinions and believes are considered as perceptive strainers to sift thinking and behaviors. One such belief is academic optimism that has been linked to student success. Instructor feeling of academic optimism is the instructor’s believes that they can train efficiently, their students can learn productively, and students’ parents support them so instructors can do their best for teaching. This new construct is grounded in the social cognitive and self-efficacy theories, social capital theory. If instructors believe in themselves as ones who are able to influence students’ learning, they consider higher and greater expectations, apply better effort, and are more flexible when they face challenges. (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1998).
Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001) explained instructor efficacy as “a teacher’s judgment of his or her capabilities to bring about desired outcomes of student engagement and learning, even among those students who may be difficult or unmotivated” (p. 783). It has been shown that instructor efficacy has been related to a diversity of instructing behaviors and student outcomes such as success (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Gibson & Dembo, 1984; Ross, 1992) and motivation (Midgley, Feldlaufer, & Eccles, 1989; Woolfolk, Rosoff, & Hoy, 1990). Instructor efficacy is defined as "the extent to which the teacher believes he or she has the capacity to affect student performance" (Berman, McLaughlin, Bass, Pauly, & Zellman, 1977, p. 137), or as "teachers’ belief or conviction that they can influence how well students learn, even those who may be difficult or unmotivated" (Guskey & Passaro, 1994, p. 4).

Among the variables which are mentioned in the instructing literature, burn-out is imagined as resulting from long term work tension, especially among human service workers, including instructors. (Jennett, Harris & Mesibov, 2003). Although there are many various ideas, all instructors may experience tension in their work. The majority of instructors deal with such tension successfully. However, burn-out may be the endpoint of coping unsuccessfully with chronic stress (Jennett et al., 2003).

As a result of the impact that teachers have in equipping students with global knowledge and academic skills that they need to be productive citizens in the 21st century, there is a need for teachers to have a positive mindset about their abilities to produce a conducive environment for their students. Therefore, it was important to determine how teachers perceived their ability to teach students given various climate, leadership, and professional situations. The purpose of this quantitative study was to determine the impact of school climate on teacher self-efficacy. The predictor variables of interest were the overall school climate, as well as the subcategories of collegial leadership, teacher professionalism, academic press, and community engagement. The criterion variable was the teacher self-efficacy level. Certified teachers from two middle schools in rural southern Virginia were targeted to participate in this study.

With more pressure on student achievement than ever before, it is critical for educational leaders to understand the factors that affect teacher morale (Rowland, 2008). The leaders who make it a priority to keep and support effective teachers create a familial environment through a positive, sustaining culture that makes teachers feel
celebrated and accomplished. Thus, the focus of the study was to evaluate the relationship between school climate and teacher self-efficacy.

1.3 Statement of the Problem
In order to come up to better student and teaching achievements, the majority of studies belong to student related variables. Also, the investigation of teacher-related variables has been the focus of a number of studies during the last few decades, however; to date, there is the lack of investigation of the relationship and inter-connection among the three variables (academic optimism, teacher efficacy, and burnout), at the same time in the form of a structural model employing big sample of participants in ELT in general and in Iranian EFL educational context in particular. There is a great lack of study between academic optimism and burn out; so, researchers who want to investigate in this area encounter the shortage of enough and related sources.

The specific problem is that a growing number of special education teachers report feelings of burnout and dissatisfaction with their careers (Pearson & Moomaw, 2005). Boe and Cook (2006) stated that teacher attrition was a major contributor to problem of teacher shortages. The quantitative, correlational study sought to bridge the gap between past research devoted to the topic of burnout, academic optimism, and teacher efficacy among teachers. The study examined the association between the independent variable burnout, along the dimensions of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment, and the dependent variables (academic optimism, and teacher efficacy).

What makes the current study stand out is the employment of the structural equation modeling as a methodologically sophisticated technique to uncover the relations among the variables and to test the fit indices of the hypothesized structural model for this study and to consider the relationship between the variables, that two of them were not the focus of research and studies.
improved student success and educational quality.

Given the significance of teachers as the key players in ELT classes, teachers’ development of the sense of academic optimism becomes crucial. Especially since academic optimism and its elements might positively affect self-efficacy which is claimed to elevate students’ learning fulfillments, instructors’ growth of the sense of academic optimism seems to be crucial.

As mentioned before, academic optimism is a variable that can be expanded and acquired (Seligman, 2006). Thus, ELT instructor educators and policy makers can help prospective EFL teachers to rise their academic optimism which is greatly related with their sense of efficacy, both of them can result in better accomplishment and higher motivation of the students in the class. A culture of optimism in individual classes or in an entire teacher education program could lead to increased motivation and cooperation for both faculty and prospective teachers. Such a culture would support setting high standards, insisting on excellence, exerting effort, being persistent and resilient, and collaborating to learn and improve.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Research
This study contributes important theoretical and empirical results for future scholarship in administration, teacher education, and educational psychology. Clearly there is a relationship between teacher self-efficacy, academic optimism, and burnout; however, results suggest that future research should be conducted to discover the relative effect of mentioned teacher related variables on different student and teacher level features in other EFL environments.

Even, one can replicate this study with larger samples considering gender, age groups, level of academic education, and experience of teaching. Also, this study particularly was an effort to just investigate teacher related variables, but students related variables and academic setting’s variables can be taken into account for further research. Moreover, for data collection procedure not only cross sectional (such as questionnaire) but also longitudinal (such as interview) procedures can also be used.
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چکیده
با توجه به تغییر نظری و عملی جهت گیری، بهترین در جریان اصلی آموزش و پرورش، به سمت پذیرش معلمان به عنوان عنصر اصلی هر برنامه آموزشی، یک پیشگاه تحضیلی در حال رشد به طور فراگیردهای ابتدای کرده است که معلمان از مهارت ویژگی راهبردی در پیشرفت دانش آموزان هستند. در نتیجه، متغیرهای مرتب با معلم در دهه‌های اخیر در آموزش عمومی و آموزش زبان انگلیسی (ELT) موجبیت زیادی در محفظان آموزشی به طور فراگیردهای از دهه گذشته از تنوری خودکارآمدی استفاده کرده‌اند. فرسودگی شغلی و همچنین بررسی نقش خودکارآمدی در ایجاد فرسودگی شغلی، ساختاری که به عنوان "بحران خودکارآمدی" تعریف شده است، خودکارآمدی معلمان به عنوان یک عامل مربوط به شغلی مفهومی از بهترین شغلی می‌شود که ممکن است منع تجربه استرس شغلی و در نتیجه شکل‌گیری فرسودگی شغلی ایجاد کند. در این شرایط، معلمان از نظر علمی و تجربی از طریق خودکارآمدی به عنوان یک عامل منابع شخصی مفهومی برای مبارزه با استرس شغلی استفاده می‌کنند. خودکارآمدی معلمان به عنوان یک عامل مربوط به شغلی ساختاری است که به عنوان "بحران خودکارآمدی" تعریف شده است. در این شرایط، معلمان از نظر علمی و تجربی از طریق خودکارآمدی به عنوان یک عامل منابع شخصی مفهومی برای مبارزه با استرس شغلی استفاده می‌کنند.

واژه‌های کلیدی: خودکارآمدی معلم، خوش‌بینی دانشگاهی، فرسودگی معلم، معلمان
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در تاریخ ۱۳۹۸/۰۴/۱۷ توسط کمیته‌ی تخصصی و هیئت داوران زیر مورد بررسی قرار گرفت و
با درجه‌ی عالی به تصویب رسید.

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