An Investigation of Burnout and Coping Strategies among English Language Instructors in the Iraqi Kurdistan Region

Basta Nazar Mohammad

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Approval of the Institute of Graduate Studies and Research

—————————————————
Prof. Dr. Ali Hakan Ulusoy
Acting Director

I certify that this thesis satisfies all the requirements as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in English Language Teaching.

—————————————————
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Javanshir Shibliyev
Chair, Department of Foreign Language Education

We certify that we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully adequate in scope and quality as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in English Language Teaching.

—————————————————
Prof. Dr. Ülker Vancı Osam
Supervisor

Examining Committee

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1. Prof. Dr. Ülker Vancı Osam   —————————————————

2. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Emre Debreli   —————————————————

3. Asst. Prof. Dr. İlkay Gilanlıoğlu   —————————————————

ABSTRACT

Teaching is one of the occupations where burnout can be quite prevalent, because it is a hard and arduous journey which requires a lot of demand on teachers. Stressors coming from the students, colleagues, administrators and the teaching environment may affect their inner feelings and their performance negatively. This study was conducted in seven universties in the Iraqi Kurdistan region to investigate the level of burnout and its causes among English language instructors in those universities. The study also aimed to find out how those instructors were coping with their burnout.

The current study followed a mixed-methods approach, which means that both quantitative and qualitative data were collected from 100 English language instructors working in these seven universities. In addition to the Maslach Burnout Inventory-Educator Survey (MBI-ES) which was applied to 100 participants, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 15 volunteers. Data analysis revealed that burnout was prevalent among the instructors of English who participated in the study. Both emotional exhaustion subscale and depersonalization subscale were found to be moderate among those instructors. However, personal accomplishment subscale was low, indicating the existence of burnout.

Regarding the causes of burnout, the results highlighted four main themes, namely, education system-related causes, government-related causes, teacher-related causes, and causes related to students. The participants also expressed the coping mechanisms they used to deal with their burnout. In addition, they suggested other

coping strategies that the university administration should deploy to help the instructors cope with burnout.

This study has a number of implications both for the English language instructors and the university administrations. It is recommended that the sense of low personal accomplishment must be addressed among instructors to avoid burnout. Also, the coping strategies pointed out by the participants might be helpful for other instructors who may be unaware of those strategies. Finally, the university authorities should highlight this issue in their future plans and help instructors to avoid frustration and be able to cope with burnout.

Keywords: Burnout, emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, personal accomplishment, English language instructors, coping strategies, Iraqi Kurdistan region.

ÖZ

Öğretmenlik mesleği, tükenmişliğin oldukça yaygın olabileceği mesleklerden biridir, çünkü öğretme işi, öğretmenler için zorlu bir yolculuktur. Öğrencilerden, iş arkadaşlarından, yöneticilerden ve öğretim ortamından gelen stresler öğretmenlerin iç duygularını ve performanslarını olumsuz yönde etkileyebilir. Bu çalışma, Irak'ın Kurdistan bölgesindeki yedi üniversitede İngilizce okutmanlığı yapan kişilerde tükenmişlik düzeyini ve nedenlerini araştırmaktadır. Çalışma ayrıca bu okutmanların tükenmişlikleriyle nasıl başa çıktıklarını bulmayı da amaçlamaktadır.

Çalışmada karma araştırma yöntemi izlenerek, toplam 100 İngilizce okutmanından hem nicel hem de nitel veri toplanmıştır. Nicel veri, 100 kişiye uygulanan Maslach Tükenmişlik Envanteri-Eğitimci Anketi (MBI-ES) yoluyla, nitel veri ise 15 gönüllü katılımcı ile yapılan yarı yapılandırılmış mülakatlar yoluyla elde edilmiştir. Toplanan verilerin analizi, araştırmaya katılan İngilizce okutmanları arasında tükenmişliğin yaygın olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Bu eğitmenler arasında hem duygusal tükenme alt ölçeği hem de duyarsızlaşma alt ölçeği, orta derecede bulunmuştur. Ancak, kişisel başarıda azalma hissi alt ölçeği düşük çıkmış olup, bu da tükenmişliğin varlığına işaret etmektedir.

Katılımcılardan elde edilen nitel verinin analizi sonucunda, tükenmişliğe neden olarak gösterilen konular dört kategoride toplanmıştır: eğitim sisteminden kaynaklanan nedenler, hükümet uygulamalarından kaynaklanan nedenler, öğretmenlerin kendilerinden kaynaklanan nedenler, öğrencilerden kaynaklanan nedenler. Katılımcılar ayrıca tükenmişlikleriyle başa çıkmak için kullandıkları başa

çıkma stratejilerini ifade etmişler, buna ek olarak okutmanların tükenmişlikle başa çıkmasına yardımcı olmak için üniversite idaresinin uygulaması gereken başa çıkma stratejileri de önermişlerdir.

Bu çalışmada elde edilen bulgular ışığında hem İngilizce okutmanları hem de üniversite idareleri için bir takım öneriler yapılabilir. Tükenmişliğin önlenmesi için okutmanların kişisel başarıda azalma hislerinin ele alınması gerekir. Katılımcıların dile getirdiği başa çıkma stratejileri, bu stratejilerin farkında olmayan diğer okutmanlara önerilebilir. Son olarak, üniversite yetkilileri 'tükenmişlik' konusunu gündemlerine almalı ve okutmanların tükenmişlikten kaçınmaları ve var olan tükenmişlik duygusuyla başa çıkabilmeleri için kendilerine yardımcı olmalıdırlar.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Tükenmişlik, duygusal tükenme, duyarsızlaşma, kişisel başarıda azalma hissi, İngilizce okutmanları, başa çıkma stratejileri, Irak'ın Kürdistan bölgesi.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter first presents the background of the study by introducing the concept of burnout. It then describes the problem to be addressed as well as the aim of this study and the research questions. The chapter ends by referring to the significance of the study and the definition of some key terms used in the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

In recent years, the whole world has gone through many political, economic and educational changes which might have left various impacts on individuals' lives and their well-being. Therefore, these recent years are known as years of stress and pressure. Burnout was one of the phenomena that were clearly observed as a result of these numerous changes. It became widespread involving all aspects of life around the world.

Burnout is known as a chronic psychological syndrome that will develop due to continuous exposure to work-related stress. The concept of burnout was first coined by Herbert Freudenberger (1974), an American psychologist, who described emotional depletion and loss of motivation and commitment among human service workers who had experienced prolonged and extensive stress in their work place. He was the first researcher to state that the accumulation of stress will lead to being burnout, and it will have a detrimental effect on the workers mental and physical well-being (Gluschkoff et al., 2016). Likewise, in 1981, Christina Maslach described

burnout as a syndrome of physical and emotional exhaustion including the development of negative job attitudes, poor professional self-concept, and low empathetic concern for clients. According to Maslach (1981) when the individual begins to feel the symptoms of burnout, then stages of burnout will appear on the individual worker. The stages include "emotional exhaustion" which denotes feelings of being emotionally over-extended and exhausted, "depersonalization" which is the development of negative feelings and attitudes about the profession and the persons that the professional is dealing with, and "reduced personal accomplishment" which is experienced by teachers as decreased feelings of competence and achievement and a tendency to evaluate oneself negatively with respect to work (Brock & Grady, 2000).

A number of scholars found out that many professions make people vulnerable to burnout syndrome which affects their career adversely. Therefore, burnout stimulated lots of researchers to explore this phenomenon. The related literature is abundant with studies in which burnout was reported in different occupations such as in nurses (Anwar & Elareed, 2017), farmers (Botha & White, 2013), engineers (Yip & Rowlinson, 2009), library personnel (Adebayo et al., 2018), lawyers (Samarasekara et al., 2016), bus drivers (Zhang & Shi, 2017), physicians (Pejušković, et al.,2011), psychotherapists (Simionato & Simpson, 2017), and civil servants (Guan et al., 2017).

Teaching is one of the challenging occupations where burnout can be quite prevalent as well, because teaching is a hard and arduous journey which puts a lot of demands on teachers. Stressors coming from the students, colleagues, administrators and the teaching environment may affect their inner feelings and their performance

negatively. Many studies have been carried out on the effect of stress on students' or teachers' performance (Beausaert et al., 2016; Cephe, 2010; Fisher, 2011; Montgomery & Rupp, 2005; Yusuf et al., 2015). Many researchers have been attracted to investigate burnout in the field of education and more specifically among teachers in different teaching contexts, different fields of education, and in various parts of the world (Chao et al., 2018; Lou & Chin, 2016; Saiiari et al., 2011; Tortop, 2012). They emphasized the fact that those teachers who experience burnout are inclined to arrive on the work without making any preparations, and they ignore the quality of education their students receive from them. Obviously, burnout teachers leave direct negative impact on the system of education in their context.

Teachers in general, as was mentioned above, are subjected to burnout and among them are the teachers of foreign languages. Borg (2006) points out that being a foreign language teacher is unique, because a teacher uses a medium (i.e., a foreign language) that the students do not understand yet, and this causes a great deal of anxiety for the students. Also, teachers' proficiency level may be a source of low self-efficacy for teachers themselves. Therefore, all these things may make the work of English language teachers harder and more stressful.

Therefore, burnout is announced as one of the problems of today's era in the entire world. Yet, the level of burnout may differ from one country to another according to their economic, cultural, social, political and educational development as well as the curricula followed in those countries. Similarly, teacher burnout, in general, differs from one teacher to another and these differences can be related to certain factors such as their age, socioeconomic background, academic level and participation in training courses.

