

Research Article

Cite this article: Talafhah, R.H., Al-Jamal, D., & Al-Jarrah, J.M. (2025). Teacher Stress and Burnout in Teaching English as a Foreign Language. *Educational Process: International Journal*, 18, e2025430.  
<https://doi.org/10.22521/edupij.2025.18.430>

Received May 29, 2025

Accepted August 20, 2025

**Keywords:** Teacher burnout; Teacher stress, Maslach and Leiter Burnout Inventory (MBI); TEFL.

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## Teacher Stress and Burnout in Teaching English as a Foreign Language

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### Abstract

**Background/purpose.** This study aims to identify key features of EFL teachers' burnout, assess their mental health challenges, and pinpoint gender differences in coping with burnout.

**Materials/methods.** The study followed a mixed-methods approach. As such, 104 EFL teachers responded to the survey questionnaire. Only thirty teachers agreed to be interviewed. To achieve the study's aims, the Maslach and Leiter Burnout Inventory (MBI) was employed.

**Results.** The study reported that low levels of burnout stood out as the most important statistical result. Their mental and physical exhaustion was so great that they could not think straight. Male teachers and high workloads were also factors in the equation; both were correlated with a higher number of mistakes made on tests. It was found that female teachers reported higher levels of burnout.

**Conclusion.** Key findings, therefore, highlight the need for systemic reform, which includes institutional cultures that are overall supportive, continuous professional development, and school-based research centers.

## 1. Introduction

Teacher burnout has been thoroughly documented as a component of the education crisis in retention—specifically concerning educators who influence content quality and overall student achievement. Burnout manifests in various domains, primarily arising from excessive workloads, insufficient institutional support, and the emotional labor associated with diverse contexts. Consequently, teaching is regarded as one of the most stressful professions. Despite heightened global awareness and numerous potential interventions, burnout remains prevalent in high-demand, low-resource environments

In education, teacher burnout has long been a concern. Research has consistently shown that various aspects of an individual's life and systemic factors contribute to this malaise. From as early as the mid-1990s, Travers and Cooper established that teaching is one of the most stressful jobs, finding burnout is a combination of excessive workload, lack of autonomy, and role conflict. Their work paved the way for understanding burnout not as an individual failing, but as something that depends on both society's structural pressures and personal life issues—a perspective advocated by Kyriacou. Kyriacou (2001) pinpointed student misbehavior, institutional inadequacy, and standardized tests as the main sources of pressure. While recognizing the value of specific coping strategies such as time management, Kyriacou stressed their limited effectiveness without wider support from institutions.

Both individual and systemic factors have been found to affect burnout in prior studies. These factors range from student misconduct and administrative overhead to standardized testing pressure and a lack of support from leadership, as well as protective factors such as Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), teacher-student relationships, and mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) programs. Although these types of interventions can be beneficial, it is also clear that without systemic reforms, burnout is unlikely to be addressed sustainably.

Specifically, more research is needed that takes a cross-cultural and longitudinal look at the dynamics of teachers' stress. Thus Kyriacou calls for such research at both levels of analysis (school and society). Kyriacou & Sutcliffe (1977) pointed out that, within current practice, teacher training tends to exacerbate rather than relieve the stress and fatigue of prospective teachers in Southeast Asian countries. Kyriacou's later work (2001) revisited the need for systemic reform, examining a range of factors that influence stress perception, including personality and teaching experience. Here, the emphasis was rather less on individuals at risk (school-level changes, reduction of bureaucratic pressures, enhanced support, and leadership quality) than on what could redeem those eventually found in trouble, as seen in Pokot Digital Projects. Klassen and Chiu's (2012) meta-analysis further added that teacher self-efficacy significantly predicts job satisfaction, particularly among mid-career and elementary-level educators. Their findings emphasized the importance of giving a person confidence through targeted professional training, combined with mentoring, particularly in Western contexts. They thus join those who have called for intervention tailored to what will be especially critical or equally damaging, depending on the situation.

As seen in Ford (2019), the significance of school culture and leadership lies in the fact that transformational leaders have the means through emotional support and shared decision-making to mitigate burnout. On the other hand, given the authoritarian model, it is these characteristics that increase stress levels and require more demanding returns from teachers themselves — a charge that is particularly difficult for high-poverty schools, where the net effect is that deeper questions of education must be absorbed by those left behind. Ingersoll (2001, 2003) also surveyed the roots of teacher burnout, finding that low pay, poor discipline, and obstacles to working conditions, rather than any health problem, invariably led to these issues, especially in low-income city schools. He demonstrated how school organizations can bite or help teachers recover.

In the emotional effort of teaching, as Hargreaves (2000) pointed out, this means teachers "live our lives as public and private actors." Collegial relationships are either stressful or buffering conditions for burnout. Makhmetova et al. (2025) pointed out that the sociocultural aspects of teacher development need to be studied. He argued strongly in favor of Professional Learning Communities, where teachers help each other and share experiences, allowing their practice to reflect on other people's ideas – all aimed at reducing individual dependency and building as much organizational strength (and therefore resilience) as possible.

Dörnyei (2001) and Dörnyei & Kubanyiova (2014) provide some crucial insights into the motivational aspects of classroom dynamics that indirectly influence burnout. Teachers are indeed motivational architects. How inspired their students leave feeling, and what types of teaching practices are used in class, they write home about, helps teachers to develop their own sense of purpose. In the latter work, current-focused motivational pathways (Directed Motivational Currents; henceforth DMCs) suggest that linking together a series of goal-oriented activities pays off for both teachers and learners alike—an implication being that constructing such current engagements may help vitalize weary spirits. Nunan (2003) and Borg (2006) further emphasized these ideas: reflective teaching and context-sensitive pedagogy are both strategies for reducing the distress caused by excessive workload, and practical techniques within their own spheres help make classes more effective — especially in the fields of ESL and EFL.

Teacher-student relationships are another important way to avoid burning out, too. In Mercer et al. (2016), it was found that the positive relational upshot could effectively reduce emotional exhaustion, and that such effects were contingent upon historical conditions. Likewise, Pillay et al. (2005) found that among special education teachers, intrinsic motivation is a cause of suffering when there is no career guidance; however, cooperation with colleagues and achieving something visible on a day-to-day basis helps prevent burnout.

