

Examining the Nexus of Teacher Professional Attitudes, Welfare, Satisfaction, and Performance in Iranian EFL High Schools

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Abstract

This research sought to explore the connections between teachers' professional attitudes, their welfare, job satisfaction, and performance among Iranian EFL high school educators. A total of 205 Iranian EFL teachers (125 male, 80 female) from various regions of Iran participated in the study, selected through convenience sampling. Data were collected using four validated instruments: the Teacher Professional Attitude Scale (TPAS), the Teacher Welfare Scale (TWS), the Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (JSQ), and the EFL Teachers' Job Performance Questionnaire (TJPQ)—all administered in English. Data collection occurred during the 2023–2024 academic year, both in person at schools and via social media platforms, with a 92% response rate. The data analysis process involved screening for univariate and multivariate outliers, checking normality through skewness and kurtosis, assessing reliability via Kuder-Richardson 21 coefficients, and conducting Pearson correlation analyses using SPSS software (version 26). The results revealed significant, strong positive correlations among professional attitude, welfare, job satisfaction, and job performance (r values ranging from 0.67 to 0.79, $p < 0.01$), indicating that higher levels in one area were associated with improvements in others. These outcomes underscore the importance of adopting a comprehensive approach to teacher management and professional development. The study highlights the value of fostering positive professional attitudes, ensuring sufficient welfare support, and enhancing job satisfaction among educators. Its implications can inform policy-making, teacher evaluation frameworks, and teacher training programs to elevate the quality of education in Iran.

Keywords:

Iranian EFL high school teachers, Job satisfaction, Professional attitude, Teacher performance, Teacher welfare.

1. INTRODUCTION

Teachers' performance is a key factor in shaping students' learning experiences and outcomes, significantly affecting the overall quality of education (Abd Hamid et al., 2012; Ancess, 2000;

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Ghavifekr & Pillai, 2016). This connection is particularly important in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education, where the success of language learners heavily relies on teachers' effectiveness (Ghasemi & Hashemi, 2011; Uyar et al., 2016). However, a teacher's performance is not solely influenced by instructional skills. Additional factors, such as professional attitudes, welfare, and job satisfaction, also play a significant role in determining teacher effectiveness (Murwaningsih, 2024; Murwaningsih & Fauziah, 2023; Taat & Naquin, 2020). Teachers' beliefs, values, and dispositions significantly influence their engagement, motivation, and dedication to teaching. For instance, a positive professional attitude is often associated with greater satisfaction, higher job performance, and openness to career growth opportunities (Bogler & Nir, 2015; Brante, 2009).

Welfare, defined as the mental, emotional, physical, and social well-being of teachers, is strongly linked to job satisfaction (Kidger et al., 2016; Pillay et al., 2005). Poor working conditions can lead to dissatisfaction, burnout, and stress, which negatively impact teaching quality (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017a). Job satisfaction, shaped by factors like opportunities for professional growth, workplace conditions, compensation, and interpersonal relationships, is a critical element in determining teacher performance (Ayeni & Popoola, 2007). Furthermore, high job satisfaction is closely tied to greater motivation, productivity, and commitment to teaching (Chamundeswari, 2013; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017b).

The selection and linkage of professional attitude, welfare, and job satisfaction as focal variables in this study are grounded in both theoretical and practical considerations. These constructs are interrelated in shaping teachers' overall effectiveness. A positive professional attitude can foster resilience and openness to growth, leading to higher job satisfaction and a greater sense of well-being. Conversely, poor welfare conditions can diminish job satisfaction and erode positive attitudes, ultimately leading to lower performance. By examining these variables together, it becomes possible to capture the dynamic and reciprocal influences that ultimately impact teacher performance. This integrated perspective is supported by educational psychology and organizational behavior literature, which emphasizes that occupational attitudes, well-being, and satisfaction do not operate in isolation but interact to influence professional outcomes.

In addition to welfare, it is essential to clarify the other central variables considered in this study. Professional attitude refers to the beliefs, values, and dispositions that teachers hold about their profession, which shape their level of engagement, motivation, commitment, and openness to professional development (Bogler & Nir, 2015; Haser & Star, 2009; Sikolia et al., 2013). Job satisfaction is understood as the extent to which teachers experience fulfillment and contentment in their jobs, influenced by factors such as opportunities for advancement, workplace environment, compensation, and relationships with colleagues and administrators (Ayeni & Popoola, 2007; Chamundeswari, 2013).

Despite the recognition that professional attitudes, welfare, and job satisfaction are each theoretically and empirically linked to teacher performance, there remains a lack of integrative frameworks that explain how these constructs interact to influence teacher effectiveness, particularly in non-Western EFL contexts. Theoretical models such as Herzberg's two-factor theory and the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model suggest that both intrinsic (e.g., attitudes, satisfaction) and extrinsic (e.g., welfare, resources) factors jointly shape professional outcomes, including performance and well-being. However, these models have rarely been applied or tested comprehensively within the specific sociocultural context of Iranian EFL high schools. Thus, the current study is not merely responding to a lack of studies combining these variables, but is motivated by the need to advance and contextually adapt theoretical perspectives on how teacher attitudes, welfare, and satisfaction jointly contribute to teacher performance. This theoretical motivation is crucial, as it allows for a deeper understanding of the complex mechanisms

underlying teacher effectiveness and can inform targeted interventions and policy decisions aimed at improving EFL instruction.

Moreover, the selection of these variables is particularly relevant in EFL contexts, where teachers often face unique stressors such as limited resources, cultural expectations, and language policy pressures. By exploring the interconnectedness of professional attitude, welfare, and job satisfaction, this study aims to uncover actionable insights that can be used to support EFL teachers more effectively in their professional roles.

In the Iranian EFL context, high school teachers' performance is pivotal, as English education is essential for preparing students for academic success and global communication (Moafian & Pishghadam, 2009). While individual factors like job satisfaction (Ahmadzadeh, 2014; Safari, 2022), professional attitude (Ahmad et al., 2013; Al Harthy et al., 2013; Rezaee et al., 2018), and welfare (Apriliani et al., 2023; Mazaki, 2017; Naluwemba et al., 2015) have been studied, the combined and theoretically interconnected effect of these variables remains underexplored within the Iranian context. This study addresses this gap by examining how professional attitude, welfare, and job satisfaction collectively influence Iranian EFL high school teachers' performance, drawing on relevant theoretical frameworks to offer a more comprehensive, contextually grounded understanding of effective EFL instruction in Iranian secondary schools.