It is noteworthy that stress on teachers needs to be recognized. In order to understand the effect of stress on instructors' development of burnout, it is necessary to study coping strategies. Coping strategies have substantial role in stress and burnout development. Lazarus and Folkman (1984) defined coping as "constantly changing cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage specific external and/or internal demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of the person" (p.141) cited in (Compas et al., 2014). To be more specific coping includes conscious volitional efforts to regulate one's own behavior, emotions, thoughts, physiology, and the environment in responses to the stressor (Compas et al., 2014).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Burnout is one of the greatest challenges facing the educational system and teachers of all subjects, including the English language teachers, in Iraqi Kurdistan region for many reasons. The sources of burnout among those teachers have changed along with the changes in this region at different times due to political and financial status as well as the military operations in the last half century.

The change in the political system in Iraq after 2003 and steps towards democracy by the rulers of Iraq and Iraqi Kurdistan created a state of educational fever, which pressured the government to open new universities and new classes in many large cities in Iraqi Kurdistan region without having the infrastructure to cater for those students. The result was increasing number of students and student/teacher ratio. This necessitated the teachers of all subjects including English language to spend extra efforts to deal with this problem. This process contributed to those teachers developing burnout.

The fall of oil prices internationally in the year 2014 and the invasion of parts of Iraq including some parts of Iraqi Kurdistan by ISIS (Islamic state of Iraq and Syria) resulted in destruction of infrastructure including schools, universities and teaching facilities and created financial crises. The local government could not pay teachers' salaries and reduced them. The expenses required for the teaching process in general were not provided completely by Ministries of Education and Higher Education. This led the teachers to get demoralized and find those hardships difficult to cope with. The process created an extra burden on the teachers who usually develop burnout under ordinary circumstances. Those teachers who could not cope with those pressures took one of many options such as leaving their jobs and leaving the country seeking asylum in European countries. Others applied for unpaid leave and got involved with other ways of earning money that may not suit their personalities and position in the community. Another group continued teaching with the small salary paid by the government and found part time jobs to support themselves and their families such as taxi driving or working as assistants to other people working in different occupations. The researcher believes that burnout as an international phenomenon is present all over the world and the causes are divided into those that are universal and related to the profession and others specifically related to teachers at different geographical locations. Nevertheless, the political changes, various wars, different embargoes, financial crises, influence of foreign countries, educational policies by various Ministries in Iraq in general and Iraqi Kurdistan region specifically are factors that participated in the high prevalence of burnout among English language teachers. Teachers felt they are deprived of their rights and privileges when their salaries were cut down and they did not get them at the right time. The financial crisis resulting from dropping of oil prices (the main income in

5

Iraqi Kurdistan region) interfered with all the projects of the universities aimed at updating curriculum, training courses in Iraq and abroad, improving the classrooms and improving the teaching environment for the students and teachers. Incentives for distinguished teachers and financial grants for researchers were cut down. A lot of teachers working in state universities either moved to work in private universities or applied for unpaid leave to work at other fields in the country or abroad.

As stated above all professionals have burnout and among them teachers are specifically affected. As the use of English language has been systematically expanding in Iraqi Kurdistan region, the demand for learning and teaching English in the most effective way has also become a source of stress for both students and teachers alike. English language teaching in this region has gone through many changes. The subject was taught starting from the fifth year of primary schools and continued until students left school after the twelfth year of education. This system has changed in the last seven years as the pupils start learning English from the first year of primary school. The books used in teaching English language have also been replaced by new ones which promote interactive teaching. Departments of English have been opened in colleges of Languages or in Colleges of Education and Basic Education in many state and private universities. Other Colleges that teach their subjects in Kurdish or Arabic languages have started offering English lessons taught by teachers from departments of English.

Although different universities affiliated to Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research and departments belonging to Ministry of Education have tried to arrange training courses, refreshing workshops and seminars and many opportunities

to improve the educational environments within schools and universities, it would not be wrong to claim that burnout is still a big problem facing teachers in the region.

In this study the researcher aims to investigate the concept of burnout among English language teachers working at universities in Iraqi Kurdistan region and highlight their coping methods. To the best knowledge of the researcher, no similar study has been conducted before in this region.

1.3 Aim of the Study

As stated above, this study aims to investigate the level of burnout among English language instructors working in some universities in Iraqi Kurdistan region, also causes of burnout in this region and the way these instructors cope with their burnout.

1.4 Research Questions

To this end, the following research questions were addressed:

1. Do the English language instructors in higher education in the Iraqi Kurdistan region feel burnout? If yes, what is the level of their burnout?

2. What are the causes of their burnout?

3. How do they cope with their burnout?

1.5 Significance of the Study

As stated above, despite the fact that burnout has been widely explored from different perspective in many various contexts, to the researcher's best knowledge there have neither been studies conducted on the presence of burnout among instructors of English language at universities in Iraqi Kurdistan region nor on their coping strategies.

In addition, the findings of this study can inform the education leaders and teacher trainers about the possible effective steps to take in order to help the instructors to regain their motivation to continue their professional career so that their teaching will not be affected adversely. This, in turn, will enable students to achieve the learning outcomes in the most effective way possible.

1.6 Definition of Terms

Burnout: A state of physical and emotional depletion resulting from conditions of work. It is emphasized that emotional exhaustion is the result of prolonged overwork and overextension. Burnout includes three unique symptoms that collectively form the syndrome of burnout: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment (Barutcu & Serinkan, 2013).

Emotional Exhaustion: It is seen as the most basic component of burnout which is the reaction of human being to huge amount of stress that can have many effects including social, physical and psychological ones, and it is not easy to evaluate the amount of stress that will lead people to become emotionally exhausted. Individuals who are emotionally exhausted feel that they ran out of their emotional resources (Ghanizadeh & Jahedizadeh, 2016).

Depersonalization: It is a sense of detachment from one's self and emotional distance in which the individual avoids one's involvement with the people he or she served and protects oneself from extreme emotional feelings by dealing with others as objects rather than as persons (Maslach et al., 1993).

Personal Accomplishment: It is one's evaluation of the results of his or her own work or feelings of competence (Maslach et al., 1997).

Stress: It is experiencing events that are perceived as endangering one's physical or psychological well-being (Nolen-Hoeksema et al., 2009) (p.711).

Coping: It is referred to the process by which a person attempts to manage stressful demands, and it takes two major forms which are problem focused-coping and emotion-focused coping (Nolen-Hoeksema et al., 2009) (P.525).

1.7 Summary

This chapter provided detailed explanation about the background of the study followed by statement of the problem, aim of the study and research questions. It ended by presenting significance of the study and definitions of some key terms.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter provides an overview of burnout in general and highlights burnout among different professionals including teachers, with special emphasis on English language teachers' burnout including causes of their burnout. In addition, the related literature on coping strategies used by those who suffered from burnout is reviewed in this chapter.

2.1 Burnout- Definition and Symptoms

Burnout is a psychological term which has been used for more than forty years. The first reference to this term as a psychological state was made by Graham Greene in his novel titled 'A Burnt-Out Case' (Mousavy et al., 2012), depicting a spiritually tormented architect living in the African jungle (Atmaca, 2017). The term burnout was described clinically for the first time in the early 1970s by Herbert Freudenberger (a clinical psychologist), who later suffered from the condition himself. While working in a hospital for treatment of drug addicts, Freudenberger observed that volunteer workers helping the addicts developed changes in their behavior, which he related to the stress of providing care for those patients. He defined these behaviors including gradual emotional depletion, loss of motivation, and reduced commitment, as symptoms of burnout (Neckel et al., 2017).

A decade later, the concept of burnout was modified and made more precise. Christina Maslach (1981) as a psychologist described the condition as a prolonged

response to chronic emotional and interpersonal stressors on the job. Burnout, as a serious psychological syndrome that can affect an individual's well-being (Mousavy et al., 2012), therefore, is defined by the three dimensions of exhaustion, cynicism, and inefficiency. Although there is no standard or general agreement on burnout definition, the most used definitions of burnout accepted by the scientific community are based on the socio-psychological perspective, being understood as a process and consisted of three dimensions, namely 'emotional exhaustion', 'depersonalization' and 'reduced personal accomplishment' (Prado et al., 2017).

Shirom (1989, as cited in Farber, 2000), on the other hand, viewed burnout as a combination of physical fatigue, emotional exhaustion, and cognitive weariness. Farber (1991, as cited in Farber, 2000) pointed out that burnout is essentially about 'inconsequentiality', a perception on the part of human-service professionals that their efforts to help others have been ineffective, the task is endless and the personal payoffs for their work (in terms of accomplishment, recognition, advancement, or appreciation) have not been forthcoming.

The analogy used to define burnout is a visual representation of a fading flame in its final flicker (Bombs, 2012, cited in Young, 2011). In other words, people with burnout look like a large flame of fire in which the fuel source is withdrawn gradually and the intensity of the flame decreases to a flicker and finally extinguished. This is owing to those people who are experiencing burnout by giving a lot of effort on their jobs and getting conversely bad results compared to their endeavor (Maslach, 2003). A similar interpretation was made by Montero-Marín et al. (2009), who stated that when the workers feel their efforts are not appropriate to the gratification achieved, burnout will be triggered among them. Likewise,

according to Schaufeli and Greenglass (2001), burnout is a physical, emotional and mental exhaustion that results from long-term involvement in work situations which are emotionally demanding.

The Association of Professors of Medicine (2001) emphasized the same point: burnout is a long-term stress reaction seen primarily in the human service profession. It is a psychological syndrome of Emotional Exhaustion (EE), Depersonalization (DP), and Personal Accomplishment (PA), the markers as characterized by Maslach and Jackson (1982, cited in Halbesleben & Buckley, 2004).

For the burnout syndrome, emotional exhaustion is characterized by the lack of energy. Feeling of emotional exhaustion leads the individual to be unable to satisfy the requirements at work and consequently become unable to accomplish daily activities. Depersonalization is defined as the lack of awareness or cynical feelings in responding to the people who are recipients of the service. Reduced professional achievement, on the other hand, refers to a decrease in the feelings of competence and dissatisfaction regarding the personal gains obtained in workplace (Aloe et al., 2014; Prado et al., 2017).