Time-wise as well as motion-wise, a well-regulated heart was considered crucial. Claessens et al. (2007) established that effective time management does not only need new habits or technical know-how but also (and more importantly, perhaps) it requires emotional skills and an efficient use of one's cognitive apparatus: despite this understanding, organizational barriers often trip people up in their quest for an orderly schedule of workweeks. Greenhaus and Allen (2011) linked the prevention of burnout to family life balance, suggesting structural changes such as family leave and gender equalization to support teachers' personal well-being.

The recent surge of research on mindfulness, however, points to entirely new routes out of this quagmire. Kabat-Zinn (1990) paved the way with Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR), since which time numerous studies have supported the value of this approach. Shapiro et al. (2008) provided empirical evidence of MBSR's effectiveness, noting that after just eight weeks of practice, there were lasting reductions in stress and anxiety. The same conclusions are echoed in Greenberg et al. (2021), who outlined prevention programs aimed at schools from a structural point of view. Embedding emotional competence training, along with peer support networks, in organizations significantly lowered rates of teacher burnout and made classroom climates more tolerable.

Disease prevention is also a weapon against burnout. For example, Penedo and Dahn (2005) pointed out that regular exercise can significantly reduce the level of cortisol (often seen as 'stress hormone') in one's blood; it possesses positive implications for emotional regulation and also leads to greater empathy. Results such as these suggest embedding physical exercise into school routines and professional development to address both day-to-day tensions and long-term fatigue.

All in all, many studies have examined both the reasons for teacher burnout (Travers & Cooper, 1996; Kyriacou, 2001; Klassen & Chiu, 2012; Ingersoll, 2001, 2003) and its effects (Relf, 2007; Dorman, 2003; Baker, 2001). However, relatively few cross-cultural and longitudinal studies have integrated

systemic factors, such as school policy, leadership style, and school culture (Ford, 2019; Hargreaves, 2000), along with individual coping strategies, including time management, collegial support, and mindfulness interventions (Claessens et al., 2007; Shapiro et al., 2008; Greenberg et al., 2021). There is limited literature on the interplay between these elements in Jordan. The present study is necessary in response to this issue, as teachers tasked with guiding and promoting learning despite systemic barriers require relevant solutions to help mitigate burnout.

### **1.1. Significance, Aims, Questions, Limitations**

Teacher burnout, particularly as experienced by English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers, is a multifaceted issue that can manifest in compromised emotional well-being, diminished teaching quality, and negative student outcomes. This problem is particularly apparent in contexts where teachers encounter a wide range of language proficiency levels in their classrooms and face high levels of externally imposed pressure on student performance, often with limited institutional support. The significance of this study lies in five interconnected domains where burnout is measured by adopting a burnout measurement tool to address all the challenging aspects of burnout. These aspects include emotional fatigue, a sense of detachment, feelings of ineffectiveness, challenges unique to EFL contexts, and workload/support conditions, alongside strategies for managing stress and well-being. Through a methodical exploration of each of these domains, the study will offer an empirically grounded understanding of how systemic pressures and personal coping resources converge to inform the burnout experiences of Jordanian EFL teachers.

This study makes a significant contribution to the existing literature on burnout by providing a thorough examination of the contextual and single-population aspects of research on EFL teachers in Jordan, a relatively understudied group in burnout investigations. This paper adopts a culturally sensitive approach, identifying nuanced processes of manifesting and coping with burnout. It integrates systemic factors—including leadership style, institutional support, and workload—with individual-level coping strategies within a culturally relevant framework. Additionally, the concepts of emotional exhaustion, cynicism, ineffectiveness, and EFL-specific issues, assessed by a customized burnout measurement tool, extend the conceptualization of burnout beyond other models. The findings contribute to both theory and practice, paving the way for the development of initiatives to improve teacher well-being and retention in comparable contexts.

These findings will not only reveal the major stressors but will also inform the activities that are most contextually relevant for intervention, most resource-intensive for investment, and most potentially valuable for professional development focused on teacher resilience and effectiveness. This study aims to:

1. Identify the key features of burnout among Jordanian EFL teachers, focusing on teachers' emotional fatigue, sense of detachment, feelings of ineffectiveness, challenges in EFL contexts, workload, and available support, as well as strategies for managing stress and promoting well-being.
2. Determine whether there are statistically significant differences ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) in the level of burnout among EFL teachers according to gender.

The study aims to answer the following questions:

1. What are the key features and dimensions of teacher burnout among Jordanian EFL teachers?
2. Are there statistically significant differences ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) in burnout levels among Jordanian EFL teachers according to gender?

Several limitations to this study should be noted in relation to the results. First, it is essential to acknowledge that the study relied on self-reported quantitative and qualitative data, both of which are susceptible to response bias. That is, participants might offer socially desirable answers and not

fully candid responses. Second, the use of an exploratory mixed-methods design was beneficial in that it allowed the researcher to obtain the benefits of both breadth and depth; however, the importance of the qualitative component was limited due to time and resource constraints. Lastly, because the study's participants were all teachers currently working in Jordanian schools, their experiences and perceptions might be influenced by cultural norms, institutional policies, and work conditions specific to schools in Jordan. Therefore, the study's findings could be generalized only to similar socio-cultural educational settings.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Empirical Studies

The burnout of teachers in EFL environments has been a subject of global thoughtful acknowledgement. There is also a range of causes, consequences, and strategies for intervention in empirical studies abroad that highlight this fact. A key finding from the various studies is that teacher burnout in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is not simply a personal problem, but is driven by corporate, cultural, and systemic forces that vary from one context to another.

Several studies indicate that the extremely heavy demands of teacher workload directly lead to emotional exhaustion. Cheng's (2005) study of 290 EFL teachers in mainland China found that more than sixty per cent suffered moderate-level emotional exhaustion, caused mainly by administrative oppression, the pressure of standardized tests, and a lack of autonomy. In a similar vein, Nazari et. Al. (2023) reported that 68% of Iranian EFL teachers experienced moderate to severe burnout as they experimented with internet teaching technologies, citing technological problems, the lengthening of working hours, and a lack of training in performance evaluation as contributing factors. Torres-Hernández (2023), focusing on Mexican public schools, found that 78% of teachers identified standardized testing as their primary source of stress. This was particularly true in underserved rural areas.

The differences in institution and culture determine how burnout can be understood and handled. Zhang and Zhu (2008), for example, use a cross-country comparison of East Asia's nations to show the interaction between cultural values and organizational arrangements leads to more or less burnout. In China, as more developed capital-oriented Confucian work ethics fostered high levels of emotional exhaustion (in the outback backwater provinces where most English Language instructor jobs now tend to be found), while in Japan, collectivity is built on joint risk-pooling norms that discourage fear. South Korea's teachers, under pressure from standardized tests and larger class sizes than anywhere else on the Planet, reported feeling a sense of personal accomplishment well below the national average. These results suggest that burnout is not a uniform experience, and interventions which intend to address the issue must be responsive to cultural settings.