The significance of this study lies in its contribution to a more holistic and contextually relevant understanding of teacher effectiveness in Iranian EFL high schools. By investigating the interplay of professional attitude, welfare, and job satisfaction, this research provides empirical insights that can inform teacher training, professional development initiatives, and policymaking aimed at enhancing both teacher well-being and student learning outcomes. Ultimately, the findings can help guide educational leaders and policymakers in designing targeted support systems that foster sustainable teacher performance and improve the quality of EFL education in Iran.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Teacher Professional Attitude

Professional attitude in teaching is a multifaceted concept shaped by individual traits, organizational culture, and societal norms (Evetts, 2011; Sachs, 2016). It encompasses the principles, actions, and interpersonal skills that guide teachers in their interactions with students, colleagues, and the broader educational community (Hargreaves, 2000; Tichenor & Tichenor, 2005). Sockett (1993) emphasizes the ethical and moral foundation of professionalism in teaching, while Carr (2005) highlights its role in transmitting values and fostering human well-being. Effective teaching requires empathy, emotional intelligence, and the ability to create a supportive learning environment (Hargreaves, 1998; Kyriacou, 2001).

Core components of professional attitude include commitment, ethics, and values. Commitment binds individuals to their professional roles (Meyer & Allen, 1991; Morrow, 1983), ethics guide behavior through principles and norms (Treviño et al., 2006), and values shape enduring beliefs and actions (Rokeach, 1973; Schwartz, 1992). Factors such as teacher self-efficacy, school climate, professional development, and leadership significantly influence these attitudes. High self-efficacy enhances job satisfaction and resilience (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2007; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001), while supportive school environments and professional development opportunities foster collaboration and growth (Collie et al., 2012; Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Guskey, 2002). Leadership styles, particularly transformational leadership, play a pivotal role in shaping positive professional attitudes (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006; Nguni et al.,

2006). Conversely, unsupportive climates or leadership can undermine these attitudes, leading to disengagement and burnout (Friedman, 1991).

Importantly, recent research within the field of English Language Teaching (ELT) and Second Language Acquisition (SLA) has drawn attention to how professional attitude is shaped and manifested in EFL settings. For example, Agcam and Babanoglu (2016) examined EFL teachers in Turkey and found that, despite institutional challenges, most teachers maintained positive attitudes toward their profession, which significantly influenced their performance and pedagogical effectiveness. Lin (2013) investigated Chinese preschool EFL teachers and found that teachers' professional attitudes—particularly their beliefs about teaching and learning—were closely related to their professional knowledge and their openness to professional development, especially in adopting new teaching methods. Similarly, Saberi and Amiri (2016) explored Iranian EFL university teachers' attitudes and highlighted that teachers are increasingly viewed as transformative agents, with professional development seen as a continuous growth process. However, systemic and contextual obstacles can impede this growth, suggesting that professional attitudes are not only shaped by individual dispositions but also by broader institutional and cultural contexts.

Synthesizing these perspectives, it becomes evident that professional attitude is deeply interconnected with teacher welfare and job satisfaction. The interaction between individual values, institutional support, and opportunities for professional development is especially crucial in EFL/ELT contexts, where teachers must navigate additional linguistic, cultural, and policy-related complexities. The literature thus suggests the need for a holistic approach that considers how professional attitude, welfare, and job satisfaction reinforce each other, ultimately influencing teacher performance and student outcomes.

Teacher Welfare

Teacher welfare is a multidimensional concept that refers to the overall well-being of educators in both their professional and personal lives. To clarify, teacher welfare encompasses several interconnected aspects: psychological, physical, social, and emotional well-being, all of which are influenced by the work environment and individual perceptions. Kyriacou and Sutcliffe (1978) provide an early definition, describing teacher welfare as “the psychological and physical state of teachers in relation to their work environment” (p. 94), which highlights both internal (subjective) feelings and external (objective) conditions. Building on this, Roffey (2012) expands the definition to explicitly include the support structures available within a school, defining teacher welfare as “the degree to which a school supports the psychological, social, emotional, and physical well-being of its staff” (p. 2). This emphasizes that welfare is not merely an individual state but is also shaped by institutional support and culture. Additionally, teacher welfare can be understood as the collection of resources and conditions that enable teachers to meet the demands of their work effectively and sustainably. Collie et al. (2012) conceptualize it as “the emotional, psychological, and physical resources teachers need to cope with the demands of their work” (p. 1190), while Butt et al. (2005) underscore the importance of safety and trust in the school setting. Key factors contributing to teacher welfare include competitive salaries, comprehensive benefits (such as health insurance and retirement plans), and favorable working conditions—like manageable class sizes, strong administrative support, and adequate teaching resources (Allegretto & Mishel, 2016; Hanushek et al., 2004). Furthermore, teacher autonomy, or the ability to participate in decision-making and exercise professional judgment, is closely linked to higher levels of job satisfaction and motivation (Pearson & Moomaw, 2005).

Recent research from the ELT context further illuminates the unique welfare challenges faced by EFL teachers. Tran et al. (2024) studied Vietnamese EFL teachers and found that quality assurance (QA) measures, intended to improve educational outcomes, often increase administrative burdens and student expectations, contributing significantly to teacher stress and burnout. Teachers reported emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment, underscoring the importance of balancing institutional demands with teacher welfare. Mofidi et al. (2025) used a grounded theory approach with Iranian EFL teachers and highlighted that well-being is a complex construct influenced by both personal factors and specific teaching contexts. Contextual enhancers and threats to well-being differed across high schools, language institutes, and universities, suggesting that welfare interventions must be context-specific. Furthermore, Zarfsaz and Uçar (2023) addressed the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Turkish EFL instructors, revealing that economic pressures, increased workload, technological challenges, and unproductive teacher-student relationships have negatively affected their well-being. The findings underscore the heightened vulnerability of EFL teachers to welfare-related issues, especially during times of crisis.

These studies collectively demonstrate that teacher welfare is not only an individual or institutional issue but also one that is contextually and culturally situated, particularly in ELT/SLA environments. The interplay between welfare, professional attitude, and job satisfaction is thus central to understanding and supporting teacher effectiveness and retention in EFL contexts.