The meaning of these three symptoms for instructors is clarified by Motallebzadeh et al. (2014) and Mukundan and Khandehroo (2010). Emotional exhaustion means that teachers put all their effort and energy on teaching and finally run out of resources. Depersonalization happens when the teacher grows negative feelings towards his/her students and/or school, university, institution and community. Finally, personal accomplishment will be affected due to negative self-evaluation and negative belief of self-capability in classroom and finally the profession of being an instructor.

The concept of burnout was approached in two ways. The first one is a clinical practice-based approach pioneered by Freudenberger and it focuses on a variety of burnout treatments including workshops, training programs, counseling psychotherapy and organizational consultancy. The second one is the academic research-based approach pioneered by Christena Maslash, which yielded thousands of scientific publications, 75,000 according to Google Scholar and 10,000 according to Psych Info in March 2017, as stated by (Neckel et al., 2017).

In the early days, burnout was seen as a 'pseudoscientific concept' or 'pop psychology' by academic journals which rejected papers written on the subject. However, the introduction of Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) resulted in burnout being accepted as a reality which triggered waves of researches on the concept (Maslach & Jackson, 1984, cited in Halbesleben & Buckley, 2004).

2.2 Burnout among Different Professions and Teachers

Burnout has been examined in various human service professions such as hotel supervisors, physicians, coaches, journalists, police officers, and teachers in which the working staff are exposed to burnout (Duzhakupof et al., 2012; Koustelios, 2010; Martinussen et al., 2007; Sunny Hu & Cheng, 2010; Pirincci & Vicdanli, 2015; Reinardy, 2011). In most of these studies, Maslach Burnout Inventory survey was used. For example, Sunny Hu and Cheng (2010) conducted a study in Taiwan on hotel supervisors using the MBI in a survey, and found out that emotional exhaustion was specifically high among the participants.

Pirincci and Vicdanli (2015) conducted a study to explore the levels of burnout as well as the factors associated with it among assistant physicians in a Turkish

university hospital. The result of the study showed high level of burnout in reference to emotional exhaustion and personal accomplishment. In Koustelios' (2010) study which investigated the levels of burnout among football coaches in Greece, the level of lack personal accomplishment was found to be high among other burnout symptoms. Moreover, Reinardy (2011) examined burnout among newspaper journalists in the USA. The study showed high level of exhaustion and cynicism between editors and page designers working at small newspapers. In contrast to this study, Martinussen et al. (2007) carried out a research about burnout among police officers in comparison to air traffic controllers, journalists and building constructors in Norway. The results indicated low level of emotional exhaustion and cynicism among police officers.

Among various professions, the occupation of teaching is most exposed to burnout because of the fact that the job of teaching requires constant interaction and communication with students (Duzhakupof, Madalieva & Fedoroych, 2012). Teachers should be enthusiastic about their job in order to increase the ability and efficiency of their students' learning. Besides, a teacher's job involves raising and shaping future generations, which makes the teacher more stressed and anxious if she/he doesn't believe in their ability to implement their mental capacity in an effective way due to their workload and lack of time (Çoklar & Ozbek, 2017). Thus, burnout has become an important issue for the researchers, and many lines of researches have been conducted on teacher's burnout and the factors associated with it.

One example of such researches belongs to Aflakseir and Nemati (2018), who examined the burnout among teachers in primary and secondary school teachers in

Iran based on schools' stressful environment. The results showed high level of burnout among the participants and they found that work-related stress is associated with teachers' burnout. More specifically, school teachers were found to be more stressed during teaching because of the lack of control over the classes as most of the classes were overcrowded. In addition to that, low rate of salary and pressure of workload led to teachers' burnout. Moreover, the results indicated that emotional manifestation, age, job engagement, professional distress, and self-control predicted burnout among the participated teachers. Therefore, the study suggested designing interventions for improving teachers' well-being and providing useful resources for helping teachers increase their self-efficacy to be able to manage or cope with their stress and burnout.

Thakur (2015) investigated the level of burnout among full time and part time teacher educators in India. The results showed that part time teacher educators had more burnout compared to full time teacher educators. This was because full time educators were found to be emotionally less exhausted, depersonalized and they were having high sense of personal accomplishment compared to their part-time counterparts, which could be due to better salaries or more secure and stable job.

Temam et al. (2019) investigated the role of social support on French teachers' burnout level at their workplace. The results regarding the level of burnout were a high level of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and low personal accomplishment. Also, this study showed that those teachers who got more social support at their work had less burnout compared to other teachers. Moreover, this study indicated that improving social support at workplaces are important to enhance teachers' well being.

In another study, Kabadayi (2015) conducted a research in Turkey to explore differences of burnout levels among preschool teachers who worked in private and state institutions in Konya. The findings of this study indicated that preschool teachers who worked in private institutions had more burnout than the teachers of state institutions. More specifically, the difference was statistically significant as regards emotional exhaustion dimension.

Shen et al. (2015) carried out a research in the USA to examine teachers' burnout level and its effect on students' motivation. The study reported high level of burnout, especially in emotional exhaustion dimension, and teachers' burnout was affecting their students' quality of motivation.

In another study, Goswami (2013) examined how teachers' burnout was associated with their job satisfaction and demographic variables like age, gender and area of their work. Based on the results of the study, a significant relationship was found between age and area of work with the emotional exhaustion. Depersonalization was significantly related to work area and personal accomplishment was related only to age. There was no relationship found between burnout dimensions and gender.

Baran et al. (2010) conducted a research to identify the level of burnout among teachers working in preschool, elementary school and private education institutions. Teachers in this study were in medium socio-economical level. The results of the study revealed that fields of teaching made significant differences in the depersonalization and personal accomplishment, but no difference was found in emotional exhaustion. The study also indicated that teachers' field of work, financial

opportunities, sufficiency of personnel and schools' facilities had an impact on teachers' increasing level of burnout.

Another factor which leads teachers to get burnout is students' misbehavior. In Aloe et al.'s (2014) study, a multivariate meta-analysis was conducted to explore the relationship between students' misbehavior with the three dimensions of burnout. The result showed that students' misbehavior had a large effect on letting teachers develop burnout. The largest effect of students' misbehavior was on emotional exhaustion burnout dimension, followed by depersonalization, and lastly personal accomplishment.

2.3 Burnout among English Language Teachers

English teaching over the last half-century has been in a state of flux and undergone dramatic changes and reforms. A lot of the second language teaching and learning theories, methods and approaches have emerged in the past 50 years. These methods represent different trends ranging from language-centered methods to learner-centered and learning-centered method. Each change or innovation resulted in giving more attention to language teachers' cognition (Ghanizadeh & Jahedizade, 2016).

Owing to continuous process of globalization, the need for using foreign languages is increasing exponentially. English language is accounted as an international language in the whole world because it is the language of political, cultural and scientific communication. Therefore, English language teachers have had to endure much more responsibility for equipping students with communicative language skills (Bolton et al., 2011). Successful English language teaching requires modern teaching methods

such as interactive methods in the form of small groups which will increase the students' ability to communicate.

The nature of the English language teaching profession puts a lot of pressure on those in the profession of English language teaching leading to physical and emotional exhaustion and eventually burnout (Ghanizadeh & Jahedizadeh, 2016). Isolation is one of the features that English language teachers are experiencing because, according to Borg (2006), English language teachers have to increase their knowledge of the subject by themselves and require support from others.

In the related literature there is a number of studies conducted on burnout among English language teachers in both schools, universities and institutes. One of those studies was carried out by Lou and Chen (2016) to find out the actual situation of burnout among English language teachers in a local comprehensive university in China. The findings indicated that emotional exhaustion and depersonalization were lower, English teachers had low to medium level of burnout. Significant differences were found in English teachers' workload. Regarding the causes of burnout, factors related to the job, management, students, teacher development and family were mentioned.

In another study Li (2015) investigated burnout among English language teachers in a medical university in China. According to the findings, the participants had experienced a low to medium level of burnout and no significant differences were found between genders and educational background. However, older English teachers experienced significantly more intense sense of reduced personal accomplishment. In contrast, more experienced English teachers reported

significantly more intense depersonalization and reduced sense of personal accomplishment. Besides, the study referred to four causes of burnout, which are related to the job, students, management and teacher development.

Another study conducted by Demirel and Cephe (2015) investigated burnout among English language instructors who are teaching at school of foreign languages in three universities in Turkey. The findings revealed various degrees of burnout among all instructors ranging from low to moderate and finally high level of burnout. Also, younger and less experienced instructors were found to have suffered more burnout compared to older and experienced instructors because they were at the beginning of their career and most of the time they felt alone. The results showed the proficiency level of students, teaching hours and the place of instructors working on materials as the main factors that contributed to teachers' burnout. The researchers pointed out a need for an in-service training for those teachers.

In a similar vein, Shamsafrouz and Haghverdi (2015) investigated the effect of burnout on the teaching performance of male and female English as foreign language teachers in Iran. Thirty English teachers of five private institutes (15 males and 15 females) and 150 students taught by the same teachers participated in this study. The results of the study showed that burnout did not influence the teachers' performance in a significant way. Additionally, it was revealed that there was no significant difference between the level of burnout among male and female English teachers.

Also, Hismanoglu and Ersan (2016) examined Turkish English language instructors' burnout level in relation to demographic variables. Results of the study indicated that Turkish teachers were at high level of burnout in terms of personal accomplishment

but moderate level of burnout in terms of emotional exhaustion. They had low level of burnout in terms of depersonalization. Furthermore, there was no effect of age and gender on burnout. The study indicated that stressful, unpleasant, and demotivating classroom environment were the factors leading teachers to develop burnout.

