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# A Cross-Cultural Study of Teacher Immunity: A Case of ESP Practitioners in Iran and Turkey

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**Abstract** The present study examined the extent to which Iranian and Turkish ESP practitioners' income, age, psychological well-being at work, dispositions toward loving pedagogy, teaching enjoyment, and emotion regulation predicted their productive and maladaptive teacher immunity types. To this end, the researchers selected 315 Iranian ESP practitioners and 329 Turkish ESP practitioners in different cities in Iran and Turkey using convenience sampling. Moreover, they used six reliable and valid questionnaires to examine the ESP practitioners' above-mentioned personal and affective factors. Lastly, they used Binary Logistic Regression and Chi-square tests to analyze the data. The results showed that while Iranian ESP practitioners' income, age, and teaching enjoyment were significant factors in their immunity, Turkish practitioners' psychological well-being at work, teaching enjoyment, dispositions toward loving pedagogy, and emotion regulation significantly predicted their immunity types. Moreover, Turkish practitioners' immunity was more productive than that of Iranian practitioners. The results may provide guidelines on the development of ESP lecturer-education courses in foreign language contexts.

***Keywords:*** *Turkish ESP practitioners, Iranian ESP practitioners, Maladaptive teacher immunity, Productive teacher immunity, Teacher factors*

## 1. Introduction

The perusal of the research on culture indicates that this concept is likely to exert considerable influence on individuals' educational and instructional endeavours (Hofstede, 2002). The significant role of culture in these activities stems from the fact that it can shape learners' learning preferences, affect their perceptions of knowledge, and determine their communication patterns in academic settings (Hofstede, 1980). Furthermore, teachers' culture might influence their conceptions of their authority, affect their interaction with their learners, facilitate or prevent their use of culturally-responsive teaching practices, and result in the mitigation of cultural mismatches in their classes (Hofstede, 2002). Accordingly, the examination of the cross-cultural differences between teachers' characteristics is likely to provide a better understanding of the extent to which their culture influences their pedagogical choices and their ability to deal with stress-inducing factors

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(Hofstede, 1980). In language teaching, the related studies (e.g., Deng et al., 2022; Khalili et al., 2025; Zarei & Dobakhti, 2024; Zohrabi & Khalili, 2023) have focused on teacher factors in recent years. Li et al. (2019) defined these factors as the teacher-internal attributes that are likely to have a direct effect on teachers' pedagogical efficacy and an indirect impact on language learners' success. Tandler et al. (2019) classified these attributes into three main categories, including cognitive, affective, and personal attributes. As they explained, cognitive attributes encompass the variables, such as critical thinking ability, that determine teachers' ability to process and use second language information in the process of instruction. Affective factors specify the attributes, such as burnout, that have a major impact on teachers' psychological health and composure (Tandler et al., 2019). Lastly, personal factors involve certain biological (e.g., gender & age), social (e.g., native language), and occupation-related (e.g., experience & income) variables that can affect teachers' instructional practices in their classes.

The definition of the affective language teacher factors highlights their affinity with the main pillars of positive psychology (Dewaele et al., 2018; Dobakhti, 2020). More specifically, similar to positive psychology that intends to promote individuals' well-being, studies of teacher factors endeavor to provide a better understanding of the positive aspects of teachers' affective domain that facilitate and expedite their academic and pedagogical growth in their settings (Dewaele et al., 2018). An examination of positive psychology factors shows that a number of them, such as grit (e.g., Liu et al., 2023), self-efficacy (e.g., Soodmand Afshar & Moradifar, 2021), and mindfulness (e.g., Li, 2022), have been recurrent research lines in second/foreign language instruction. Notwithstanding, as Dewaele and Li (2022) noted, these variables do not reflect the totality of language teachers' psychological status.

The above-mentioned issue prompted the researchers to search for the teacher factors that adequately expounded on teachers' psychological profiles (Dewaele et al., 2019). In this regard, Hiver (2015) developed the construct of Teacher Immunity (TI) and defined it as language teachers' psychological shield. The multilayered nature of TI and its significant role in teachers' mental health have prompted researchers to focus on its diverse aspects. The pertinent studies have predominantly followed four research lines. The first line of research (e.g., Aliakbari & Fadaeian, 2023) has made an effort to determine the extent to which language teachers' instructional practices and teaching strategies are affected by their TI. The second research line (e.g., Haseli Songhori et al., 2018) has endeavored to specify the productive or maladaptive nature of language teachers' TI in their workplace. The third line of empirical studies of TI (e.g., Khazaeenezhad & Davoudinasab, 2022) has investigated the probable relationships between teachers' personality traits and their TI. Lastly, the fourth research line (e.g., Rahmati et al., 2019) has examined the impacts of various academic settings on language teachers' TI development.