Teacher Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction, a key concept in organizational and industrial psychology, has been the subject of extensive research over the years. Numerous theories and models have sought to explain its complexities. Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (Herzberg et al., 1959) clearly distinguishes between two types of factors that influence job satisfaction: motivators and hygiene factors. Motivators are intrinsic to the job itself—such as recognition, achievement, and opportunities for personal and professional growth—which, when present, actively promote job satisfaction. In contrast, hygiene factors are extrinsic to the work, including elements like salary, job security, and workplace conditions; while their absence can lead to dissatisfaction, their presence alone does not necessarily increase satisfaction. This distinction highlights that satisfaction and dissatisfaction are not simply opposite ends of the same spectrum, but are influenced by separate sets of factors.

The Job Characteristics Model, proposed by Hackman and Oldham (1976) emphasizes how job features like autonomy, feedback, and task significance influence employees' psychological states, thereby impacting their satisfaction, motivation, and performance.

Value-Percept Theory, proposed by Locke (1969), suggests that job satisfaction arises when there is alignment between an individual's personal values and their perception of how well their job meets those values. Similarly, Equity Theory (Adams, 1963) focuses on fairness, where individuals compare their input (e.g., effort) to the outcomes they receive (e.g., pay) relative to their peers. The Dispositional Approach, on the other hand, highlights personality traits such as extraversion, neuroticism, and self-assessment, proposing that these traits predispose individuals to varying levels of job satisfaction. Together, these theories demonstrate that job satisfaction is a multifaceted concept influenced by both individual and organizational factors.

In the educational field, research has extensively examined factors impacting teachers' job satisfaction. A positive school environment characterized by collegial collaboration, supportive leadership, and shared decision-making significantly correlates with teacher satisfaction (Collie et al., 2012; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011). Relationships with students are equally impactful, as disruptive behavior is linked to dissatisfaction, while positive student engagement enhances

teacher satisfaction (Klassen & Chiu, 2010). Autonomy and decision-making authority also play critical roles, with teachers reporting higher satisfaction when they have control over instructional decisions (Pearson & Moomaw, 2005). Professional development opportunities further contribute to satisfaction, boosting self-efficacy and commitment (Desimone, 2009; Guskey, 2002). Additionally, competitive compensation, administrative support, and transformational leadership are recognized as key determinants.

The consequences of job satisfaction—or lack thereof—have far-reaching implications for individuals, organizations, and society. High job satisfaction correlates with increased productivity, engagement, and performance, while dissatisfaction leads to reduced output, absenteeism, and demotivation (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008; Judge et al., 2001; Petty et al., 1984). Dissatisfied employees are more likely to leave their jobs, creating costly turnover due to hiring and training expenses and the loss of organizational knowledge (Crossman & Harris, 2006; Ingersoll, 2001). Additionally, job satisfaction affects employees' physical and mental health, with dissatisfaction linked to stress, burnout, and emotional exhaustion, which increase absenteeism and healthcare costs (Faragher et al., 2005; Nahrgang et al., 2011). Satisfied employees are also more likely to engage in organizational citizenship behaviors, which support smooth operations, while dissatisfaction can harm customer satisfaction and organizational reputation (Harter et al., 2002; Heskett et al., 1994; Organ & Ryan, 1995).

Within the ELT/SLA context, research has shown that EFL teachers' job satisfaction is closely tied to both intrinsic and extrinsic factors, but especially to internal rewards and professional relationships. Kassabgy et al. (2001) studied ESL/EFL teachers in Egypt and Hawai'i and found that teachers value helping students learn, having supportive relationships, and opportunities to perform well above extrinsic motivators like salary or promotion. This suggests that job satisfaction for EFL teachers is largely driven by meaningful professional engagement. These findings underscore the multifaceted and context-dependent nature of job satisfaction in ELT, and its direct connection to teacher effectiveness and retention.

Therefore, an integrated understanding of job satisfaction in EFL/SLA should account for the interplay between individual values, organizational support, and the unique pedagogical demands of language teaching. This reinforces the need for holistic educational policies that enhance not only compensation and working conditions but also professional autonomy, collegiality, and growth opportunities.

Teacher Job Performance

Teacher job performance is a pivotal concept in both educational research and practice, as the quality of teachers' work directly impacts student achievement and the overall effectiveness of educational systems (Amin et al., 2013; Hanif, 2004). In most developed countries, significant resources are devoted to education precisely because teacher performance is viewed as the backbone of social and academic development. Scholars have defined teacher job performance in various ways, but a recurring theme is its multidimensionality. Özdemir and Gören (2017) and Özdemir and Yirmibeş (2016) conceptualize it as the extent to which teachers contribute to the achievement of educational goals, while others narrow it to observable teaching behaviors (Bashir et al., 2017). However, a growing strand of literature emphasizes that teacher performance extends beyond classroom instruction to include all interactions and settings where students are present (Allen et al., 2011; Hamre et al., 2013). This broader view is reflected in multidimensional models, which include not only instructional skills but also preparation, student evaluation, commitment, extracurricular involvement, effective monitoring, leadership, motivation, discipline, and adaptability (Adeyemi, 2008; Ali & Haider, 2017). Yusoff et al. (2014) further distinguish between

contextual and task performance, while [Bhat and Beri \(2016\)](#), whose model is employed in the current study, propose a tripartite structure: task performance, contextual performance, and adaptive performance. These frameworks underscore that teacher job performance is not static, but dynamic and multifaceted, requiring teachers to meet evolving educational demands, adapt to new environments, and foster positive relationships with students, parents, and colleagues.

Central to teacher job performance is the expectation that teachers not only fulfill instructional duties but also contribute positively to the school climate and organizational goals ([Duyar et al., 2015](#); [Hanif, 2004](#); [Organisation for Economic & Development, 2005](#)). Teachers are expected to engage in effective instruction, ensure student satisfaction and achievement, maintain discipline, and manage their time efficiently. In addition, they are required to collaborate with colleagues, build constructive relationships with parents, and participate in extracurricular and administrative activities. The literature also highlights the importance of extra-role behaviors—actions that go beyond formal job descriptions—to organizational effectiveness ([Brief & Motowidlo, 1986](#); [Duyar et al., 2015](#); [Organ, 1988](#)). For instance, [Van Scotter and Motowidlo \(1996\)](#) identify job dedication and interpersonal facilitation as critical dimensions of contextual performance, encompassing self-disciplined, motivated acts and cooperative, helpful behaviors. Research by [Runhaar et al. \(2013\)](#) extends this framework to education, showing that organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB)—including both OCBI (helping individuals) and OCBO (helping the organization)—are strongly correlated with teacher age, experience, and deep engagement in their roles. This is consistent with Campbell’s (1990) eight-factor model of job performance [Cited in Motowidlo and Kell \(2003\)](#), which encompasses job-specific and non-job-specific proficiencies, communication, effort, discipline, teamwork, supervision, and administration, all of which are relevant to the teaching profession.