In another study, Jabbarpoor (2016) investigated the burnout level among Iranian EFL teachers of high schools, private institutions and universities. Teachers of universities reported lower degrees of burnout while junior high school teachers reported the highest degree of reduced personal accomplishment, whereas the highest levels of depersonalization, emotional exhaustion, and total burnout were reported by senior high school teachers. Those results showed that level of educations and students' misbehavior had an essential role in developing burnout among teachers.

Ghanizadeh and Jahedizadeh (2016) examined the effect of teaching style and teachers' creativity on English teachers' level of burnout. One hundred ninety-three English language teachers teaching in different language institutes of Mashhad and Tehran in Iran participated in this study. The results showed that teachers adopting learner-centered approaches of second language teaching were less prone to burnout. Burnout negatively predicted teacher creativity because they were less capable of experiencing creative skills and thinking and were more abiding by following routines. The recommendation was that teachers needed to be satisfied with their jobs and thus motivate themselves.

Kulavuz-Onal and Tatar (2017) examined burnout among English instructors of both private and state universities in Turkey through their participation in professional learning activities. The results revealed that burnout level was different among those

instructors who worked in a state university from those who worked in a private university regarding the sense of personal accomplishment and their participation in professional learning activities. Those instructors who worked in private universities had less burnout and participated more in professional learning activities

Özkanal and Arıkan (2010) investigated the level of burnout among EFL instructors teaching preparatory school of Eskişehir Osmangazi University in Turkey. Twenty-eight instructors participated in this study. The findings indicated that five of the EFL instructors suffered from burnout in all three dimensions. Three of the instructors were at moderate level while 2 of them were at low level in all the dimensions. Five of the participants had high level of Emotional Exhaustion and reduced Personal Accomplishment. Two of the instructors had high level in Emotional exhaustion and these participants had low or moderate burnout levels in the other two dimensions. Two of the instructors had high level of lack of Personal Accomplishment and they had low or moderate burnout levels in the other two dimensions. Also, the results showed that educational background had no effect on teacher's burnout.

Another study conducted by Heidari and Gorjian (2017) examined the level of English language teachers' burnout on students' general English achievement. In order to achieve this aim, students did a pre-test which was Cambridge English Preliminary Test followed by a post-test. The results showed that high level burnout among teachers affected students' general English achievement.

Laiou's (2018) study investigated the burnout and motivation levels of EFL teachers in Greece. The findings revealed a high level of emotional exhaustion but low level of depersonalization. However, the majority of the teachers reported low levels of

21

personal accomplishment. In relation to motivation, Greek teachers were motivated and did not regret about their choice of teaching profession. The researcher concluded that burnout still existed among teachers due to some factors related to the education system.

Khezerlou (2013) studied self-efficacy as predictor of burnout among teachers who were Iranian and Turkish, teaching English as a foreign language. The results showed that Turkish teachers suffered more burnout, and the difference between the two groups was more significant regarding emotional exhaustion. They study also revealed that Turkish teachers were less able to deal with students' problems and didn't have the desire to adopt new strategies to solve their students' behavioral problems or learning problems.

Mousavy et al. (2012) examined burnout level between low experienced and high experienced English language teachers in Malaysia. Thirty teachers from different nationalities- Malaysian and Iranian- participated in this study. Low experienced teachers were those who had 0 to 10 years of teaching experience, while high experienced teachers had more than ten years of teaching experience at different levels of both schools and universities. The results of the study showed that there was no difference between levels of depersonalization and personal accomplishment subscale scores, while there was a significant difference in Emotional Exhaustion subscale scores between high and low experienced teachers. High experienced teachers were more emotionally exhausted compared to low experienced teachers and this was related to professional maturity of high experienced teachers.

Maroofi and Ghaemi (2016) investigated the sense of burnout among English as a foreign language teachers and their affective construct. This study was conducted in a number of language institutes and schools in Mashhad. The result of the study showed that there was a significant correlation between teachers' social composite domain and their burnout. Thus, the study indicated that those teachers who could not receive social support were more exposed to burnout. As a result of this finding, both researchers advised teacher educators and supervisors who work directly with teachers to bear in mind how varied teachers are in their performance. Therefore, they need to teach both pre-service and in-service teachers to solve and overcome their teaching difficulties in more appropriate ways.

Mahmoodi and Shahrebabaki (2016) studied impact of perfectionism on English teachers' burnout in Iran. Depersonalization was more significantly affected by both direct and indirect effects of perfectionism.

Finally, Nayernia and Babayan (2019) examined the effect of experiencing sense of burnout on non-native English language teachers' self-assessed language proficiency. This study took place in Ardabil and Tehran. The result of the study showed a high level of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization; thus, it declared that language proficiency had a significant negative relationship with these two subscales of burnout. About the language proficiency and sense of personal accomplishment, a significant positive correlation was found. Regarding language proficiency subskills' relationship with the three dimensions of burnout, it was found that instructors who were less competent in writing subskill scored higher emotional exhaustion. Also, depersonalization was best predicted in the speaking subskill of language

proficiency. Ultimately, it was found that the best predictor of personal accomplishment was the speaking and listening subskills. At the end, the researchers gave some pedagogical implications about their research findings. To exemplify, they stated that teacher educators should prevent teachers from experiencing burnout by giving more attention to improve teachers' language proficiency not only for maximizing and highlighting teachers' teaching efficacy. Furthermore, they suggested that administrators should provide or create opportunities for teachers to study foreign programs abroad, and arrange summer workshops in order to help these teachers to develop their language proficiency.

2.4 Teachers Coping with Burnout

Coping was considered one of the tools to prevent and overcome burnout among teachers (Küçükoğlu, 2014). It was described by Lazarus and Folkman (1984, cited in Kelso et al., 2005) as the way individuals manage environmental demands in their lives. A similar definition was offered by Montero-Marin et al. (2014), who stated that life environmental demands are managed both cognitively and behaviorally by people and this represents the process of coping. Moreover, Pithers and Fogarty (1995) stated that the strength of an individual's coping resources can alleviate the strain produced by occupational stress which led to burnout among professions.

In the same vein, McCarthy et al. (1997) indicated that coping strategies can be by individual's behavior to deal with stressor, or by coping resources which is individuals' skills or capacity and their abilities that served as the foundation for coping strategies. Regarding this, it is necessary to refer to Matheny et al.'s (1986) taxonomy which identified psychological coping resources based on their usefulness for either combating or preventing stress. According to this taxonomy, people draw

on combative coping resources after facing a threatening condition or circumstance that made them feel stressful. Such kind of resources are like individuals' skills or abilities linked with traditional practices of managing stress, for example having the ability to self-disclose, decreasing the sense of emotional tiredness by relaxation procedures, and using problem-solving skills. On the other hand, preventive coping resource helps individuals to recognize life demands and difficulties in order to avoid any stress experiences in the first place.

The researchers' perceptions about combating and preventive coping were different from each other. For example, in a study conducted by Dorz et al. (2003), preventive coping was supported to overcome burnout. This study indicated that preventive coping can function as a predictive factor of the three subscales of the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI). At the same time, they discovered that making a plan, for example, to reflect on developing a problem solving strategy and restraint coping strategies such as avoiding acting impulsively, waiting for the right moment to cope with the stress, would predict personal accomplishment scores on the Maslach Burnout Inventory. On the other hand, rejecting the problem or facing difficult situation with sense of humor was found to be more related to emotional exhaustion and depersonalization subscales.

There are a number of studies which investigated how instructors cope with burnout at their workplace. One of such studies was conducted by Küçükoğlu (2014). The study suggested some ways of coping for ELT teachers such as seeking for opportunities to travel for educational and social purposes. Other recommendations included the following: teachers should attempt to detect those difficulties facing them both personally and academically; they should look for appropriate strategies to

resolve those problems that they have detected; talking about their difficulties or problems and sharing their feelings with those people who are going through the same experiences is helpful; they should seek support from the administrative staff and dedicate extra time to specific tasks. Among other methods that help them cope included providing healthy atmosphere at their houses, reflecting about their futures and looking for ways to improve themselves. They should allocate time to relax in between working hours and after their work. Teachers should avoid confrontations to protect them against burnout. The institutions, on the other hand, should work with the teachers to detect what difficulties teachers face. This necessitates both organizational and personal collaboration to prevent both psychological and physical symptoms of burnout among their teachers.

Akbari and Eghtesadi (2017) conducted a research about how EFL teachers coped with their burnout. The researchers observed that majority of the teachers in this study tried to cope with their burnout by a process of continuous development of their learning like extending linguistic knowledge and talking about their problems with other colleagues. They also tried to get some rest in between teaching sessions and make their teaching more interesting. They tried to improve their classroom management by reflecting on the way they were teaching in order to establish good rapport with students. Moreover, sometimes they went back to traditional teaching styles to deal with burnout. Therefore, this study suggested that there is a need for training teachers about how to use useful strategies for effective coping ways with burnout especially focusing on practical points and not only on emotion. Moreover, how to cope with burnout should be included in teaching and preparing programs objectives and also in preparing pre-service teachers.

In another study, Laugaa et al. (2008) examined coping strategies among French teachers. This study showed four ways of coping, which were i) the need to communicate, ii) coping centered on the problem, iii) avoidance coping, and iv) adopting a traditional style of teaching. The need to communicate or social support includes items such as talking or thinking about the problem with co-workers, sharing their experience with each other such as how they solved their problems in the past, and which strategy they need to develop in order to make the teachers more self-confident. Coping centered on problems is about teachers who should try to think positively about their profession especially regarding their teaching and beside this encouraging their students. Avoidance coping strategy involves trying not to spend very long hours working without rest and not to take their work to home. Also, teachers should try to ignore their problems instead of overthinking about them and they can provide some times for extra professional activities. Adopting a traditional style of teaching is a strategy that includes items like making students remain quiet and separating students from each other for a while.