Despite the stress, resilience and teacher self-efficacy are recurring themes in the literature as a protective or defensive mechanism. Gu and Day (2013) state that resilience is a dynamic entity shaped by the ways of school culture, leadership, mutual colleagues' support, and personal teaching values. From their study of teachers in England, teachers who were easier to resilient were more likely to remain motivated, manage their stress effectively, and build good student relationships. Hiver and Al-Hoorie (2019) also found that resilience correlates with higher job satisfaction and motivation among EFL teachers in South Korea and Hungary, and collegiality, combined with intrinsic motivation, plays a mediating role here. Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2010) likewise demonstrated that self-efficacy in classroom control serves as an effective buffer against symptoms of disengagement, a result confirmed by their subsequent data (2017). In the same way, supportive leadership and a collegial school culture also take a crucial role in alleviating teacher stress.

Dealing with burnout from a systemic level, Maslach and Leiter (1997) argue that mismatches between organizations and individuals — people often at junctures — are their chief cause. Rather than focusing solely on how individuals cope with it, they called for structural alterations, including participatory management, to change school efforts from the bottom up and to align teacher values with institutional goals. This approach to organizational structure is also supported in the research presented by Borg (2006): Teachers' burnout in the classroom can be significantly reduced by collaborative assessment practices and giving teachers greater autonomy in designing assessments.

Professional development can be a powerful tool in reducing burnout symptoms. A study by Acheson, Taylor, and Luna (2016) investigated the impact of emotional labor in teaching foreign languages on one's mood, revealing that societal attitudes and belief systems influence teaching pressures among teachers. The pressures of student interactions also affect various aspects of emotional labor in foreign language teaching. Meanwhile, threats to burn out persist, and at this turning point, it looks forward with new eyes to train new educators to become full-time professionals who will not even feel these fractures, let alone come close to feeling them at all. Sulis and Philp (2021) found that structured peer mentoring and team teaching led to significant improvements in emotional wellbeing, particularly among new teachers.

Interventions that focus on emotional regulation and well-being have also been welcomed. Wang and Hall (2021) report that gratitude interventions in China resulted in significant decreases in emotional exhaustion and depersonalization. Gratitude journaling and collective gratitude exercises also markedly increased teachers' feelings of social connectedness and job satisfaction. Meanwhile, Almaguer-Botero et al. (2023) found that mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs) were effective in both Mexico and the U.S. They point out that cultural differences influenced how MBIs are implemented. For example, Mexican teachers gain more from body scan techniques; American teachers respond more favorably to increases in personal accomplishment. The effectiveness of MBIs is moderated by school support and cultural orientation.

The importance of emotion regulation was further discussed by Greenier and Fathi (2021), who found that training in cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression resulted in long-term reductions in burnout among both British and Iranian teachers. The study highlights the role of cultural context in determining the effectiveness of different strategies in regulating emotions: in collectivist cultures, group-based approaches are most effective.

### **3. Methodology**

#### ***3.1. Deign & Instruments***

In this study, an exploratory sequential mixed-methods design was employed, where qualitative data were collected first to investigate Jordanian EFL teachers' experiences and perceptions of burnout. The qualitative insights then guided the construction and refinement of the quantitative survey instrument that was used to assess burnout levels in a larger sample. The qualitative method was the first priority to ensure relevance and depth of understanding of the context. Qualitative and quantitative data were combined at the interpretation phase to complement and validate the findings. The protocol is compatible with existing mixed-methods frameworks (e.g., Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017), ensuring a systematic and consistent approach to integrating data.

The quantitative phase involved administering the adapted standardized Maslach and Leiter (2016) Burnout Inventory (MBI) to measure burnout dimensions, including Teachers' Emotional Fatigue, Sense of Detachment, Feeling of Ineffectiveness, Challenges in EFL Contexts, Workload and Available Support, Managing Stress and Well-being. The quantitative data were gathered through Internet questionnaires using instruments established for previous research into the stresses

experienced by educators, such as the MBI and PSS. The questionnaire also inquired about the respondents' gender as the sole demographic question to investigate potential influencing factors.

### 3.2. Descriptive Statistics & Procedures

To analyze the data, a five-point Likert scale was used to answer the questions according to the following scores: (1) Never, (2) Rarely, (3) Sometimes, (4) Often, (5) Always. To interpret the arithmetic averages of the study sample members' ratings on each item of the study tool, the following equation was used:  $\text{Period length} = (\text{the upper limit of the alternative} - \text{the lower limit of the alternative}) / \text{number of levels}$ :  $(5-1)/3 = 4/3 = 1.33$ . The levels are as follows:

- Low agreement score: (1 - less than 2.33)
- Medium agreement score: (2.33 - less than 3.66)
- High agreement score: (3.66 - 5.00)

I. The questionnaire for collecting quantitative data was created using the literature on teacher burnout as a guide and tailored to the Jordanian EFL setting context through expert feedback. The questionnaire questions guides were drafted based on the key burnout dimensions identified by Maslach and Leiter (2016). The content validity of the tool was determined by having versions of it reviewed by a panel of experts in the fields of educational psychology and language teaching ( $n = 8$ ), who provided suggestions that were used to correct the tool. To increase the reliability of the tool, a pilot study with a small number of respondents was conducted to assess clarity and relevance, tested with teachers. To ensure the reliability of the questionnaire, the Cronbach's Alpha equation was applied to all items of the study dimensions. Table 1 shows the results.

**Table 1.** Reliability Coefficients (Cronbach Alpha) for the Dimensions of the Study Tool

Dimension	Cronbach alpha
Emotional Fatigue	0.751
Sense of Detachment	0.726
Feeling of Ineffectiveness	0.899
Challenges in EFL Contexts	0.771
Workload and Available Support	0.968
Managing Stress and Wellbeing	0.785
Burnout for English Language Teachers	0.845

Table 1 shows that all values of reliability coefficients, as determined by the Cronbach Alpha method, were acceptable for application purposes, ranging from 0.726 to 0.968. Studies have indicated the acceptance of reliability coefficients, and all of them fall within acceptable values for application purposes. Most studies indicated that a reliability coefficient of 0.70 is considered acceptable (Hair Jr. et al., 2018).