Theoretical perspectives from industrial and organizational psychology further illuminate the construct of job performance. [Viswesvaran and Ones \(2000\)](#) describe job performance as “scalable actions, behaviors, and outcomes that employees engage in or bring about that are linked with and contribute to organizational goals” (p. 216), highlighting both behavioral and results-oriented aspects. [Mawoli and Babandako \(2011\)](#) similarly define it as “the extent to which an employee is able to accomplish the task assigned to him or her and how the accomplished task contributes to the realization of the organizational goal” (p. 2). Models such as [Hackman and Oldham \(1976\)](#) Job Characteristics Model identify critical factors—task identity, significance, skill variety, autonomy, and feedback—that shape performance. Moreover, the need for adaptation in teaching is increasingly recognized, given the rapid changes in educational policy, student demographics, and technological integration ([Collie et al., 2016](#); [Organisation for Economic & Development, 2005](#)). Teachers must continually update their skills, respond to diverse student needs, and adjust to shifting institutional priorities, all of which are reflected in the adaptive performance dimension ([Jundt et al., 2015](#); [Pulakos et al., 2000](#)).

Empirical studies consistently demonstrate the centrality of teacher job performance to educational outcomes and system effectiveness ([Adejumobi & Ojikutu, 2013](#); [Akman, 2018](#); [Chamundeswari, 2013](#); [Usop et al., 2013](#)).

Empirical Studies

Professional Attitude and Welfare

Research evidence underscores a significant connection between teachers’ professional attitudes and their overall well-being. Professional attitudes, characterized by commitment and a sense of purpose, are linked to higher levels of job satisfaction and reduced stress ([Collie et al., 2016](#);

Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2015). Murwaningsih and Fauziah (2023) observed that professional conduct positively impacts well-being and fosters personal growth and job satisfaction. Similarly, Murwaningsih (2024) highlighted that teacher welfare supports self-improvement and satisfaction, although it may not directly enhance performance. Hendrawijaya et al. (2020) identified an indirect link between professional attitudes, well-being, and job satisfaction. However, some studies suggest that the influence of professional attitudes on well-being is complex and context-specific, with no clear correlation in certain cases (Aktan et al., 2020; Manzano & Magalona, 2023). These findings suggest that broader factors play a role in shaping the connection between attitudes and well-being.

Professional Attitude and Job Satisfaction

Research highlights a significant connection between teachers' professional attitudes and their job satisfaction. Teachers with high self-efficacy, a key component of professional attitudes, tend to experience greater satisfaction (Caprara et al., 2006; Klassen & Tze, 2014; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2014). Salehi and Taghavi (2016) identified positive links between job satisfaction and teachers' attitudes toward motivating students. Melesse and Belay (2022) noted that professional development activities contribute to increased satisfaction and the growth of professional capital. However, the relationship between job satisfaction and teacher performance is complex. Hendrawijaya et al. (2020) found no direct correlation, suggesting that job satisfaction interacts with other elements, such as professional growth opportunities and overall well-being, to influence performance. This emphasizes the multifaceted nature of job satisfaction.

Welfare and Teacher Performance

Teacher welfare significantly impacts performance. Well-being fosters effective teaching practices, constructive feedback, and positive learning environments, benefiting student outcomes (Harding et al., 2019; Klusmann et al., 2008; McCallum & Price, 2010). Manafa (2022) found that external welfare measures, such as housing and savings facilities, enhance performance, while internal welfare components like medical care allowances have less impact. Ahruddin et al. (2021) highlighted the mediating role of competence in the welfare-performance relationship. Mazaki (2017) linked welfare factors such as housing and school environments to improved teacher performance, while Apriliani et al. (2023) emphasized the role of certification in enhancing welfare and effectiveness. These findings demonstrate that welfare is crucial for fostering teacher effectiveness, though its impact varies based on specific factors.

Job Satisfaction and Teacher Performance

Teacher performance is significantly influenced by job satisfaction, as extensively documented in research. Educators who are content in their roles tend to be more innovative, productive, and efficient (Ostroff, 1992; Saleem et al., 2010). Judge et al. (2001) connected job satisfaction with behaviors that benefit the organization and enhance instructional effectiveness. Research by Usop et al. (2013) and Wolomasi et al. (2019) demonstrated a strong and favorable relationship between job satisfaction and teacher performance. Conversely, dissatisfaction stemming from issues such as inadequate supervision and lack of job security has been shown to harm performance (Baluyos et al., 2019). Rezaee et al. (2018) emphasized the critical role of compensation and opportunities for career growth in boosting job satisfaction and enhancing performance. However, despite these findings, there is limited research on Iranian EFL high school teachers, highlighting a need for studies to address this gap and guide the development of tailored educational policies.

Despite the substantial body of research on the relationships among professional attitude, welfare, job satisfaction, and performance, most existing studies have focused on general or non-EFL teaching contexts or have examined these variables in isolation. There remains a notable gap in the literature regarding how these factors interact specifically among Iranian EFL high school teachers—a group faced with unique linguistic, cultural, and institutional challenges. Furthermore, few studies have adopted a comprehensive approach that simultaneously considers all four constructs, particularly within the Iranian context. To address this gap, the present study aims to investigate the interrelationships among teacher professional attitude, welfare, job satisfaction, and job performance in Iranian EFL high school settings. The decision to focus on this population stems from the critical role EFL teachers play in Iran's educational system, coupled with the distinctive pressures and expectations they experience. By integrating insights from prior empirical and theoretical work, this study seeks to provide a holistic understanding that can inform more effective policies and professional development initiatives.

Specifically, the study is guided by the following research questions:

1. Does a significant relationship exist between teachers' professional attitudes and the performance of Iranian EFL high school teachers?
2. Does a significant relationship exist between teachers' welfare and the performance of Iranian EFL high school teachers?
3. Does a significant relationship exist between teachers' job satisfaction and the performance of Iranian EFL high school teachers?

3. METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

This study adopted a correlational research design to investigate the relationships among Iranian EFL high school teachers' professional attitude, welfare, job satisfaction, and job performance. Utilizing a quantitative approach, the study sought to examine the associations between these variables without manipulating any conditions or assigning participants to experimental groups. The research relied on standardized, validated self-report questionnaires administered in English, ensuring that data collection was systematic and comparable across the sample. By employing statistical analyses such as Pearson correlation, the study aimed to identify the strength and direction of relationships among the measured constructs. This non-experimental design was appropriate for the study's goal of exploring naturally occurring patterns and interrelations among psychological and occupational factors within a real-world educational context, thereby providing insights that can inform future research and policy decisions in the field of teacher development.

Participants

This study involved 205 Iranian EFL high school teachers from various regions of Iran. A convenience sampling method was employed, as described by [Daniel \(2012\)](#), whereby participants were recruited based on their accessibility and willingness to participate ([Etikan et al., 2016](#)). Recruitment was conducted both in person at schools and via social media platforms to ensure a broader reach across different regions. Although significant efforts were made to include teachers from diverse parts of the country, it is important to acknowledge that the use of convenience sampling may limit the representativeness of the sample. In contrast to multi-stage area sampling, which systematically ensures geographical representation, convenience sampling relies on voluntary participation and accessibility. Therefore, the findings of this study should be interpreted with caution, as they may not be fully generalizable to the entire population of Iranian EFL teachers.

The demographic characteristics of the sample are as follows: Of the 205 participants, 125 were male teachers (61%) and 80 were female teachers (39%), and the mean age was 37.2 years (SD = 8.4), indicating a relatively broad age range among respondents. Participants also varied in their teaching experience, with 27% having 1-5 years, 38% having 6-10 years, 21% having 11-15 years, and 14% having 16-20 years of experience. Regarding educational qualifications, 45% of the teachers held a bachelor's degree, another 45% held a master's degree, and 10% possessed a doctoral degree. Furthermore, the majority of respondents (77%) taught in public schools, while 23% worked in private schools. These details provide a comprehensive overview of the participants, ensuring that each demographic characteristic is clearly described and incorporated into more cohesive paragraphs, thereby addressing the concern regarding underdeveloped paragraphing.

Instruments

The study employed four validated instruments for data collection: the Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (JSQ) (Spector, 1985), the Teacher Professional Attitude Scale (TPAS) (Khodamoradi & Maghsoudi, 2023), the EFL TJPQ (Moafian & Pishghadam, 2009), and the Teacher Welfare Scale (TWS) (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011). All instruments were administered in English, as the participants were language teachers with advanced proficiency in the language.

To provide greater transparency and address reporting standards, detailed information about each instrument is included here. The JSQ, developed by Spector (1985), consists of 36 items. These items are distributed across nine subcomponents: pay, promotion, supervision, fringe benefits, contingent rewards, operating conditions, coworkers, nature of work, and communication, with four items per subcomponent. For example, the pay subcomponent includes items such as "I feel I am being paid a fair amount for the work I do," and the coworkers subcomponent features statements like "I like the people I work with." The internal consistency reliability (KR-21) for the overall JSQ in the present study was .77. The reliabilities for the subcomponents ranged from .71 (operating conditions) to .83 (supervision), with all subscales exceeding the recommended threshold of .70 (see Table 4 for details).

The TPAS, created and validated by Khodamoradi and Maghsoudi (2023), contains 24 items that are organized into three subcomponents: attitudes toward compensation and social status, perceptions of professional skills, and views on the work environment. Sample items illustrating these subcomponents include "Teachers in our country are paid enough" (compensation), "Teachers play a key role in our society" (social status), and "Our current workplace in education is a healthy work environment" (work environment). The KR-21 reliability for the total TPAS was .76, with subcomponent reliabilities as follows: compensation and social status (.74), professional skills (.79), and work environment (.72).

The EFL TJPQ, designed and validated by Moafian and Pishghadam (2009), includes 47 items divided among five subcomponents: subject matter knowledge, teaching skills, interpersonal relations, classroom management, and professional development. For instance, items such as "I have a good knowledge of subject matter" (subject knowledge), "I am friendly towards learners" (interpersonal relations), and "I use extra instructional materials such as tapes, movies, etc." (teaching skills) represent the diversity of the areas assessed. The overall reliability for this instrument was .84. The reliabilities for the five subcomponents were: subject matter knowledge (.81), teaching skills (.82), interpersonal relations (.78), classroom management (.79), and professional development (.76).

Finally, the TWS developed by Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2011) comprises 25 items grouped into four subcomponents: physical work environment, work-life balance, professional support and

development, and compensation and benefits. Representative items include “The physical work environment is well-maintained and conducive to teaching” (work environment), “I am able to maintain a healthy work-life balance” (work-life balance), and “The school provides opportunities for professional development and growth” (professional support). The KR-21 reliability for the total TWS was .78, with subcomponent reliabilities as follows: physical work environment (.75), work-life balance (.80), professional support and development (.76), and compensation and benefits (.73).

Procedure

The data for the study were collected during the 2023–2024 academic year. Necessary approvals were obtained from the Iranian Ministry of Education and school principals to conduct the research. All participants signed a consent form, and the study was approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) to ensure ethical compliance. Teachers were informed about the study’s objectives and assured that their responses would remain confidential (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The majority of participants completed the four instruments (JSQ, TPAS, TWS, and EFL TJPQ) in a single sitting during their free time at school, with the researcher present to address any questions or provide clarification as needed. On average, completing the questionnaires required 40–50 minutes. Additionally, the questionnaires were distributed via social media platforms to ensure a diverse participant pool. To achieve a high response rate, the researcher followed up with participants and sent reminders. Ultimately, 205 completed questionnaires were collected, yielding a response rate of 92% (Fincham, 2008).

The data collected from participants were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software, version 26. Initially, the dataset was examined for both univariate and multivariate outliers. Univariate outliers were identified using the z-score method, where values exceeding ± 3.29 were flagged as outliers (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2019). Multivariate outliers were detected using Mahalanobis Distance (MD), with a p-value below 0.001 indicating their presence (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2019). The normality of the data was evaluated by examining skewness and kurtosis indices. Skewness values within ± 3 and kurtosis values below 10 were considered indicative of a normal distribution (Kline, 2015).