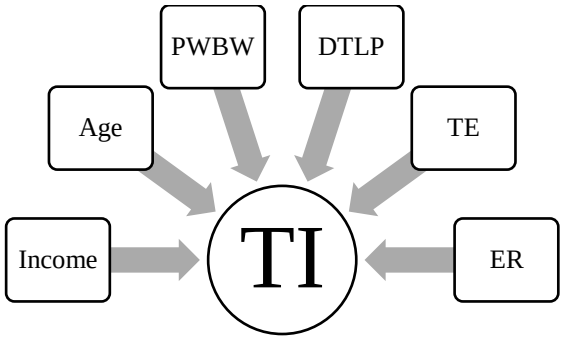
Notwithstanding, the pertinent studies of TI have disregarded its links with the other teacher factors. The relevant factors encompass both teachers' personal attributes such as their age and income (e.g., Klassen & Chiu, 2010), and their affective variables including their Psychological Well-Being at Work (PWBW) (e.g., Dagenais-Desmarais & Savoie, 2012) Dispositions Towards Loving Pedagogy (DTLP) (Li & Miao, 2022), Teaching Enjoyment (TE) (e.g., Proietti Ergün & Dewaele, 2021; Proietti Ergün & Ersoz Demirdag, 2022), and Emotion Regulation (ER) (e.g., Greenier et al., 2021; Zohrabi & Khalili, 2024b). The justification to put these variables together stems from Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory. In his theory, Bandura (1986) accentuated the fact that reciprocal determinism constitutes the main principle of human behavior. According to this principle, individuals' personal attributes (e.g., age), contextual factors (e.g., work hours), and affective and cognitive factors (e.g., personality traits & cognitive styles) influence their behavior and attitudes in diverse situational contexts. Accordingly, ESP practitioners' personal factors, including their income and age, along with their affective factors, including their PWBW, DTLP, TE, and ER, can predict their productive and maladaptive TI that constitutes their protective behavior against various stress-inducing factors in their academic setting. Figure 1 provides a visual representation of the hypothesized model.

TI studies are likely to play a more essential role in ESP courses compared to general English courses owing to the pragmatic nature of these courses. More specifically, ESP lecturers' psychological composure constitutes a main prerequisite to their capability to apprise their students of the ESP

language skills and aspects that are necessary for performing their occupation-related tasks (Dobakhti & Khalili, 2024; Khalili et al., 2022; Mohammadnia & Khalili, 2014a, b, c).

**Figure 1**
*Conceptual Model of the Study*






The significant role of TI in language teachers' mental health and pedagogical efficacy highlights the necessity of its examination in different language courses, including the ESP course. ESP practitioners' TI can have major impacts on learners' development of the necessary language skills that facilitate their mastery over the technical skills of their occupation (Khalili & Zohrabi, 2024; Zohrabi & Khalili, 2023, 2024a, 2025). This issue highlights the need for empirical studies of TI in numerous ESP courses, including the Civil Engineering ESP courses, among others. Finally, TI studies have been carried out in single countries and have not compared language teachers' TI with that of their peers in other countries.

Considering these issues, the present study strived to determine the role of ESP practitioners' personal and affective factors, including their income, age, PWBW, DTLP, TE, and ER, in the prediction of their TI in the language contexts of Iran and Turkey. The selection of these countries as the research contexts stemmed from their proximity and their similar ESP education systems. More specifically, the researchers attempted to specify the similarities and differences between teachers' TI in two neighboring countries whose ESP teaching conditions were analogous to each other. The similarity between the ESP teaching systems of Iran and Turkey emanated from the fact that in both of these countries, ESP courses constitute a very small section of university students' total curriculum and aim to provide them with the ability to perform their occupation-related tasks in second language contexts in a very short period of time. As a result, in both of these countries, ESP instruction constitutes a very challenging task for ESP practitioners. In light of the significance of research on ESP practitioners' TI, the study attempted to provide a better understanding of the variables that affect these practitioners' mental health in their academic settings in similar educational circumstances. Considering these objectives, the study strived to answer the following questions:

1. Do Iranian ESP practitioners' income, age, PWBW, DTLP, TE, and ER predict their productive and maladaptive TI?
2. Do Turkish ESP practitioners' income, age, PWBW, DTLP, TE, and ER predict their productive and maladaptive TI?
3. Are there any differences between the predictors of Iranian and Turkish ESP practitioners' productive and maladaptive TI?

## 2. Theoretical Framework

### 2.1. Teacher Immunity

Hiver (2015) developed the concept of TI to provide a better understanding of language teachers' psychological status. In his later work, Hiver (2017) focused on its structure and particularized its seven underlying sub-components, including openness to change, coping, burnout, teaching self-efficacy, attitude towards teaching, resilience, and affectivity. As he explained, openness to change refers to teachers' perspectives on new ideas in their field and their proclivity to take advantage of recent

innovations to ameliorate their instructional efficacy. Coping encompasses teachers' capability to utilize affective strategies to deal with the sources of stress in their classes. Burnout comprises teachers' physical and psychological exhaustion that stems from the prolonged stressors in their academic settings. Teaching self-efficacy determines teachers' perspectives on their own pedagogical capabilities. Attitudes towards teaching involve teachers' opinions about the status of their profession in their relevant society. Resilience refers to teachers' ability to resolve their emotional crises without being affected by them in an unduly way. Lastly, affectivity comprises the whole range of teachers' emotions in the process of language teaching.