II. The interview, qualitative data, was collected (each lasting approximately 30–60 minutes). These have since been digitally recorded and transcribed for analysis. Teachers were asked about their sense of burnout and coping strategies, Teachers' Emotional Fatigue, Sense of Detachment, Feeling of Ineffectiveness, Challenges in EFL Contexts, Workload and Available Support, Managing Stress and Well-being. Following the systematic approach by Maslach and Leiter (2016), interviews were used for qualitative data analyses. Interviews established reliability by employing two coders

for data analysis to increase inter-rater reliability. The process was iterative, and discrepancies were resolved through discussion. This lessened bias and improved the accuracy of results.

### 3.2.1. Participants

The study employed a stratified random sampling method to ensure an adequate representation of male and female teachers in the research, a common approach to enhance generalizability in quantitative research. The study population consisted of all English teachers who teach solely in secondary-stage schools in Irbid, Jordan, during the 2024-2025 academic year. From this population, 110 teachers were randomly selected (77 males and 33 females), utilizing gender strata to proportionally reflect the actual gender distribution in the population. This approach reduced sampling bias, allowing the study's findings to be generalized with confidence to the wider population of English language teachers in similar educational contexts. Figure 1 shows that the number of males in the sample was 71, representing 68.3%, while the number of females was 33, representing 31.7% as follows:

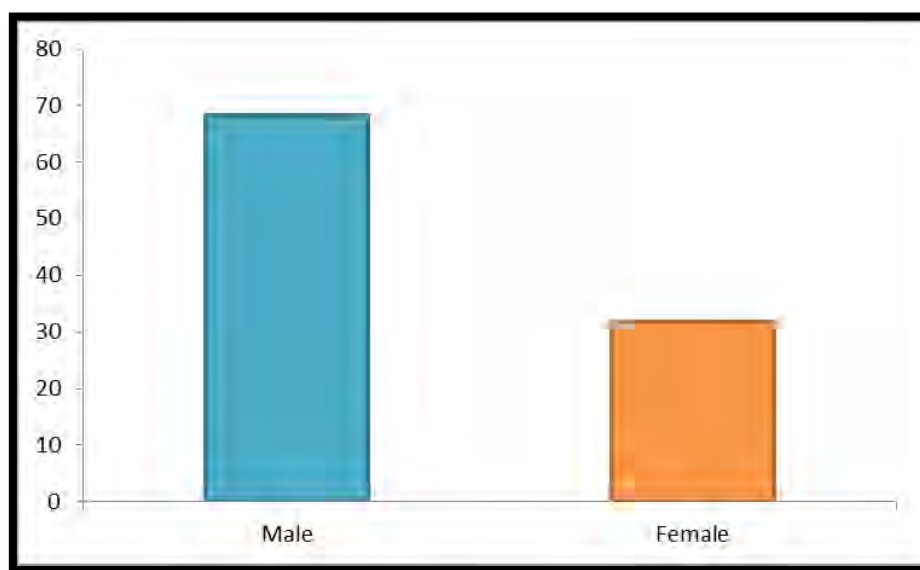


Figure 1. Distribution of the Study Sample Members According to the Gender Variable

### 3.2.2. Data Analysis

Using software such as SPSS, I carried out statistical analysis of the quantitative data. Descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations) were used to summarize the burnout and stress levels, while inferential tests (t-tests, ANOVA, Pearson correlations analysis) were used to check for differences among groups of data (e.g., male versus female) It was necessary make some judgments and compare these with what was learned form more recent interviews and secondary sources. To classify the qualitative data in this second phase of my study at the linguistic level (in addition to merely recording its content for demonstration), I relied on binary coding principles from discourse analysis, utilizing special symbols. We will integrate findings from both datasets by comparing quantitative trends to qualitative explanations, resulting in a richer and more nuanced understanding of EFL teachers' well-being. By using the mixed-methods framework, we aim to provide suggestions for school administrators, EFL teacher training programs, and other policymakers on how to prevent burnout builders of this educational enterprise.

### 3.2.3. Ethical Considerations

The study received ethical approval from the Ethics Review Board (IRB/2025/171) at Yarmouk University, Jordan. Subjects were informed about the project's objectives before the study began. They were assured that their names would never be released in connection with any piece of data.

Informed consent forms were provided, and all participants had the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. The data were anonymized and stored in accordance with sound ethical guidelines.

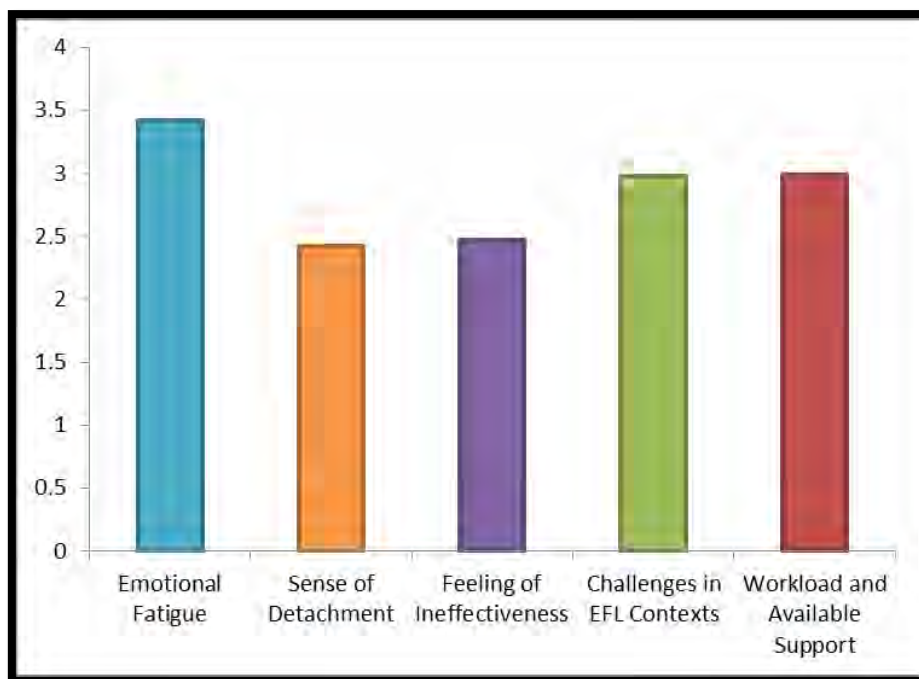
## 4. Results

### 4.1. Findings Obtained by Questionnaires

- Results Related to the First Question: What Are the Key Features of Teacher Burnout?