In another study, Worterk and Larungen (2008, cited in Manju, 2018) suggested some ways to solve burnout problems among teachers such as:

• developing short term and long term goals that are realistic (it will be better if written).

• giving more priority to heath and eating healthy foods.

• setting some times for relaxing and doing some exercises.

• making new friendship and staying away from being angry all the time.

• giving oneself the power of refusing to do things which are above one's capabilities.

• trying to share some of job or family responsibilities with others.

• reflecting on oneself and going through one's actions and thoughts during their work. (You can discover the ways that you dealt with the challenges in your work and avoid repeating your mistakes).

Caruso (2019) carried out a research project entitled 'Facing English language teachers' burnout through motivation' in Italy. This study took two years focusing on how teachers cope with potential burnout conditions. The results of this project indicated that English teachers can overcome their burnout through motivating their students by making innovation and escape from classical style of teaching, avoiding unnecessary pressure on their students. This, according to the author, would provide a good condition for both instructors and learners.

In another study, Chang (2013) examined teachers' emotions and strategies they use to cope with their emotions. In order to achieve this aim, the researcher created a model. The result of the study suggests that teacher educators or school administrators should increase teachers' knowledge to be able to adopt culturally responsive classroom management. Moreover, teachers need to reflect upon their goals and try to solve their problems effectively such as trying to find out what is the source and cause of students' misbehavior. The teacher must be equipped with enough psychological background to help them with the reasons for aggressions and misbehavior expressed by their students rather than reacting to them similarly. By this way he or she will have healthy ways of coping with these difficult situations.

Another relevant study was conducted by Jiang et al. (2017) among Chinese university instructors about coping styles with job burnout and its effects on

instructor's mental health. The aim of this study was to find out which coping strategy played a greater role in decreasing job burnout among instructors and its impact of their mental health. In order to accomplish this purpose, a sample of coping style questionnaire survey method was used. The questionnaire was divided into negative coping scale (i.e., escaping from the problems or trying to face the problems alone) and positive coping scale (i.e., facing and dealing with the problems by getting help from others). The findings indicated that the majority of participated teachers preferred positive coping style, because this style helped teachers to face their work pressures and challenges that they encountered, and thus it enhanced their sense of personal accomplishment and reduced their job burnout.

2.5 Summary

This chapter presented literature on burnout by first giving its definition and symptoms. This was followed by literature about burnout among different professions and teachers, burnout among English language teachers, and ended by reviewing the related literature on coping with burnout.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides a comprehensive description of the methodology employed in the study. It consists of six sections. The first section presents detailed information about the research design. The second section describes the context of the study, followed by the third section which introduces the participants of the study. The fourth section describes the data collection instruments and the next section focuses on data collection procedures. The chapter ends with the procedures followed in data analysis.

3.1 Research Design

As stated earlier, this study aims to investigate the existence and the level of burnout, its causes as well as the strategies for coping with burnout among English language teachers working at universities in the Kurdistan region of Iraq. To realize this purpose, this study adopted a mixed methods research design.

A mixed methods research utilizes both quantitative and qualitative data. Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) refer to mixed methods as the third research paradigm in which the target is to show a sketch of the research strengths, and diminish the research weaknesses by mixing both quantitative and qualitative methods in one single study. By using both of these methods, the researchers can easily collect different kinds of data in order to have more valid and reliable research findings (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012). This is, in fact, the concurrent triangulation

method in which a researcher uses two different methods in an attempt to conform, cross, validate, or corroborate findings within a single study (Creswell, 2003). As pointed out by McKim (2017), using mixed methods makes the research more valuable and enables the readers to gain a better and deeper understanding.

Quantitative research manipulates the variables in order to test hypotheses, in which there is a quantification of data and numerical analysis (Mackey & Gass, 2005). Qualitative research, on the other hand, gives priority to words more than quantification in collecting and analyzing the data (Bryman, 2004). Fraenkel and Wallen (2003) discuss that what is more likeable by researchers is the research quality, instead of the regularity of a certain action or its alternative evaluation. They declare that "research studies that examine the quality of activities, relationships, situations, or materials are habitually referred to as qualitative research" (p. 430).

Quantitative and qualitative data can be obtained in a number of ways. In quantitative research, the most common research instrument is the test, such as language tests or psychological tests like aptitude tests or personality batteries. Conducting a survey by using some types of the questionnaire is also a common research instrument in quantitative studies. In qualitative research, on the other hand, the common instruments for collecting data are interviews, observations, diaries and journals (Dörnyei, 2007). In this study, both quantitative and qualitative data collection instruments, namely a survey and semi-structured interviews are used.

3.2 The English Language Teaching in the Research Context

This study was conducted in seven universities situated in the Iraqi Kurdistan region. The cohort included instructors of English language in the Department of English Language and Department of Education in those universities.

The education system in the Iraqi Kurdistan region has gone through many changes due to some political changes in the region. This region has taken some new steps toward development and improvement including opening new private and public schools and universities, as well as developing a new curriculum. According to Ali (2012), although this region is more superior in development compared to other parts of Iraq, it is isolated from all scientific and academic developments that happen in the wider world. The Kurdistan Regional Government's education sector has been built since the early 1990s on the legacy of the central Iraqi government policy which was applied before this date and it has expanded year by year. In the current time, the Kurdistan region has two ministries of education: The Ministry of Education, which administers basic education and secondary education, and the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, which is responsible for the university and technical institute education.

Before 2003, when there was a change in the government, the education system in the region was rather traditional and teacher-centered. However, after the fall of the Iraqi government in 2003, and increased communication with the outside world, the Kurdistan region went through many changes. The local government in the Kurdistan region realized the failure of the traditional didactic method in which the teacher was at the center of the process. Therefore, the Ministry of Education had many

conferences in consultation with experts from foreign countries to improve the education system, including the English language teaching. In the last eight years, English language teaching has had great changes. For example, in the past the English language was taught starting from the fifth year of primary school (i.e., basic education), but currently it starts in the first year of basic education, and continues till the university level in all branches of secondary schools, including scientific, literature and vocational schools. Also, the curriculum of teaching has changed. In 2007, a new coursebook 'Sunrise' was launched with its teacher's book, student's book, activity book and CDs for pronunciation practice. Hence, the British system of English language tailored for the Kurdistan region schools has been applied since then. This new curriculum is interactive and the students are at the center of the teaching/learning process, aiming to make them more independent and 'autonomous' learners. These changes were implemented because the authorities in the region realized the importance of English language in the modern era of technology and the advances in the outside world.

As regards the teaching of English language at the higher education sector in the Iraqi Kurdistan region, it can be said that it differs from public universities to private universities. In public universities, the departments that teach humanities (other than English language department) teach their subjects either in Arabic or Kurdish language; nevertheless, it is compulsory to have a general English course in the curriculum. On the other hand, in departments like medicine and other health sciences such as dentistry, nurses, pharmacy and veterinary medicine, the medium of interaction is English. The same thing is true for hard sciences like physics,

chemistry, and biology. Therefore, graduate students of humanities usually have a weaker command of English compared to graduates of above-mentioned sciences.

Concerning the private universities, the situation is different from the public universities. In private universities all of the subjects excluding law department are taught in English. This is mainly because of the reason that the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, as well as the public universities, started appreciating the importance of English language for the job market. Therefore, English language teaching is gaining importance, and there are plans to change the whole system of teaching of all the subjects to English (personal communication with a Ministry staff member). Many private institutes are now established and they recruit students in their classes preparing them for TOEFL, IELTS, and other tests. The certificates of these tests are mandatory for admission to postgraduate studies at all universities in the Iraqi Kurdistan region and they are necessary for employment at high level jobs in the region.

The Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research is also encouraging various private and public universities to join the Bologna system which is well recognized internationally, especially in Europe. This created a great interest among universities to update their curricula and currently, they are trying to make those changes despite many challenges in their way. The most recent policy that the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research has announced is related to a nine-month pedagogy course which will be obligatory for all newly recruited university teachers (including English teachers). This training will be piloted by the trainers who were trained in Finland with the help of Cambridge University, aiming

to improve the teaching skills of all instructors at higher education (personal communication with a Ministry staff member).

Having given this background information about the educational system in the research context, we can give brief introduction for each of the seven universities in which the study was conducted (first public, then private universities). The first university is the University of Sulaimani (UoS) which is the first public university in the Iraqi Kurdistan region. It was established in the year 1968, and located in the city of Sulaymaniyah, which is one of the most important scientific and cultural centers in the Kurdistan region. The university accommodates a language center in which many courses are offered for learning various languages including Arabic, Persian, Kurdish and English. The class of English in this center of language prepares candidates for IELTS and TOEFL exams (www.univsul.edu.iq).

University of Garmian (UG) is one of the public universities located in the city of Kalar near the Iranian border. It was established in 2010. The Departments of English, one in the College of Arts, and the other one in the College of Basic Education, are among the active institutions in this university. The staff of those departments incited many activities such as conferences, workshops, and symposiums. Some of the teachers in this university had training courses in the USA (www.garmian.edu.tr).

University of Raparin (UoR), established in 2010, is a public university in the Kurdistan region. The main campus of this university is located in Ranya and the second campus is located in Qaladiza town. College of English Language is in the Qaladiza campus. This university has made many attempts to develop and improve

the university and its scientific level, including opening new colleges of science in 2015 (www.uor.edu.krd).

University of Halabja (UoH) is one of the public universities established in 2011. It is located in the famous Halabja city (the city that was bombarded by chemical weapons in the year 1988). The main campus is in Halabja and it has another campus in Sharazoor district. The main programs in this university were agricultural, sports and religious studies. However, the presidency of this university soon realized the need for the college of education in which the department of English was opened (www.uoh.edu.iq).