The scrutiny of the sub-components of TI paved the way for examining its types along with their relevant features. In this regard, Hiver and Dörnyei (2017) classified language teachers' TI into two main categories, including productive TI and maladaptive TI. As they explained, productive TI is comparable to an efficient immune system of the body that safeguards teachers against diverse stressors and empowers them to deal with sources of stress by capitalizing on their inner resources. On the other hand, they likened maladaptive TI to an overactive immune system that considers harmless factors, such as language teaching innovations, as threats and turns teachers into cynical practitioners who oppose changes and new ideas. Hiver and Dörnyei (2017) stated that each of the TI types may be affected by teachers' personal and affective factors.

### 2.2. Teacher Factors

In the field of language instruction, teachers' income has received considerable attention (Klassen & Chiu, 2010). Kim and Roth (2011) defined income as teachers' monthly wages and their pertinent bonuses. Moreover, as Kim and Roth (2011) pointed out, language teachers' age is another factor that has been extensively examined in pertinent studies. They defined age as the biological age of teachers' body and argued that the maturation in age can have a significant effect on teachers' coping and their language teaching beliefs.

Besides, Deng et al. (2022) noted that teachers' PWBW is a significant affective factor that determines their satisfaction with their workplace experiences. They itemized five main sub-components of this construct, including feeling of competency at work, thriving at work, interpersonal fit at work, perceived recognition at work, and desire for involvement at work. Furthermore, Yin et al. (2019) stated that teachers' DTLP is one of their affective factors that encompasses the extent to which they understand their learners' needs and wants by empathizing with them. Accordingly, they particularized six sub-components of DTLP, including kind acts, intimacy, classroom community, forgiveness, acceptance of diversity, and bonding and sacrifice. In addition, Dewaele and MacIntyre (2014) noted that TE is a main teacher factor that refers to the satisfaction that language teachers derive from the process of language instruction and their learners' acquisition of the target language. In light of this definition, Proietti Ergün and Dewaele (2021) itemized three sub-components of TE, including learner appreciation, social enjoyment, and personal enjoyment. Finally, Greenier et al. (2021) stated that ER is a teacher factor that determines teachers' ability to suppress their negative emotions by capitalizing on their internal resources. Accordingly, Gross and John (2003) particularized two sub-components of ER, including expressive suppression and cognitive reappraisal.

The scrutiny of research on TI shows that this concept is still in its infancy and has not been adequately investigated. More specifically, a number of studies (e.g., Aliakbari & Fadaeian, 2023) have tried to determine the links between teachers' TI and their pedagogical practices, such as using translanguaging. Another group of studies (e.g., Haseli Songhori et al., 2018; Hiver & Dörnyei, 2017; Maghsoudi, 2021) have examined teachers' dominant TI types in different academic settings. Moreover, certain studies (e.g., Khazaeenezhad & Davoudinasab, 2022) have endeavored to specify the links between teachers' personality traits and their TI. Lastly, a few studies (e.g., Rahmati et al., 2019) have investigated the difference between teachers' TI in school and language institute settings.

Nonetheless, the above-mentioned studies have disregarded certain issues in the research on the fledgling concept of TI. First, they have focused on general English courses and have not dealt with ESP courses. Second, these studies have not examined the predictive role of instructors' personal and affective factors in their TI. Third, they have focused on language teachers in one country without

dealing with other countries. Finally, they have not examined the probable differences between language teachers' TI in different contexts. The present study endeavored to address these research inadequacies in the contexts of Iran and Turkey.

### 2.3. Cultural Contexts of Iran and Turkey



The comparison between Iran and Turkey indicates that while they are geographically close and share some historical ties, they exhibit distinct cultural characteristics when analyzed through Hofstede's (1980) cultural dimensions theory. More specifically, the scrutiny of the cultural context of Iran indicates that it highlights high power distance and values a hierarchical society by respecting elders and authorities. Furthermore, Iran's culture is predominantly a collectivist culture that values strong family ties and the development of social networks. In addition, it is marked by high uncertainty avoidance owing to the fact that Iranian people prefer clear rules in diverse situational contexts. Lastly, the cultural context of Iran highlights restraint since it regulates individuals' behavior using strict social norms (Alizadeh et al., 2024).

On the other hand, Turkish culture shows moderate power distance and integrates hierarchical tendencies into egalitarian ones. In addition, it reflects more individualistic proclivities. Furthermore, the cultural context of this country is masculine in nature and values competition, assertiveness, and achievement. Moreover, Turkish culture is highly indulgence-supportive and values individuals' expression of their needs and desires (Alizadeh et al., 2024). Nonetheless, Turkish culture is very similar to Iranian culture in terms of uncertainty avoidance and demonstrates a preference for clear rules and structures (Alizadeh et al., 2024).

## 3. Methodology

### 3.1. Participants

In light of the objectives, the researchers used convenience sampling in order to select Iranian and Turkish ESP practitioners. In this process, 315 Iranian ESP practitioners, including 168 male and 147 female practitioners, were selected as Iranian participants. Moreover, 329 ESP practitioners, including 173 male and 156 female practitioners, were considered to be Turkish participants. Both of these participant groups were asked to fill out the consent forms for the study.