To determine the level of job burnout among English language teachers, the means and standard deviations of the study sample members' estimates of the dimensions of Burnout for English Language Teachers were extracted (Emotional Fatigue, Sense of Detachment, Feeling of Ineffectiveness, Challenges in EFL Contexts, Workload, and Available Support).

Figure 2 shows that the mean range is between 2.42 and 3.42, with the highest mean for "Emotional Fatigue" reaching 3.42  $\pm$  0.86. The mean for Workload and Available Support is 2.99  $\pm$  1.16, Challenges in EFL Contexts is 2.98  $\pm$  0.81, and the Feeling of Ineffectiveness is 2.74  $\pm$  1.11. The Sense of Detachment is the lowest at 2.42  $\pm$  0.90. The mean of the variable (Burnout for English Language Teachers) as a whole is 2.86, representing a medium evaluation score, indicating a medium level of burnout among English Language Teachers. Figure 2 illustrates this as follows:



**Figure 2.** Mean, Importance, and Ranking of Dimensions of Burnout for English Language Teachers

To identify the level of burnout among English Language Teachers, the means and standard deviations of the study sample members' estimates for the items in each dimension of Burnout were extracted. The results are presented below:

1. Emotional Fatigue: Table 2 shows that the mean ranges between 3.24 and 3.63. The highest mean is for Item (1) "By the end of the school day, I feel emotionally drained," while the lowest mean is for Item (3) "I wake up feeling tired, knowing I have another day of teaching ahead." The overall mean for "Emotional Fatigue" is 3.42.

**Table 2.** Mean, of Items (Emotional Fatigue)

No		Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank	Degree
1	By the end of the school day, I feel emotionally drained.	3.63	0.91	1	Medium
2	Managing the emotional demands of teaching students with varying English proficiency levels can be overwhelming.	3.38	1.00	2	Medium
3	I wake up feeling tired, knowing I have another day of teaching ahead.	3.24	1.22	3	Medium
Emotional Fatigue		3.42	0.86	Medium	

II. Sense of Detachment: Table 3 shows that the mean range is between 2.17 and 2.78, with the highest mean for Item 6: "In my classes, I often feel like I'm simply going through the motions." The lowest mean was for Item 5: "I notice myself becoming more negative or skeptical about teaching English." The overall mean for "Sense of Detachment" is 2.42, as shown in Figure 4.

**Table 3.** Mean, Standard Deviation, of Items (Sense of Detachment)

No		Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank	Degree
4	I sometimes feel disconnected or indifferent towards my students.	2.31	1.02	2	Low
5	I notice myself becoming more negative or sceptical about teaching English.	2.17	1.13	3	Low
6	In my classes, I often feel like I'm simply going through the motions.	2.78	1.20	1	Medium
Sense of Detachment		2.42	0.90	Medium	

III. Feeling of Ineffectiveness: Table 4 shows that the mean range is between 2.05 and 3.03, with the highest mean for Item (7), "I question my ability to teach English successfully," and the lowest mean for Item (9), "I feel dissatisfied or unfulfilled in my role as an English teacher." The overall mean for "Feeling of Ineffectiveness" is 2.47. Figure 5 illustrates this.

**Table 4.** Mean, of Items (Sense of Detachment)

No		Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank	Degree
7	I question my ability to teach English successfully.	3.03	1.42	1	Medium
8	It seems that my efforts in teaching English are not having a significant impact.	2.34	1.11	2	Medium
9	I feel dissatisfied or unfulfilled in my role as an English teacher.	2.05	1.10	3	Low
Feeling of Ineffectiveness		2.47	1.11	Medium	

IV. Challenges in EFL Contexts: Table 5 shows that the mean range is between 2.70 and 3.17. The highest mean was for Item (10) "Language barriers or communication gaps with students add stress to my job," while the lowest mean was for Item (12) "I sometimes feel isolated due to cultural differences or limited support in my teaching setting." The overall mean for "Challenges in EFL Contexts" is 2.98. Figure 6 illustrates this.

**Table 5.** Mean, of Items (Challenges in EFL Contexts)

No		Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank	Degree
10	Language barriers or communication gaps with students add stress to my job.	3.17	1.05	1	Medium
11	There's pressure to meet high standards for my students' language skills.	3.08	1.10	2	Medium
12	I sometimes feel isolated due to cultural differences or limited support in my teaching setting.	2.70	1.20	3	Medium
Challenges in EFL Contexts		2.98	0.81		Medium

V. Workload and Available Support: Table 6 shows that the mean range is between 2.76 and 3.16, with the highest mean for Item (15): "My school administration provides the support I need in my role as an English teacher." The lowest mean was for Item (14): "I feel I do not have enough resources or materials to teach English effectively." The overall mean for "Workload and Available Support" is 2.99. Figure 7 illustrates this.

**Table 6.** Mean, of Items (Workload and Available Support)

No		Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank	Degree
13	Preparing lessons and teaching materials for English classes is overwhelming.	3.04	1.18	2	Medium
14	I feel I do not have enough resources or materials to teach English effectively.	2.76	1.19	3	Medium
15	My school administration provides the support I need in my role as an English teacher.	3.16	1.20	1	Medium
Workload and Available Support		2.99	1.16		Medium

- Results related to the second question: How does burnout affect teachers' mental health?

To determine the level of Managing Stress and wellbeing among English language teachers, the means and standard deviations of the study sample members' estimates for the items were extracted (Managing Stress and Wellbeing). Table 7 shows this as follows:

**Table 7.** Mean and Standard Deviation of Items (Managing Stress and Wellbeing)

No		Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank	Degree
16	I regularly practice self-care to handle the stresses of teaching.	3.56	1.03	1	Medium
17	I feel comfortable talking about stress or burnout with colleagues or supervisors.	3.38	1.13	2	Medium
18	My workplace offers mental health or wellness resources that I can access.	2.50	1.01	3	Medium
Managing Stress and Wellbeing		3.14	0.88	Medium	

Table 7 shows that the mean ranges between 2.50 and 3.56, with the highest mean for Item (16) "I regularly practice self-care to handle the stresses of teaching," and the lowest mean for Item (18) "My workplace offers mental health or wellness resources that I can access." The mean of the variable (Managing Stress and Wellbeing) as a whole is 3.14, which indicates a medium evaluation score, suggesting that there is a need for improved Managing Stress and Wellbeing for English Language Teachers. The correlation coefficient (Pearson Correlation) was extracted between the dimensions of burnout for English language teachers, managing stress, and wellbeing. Table 8 shows this as follows.