In addition to these four public universities, this study was conducted in the following three private universities, as well. Cihan University is one of the private universities which was established in 2007 in the city of Erbil, the capital of Kurdistan region. The fast development of this university created the chance for establishing branches in other cities including Sulaimani and Duhok. The Sulaimani branch of Cihan University was officially inaugurated in the year 2011 and the English Literature Department was among the very few departments that the university started with. (www.sulicihan.edu.krd).

University of Human Development (UHD) is one of private universities established in 2008, followed by many other private universities. This university is located in Qaradagh. It concentrates on teaching subjects in the field of humanities, including English language teaching. It has started postgraduate programs recently in collaboration with the University of Sulaimani (www.uhd.edu.iq).

Komar University for Science and Technology (KUST) is the most recent private university established in 2009 in the Sulaimaniyah city. This university follows an American style of education and administration. It has an active department of English language and a center of the Intensive English Program (www.komar.edu.iq).

3.3 Participants

The participants involved in this study was 100 English language instructors working in the universities that were introduced above, namely Sulaimani, Garmian, Raparin, Halabja, Cihan, Human Development, and Komar. The sampling choice of this study was based on a convenience approach. Dörnyei (2007) explains convenience sampling (also known as haphazard sampling or accidental sampling) as a kind of nonprobability or nonrandom sampling where members of the target population meet certain practical criteria, such as easy accessibility, geographical proximity, availability at a given time, or the willingness to participate. Since the researcher had some acquaintances with the heads of departments or the presidents of some universities, those seven universities were chosen due to their convenience.

Out of these 100 teachers, 35% of them were females and 65% of them were males. As regards their age, majority of them (44%) were between 30-39 years old, 23% were between 40-49, 16% were between 50-59, while only 3% were above the 60s. About the participants' academic rank, the majority of participants hold an MA degree (38%) and PhD (30%), 8% were PhD in progress, while MA in progress were only 14%. Regarding the participants' teaching hours, they had different teaching hours a week. The greater percentage of the participants (60%) were teaching between 2-15 hours, 38% were teaching between 16-21 hours, but a very few

participants (%2) were teaching for 27-30 hours a week. Concerning participants' years of experience, they had various years of experience. For example, 29% of the participants had 6-10 years of experience, while 28% had 1-5 years of experience. The remaining 21% and 22% of the participants had 11-15 and above 16 years of experience, respectively (Table 3.1).

Table 3.1: Demographic Data of Participants

Characteristic	Levels	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	65	65.0
	Female	35	35.0
Age	20-29	14	14.0
	30-39	44	44.0
	40-49	23	23.0
	50-59	16	16.0
	60+	3	3.0
Academic rank	MA in progress	14	14.0
	MA	38	38.0
	PhD in progress	18	18.0
	PhD	30	30.0
Years of teaching	1-5	28	28.0
	6-10	29	29.0
	11-15	21	21.0
	16+	22	22.0
Teaching hours	2-15	60	60.0
	16-21	38	38.0
	27-30	2	2.0

3.4 Data Collection Instruments

The present study administered a survey with 100 participants and semi-structured interviews with 15 participants.

3.4.1 The Survey

To accomplish the purpose of this study, Maslach Burnout Inventory-Educator Survey (MBI-ES) was employed as an instrument of quantitative data collection method. This survey consists of 22 self-reported items in three subscales:

a) Emotional Exhaustion (9 items)

b) Depersonalization (5 items)

c) Personal Accomplishment (8 items) (See Table 3.2).

Table 3.2: MBI-ES Items of the Three Burnout Domains

Scale domains	Statement number	Total no. of statements	Highest score
Emotional Exhaustion	1,2,3,6,8,13,14,16,20	9	54
Depersonalization	5,10,11,15,22	5	30
Personal accomplishment	4,7,9,12,17,18,19,21	8	48
Total		22	132

Emotional Exhaustion subscale describes feelings of wearing out or loss of energy. Depersonalization subscale describes the negative shift attitude towards students, while Personal Accomplishment subscale describes the positive response toward oneself and one's successful personal achievements at work. The survey is written in the form of statements about personal feelings or attitudes, and these are answered in terms of the frequency on a 7-point rating scale, ranging from "never" (0) to "every day" (6) with which the teacher experiences them (See Appendix A).

Malsach Burnout Inventory (MBI) is considered one of the most widely used burnout measurement instruments among the researchers (Baran et al., 2010; Naz et al., 2017; Pishghadam et al., 2014; Shen et al., 2015). It has been translated into various languages such as Brazilian (Gil-Monte et al., 2010), Arabic (Sabbah et al., 2012), Portuguese (Figueiredo-Ferraz et al., 2013), Malay (Chen et al., 2014), Italian (Guidetti et al., 2018).

Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) consists of three types: Maslach Burnout Inventory – Human Service Survey (MBI-HSS), Maslach Burnout Inventory – General Survey (MBI-GS), and Maslach Burnout Inventory-Educator Survey (MBI-ES). The original type (MBI-HSS) was created in 1981 by Maslach and Jackson to assess the three symptoms of burnout among different human service occupations. The development of this inventory was based on numerous researches done by Maslach and Jackson. They conducted various interviews and surveys among different professionals in order to find out sources of feelings or attitudes that burnout workers have.

The version used in this study MBI-ES, is mainly the same as the MBI-HS and MBI-GS except that the word 'recipient' has been changed to 'student' as it was specified to measure burnout in the teaching profession. In the published MBI manual (3rd ed., 1996), Maslach quoted two studies that verified the reliability and validity of the Maslach Burnout Inventory Educator Survey (MBI-ES). The first study was conducted by Iwanicki and Schwab in 1981 with 469 Massachusetts teachers. They reported Cronbach alpha, which was .90 for emotional exhaustion, .76 for depersonalization, and .70 for personal accomplishment. The second study took place in California by Gold (1984) with 462 teachers, and the study report was .88 for

emotional exhaustion, .74 for depersonalization, and .72 for personal accomplishment.

Further, in spite of the fact that the three subscales of burnout are distinct indicators of burnout syndrome, Maslach reported significant and positive inter-correlation between the MBI subscales of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization (.52) and negative inter-correlation between emotional exhaustion and personal accomplishment (-.22), and depersonalization and personal accomplishment (-.26) (Maslach et al., 1996).

The scoring key for this inventory leads the user to cluster items specific to each of the three burnout factors and then to calculate summative scores for each subscale. Respectively each subscale is measured according to the guidelines in a scoring key as stated by the scale developers (Maslach et al., 1996) (Table 3.3).

Table 3.3: Maslach Burnout Inventory for Educators Interpretation of Scores

Subscale	Low burnout	Moderate burnout	High burnout
Emotional Exhaustion	0-16	17-26	27+
Depersonalization	0-6	7-12	13+
Personal Accomplishment*	37	31-36	0-30

*Scale is reversed for Personal Accomplishment. Lower scores in Personal Accomplishment section indicate greater burnout.

3.4.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

In order to find out the causes of burnout among English language teachers in the research context, and how they cope with their burnout, semi-structured interviews were held with English language teachers in seven universities, namely Sulaimani, Garmian, Raparin, Halabja, Cihan, Human Development, and Komar. The interview questions were adapted from Jacobson's (2016) research with some changes according to the study context. The changes were made so that the semi-structured interview suits English language instructors in Iraqi Kurdistan region taking the circumstances of this region into consideration. The interview questions were specified for English language instructors rather than teachers in general. The interview was in the form of semi-structured in order to allow participants to express their opinion freely. Dörnyei (2007) states that semi-structured interview questions give the participants more freedom to express their ideas in an explanatory manner. Moreover, this format gives a chance to interviewer to skip those questions that have been already answered. Therefore, it will help to prevent participants' boredom (Cresswell, 2003).

Overall, the interview consisted of seven questions. The interview questions start with professional background of the participated instructors, followed by the next question which was about finding the sources of English language instructors burnout in this region. Then, the questions were continued to find out which defense mechanism the Kurdish instructors use for coping with their burnout. The role of the administration regarding coping with this issue was also inquired. According to the responses of the participants, the researcher added or skipped some questions in line with the aim of the study.

3.5 Data Collection Procedures

The data collection procedures took place in the fall semester of 2018-2019 academic year. Prior to conducting the study, the researcher obtained approval from Ethical Committee of EMU. Later, the researcher received permission letters from all universities in which the study would be conducted. Next, the researcher collected data from the participating English teachers via Maslach Burnout Inventory Educator Survey (MBI-ES) and the semi-structured interviews. Before the administration of both the survey and the interviews, consents of the teachers were obtained. They were asked to sign the consent form (Appendix C and Appendix D) and submit it to the researcher before they started responding to the survey and interview.

As mentioned above, quantitative data were collected by Maslach Burnout Inventory Educator Survey (MBI-ES). Before its administration, the survey was piloted with five English instructors in the Kurdistan region of Iraq to find out whether the questionnaire was relevant and applicable for their context and if there were any ambiguous items in it. Piloting is considered one of the important actions which has a significant benefit for the study. According to Dörnyei (2007), piloting helps the researcher to enhance the validity and reliability of the research tool regarding the research context. All five teachers with whom the survey was piloted showed their satisfaction with all the items as they found the items clear and relevant; therefore, there was no need for making any changes.

Then, the researcher contacted the participating teachers in person and explained the purpose of the study. After getting their consent, the researcher administrated the survey according to the participating teachers' schedule. Teachers were handed in the

survey and asked to fill it in. The filled-in forms were then collected by the researcher to be analyzed. A total of 100 participants responded and completed the survey on a voluntary base. The response rate was about 100% with no missing answers in the survey.