Iranian ESP practitioners ranged in age from 31 to 64 and had a Ph.D. degree in Applied Linguistics. Moreover, they were native speakers of Turkish, Persian, Kurdish, Arabic, Mazandarani, Gilaki, or Balochi. The ESP course teaching experience of these participants was in the range of 2 to 28 years. In addition, Turkish ESP practitioners were in the age range of 37 to 61 and were Applied Linguistics Ph.D. holders. These participants spoke Turkish as their mother tongue and ranged in experience from 4 to 25 years.

### 3.2. Instruments

The researchers used six questionnaires to gather the data. The English versions of all of the questionnaires were administered to Iranian and Turkish participants. Five of these questionnaires were Likert-scale instruments. Therefore, the researchers used Cronbach's alpha (α) measure to examine their reliability in a pilot study in the contexts of Iran and Turkey. The pilot study involved 43 Iranian and 47 Turkish ESP practitioners whose characteristics were similar to the characteristics of the participants in the main study. The following section provides information on these instruments.

#### *3.2.1. Language Teacher Immunity Questionnaire*

In this study, the researchers used Hiver's (2017) TI questionnaire to examine ESP practitioners' TI in Iran and Turkey. This self-report instrument involves 39 Likert-scale items that are rated on a 7-point scale in the range of strongly disagree to strongly agree. The relevant items focus on seven major sub-components of TI, including openness to change, coping, burnout, teaching self-efficacy, attitude towards teaching, resilience, and affectivity. Reliability analysis showed that the reliability indices of this questionnaire were. 87 and .84 in Iranian and Turkish contexts, respectively, and it could be used in the present study. The cut-off point of this questionnaire was 156. Therefore, TI scores that were

below 156 were classified into the maladaptive TI category. On the other hand, the scores that were above 156 were classified into the productive TI category.

*3.2.2. Demographic Information Questionnaire*

The researchers used a demographic information questionnaire to determine Iranian and Turkish ESP practitioners' gender, age, income (in U.S. dollars), experience, and native language background.



*3.2.3. Psychological Well-Being at Work Questionnaire*

The researchers used Dagenais-Desmarais and Savoie's (2012) PWBW questionnaire to examine Iranian and Turkish ESP practitioners' PWBW. This questionnaire involves 25 Likert-scale items. These items are rated on a 6-point scale ranging from completely disagree to completely agree and examine five main sub-components of PWBW, including feeling of competency at work, perceived recognition at work, desire for involvement at work, thriving at work, and interpersonal fit at work. The results showed that the reliability indices of this instrument were. 81 and .85 in the contexts of Iran and Turkey, respectively, and it could be used in the present study.

*3.2.4. Dispositions towards Loving Pedagogy Questionnaire*

The researchers used Yin et al.'s (2019) DTLP questionnaire to examine ESP practitioners' DTLP in the contexts of Iran and Turkey. This instrument encompasses 29 items that are rated on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. They examine six sub-components of DTLP, including kind acts, intimacy, classroom community, forgiveness, acceptance of diversity, and bonding and sacrifice. Based on the results, the reliability indices of this questionnaire were .87 and .83 in the context of Iran and Turkey, respectively. Consequently, it was used in the present study.

*3.2.5. Foreign Language Teaching Enjoyment Questionnaire*

The researchers utilized Proietti Ergün and Dewaele's (2021) TE questionnaire to examine Iranian and Turkish ESP practitioners' TE. This instrument encompasses nine items that are rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The pertinent items examine three sub-components of TE, including learner appreciation, social enjoyment, and personal enjoyment. Based on the results of reliability analysis, the questionnaire was satisfactorily reliable in Iranian ($\alpha$=.87) and Turkish ($\alpha$=.89) contexts and could be used for collecting the required data in this study.

*3.2.6. Emotion Regulation Questionnaire*

The researchers used Gross and John's (2003) ER questionnaire to specify ESP practitioners' ER in Iranian and Turkish contexts. This questionnaire comprises 10 items that are rated on a 7-point Likert scale in the range of strongly agree to strongly disagree. These items examine two sub-components of ER, including expressive suppression and cognitive reappraisal. According to the results of reliability analysis, the reliability indices of this questionnaire were. 82 and .88 in the contexts of Iran and Turkey, respectively, and it could be used to gather the relevant data in this study.

**3.3. Procedure**

*3.3.1. Data Collection*

In the present study, first, the researchers contacted the engineering departments of different public universities in fourteen cities in Iran and asked their heads to provide them with the contact information of their ESP practitioners. Second, the researchers called these practitioners and invited them to participate in the study. At the end of this process, 315 Iranian ESP practitioners, including 168 male and 147 female practitioners, completed the written consent forms of the study. Third, the researchers visited the websites of diverse universities in sixteen cities in Turkey, determined the practitioners who taught the ESP courses for Civil Engineering students, and used emails to invite them to participate in the study. As a result, 329 Turkish ESP practitioners, including 173 male and 156 female practitioners, filled out the consent forms.

Fourth, the researchers took advantage of Google Forms to administer TI, demographic information, PWBW, DTLP, TE, and ER questionnaires of the study to Iranian and Turkish participants. Iranian participants and Turkish participants provided the researchers with the completed questionnaires in a four-month and two-month period, respectively. Lastly, the researchers performed the data analysis using SPSS 25.