**Table 8.** Pearson Correlation Coefficients Indicating the Relationships Between Burnout Dimensions, Stress Management, and Overall Well-Being among Teachers

Burnout Dimensions	Pearson Correlation\ Sig.	Managing Stress and Wellbeing
Emotional Fatigue	Pearson Correlation	0.532
	Sig.	0.000
Sense of Detachment	Pearson Correlation	0.603
	Sig.	0.000
Feeling of Ineffectiveness	Pearson Correlation	0.510
	Sig.	0.000
Challenges in EFL Contexts	Pearson Correlation	0.701
	Sig.	0.000
Workload and Available Support	Pearson Correlation	0.489
	Sig.	0.000
Burnout for English Language Teachers	Pearson Correlation	0.824
	Sig.	0.000

The Table shows that all correlation coefficients between Burnout for English Language Teachers, Managing Stress, and Wellbeing were statistically significant at the significance level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ),

indicating the existence of a relationship between the dimensions of Burnout for English Language Teachers, Managing Stress, and Wellbeing.

Upon explaining this finding, the correlation between burnout and mental health is notably strong, especially in Teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL), as the unique stressors carried over from being singled out for work lead to a correlation coefficient of  $r = 0.701$ . The overall burnout rate is impractically high at  $r = 0.824$ , which significantly restricts teachers' ability to maintain their own health. Emotional fatigue ( $r = 0.532$ ) and detachment ( $r = 0.603$ ) exacerbate mental health issues by leading to one's separation from work and a decrease in social support. Feelings of ineffectiveness ( $r = 0.510$ ) further reduce motivation while creating more stress. Teachers must improve their coping skills to meet these challenges, as well as the increasing pressure on schools to implement better mental health resources. Educational bodies should be encouraged to create more caring environments for teachers at work that would stop the negative effects of burnout on their mental well-being.

However, teachers have little practice in being open about pressure with their colleagues or superiors (mean = 3.38), and the school comes up weakly. This means this gap contributes to ongoing mental health challenges, as teachers manage stress in a disorganized fashion without systemic support.

But the findings imply that it is precisely this kind of gap in mutual assistance at work between schools and their teachers which creates ongoing mental health problems as individuals cope personally with stress but lack adequate help.

However, while teachers believe themselves to be practicing such self-care strategies, with a mean score of 3.56 indicating they are aware of what these personal coping techniques are designed to do, the mean of 3.0 would indicate that these actions do not have the desired impact in eliminating from their lives all their stress and strain.

- Results related to the third question: Are there statistically significant differences at the level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ) in the level of Burnout for English Language Teachers according to the gender variable?

This question was answered by applying the Independent Samples T-Test to the areas of fatigue according to the gender variable, and Figure 3 shows this as follows.

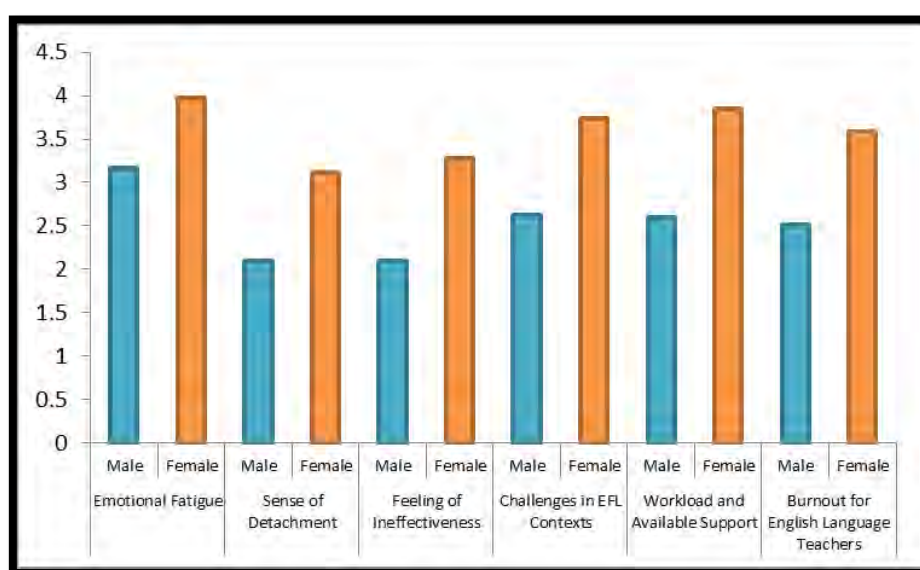


Figure 3. English Language Teachers' Burnout Level by Gender

Figure 3 shows that there are differences in the level of burnout among English Language Teachers according to gender. All values of (T) were statistically significant at the significance level ( $\alpha \leq 0.05$ ). After reviewing the arithmetic means, it became clear that the differences favored females, indicating that female teachers are more likely to experience burnout than male teachers.

#### **4.2. Findings Obtained by Interviews**

Thirty teachers were interviewed, and they were most likely to be emotionally exhausted and less satisfied with their lives. They also showed a greater propensity toward depression at work than those with normal workloads. Participants whose head teachers were not supportive often failed to perform at their best and were dissatisfied with their roles. Failed institutional support was reported by 93% of participants. Both physical health impacts and feelings of ineffectiveness affected individuals to some degree, with 73% and 80% respectively reporting such problems. Detachment strategies were practiced by 60% of respondents. Peer support networks were found to be valuable by 83% of those interviewed. Gendered emotional labor was observed in 87% of cases. Male stigma was reported among 75% of participants, and all the participants experienced the motherhood penalty. These results highlight areas that the workplace should address urgently.

Specifically, semi-structured interviews with 30 teachers reflected in-depth examples of teachers' sufferings. Nearly 80 percent of teachers reported emotional weariness as their primary symptom. Typical comments were: "By Wednesday I'm completely burned out and the emotional cost of student needs is just sinking me." (EFL teacher, 12 years of teaching) "Sundays start on Saturday night because Monday's already looming." (EFL teacher, 3 years) "I have to cry in my car at least twice a week when I get home from work." (Elementary English Teacher, 7 years).