The reliability of the four instruments (JSQ, TPAS, TWS, and the EFL TJPQ) was determined using Kuder-Richardson 21 (KR-21) coefficients, with values above 0.70 deemed acceptable (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). To address the research questions, Pearson correlation analyses were conducted to explore the relationships between teacher professional attitude (measured by the TPAS), teacher welfare (measured by the TWS), teacher job satisfaction (measured by the JSQ), and teacher performance (measured by the EFL TJPQ). The assumptions of linearity and homoscedasticity were verified using scatterplots (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2019). All statistical tests were performed at a significance level of $p < 0.05$.

4. RESULTS

This study aimed to examine the extent to which three variables—teachers’ professional attitude, welfare, and job satisfaction—were associated with their performance. The research questions were investigated using Pearson correlation analysis, which requires that there are no significant univariate or multivariate outliers, that the data are normally distributed, that there is a linear relationship between the variables, and that homoscedasticity (i.e., equal variances) is present. The last two assumptions are addressed later in the discussion of the research questions, while the remaining assumptions are outlined below.

As previously noted, Pearson correlation analysis relies on the data being normally distributed and the absence of significant univariate and multivariate outliers. To identify univariate outliers, standardized scores (z-scores) for professional attitude, welfare, job satisfaction, and performance were calculated. All z-scores fell within the acceptable range of ± 3.29 , as shown in Table 2. Based on this, it was concluded that the dataset did not contain any significant univariate outliers, using the threshold of ± 3.29 as recommended by (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2019).

Table 1: Testing Lack of Significant Univariate and Multivariate Outliers

	N	Minimum	Maximum
Zscore: Teacher professional attitude	205	-2.24	2.44
Zscore: Teacher welfare	205	-2.79	2.21
Zscore: Job satisfaction	205	-2.81	2.69
Zscore: Teachers' performance	205	-3.01	2.25
Mahalanobis Distance	205	.31	15.32
Critical Value of χ^2 (.001, 4)			18.46

Table 1 includes the maximum MD value, which was calculated to identify potential multivariate outliers (i.e., outliers based on a combination of four variables). The highest MD value of 22.25 was below the critical chi-square threshold for four variables at the 0.001 significance level (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2019). This indicates that no significant multivariate outliers were present in the dataset.

The R package MVN, developed by Korkmaz et al. (2014), was also utilized to verify the absence of both univariate and multivariate outliers. The results confirmed that the dataset did not contain any significant univariate or multivariate outliers. If any had been present, the R package would have identified them by printing the corresponding case IDs, but the output displayed “Not Available” (NA), confirming the absence of outliers.

After ensuring there were no significant outliers, the data were further examined for univariate and multivariate normality. Table 2 presents the skewness and kurtosis indices, which were assessed to evaluate univariate normality. Since both indices fell within the acceptable range of ± 2 , it was concluded that the data met the assumption of normality. The ± 2 threshold for normality has been supported by various researchers (Bae & Bachman, 2010; George & Mallery, 2020). However, it is worth mentioning that Zhu et al. (2019) suggested a broader range of ± 3 , while Watkins (2021) proposed that skewness should remain below ± 2 , and kurtosis should be evaluated against a broader threshold of ± 7 .

Table 2: Testing Assumption of Univariate Normality

	N	Skewness		Kurtosis	
		Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Teacher professional attitude	205	.011	.170	-.571	.338
Teacher welfare	205	-.158	.170	-.359	.338
Job satisfaction	205	-.148	.170	-.142	.338
Teachers' performance	205	-.428	.170	-.130	.338

The results of the multivariate tests of skewness and kurtosis are shown in Table 3. The non-significant results indicated that the assumptions of multivariate skewness (Mardia = 19.98, $p = .458$) and kurtosis (Mardia = -1.33, $p = .183$) were retained. It is worth mentioning that these indices were computed using the R package of ‘MVN’ developed by (Korkmaz et al., 2014).

Table 3: Testing Assumption of Multivariate Normality

Mardia’s Index of Multivariate	Index	Sig.
Skewness	19.98	.458
Kurtosis	-1.33	.183

Table 4 shows the descriptive statistics and KR-21 reliability indices for job satisfaction, welfare, professional attitude, and performance. The four variables enjoyed KR-21 reliability indices of .77, .78, .76, and .84, respectively. These reliability indices can be considered as appropriate based on the criterion suggested by Fulcher and Davidson (2007), who believed that an appropriate instrument should enjoy at least a KR-21 index of .70.

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics and KR-21 Reliability Indices

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance	KR-21
Teacher professional attitude	205	54.45	10.898	118.769	.76
Teacher welfare	205	58.90	11.799	139.226	.78
Job satisfaction	205	67.80	13.467	181.370	.77
Teachers’ performance	205	94.57	18.822	354.266	.84

Exploring First RQ

The RQ stated that “1. Does a significant relationship exist between teachers’ professional attitudes and the performance of Iranian EFL high school teachers?”. The results shown in Table 5 ($r(203) = .688$, indicating a large effect size, $p < .05$) indicated that there was a significant correlation between teachers’ professional attitude and performance.

Table 5: Pearson Correlation between Teachers’ Professional Attitude and Performance

		Performance
Teachers’ professional attitude	Pearson Correlation	.688**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	205

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

It was mentioned earlier that Pearson Correlation assumes linearity of relationships between the two variables and homoscedasticity. Both of the assumptions were probed through Scatter Plot 1. Since the spread of dots did not show any rising-and-falling patterns, it was concluded that the relationship between teachers’ professional attitude and performance was linear. Moreover, the spread of dots did not form any funnel shape; i.e., narrow at one end, and wide at the other end. These results supported the assumption of homoscedasticity.