*3.3.2. Data Analysis*

The researchers used Binary Logistic Regression (BLR) and the Chi-square test for independence to analyze the obtained data. More specifically, the researchers used BLR to specify the role of Iranian and Turkish ESP practitioners' income, age, PWBW, DTLP, TE, and ER (i.e., interval predictor variables) in the prediction of their productive and maladaptive TI (i.e., nominal criterion variable). The interval predictor variables were entered into the regression model in a step-wise way (Pallant, 2007). Moreover, they used the Chi-square test for independence to specify the significance of the differences between Iranian and Turkish ESP practitioners' productive and maladaptive TI categories.

### 3.4. Design

The researchers conducted the present study using a predictive correlational design. According to Creswell (2009), this design empowers the researchers to determine the degree to which a number of independent variables predict a certain dependent variable. Accordingly, in this study, the researchers used this design to specify the extent to which Iranian and Turkish ESP practitioners' income, age, PWBW, DTLP, TE, and ER (i.e., independent variables) explained the variance in their TI (i.e., dependent variable).

## 4. Results

This section presents the findings based on the research questions.

1. Do Iranian ESP practitioners' income, age, PWBW, DTLP, TE, and ER predict their productive and maladaptive TI?

Considering the aim of this question, the researchers used BLR to determine these factors. To this end, first, they examined the multicollinearity assumption of this test (Pallant, 2007). Preliminary data analysis indicated that all of the Tolerance values were larger than 0.1. Consequently, the multicollinearity assumption was not violated, and the researchers could examine model coefficients and test results to assess the goodness of fit of the relevant model. Table 1 provides the pertinent results.

**Table 1**
*Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficients for Iranian ESP Practitioners' TI*

| Test | Chi-Square | df | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Step | 91.582 | 6 | .000 |
| Block | 91.582 | 6 | .000 |
| Model | 91.582 | 6 | .000 |

According to Table 1, the results were significant ($p<0.05$), and the researchers had to scrutinize the goodness of fit. The analysis showed that the goodness of fit result was not significant ($X^2=14.739$, df =8, p=.192). Therefore, a summary of the model was scrutinized (Pallant, 2007). Table 2 shows these results.

**Table 2**
*Model Summary for Iranian ESP Practitioners' TI*

| -2 Log likelihood | Cox & Snell R Square | Nagelkerke R Square |
|---|---|---|
| 74.589 | .387 | .415 |

The values in Table 2 indicated that the model explained between 38.7 and 41.5 percent (i.e., R Square values multiplied by 100) of the variance in Iranian ESP practitioners' TI. Accordingly, contributions of predictor factors to these practitioners' TI were examined. Table 3 provides the pertinent results.

**Table 3**
*Factors in the Equation for Iranian ESP Practitioners' TI*

| Factor | Wald | Sig. |
|---|---|---|
| Income | 14.573 | .000 |
| Age | 6.935 | .003 |
| PWBW | .522 | .246 |
| DTLP | .187 | .762 |
| TE | 4.728 | .007 |
| ER | .347 | .581 |

The examination of the Wald scores and their relevant probability values in Table 3 highlighted the fact that Iranian ESP practitioners' income (14.573), age (6.935), and TE (4.728), respectively, made the strongest significant contribution to explaining their productive and maladaptive TI ($p<.05$).

2. Do Turkish ESP practitioners' income, age, PWBW, DTLP, TE, and ER predict their productive and maladaptive TI?

Based on the aim of this question, the researchers examined the multicollinearity assumption of BLR. Based on the results, all of the Tolerance values were larger than 0.1, and the multicollinearity assumption was not violated. Therefore, the researchers scrutinized model coefficients test results for assessing the goodness of fit of the pertinent model. Table 4 shows these results.

**Table 4**
*Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficients for Turkish ESP Practitioners' TI*

| Test | Chi-Square | df | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Step | 88.731 | 6 | .001 |
| Block | 88.731 | 6 | .001 |
| Model | 88.731 | 6 | .001 |

As shown in Table 4, the results were significant ($p<0.05$), and the researchers examined goodness of fit. The analysis indicated that the result of goodness of fit was not significant ($X^2=12.467$, df=8, p=.283). Therefore, a summary of the model was scrutinized. Table 5 shows these results.

**Table 5**
*Model Summary for Turkish ESP Practitioners' TI*

| -2 Log likelihood | Cox & Snell R Square | Nagelkerke R Square |
|---|---|---|
| 77.437 | .423 | .457 |

The values in Table 5 indicated that the model explained between 42.3 and 45.7 percent (i.e., R Square values multiplied by 100) of the variance in Turkish practitioners' TI. Considering these results, the contributions of predictor factors to these practitioners' TI were examined. Table 6 provides the pertinent results.

**Table 6**
*Factors in the Equation for Turkish ESP Practitioners' TI*

| Factor | Wald | Sig. |
|---|---|---|
| Income | .823 | .264 |
| Age | .376 | .795 |
| PWBW | 12.647 | .000 |
| DTLP | 7.382 | .006 |
| TE | 9.216 | .002 |
| ER | 5. 294 | .009 |

The scrutiny of the Wald scores and their pertinent probability values in Table 6 indicated that Turkish ESP practitioners' PWBW (12.647), TE (9.216), DTLP (7.382), and ER (5.294), respectively, made the strongest significant contribution to explaining their TI ($p<.05$).