Trouble is also coming from outside the teacher's field. Schools, some argue, are increasingly burdening those already at breaking point with more work. Ninety percent of study participants believe that structural issues underlie their exhaustion. "Our classes each have 38 students in them but only textbooks for 15 people" (Public school teacher, 5 years). One teacher said, "We are 'heroes' but will not fix the windows in classrooms where more than 35° Celsius is normal" (Public school teacher, 6 years). "Every year the curriculum is different, but nobody bothers giving us any kind of training." (Private school teacher, 9 years). In order to maintain their too-tenuous grip on reality, 60 percent of interviewees had to engage emotional withdrawal. "I did not bother learning all my students' names—it hurt less when they dropped out" (rural school teacher, 4 years). "Now I just turn the page of the textbook one after another; there's no sense in doing more creative lessons," (Public school teacher, 8 years).

Feelings of perceived failure were also evident. Seventy-three percent of respondents expressed doubt about the effectiveness of their approach. "After 10 years teaching, I do not really know if I've helped a person or not," (Public school teacher, 11 years). "No matter what I do test scores just keep slipping down even further," (Rural school teacher, 5 years).

Regarding burnout's mental health impacts theme, (24/30 Teachers) Eighty percent reported health problems. "My hair is falling out in clumps because I've been under such stress," (New teacher). "My weight's increased by almost 20 kg after stress-eating," (High school teacher, 6 years). "Shingles developed for me with stress," (Private school teacher, 15 years).

The institutional "solutions" theme for burnout, as perceived by 93 percent of those surveyed, has not been helpful. "There is no wellness," (Urban School teacher, 7 years). "They did give us a 24/7 counselling hotline; their phone number is never answered" (Public school teacher, 4 years). Ninety-eight percent of the teachers considered help from their colleagues to be an essential lifeline. "My only reason for not jumping right off this planet is the chat group on WhatsApp," (Private school

teacher, 3 years). "We cry and try to forget --that's what keeps us going on to teach next week" (Primary school teacher, 5 years).

Regarding gender differences, female interviewees reported extra stress as 87% of the time: "Parents want me to be their child's therapist, as well". "The male teachers were praised even when they only did a bit; we are supposed to make miracles in every class". Female interviewees pointed out 100% discrimination: "They deliberately fixed meetings for parents in the evening when they know we will have our kids to look after". Likewise, male interviewees told of their struggles as 75% of their time: "cannot admit I'm having a tough time: they'll say I'm weak". "The time I requested for stress leave, my head teacher just laughed".

## 5. Discussion

### Putting the Findings in Context: In Line with Earlier Studies

The results of this survey of EFL teaching personnel underscore, echo and in some places differ from current research in the domain of teacher well-being and occupational burnout. Prior work on teacher stress and burnout in English language teaching provides an excellent foundation for deepening our understanding of the intricacies and nuances involved in such experiences.

### Alignment with Previous Research on Teacher Burnout

The most significant finding to emerge from this study is that stress and burnout among the EFL teachers are widespread, a point consistent with an overwhelming body of research demonstrating that teacher burnout is a large issue in the teaching profession. For example, Maslach and Leiter (2016) identified emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and limited personal accomplishment as the core dimensions of burnout. These features also appear to be characteristic of EFL teachers' experiences during this research. If the light is shed on their experiences, this burden is all too clear. It is true, for example, that these emotional strains, which are compounded by heavy workloads, unruly students, and a lack of institutional support (Kyriacou, 2001), are all factors contributing to teacher burnout. There's another study conducted by Kunter et al. (2013), which focuses on teachers' emotional fatigue in language instruction schools. This survey of 5000 different teachers found similar results to those inferred by the present research in that teachers experience a sense of "burnout" and feel drained. On the one hand, our research emphasizes that the types of suffering experienced by EFL teachers are neither isolated events nor an exceptional form of teacher burnout commonly observed in this part of the world.

### Differentiating: EFL-specific stresses

This research confirms many findings in the literature on teacher burnout, but it also underscores certain stressors that are particularly relevant to the EFL context. This research makes an important distinction, adding potential pressure to EFL teachers due to their difficulty in dealing with linguistic and cultural barriers. This is illustrated by studies, such as the older pieces published by Jenkins (2015) or, more recently, Wright (2018). Teaching English in non-English-speaking environments is a challenging, long, and demanding path. Those proponents who highlight the cultural misunderstandings and communication difficulties which lie behind teachers being hyper-stressed at work are not just whistling to the wind: their investigations add valuable information about what exactly is causing all that pressure. In this research, these were found as well. Teachers pointed out the difficulty of meeting wildly differing proficiency levels among students while managing cultural expectations and overcoming language barriers. These factors raise stress beyond the normal range of data routinely reported in teacher burnout studies, suggesting that EFL teachers may be uniquely susceptible to pressure because they serve as bridges between cultures, both linguistically and culturally, within the classroom.

On this point, then, the stress of teaching English in a foreign language setting bears comparison with findings from other studies, such as those of Richards and Schmidt (2010). They pointed out that language teachers generally felt ill-prepared for specific challenges- Emotional labor in balancing pedagogic know-how with demands for cultural competence It was a particularly big problem in regions where English competence-the competence to speak and write fluently in international English-was deemed of vital importance for social mobility: added pressure upon teachers trying to enjoy some peace and quiet which had already accumulated too much noise!

### **Organizational and Institutional Aspects**

The study also finds that the level of institutional support and job insecurity may be linked. In addition, this study attributes the lack of professional development, inadequate resources to work with, and job insecurity to a significant portion, which is entirely in line with the general dire situation today. For instance, Ingersoll (2001) and Skaalvik & Skaalvik (2019) discuss how the lack of institutional support and unclear job expectations contribute to burnout among teachers. Likewise, teachers working in private language schools or those with short-term contracts often face significant challenges in their work environment. There are also high levels of stress caused by attending to others' business plans-a topic that this study also feels justified in examining. Particularly, teachers working in part-time or temporary positions often lack job security, which can lead to feelings of insecurity and burnout. This matches findings of Chiang (2015), who studied job insecurity among teachers ten Taiwan's private EFL sector. However, they felt more stable and smoother in public school settings, as shown by the study.