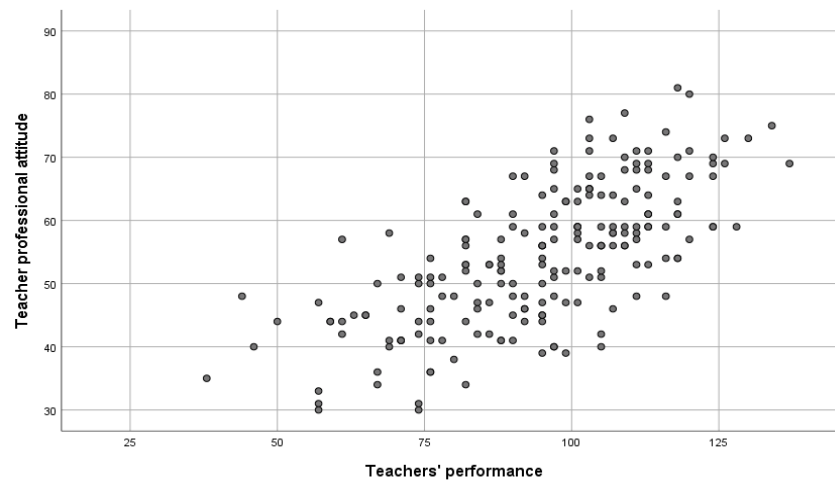


Figure 1: Testing Assumptions of Linearity and Homoscedasticity between Teachers' Professional Attitude and Performance

Exploring Second RQ

The second RQ stated that “2. Does a significant relationship exist between teachers’ welfare and the performance of Iranian EFL high school teachers?”. The results shown in Table 6 ($r(203) = .809$, indicating a large effect size, $p < .05$) indicated that there was a significant correlation between teachers’ welfare and performance.

Table 6: Pearson Correlation between Teachers’ Welfare and Performance

		Performance
Teachers’ welfare	Pearson Correlation	.809**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	205

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

Scatter Plot 2 evaluates the conditions of linearity and homoscedasticity. As the distribution of points lacked any noticeable upward or downward trends, it was determined that the connection between teachers’ welfare and performance was linear. Furthermore, the arrangement of points did not exhibit a funnel-like pattern, such as being narrower on one side and wider on the other. These findings confirmed the validity of the homoscedasticity assumption.

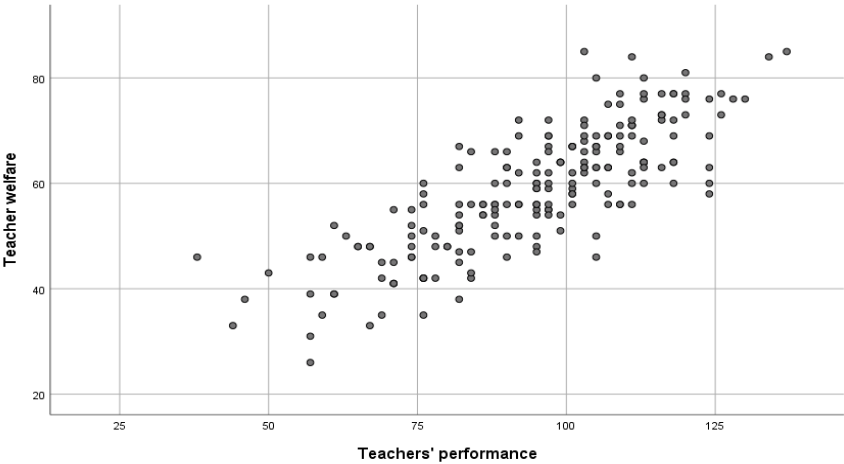


Figure 2: Testing Assumptions of Linearity and Homoscedasticity between Teachers’ Welfare and Performance

Exploring Third RQ

The third research question asked, “Does a significant relationship exist between teachers’ job satisfaction and the performance of Iranian EFL high school teachers?” The data presented in [Table 7](#) ($r = .639$, $p < .05$, $n = 205$) demonstrated a significant and strong positive correlation between teachers’ job satisfaction and performance.

Table 7: Pearson Correlation between Teachers’ Job Satisfaction and Performance

		Performance
Job Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.639**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	205
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).		

[Scatter Plot 3](#) investigates the requirements of linearity and homoscedasticity. As the arrangement of points did not display any noticeable upward or downward trends, it was inferred that the relationship between teachers’ job satisfaction and performance followed a linear pattern. Additionally, the points did not form a funnel-like distribution, such as being narrow at one end and wider at the other. These observations confirmed the assumption of homoscedasticity.

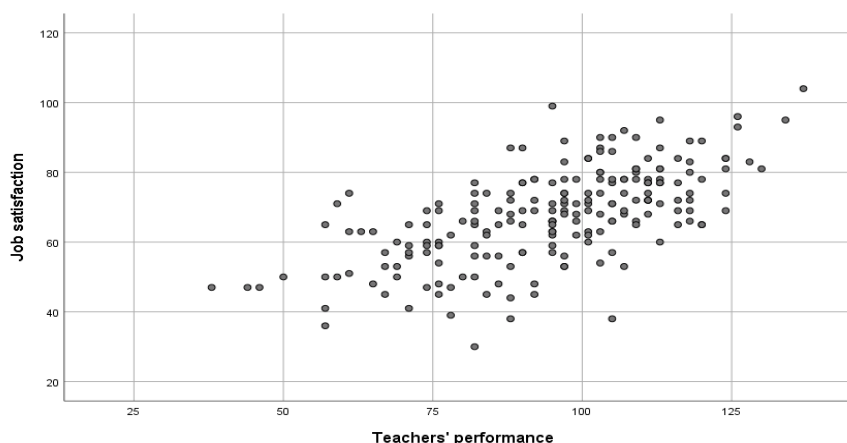


Figure 3: Testing Assumptions of Linearity and Homoscedasticity between Teachers' Job Satisfaction and Performance

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The findings of this study provide robust empirical support for the proposition that professional attitude, welfare, and job satisfaction are each significantly and positively correlated with teacher performance among Iranian EFL high school teachers. The magnitude of these relationships—particularly the strong associations between welfare and performance ($r = .809$), professional attitude and performance ($r = .688$), and job satisfaction and performance ($r = .639$)—not only affirms but also extends the existing body of literature on teacher effectiveness. In critically engaging with prior research, it is evident that while the centrality of these constructs has been widely acknowledged (Collie et al., 2012; Harding et al., 2019; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2007), the current study's context-specific findings provide new insights into the unique interplay of these variables within the Iranian EFL context. Unlike previous research, which has often examined these relationships in isolation or within broader educational settings, this study's comprehensive, simultaneous analysis of all three predictors—professional attitude, welfare, and job satisfaction—offers a more nuanced understanding of their collective and individual importance for teacher performance, particularly within the sociocultural, linguistic, and institutional realities of EFL education in Iran.