Qualitative data were collected by semi-structured interviews with 15 English instructors who have already responded the survey. Special attention was paid in order to have an equal number of interviewees from each university; however, due to some logistic difficulties such as time and accessibility, interviews were held with teachers only from three universities, namely Raparin, Garmian, and Sulaimani. These instructors were those who showed interest in being interviewed. The researcher conducted interviews according to prior appointments with the instructors and the interviews usually took place in their offices. Each interview lasted around 10 to 15 minutes and was recorded to be transcribed later for analysis.

3.6 Data Analysis

In the present study data were collected and analyzed by both quantitative and qualitative research methods. The quantitative data gathered by means of Maslach Burnout Inventory- Educator Survey (MBI-ES) were analyzed via Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, version 22). Moreover, qualitative data gathered via semi-structured interviews with the instructors were analyzed through content analysis, as explained below.

The quantitative data gathered through the MBI-ES survey were analyzed using descriptive statistics in order to measure the participating teachers' burnout level according to the three subscales, namely, Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization,

and Personal Accomplishment. As mentioned in the MBI manual, the three subscales should be scored separately, not into a single total score. Thus, the three domain scores were calculated for each participant. Each subscale was measured according to the guidelines in the scoring key as stated by the scale developers. The result is reported as low, moderate, or high as listed on the scoring key. High level of Emotional Exhaustion and Depersonalization indicate greater burnout. In the Personal Accomplishment, however, the scale is reversed; thus, lower scores in Personal Accomplishment section indicate greater burnout (See Table 3.3).

The qualitative data gathered from the semi-structured interviews were analyzed by content analysis. Firstly, the transcriptions of interviews were examined carefully to search for the emerging topics as indicators of burnout. Then, emerging topics were listed. In order to become sure about the reliability of the coding done by the researcher, a colleague who was also an MA student in the ELT program was asked to read the transcriptions of five interviewees and code the themes individually. Then, the two coding (done by the researcher and the colleague) were compared. Seeing that there was a high level of agreement (around 80%) between the two sets of coding, the researcher continued the coding process alone. After that, the findings were tabulated in a conceptual manner "to develop a conceptual understanding of the issues" (Hennink et al., 2011). Finally, the researcher built her theory in order to contribute to a broader conceptual understanding of a given social phenomenon. The analysis will be reported in the next chapter, and the quotes from the participants will be indicated by using P1, P2, P3 …etc., the letter P standing for 'participant'.

3.7 Summary

This chapter provided insights about the research design of the study. It also outlined the context and the participants, data collection instruments, and procedures followed in data collection and data analysis. In the next chapter, the results of the collected data will be presented and analyzed extensively.

Chapter 4

RESULTS

This chapter is a comprehensive presentation of the research findings obtained from the analysis of the Maslach Burnout Inventory Educator Survey (MBI-ES) and semi-structured interviews. The first section of this chapter reports the findings of quantitative analysis of Iraqi Kurdish English language instructors' burnout level, which was obtained via MBI-ES. The second section reports the findings of qualitative analysis, which was about the Iraqi Kurdish English language instructors' perceptions about the causes of burnout and their coping strategies with burnout.

4.1 Research Question #1: Do the English language instructors in higher education in the Iraqi Kurdistan region feel burnout? If yes, what is the level of their burnout?

As it was mentioned in the previous section, answers to the first research question were obtained by conducting a survey among participated instructors. In this survey (MBI-ES), the frequency with which the respondent experiences feelings related to each of the subscales, namely Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization, and Personal Accomplishment was assessed by a seven-point response format ranging from "never" to "every day". The participants' responses to the survey were analyzed by using MBI scoring key which was designed by the survey developers (Maslach et al., 1996) (See Table 3.3). They pointed out that the measurement of burnout phenomena is divided into three categories, namely Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization, and Personal Accomplishment.

The Emotional Exhaustion scores correlate with "behavior", Depersonalization scores correlate with "job performance", and Personal accomplishment scores correlate with "the person's work outcome". The scores were transferred from the survey into the Excel program to assess the result of MBI-ES. The results of the three subscales are presented below.

4.1.1 Emotional Exhaustion Subscale

Emotional Exhaustion subscale assesses the teacher's sensation of being emotionally exhausted or overextended. According to Maslach et al. (1981), the basis of emotional exhaustion is feeling overloaded followed by personal conflict at work. In another words, it is the teachers' sense of being drained and facing difficulty from unwinding and recovering work (Maslach et al., 1996). They may not have enough energy to face another project or another person. The result showed a moderate level of psychological burnout Mean score 24.57 with a SD of 4.78. This result indicates that the participants to some extent feel exhausted and overextended, emotionally and physically.

Table 4.1 presents the results of the descriptive statistical analysis of participated Iraqi Kurdish English language instructors mean score of emotional exhaustion subscale compared to MBI-ES.

Table 4.1: Participants Emotional Exhaustion Compared with MBI-ES

Domain	MBI Scoring Key		Participants' Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Emotional Exhaustion (EE)	Low	0-16		
	Moderate	17-26	24.57	4.78
	High	+27		

4.1.2 Depersonalization Subscale

Depersonalization subscale evaluates the teacher's sensation of impersonal response toward a student. As Maslach et al. (1996), state, Depersonalization happens as a result of Emotional Exhaustion. Instructors sense they can no more have positive feelings towards their students as they once had. The result showed a moderate level of psychological burnout Mean score 9.49 with a SD of 2.94. This result indicates that the participated English language instructors are likely to be less motivated to allocate enough time for their students.

Table 4.2 below presents the result of the descriptive statistical analysis of participated Iraqi Kurdish English language instructors mean score of Depersonalization subscale compared to MBI-ES.

Table 4.2: Participants' Depersonalization Compared with MBI-ES

Domain	MBI Scoring Key		Participants' Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Depersonalization (DP)	Low	0-6		
	Moderate	7-12	9.49	2.94
	High	+13		

4.1.3 Personal Accomplishment Subscale

Personal Accomplishment subscale is designed to measure the sense of teacher's successful achievement. Maslach et al., (1996), described personal accomplishment as a sense of competence and achievement of instructors. The average of the descriptive statistical analysis of participants' mean score of Personal Accomplishment subscale compared to MBI-ES results revealed a low level of psychological burnout reported 47.8 with a SD of 6.12. As mentioned before, the Personal Accomplishment mean score is in the opposite direction from the

Depersonalization and Emotional Exhaustion mean score. Those low results in this subscale among English language instructors in the Kurdistan universities reflect low self confidence among those instructors, which imposes a detrimental effect on the learning outcome of their students.

Table 4.3 presents the result of the descriptive statistical analysis of participated Iraqi Kurdish English language instructors mean score of Personal Accomplishment subscale compared to MBI-ES.

Table 4.3: Participants Personal Accomplishment Compared with MBI-ES

Domain	MBI Scoring Key		Participants' Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Personal Accomplishment (PA)	Low	37+	47.08	6.12
	Moderate	31-36		
	High	0-30		

4.1.4 Summary

The prevalence of the psychological burnout levels among participants as it is summarized in Table 4.4 indicates that out of 100 participants 65% of the participated English language instructors reported moderate level of Emotional Exhaustion and Depersonalization subscales, and 93% of participants are within the low level of Personal Accomplishment subscale.

Table 4.4: Participants' Burnout Level Scores

Burnout dimensions	Level of burnout			
	Low	Moderate	High	Total
Emotional Exhaustion (EE)	4.0	65.0	31.0	100.0
Depersonalization (DP)	17.0	65.0	18.0	100.0
Personal Accomplishment (PA)	93.0	5.0	2.0	100.0

4.2 Research Question # 2: What are the causes of their burnout?

As it was stated earlier, one of the aims of this study was to find the causes of burnout among English language instructors in the Iraqi Kurdistan region. For this purpose, the participants were asked in the semi-structured interviews to elaborate on this issue.

The interviewees, in general, were satisfied about their job as a teacher despite the challenges they were facing, as it appeared in their answers. However, when they were asked whether their occupation was easy to perform or difficult and stressful, some of the instructors thought it was quite difficult for the following reasons: responsibility for students, accountability for the university administration, daily continuous professional development, updating their knowledge, abiding by rigid university rules and regulations, and teaching students with various educational background. One of the respondents thought that teaching is an easy and enjoyable occupation provided that the teacher is disciplined, knowledgeable, having vast repertoire of information in his files and being familiar with rules and regulations of higher education system. This respondent also stated that those types of instructors could benefit the students, university, and feel much confident and relaxed while teaching. The remaining interviewees perceived their profession of teaching as neither difficult nor easy and they stressed that an instructor needs to have good social skills and the desire for continuous self-improvement. Some of respondents had their teaching profession as the only job while eight of them had other commitments or positions in the university including head of department, head of language center, coordinator, office work and registration work. They added that some of these commitments were at other universities.