3. Are there any differences between the predictors of Iranian and Turkish ESP practitioners' productive and maladaptive TI?



In light of the objective of this question, the researchers utilized a chi-square test for independence to perform the data analysis. Pallant (2007) stated that in 2 by 2 Chi-square tables, the Continuity Correction value has to be checked instead of the Pearson Chi-Square value. Accordingly, first, the researchers examined the frequencies of Iranian and Turkish practitioners' TI categories (Table 7).

**Table 7**

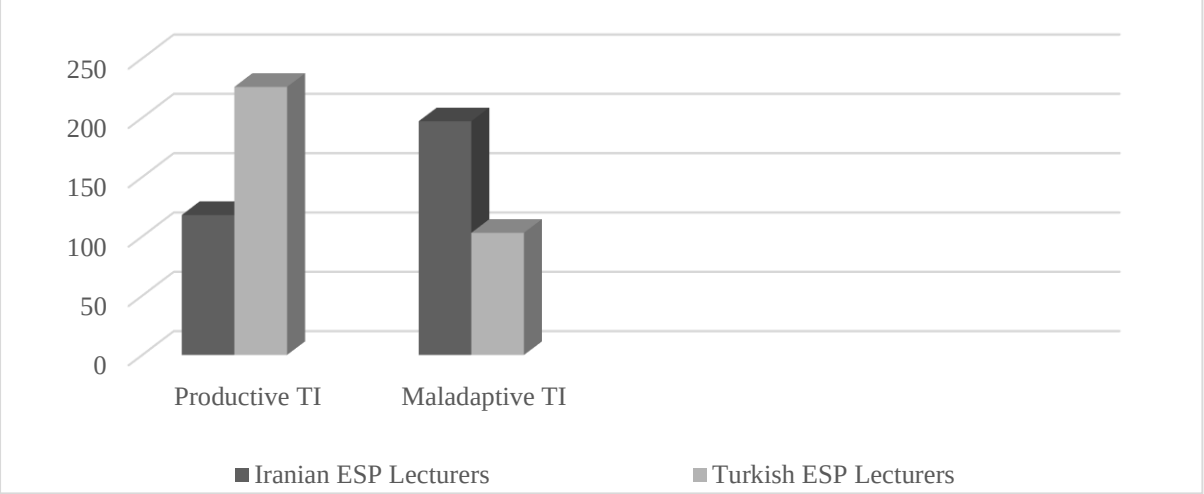
*Frequency of Iranian and Turkish ESP Practitioners' TI Categories*

| Groups | Productive TI | Maladaptive TI |
|---|---|---|
| Iranian ESP Practitioners | 118 | 197 |
| Turkish ESP Practitioners | 226 | 103 |

Second, in order to determine the significance of the differences between productive and maladaptive TI types of these groups of ESP practitioners, the researchers checked the Continuity Correction value instead of the Pearson Chi-Square value. The results of the analysis indicated that there were significant differences between Iranian and Turkish ESP practitioners' TI types ($X^2=61.837$, df=1, $p=.000$). That is, Turkish ESP practitioners' TI was more productive than that of Iranian ESP practitioners. Figure 2 illustrates these results.

**Figure 2**

*Iranian and Turkish ESP Practitioners' TI Categories*




## 5. Discussion

This study aimed to specify ESP practitioners' attributes that explained the variance in their TI in the contexts of Iran and Turkey. Accordingly, question one of this study examined the main factors in Iranian ESP practitioners' productive and maladaptive TI. The obtained results indicated that these practitioners' income, age, and TE constituted the main predictors of their TI. In general, these results underpin the results of a number of previous studies (Abbasi et al., 2018; Derakhshan et al., 2022a; Khalili et al., 2024; Liu et al., 2023; Topchyan & Woehler, 2021; Xiao et al., 2022; Zohrabi & Paydar, 2025). These studies reported that language teachers' age, income, and TE were significant predictors of their mental health.

Abbasi et al. (2018) attributed their results to the fact that language teachers' income constituted one of the main factors in their psychological well-being. As they explained, in their study, teachers' salary and bonuses were not proportional to their academic degree, knowledge, and endeavors in their classes. Moreover, a large number of their participants depended on their teaching salary to provide for their family. Likewise, Topchyan and Woehler (2021) stated that, in their study, language teachers' income affected both their academic life and their personal life. That is, teachers with low levels of income suffered from acute nervous breakdown at different stages of their service years.



Moreover, Xiao et al. (2022) pointed out that language teachers' age influenced their mental health in their study. According to them, most of the young language teachers were not confident about their teaching efficacy in their early service years and tended to rely on external support that was mainly provided to them in the form of peer feedback and supervisor feedback. As they explained, this issue had a deleterious effect on teachers' psychological well-being. Nonetheless, teachers' maturation in age in the later years of their service period made them aware of their internal resources and ameliorated their self-reliance. In other words, pedagogical self-efficacy constituted one of the concomitants of age-related maturation and turned language teachers into independent and self-sufficient practitioners.