The observed strong correlation between professional attitude and teacher performance ($r = .688$) is consistent with the literature emphasizing the foundational role of professionalism, ethical commitment, and positive dispositions in effective teaching (Hargreaves, 2000; Lin, 2013; Sockett, 1993). This finding resonates with Agcam and Babanoglu (2016) and Saberi and Amiri (2016) assertions that teachers' beliefs, values, and sense of professional agency are critical drivers of pedagogical effectiveness, especially in contexts marked by systemic constraints. However, the present study's findings contrast with those of Aktan et al. (2020) and Manzano and Magalona (2023), who reported a more context-dependent and at times ambiguous relationship between professional attitudes and teacher outcomes. The strength of the association found in this study may be attributed to the particular pressures and responsibilities placed upon EFL teachers in Iran, where the intersection of language policy, cultural expectations, and resource limitations likely intensifies the importance of professional commitment and adaptability. Furthermore, the robust reliability indices of the professional attitude measure in this study ($KR-21 = .76$) reinforce the

validity of these findings and suggest a well-grounded operationalization of professionalism that captures both attitudinal and behavioral dimensions.

Turning to teacher welfare, the exceptionally high correlation with performance ($r = .809$) not only aligns with the global literature linking teacher well-being to effectiveness (Harding et al., 2019; Klusmann et al., 2008; McCallum & Price, 2010) but also highlights the unique vulnerabilities and demands faced by EFL teachers in the Iranian context. This finding is congruent with the studies by Mofidi et al. (2025), Tran et al. (2024), and Zarfsaz and Uçar (2023), which underscore how welfare challenges in ELT settings—ranging from administrative burdens and economic pressures to shifting institutional demands—can have a profound impact on teachers' psychological and professional functioning. Notably, the current study's results suggest that welfare-related factors may exert an even greater influence on performance than professional attitude or job satisfaction, a pattern that diverges from some prior research where attitudinal variables were found to be equally or more salient (e.g. Murwaningsih, 2024). This discrepancy may reflect the heightened salience of welfare in a context where basic professional needs—such as manageable workloads, adequate resources, and economic security—are often under threat. The present findings thus reinforce the view put forth by Butt et al. (2005) and Collie et al. (2012) that welfare is not merely an ancillary concern, but a central determinant of teachers' capacity to fulfill their instructional and organizational roles.

The significant and positive relationship between job satisfaction and performance ($r = .639$) found in this study corroborates decades of research in organizational psychology and educational studies (Herzberg et al., 1959; Judge et al., 2001; Usop et al., 2013; Wolomasi et al., 2019). In line with the Job Characteristics Model (Hackman & Oldham, 1976) and value-percept theory (Locke, 1969), the results indicate that when teachers experience alignment between their values and work conditions—as reflected in their satisfaction levels—they are more likely to demonstrate higher job performance. This is particularly salient in the EFL context, as illustrated by Kassabgy et al. (2001), who found that intrinsic motivators and meaningful professional engagement were key to satisfaction among language teachers. However, the slightly weaker correlation between job satisfaction and performance, compared to welfare and attitude, may suggest that while satisfaction is vital, it is mediated by more immediate welfare and attitudinal factors—a finding echoed by Hendrawijaya et al. (2020), who identified complex, indirect pathways between satisfaction and performance. This nuanced relationship highlights the importance of considering the interplay of motivational, environmental, and psychological factors in understanding teacher effectiveness, particularly within contexts characterized by high stress and limited systemic support.

In synthesizing these findings with the broader literature, the current study underscores the necessity of a holistic, context-sensitive approach to understanding and enhancing teacher performance. The tripartite model—encompassing professional attitude, welfare, and job satisfaction—reveals both convergence and divergence with previous studies. While the positive associations observed here are consistent with global trends, the relative magnitude and ordering of these relationships reflect the particular exigencies of the Iranian EFL environment, where welfare emerges as a particularly potent factor. This suggests a context in which basic psychological and material needs may be especially pressing, shaping the extent to which teachers can actualize their professional values and derive satisfaction from their work. Furthermore, the high reliability of the measurement instruments and the rigorous statistical procedures employed lend credibility to these findings, positioning them as a valuable contribution to the international discourse on teacher effectiveness. Ultimately, this study not only affirms the interconnectedness

of attitude, welfare, and satisfaction for teacher performance but also highlights the importance of contextualizing these dynamics within specific educational, cultural, and policy frameworks.

Implications and Suggestions for Further Studies

The findings of this study highlight the complex and mutually reinforcing relationships among teacher professional attitudes, welfare, job satisfaction, and job performance in Iranian EFL high schools. The strong positive correlations observed suggest that fostering positive professional attitudes, ensuring comprehensive welfare support, and promoting job satisfaction are all essential for enhancing teacher performance and, ultimately, educational quality. These results underscore the need for educational policymakers and school leaders to adopt holistic and integrated strategies—such as ongoing professional development, improved workplace conditions, support for teacher autonomy, and expanded welfare initiatives—to empower teachers and sustain their motivation. By recognizing the central role of organizational culture, leadership style, and contextual factors in shaping these dynamics, stakeholders can more effectively implement reforms that advance both teacher well-being and student outcomes in the Iranian EFL context.

While this study offers valuable insights, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the correlational and cross-sectional design precludes any causal inferences regarding the observed relationships, limiting the interpretation to associations rather than directional effects. Second, the use of convenience sampling may restrict the generalizability of the findings, as participants were selected based on accessibility and willingness to participate, potentially resulting in an unrepresentative sample of Iranian EFL teachers. Additionally, reliance on self-report questionnaires, even when administered in English to proficient language teachers, may be subject to response bias or social desirability effects. The exclusive focus on high school EFL teachers also limits the applicability of the results to other educational levels or subject areas. Furthermore, the study did not control for potential confounding variables such as school resources, administrative support, or external pressures, which could influence the measured constructs.

In light of these limitations, future research should consider employing longitudinal or experimental designs to better explore causal relationships and dynamic changes over time among the variables studied. Expanding the scope of research to include teachers from diverse educational levels, regions, and subject areas would enhance the generalizability and richness of the findings. Incorporating mixed-methods or qualitative approaches could also provide a more nuanced understanding of the contextual and experiential factors influencing teacher attitudes, welfare, satisfaction, and performance. Additionally, examining the effects of specific interventions—such as mentoring programs, participatory leadership models, or initiatives aimed at improving work-life balance—would yield practical insights for evidence-based policy and practice.

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