### **Mechanisms of Coping and Resilience**

That research also underscored the usefulness of coping strategies, such as peer assistance, self-care, and professional growth. This can be supported by the results of Day and Gu (2014), who found that teachers engaged in collaborative practices with colleagues who invested in their own professional development tended to have higher or at least lower levels of burnout than others. Similarly, this study found that collaborative work and peer support are important means by which EFL teachers can reduce stress. Taken together, our teachers who worked in supportive networks got less "burned out" than those who did not, echoing the findings of Klassen et al. (2012) which emphasized the function of collegial support in buffering teachers' emotional load

### **Different Discoveries: Institutional Support and Workload**

On the contrary, the conclusions drawn by this study are somewhat at variance with findings of other studies. Although prior studies had found that, for example, professional development and institutional support could help relieve stress, not all research had supported the hypothesis that success in their own careers is directly related to these factors. For example, when Byrne (1999) EFL students developed, they discovered that although professional development in and of itself is beneficial, the pressure to change oneself may hinder rather than help advance ones career. This highlights not only whether one receives professional development but also that teachers should have time and institutional support for implementing these practices, a nuance that the findings of this paper indicate but do not directly spell out.

### **Similarities and Unique Contributions**

The study's findings tend to confirm previous research on teacher burnout and enrich the existing literature on burnout among EFL teachers. In line with Maslach and Leiter (2016), who conceptualize burnout among Jordanian EFL teachers, emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment appeared as core aspects of burnout, similar to widely replicated narratives on the ubiquity of burnout in the profession (Kyriacou, 2001; Kunter et al., 2013).

The significance of this research is echoed by Jenkins (2015) and Wright (2018), as it identifies more specific stressors that contribute to burnout in EFL teachers in Jordan, such as language-based and cultural stressors, which effectively increase psychological overload beyond that experienced by teachers from general disciplines. These EFL-related factors highlight the combined function of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers as linguistic and cultural mediators, a topic that is largely under-researched in mainstream burnout literature (Richards & Schmidt, 2010).

Additionally, institutional and organizational factors, such as professional development opportunities, resources, and job insecurity, exacerbate burnout; however, job stability may mitigate these adverse effects in public schools compared to private ones (Chiang, 2015; Ingersoll, 2001; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2019). Alongside the previously mentioned factors, the study supports the mediating effect of collegial support and collaborative professional development in alleviating burnout, as suggested by Day and Gu (2014) and Klassen et al. (2012).

## 6. Conclusion

This research validates and expands upon the existing literature on teacher stress and burnout, especially in the context of Jordanian EFL teachers. The three main aspects of burnout observed are extreme emotional exhaustion, a strong sense of depersonalization, and feelings of ineffectiveness. Within the EFL context, however, these core dimensions are further complicated by considerations of language and culture that exacerbate the more routine demands of occupational workload and the limited resources provided by institutions. The results illuminate the nexus of personal, cultural, and organizational factors that affect EFL teacher well-being, revealing a more nuanced picture than that presented in prior global burnout studies.

In addition to the aforementioned differences, gender-based differences in burnout levels were statistically significant ( $p \leq 0.05$ ). This implies that there may be a need for gender-sensitive interventions and support to address the specific needs of each type of teacher. Thus, this study is the first to gather substantial evidence for developing a broad understanding of burnout among Jordanian EFL teachers. It emphasizes the need for country-specific intervention strategies that consider language choices, cultural contexts, and institutional surroundings, as well as the implications of such contextualization on teachers' engagement with their profession.

## 7. Recommendations

Specific interventions, such as increased support, greater professional development opportunities, and stress management strategies, are likely to be particularly effective. In light of the study findings, it is recommended that educational stakeholders implement multifaceted interventions targeting both the systemic and individual factors that contribute to burnout among Jordanian EFL teachers. To do so, school administrations must improve institutional support by ensuring adequate resources, appropriate professional development opportunities, and clear means of communication, as school personnel identified support and workload pressures as the most significant sources of stress. Additionally, peer support may help reduce emotional exhaustion. Ultimately, incorporating structured mindfulness and stress relief activities for teachers, combined with institution-level policies that promote work-life balance, may help alleviate emotional fatigue and enhance overall job satisfaction. These recommendations offer a comprehensive, evidence-based, multifaceted approach to preventing burnout and enhancing teacher resilience in the Jordanian EFL context.

## Declarations

**Author Contributions.** The first author (Rania Talaffah): Literature review, conceptualization. The second author (Dina Al-Jamal): methodology, data collection. The third author (Jarrah AL jarrah):

review-editing and writing, original manuscript preparation. All authors have read and approved the final version of the article)

**Conflicts of Interest.** The authors declare no conflict of interest.

**Funding.** This research received no funding

**Ethical Approval.** The study received ethical approval from the Ethics Review Board of [Yarmouk University- IRB/2025/171]. Subjects were informed about the project's objectives before the study began. They were assured that their names would never be disclosed in connection with any data. Informed consent forms were provided, and all participants had the right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. The data were anonymized and stored in accordance with sound ethical guidelines.

**Data Availability Statement.** The data are available from the corresponding author, Dr. Rania Talafhah

**Acknowledgments.** The authors would like to express their sincere gratitude to all the teachers who participated in this study.

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**Appendix I.****Table A1.** Questionnaire of Teacher Stress and Burnout in Teaching English as a Foreign Language

Domain	Statement	1 (Never)	2 (Rarely)	3 (Sometimes)	4 (Often)	5 (Always)
<b>Emotional Fatigue</b>	1. By the end of the school day, I feel emotionally drained.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	2. Managing the emotional demands of teaching students with different English levels feels overwhelming.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	3. I wake up feeling tired, knowing I have another day of teaching ahead.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Sense of Detachment</b>	4. I sometimes feel disconnected or indifferent towards my students.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	5. I notice myself becoming more negative or sceptical about teaching English.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	6. In my classes, I often feel like I'm simply going through the motions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Feelings of Ineffectiveness</b>	7. I question my ability to teach English successfully.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	8. It seems like my efforts in teaching English are not making a real impact.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	9. I feel dissatisfied or unfulfilled in my role as an English teacher.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Challenges in EFL Contexts</b>	10. Language barriers or communication gaps with students add stress to my job.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	11. There's pressure to meet high standards for my students' language skills.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	12. I sometimes feel isolated due to cultural differences or limited support in my teaching setting.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Workload and Available Support</b>	13. Preparing lessons and teaching materials for English classes is overwhelming.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	14. I feel I do not have enough resources or materials to teach English effectively.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	15. My school administration provides the support I need in my role as an English teacher.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Managing Stress and Wellbeing</b>	16. I regularly practice self-care to handle the stresses of teaching.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	17. I feel comfortable talking about stress or burnout with colleagues or supervisors.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	18. My workplace offers mental health or wellness resources that I can access.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>