Lastly, Liu et al. (2023) attributed their results to the fact that language teachers' TE positively affected their occupation-related practices. As they explained in their study, teachers' TE prompted them to allocate their time, including their leisure time and their internal resources, to language instruction. Moreover, TE ameliorated teachers' attitudes towards their academic setting and helped them to derive satisfaction from expediting their learners' target language acquisition.

In light of these discussions, it can be averred that in the present study, Iranian ESP practitioners' income was a main predictor of their productive and maladaptive TI since low income was linked to their psychological distress. Furthermore, these practitioners' age significantly predicted their TI categories since their age-related maturation made them cognizant of their capabilities and improved their instructional self-efficacy. In addition, these ESP practitioners' TE was a main factor in their TI due mainly to the fact that it ameliorated their perspectives on their workplace responsibilities, encouraged them to allocate their time and energy to their teaching practices, and enabled them to derive satisfaction from their learners' success.

Research question two focused on the main predictors of Turkish ESP practitioners' productive and maladaptive TI. Based on the results, these practitioners' PWBW, TE, DTLP, and ER were the main factors that predicted their TI types. In general, these results are in line with the results of certain previous studies, including the studies that were conducted by Loreman (2011), Stapleton et al. (2020), Greenier et al. (2021), Proietti Ergün and Dewaele (2021), Zhao and Li (2021), Derakhshan et al. (2022b), Dewaele and Li (2022), Li et al. (2022), and Yang et al. (2022). These studies reported that language teachers' PWBW, TE, DTLP, and ER significantly influenced their psychological status in their academic settings.

Zhao and Li (2021) stated that in their study, language teachers' PWBW positively affected different aspects of their occupation, including their satisfaction with peer relationships, instructional methodology, and instruction-related events such as webinars and teacher education courses, among others. As they explained, their participants' satisfaction with their occupation ameliorated their perspectives on their own capabilities and enabled them to use constructive peer and expert feedback in order to engage in language instruction in an efficacious way and to expedite their learners' acquisition process.

Moreover, Li et al. (2022) ascribed their results to the fact that language teachers' TE had a positive impact on their self-esteem and prevented their burnout in their study. They argued that TE prevented their participants' burnout since it enabled them to establish working relationships with their colleagues and learners, and encouraged them to develop and implement stress-management strategies. According to them, teachers' higher TE levels turned them into open-minded practitioners who were likely to evaluate novel ideas and pedagogical innovations and to take advantage of them to ameliorate their language instruction.

Furthermore, Stapleton et al. (2020) noted that in their study, language teachers' DTLP prompted them to develop constructive relationships with their learners to enable them to deal with their language learning anxiety. As they explained, teachers with high levels of DTLP empathized with their learners and tended to accept their exhibited behavior to empower them to take into account their language learning over the course of time. Moreover, these teachers passionately sacrificed their time and energy for their learners' language acquisition and valued the learners' community in their classes. According to Stapleton et al. (2020), the learners' success ameliorated these teachers' perspectives on their language instruction efficacy, occupation status in society, and ability to deal with diverse contextual stressors.

In addition, Yang et al. (2022) noted that language teachers' ER made them cognizant of the impact of their diverse emotions on their pedagogical efficacy in their study. As they explained, the participants' ER empowered them to deal with their negative emotions by capitalizing on their positive feelings and their internal resources. As they concluded, their participants' ER helped them to specify stress-inducing teaching situations and enabled them to use diverse affective strategies for acclimatizing themselves to the pertinent situations in their academic settings.

Considering the above-mentioned discussions, it can be argued that in this study, Turkish ESP practitioners' PWBW was a significant predictor of their productive and maladaptive TI since it had a positive effect on their occupation-related perspectives. Moreover, it ameliorated their development of constructive relationships with their peers and learners. Furthermore, these practitioners' TE significantly predicted their TI types owing to the fact that it turned them into open-minded practitioners who made an attempt to ameliorate their instructional efficacy using innovative ideas in their field. In addition, these practitioners' DTLP was a main factor in their TI categories because it improved their perspectives on their pedagogical abilities and the value of their profession in their societies. Additionally, these practitioners' ER significantly influenced their TI types since it helped them to stifle their negative emotions by capitalizing on their internal resources, including their self-efficacy, among others.

In addition to the above-mentioned discussions, it is possible to interpret the obtained results in light of Hofstede's (1980) cultural dimensions theory. In this regard, it can be noted that the significant role of income in Iranian ESP practitioners' TI stemmed from the collectivist nature of Iranian culture. That is, these practitioners considered themselves responsible for fulfilling their family members' needs and experienced psychological distress due to the threats to their income (Hofstede, 2002). Moreover, the significant role of age in these practitioners' TI can be ascribed to the masculine perspective of Iranian culture on maturation. That is, this culture relates maturation to assertiveness, strength, management ability, and control that are likely to have an advantageous impact on teachers' TI in the context of the classroom (Hofstede, 2002). In addition, it is possible to relate the significance of TE in Iranian ESP practitioners' TI prediction to the indulgence-promoting nature of Iranian culture. More specifically, Iranian culture values job enjoyment and regards it as a prerequisite to satisfactory job performance. As a result, ESP practitioners' higher TE levels resulted in their development of productive TI in their workplace (Hofstede, 1980).

On the other hand, it is possible to relate the role of Turkish ESP practitioners' PWBW, TE, and DTLP in their TI to the long-term orientation of Turkish culture. That is, Turkish culture values the delayed satisfactory outcome of the present actions. As a result, this orientation prompted Turkish ESP practitioners to develop satisfactory attitudes towards their profession and to enjoy performing their academic tasks owing to the fact that these conditions were likely to guarantee their psychological composure in their workplace in the later stages of their career (Hofstede, 2002). Lastly, it can be stated that the consequential role of these practitioners' ER in their TI stemmed from the uncertainty avoidance nature of Turkish culture. More specifically, these practitioners' ability to predict the dynamics of their classes enabled them to control their negative emotions and improved their TI in their academic settings (Hofstede, 2002).

Lastly, question three examined the significant differences between Iranian and Turkish ESP practitioners' productive and maladaptive TI. The results indicated that there were significant differences between Iranian and Turkish practitioners' TI types. Moreover, Turkish practitioners' TI

was more productive than that of Iranian practitioners. Generally, these results corroborate the results of the studies that were carried out by Haseli Songhori et al. (2018) and Maghsoudi (2021). These studies reported that Iranian English teachers' TI was mainly maladaptive in different academic settings. Moreover, the results support the results of the studies that were conducted by Stavraki and Karagianni (2020) and Li (2022). These studies indicated the context-sensitive nature of TI.



Hiver (2017) averred that TI constitutes a context-sensitive construct whose sub-components are influenced by diverse teacher-internal and teacher-external factors. As he explained, the openness to change and coping sub-components of TI can be affected by teachers' opportunities to attend diverse events such as international conferences, webinars, and teacher education courses, among others. Furthermore, the affectivity and attitudes towards teaching sub-components of TI are predominantly affected by teachers' perceptions of the value of their profession in their native culture. In addition, the instructional self-efficacy and burnout sub-components of TI can be influenced by the feedback of teachers' peers and supervisors. Finally, as Hiver (2017) noted, the available professional counseling services in teachers' workplaces may have an impact on the resilience sub-component of their TI.

In light of these discussions, it can be argued that in this study, Turkish ESP practitioners' TI was more productive than that of Iranian ESP practitioners owing to the fact that they had numerous opportunities to take part in national and international academic events. Moreover, these practitioners had a positive perspective on the status of their profession in their community and took pride in it. Lastly, the Turkish practitioners were provided with supportive counseling services during their service years.

The present study endeavored to determine the main predictors of Iranian and Turkish ESP practitioners' productive and maladaptive TI. Furthermore, it examined the differences between the TI categories of these lecturer groups. The results showed that while Iranian practitioners' income, age, and TE constituted the main factors in their TI types, Turkish practitioners' PWBW, TE, DTLP, and ER were the main predictors of their TI categories. Moreover, Turkish practitioners' TI was more productive than that of Iranian practitioners.

A number of conclusions can be drawn based on these results. First, it is essential to develop satisfactory ESP lecturer-education courses in foreign language contexts, including the Iranian context. Most of the universities in Iran select their ESP practitioners from among the practitioners of general English courses and consider their English knowledge as the main prerequisite for their effective ESP instruction. In other words, the ESP practitioners are not provided with pertinent education prior to the onset of their service. Considering this issue, it can be argued that course developers have to pay special attention to the educators and content of ESP lecturer-education courses. That is, they need to prepare the educators for the relevant courses by apprising them of the main lecturer factors such as TI and their role in ESP practitioners' psychological composure and pedagogical efficacy. Moreover, they should include a lecturer-factor module in the relevant courses to make the prospective practitioners cognizant of their main factors (e.g., PWBW & TE).

Second, syllabus designers need to develop efficacious manuals for ESP practitioners in foreign language contexts. These manuals have to guide the practitioners through the process of instruction in order to relieve their workplace anxiety and teaching stress. Moreover, they should encompass a lecturer-factor section that empowers the practitioners to capitalize on their internal resources, such as their coping strategies and self-esteem, to deal with negative affective factors such as maladaptive TI, among others.

Lastly, it can be argued that in foreign language contexts, higher education institutions, including universities, need to provide ESP practitioners with professional counseling services in order to prevent their burnout. In addition, these institutions need to provide practitioners with adequate opportunities to attend national and international academic events to turn them into open-minded practitioners. These measures can have a beneficial impact on ESP practitioners' development of productive TI in their relevant academic settings.

The present study suffered from certain limitations since it did not control the impact of ESP practitioners' age, gender, language background, teaching experience, and employment context (urban/

rural, public/private) on the obtained results. Moreover, the researchers delimited the study by focusing on ESP practitioners' income, age, PWBW, DTLP, TE, and ER without considering their other factors, such as their grit and work engagement as predictors of their TI. The future studies should deal with these issues. Furthermore, these studies need to examine the predictors of ESP practitioners' productive and maladaptive TI in different ESP courses, such as the ESP courses for students of Medicine and Allied Medical Sciences, among others. Lastly, future studies should use mixed-methods designs to delve more deeply into the main predictors of ESP practitioners' TI types in different contexts.



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