Content analysis of the data from the answers of the instructors as regards the causes of burnout among them helped us classify the data into the following themes:

a) Education system-related causes

b) Government-related causes

c) Teacher-related causes

d) Student-related causes

Each of these themes will be elaborated in more detail as shown in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Participants' Perception about the Causes of Burnout

Themes	Sub-themes
Education system-related causes	Education system being old Curriculum Lack of facilities Administration and academic environment
Government-related causes	Teachers' poor economic status Workload including teaching and non-teaching loads
Teacher-related causes	There is no collaboration between teachers Teachers are not up to their responsibility
Student -related causes	Students' poor English language background Students' demotivation Students' carelessness

4.2.1 Education System Related-Causes

Education system was the most incriminating issue among the participants, who were themselves graduates of this system. It appears that the system did not change despite the advances and changes throughout the world. This seems to have obliged the instructors to go through the same system while they are teaching. Obviously this mismatch between the current reality and their professional ambitions seemed to have caused burnout. Based on the participants' responses, this theme can be further classified into different sub-themes:

4.2.1.1 The Education System is Old

The instructors assessed the educational system in different ways according to their perception. Some of them stressed that the process of students' admission to universities was old fashioned and this had a negative impact on the current academic level of the universities. This negative impact caused burnout among the instructors, as pointed out by one of the instructors:

> Sometimes I feel burnout because our system was wrong from the beginning and still there is no innovation in the system. (P1)

4.2.1.2 Curriculum

According to some participants, the access of people to websites of universities throughout the advanced world and having access to the curriculum of some of those universities created disappointment among the instructors. The system in the Iraqi Kurdistan region and the rest of Iraq does not allow radical changes in the curriculum to make it similar to that of the universities mentioned before. This problem made the instructors frustrated and this was complicated by the fact that their students graduate from their departments without reaching the goals of those instructors, which is "speaking English fluently". Some of the participants mentioned this as follows:

> I feel burnout because our current curriculum is not according to the appropriate level   compared to other countries. That's why the level of students in English is low after graduation too. (P1, P6, P7).

> I feel burnout because of our poor curriculum it is not parallel nowadays English language level. most of the students suffer from low-level of English even after graduation too (P3).

> I don't feel comfortable with materials that are merely assigned by administration because it does not help to accomplish my goals (P11)

One of the instructors mentioned she had their own plan regarding curriculum but it could not implement them which made her feeling burnout.

> I feel burnout when my plans not be executed or done as outlined from the curriculum and syllabi. (P5, P15)

The lack of native speakers of English within the curriculum and lack of opportunities for instructors and students for exposure to native speaking teachers was another issue that made the task of English language instructors more difficult. The followings are statements as quoted by some of the instructors:

> As English language teachers we are not exposed to authentic language from native speakers of English. (P2)

> One of the most common source of English language instructors cause of burnout is lack of interaction and practice with the native speakers. (P4, P10)

4.2.1.3 Lack of Facilities

Some of the instructors complained about the lack of facilities at the university, which included the number of students compared to the sizes of the classes, which created extra burden on the instructors during the process of teaching in those classes.

There might be several factors which result in burnout among English teachers in university for example, class size which sometimes will be hard to maintain the discipline. (P1, P8, P10)

Most of those instructors had the desire to have access to modern resources which requires easy access to internet and electronic libraries. The university administration could not provide that service for them because of the financial crisis in the region and the instructors themselves could not afford that because of their very low salaries. This shortage of facilities among the instructors who knew about the situation at western universities as it was mentioned in the theme of curriculum dismayed those instructors causing them to have burnout. The following are statements by those instructors:

There are some reasons of stress in this region. One of them is lack of technical support and technology such as electronic library inside universities. (P3, P5)

I feel one of the causes of burnout among English teachers in this region is that our education system is so old and there is no electronic library for teachers to improve themselves. (P6)

Well, I am certain that there are extra difficulties in this region, to this moment there is no central electronic library therefore teachers and students have no access to the internet inside the classes and even in the university. So the system is old comparing with the systems of education in the western countries. (P5, P7)

4.2.1.4 Administration and Academic Environment

Administration has a vital role in the process of education development. It has a substantial effect on both academic and psychological development of teachers. Some of the participants complained about the way that the presidency of the universities was treating the instructors. They stated that they were not rewarded for their achievements and the result of their evaluations were similar to the assessment of other instructors who were neither serious nor committed to their job. Some of

those teachers felt marginalized by this administration. Some of the instructors felt that they were treated the same way as unqualified colleagues. The following statements are an examples illustrating this sub-theme.

> I feel burnout specially when I see the administration and the deanery never distinguish between serious, diligent and honest teachers from those teachers who are not serious and unqualified. In this case, I feel isolated, exhausted and hopeless. (P5, P14)

> Sometimes we have to cope with some imposed rules and regulations that don't serve the process of teaching and learning very tiring. (P8)

Furthermore, the administration of the university was also criticized for not providing an academic friendly environment. They thought that the administration system is harsh with excessive discipline. The administration did not appreciate the teacher's efforts and did not arrange for recreational activities to lower the level of stress among those hard working instructors. The result was that they developed burnout. As it was quoted in the following statements:

> Our administration at the universities are not friendly and there is excessive discipline. Also university presidency does not appreciate teacher's effort. (P1)

> The main problem of English teachers in Kurdistan is our academic environment. It is not friendly and this produced sense of burnout. (P15)

4.2.2 Government-Related Causes

Majority of the instructors who were interviewed stressed on this issue as one of the biggest causes of burnout especially in the last few years due to huge economic crisis. This issue makes instructors more tired as they couldn't meet their personal needs and their family needs. Hence, some of them tried to find a job in other universities or to find another job beside their teaching and this situation led the instructors to feel more stressed and exhausted. The sub-themes of this category are explained below.

56

4.2.2.1 Teachers' Poor Economic Status

The conduction of this study coincided with the economic crisis in the whole of Iraq, which specifically affected the Kurdistan region. The government cut down the salaries of all employees to about one quarter of their previous rates. This had a direct impact on university instructors as they were not able to provide a decent life for themselves and their families. Furthermore, the quarter salaries were not given to the instructors at fixed dates. This created anxiety among those instructors because some of them were not sure that they would get their salaries. This situation created chaos among the instructors and some of them tried to find other jobs outside the universities even though those jobs lowered their prestige. This economic state of the instructors made them more stressed and felt emotionally exhausted. The following quotes illustrate this theme clearly.

> Yes, I am burnout teacher now, and this is because I didn't get my salary at the right time, or get half of it because of the economic crisis our country is going through. (P1, P3, P4, P6, P8, P11, P12, P13, P9, P10,

> I feel insecure because of the economic crisis. (P2)

> I feel indifferent with teaching, and feel tired of teaching. I have to work at other jobs. This leaves me no time to develop myself for performing better in class. (P7)

4.2.2.2 Workloads including Teaching and non-Teaching Loads

The government's decision to cut down the salaries forced some of the instructors to find other opportunities to work and teach outside their universities. Some of those who were employed by state universities were seeking employment opportunities in private universities or institutes. This increased their workloads and they did not have enough time to cater for their family affairs and spend time with their children. Furthermore, it did not give them enough time either to improve themselves academically or update themselves. The following quotes are example of this issue.

57

Yes. In the last two academic years, I felt burnout, which was mainly due to my teaching at three different universities. I think the main factor is that when you have a lot of classes to teach, and little time to take some rest. When you are in such a context, you don't have time to relax or do something other than teaching. As we know, teaching also needs preparation at home, preparing classes, checking student papers, etc. These responsibilities contribute to the fact that teachers have less time to spend time away from work. (P11, P3, P7, P9, P12)

In Kurdistan, the main problem is we are not well paid although we put a lot of efforts in our works the money is not according to our effort. We work longer hours with a limited salary compared to teachers in western countries who get paid more for similar working hours. Another problem is working hours, compared to western countries the level of working hours in much higher in Kurdistan. (P5)

Some teachers, through unofficially, look for other job opportunities in which they can earn some money to survive. Usually, these jobs are not teaching-related.

4.2.3 Teacher-Related Causes

Two sub-themes that emerged in that content analysis were categorized under teacher-related causes. The first one was related to the lack of collaboration in their workplace and the second one was the irresponsible behavior of some colleagues.

4.2.3.1 Lack of Collaboration Between Teachers

The findings indicated that social interaction among instructors in the department was very low in some cases and, thus some of the participants felt isolated. For example, one participants pointed out

The negative or biased evaluation of some co-teachers at work, which causes stress and unhappiness. (P8)

Another participant emphasized on the lack of collaboration between colleagues at work leading some colleagues to think of leaving teaching.

Many factors impact on teacher's motivation such as learners and luck of collaboration between colleagues at works. I know some colleagues who think of leaving teaching because of these factors. (P14)

Also one participants' stated there is no collaboration between instructors for solving students' problem.

> In this context, teachers are not friendly. They don't support each other for finding solution for weak students English problems. (P7)

4.2.3.2 Teachers are Not Up to Their Responsibilities

Some of the responses pointed out that some of the instructors were not performing their duties in the process of teaching either because of their economic state or because they were not reprimanded by Deanery Office of the university. This situation created burnout among other teachers who were doing their jobs properly. The following quote is an example:

> Well, in my opinion one of the major reasons of stress is some of the teachers are not up to their responsibility, so it grows the feelings of demotivation and anger about my job. (P1, P5)

4.2.4 Student-Related Causes

The participated instructors mentioned some causes of burnout which could be collectively categorized as student-related causes, which can be specified in three themes:

4.2.4.1 Students' Poor English Language Background

Most of the students who were studying at English departments of different Kurdistan universities during this research were those who graduated from secondary schools that followed the old system of education with a very poor curriculum. Those students had high marks in English language. Yet, they were unable to hold a conversation in English for a few seconds. They were not able to compose a very short essay in English. This problem involved most of the students who graduated from government schools. Those students were studying at the university during the data collection stage of this research and they could not cope with the curriculum of the university, which made the task of the instructors of English language difficult.

The result was that the instructors had to make extra efforts to raise the level of those students. They had to spend more time with the students in order to cover the curriculum. Therefore, these instructors felt emotionally exhausted and sometimes became harsh with the students. The following quotes are examples illustrating this theme:

> I think sources of stress for all teachers of English around the world are so similar but level or let's say the source of stress is different from one place to another. For example, most of the students come from very bad teaching background or poor interaction practice therefore their English level is very low when they come to universities so this will put too much stress on English teachers. (P1)

> Yes, I am always burnout because of my students bad English and they don't try to improve themselves either. But, I keep encouraging them by bringing new sources from outside to encourage them to improve their English. This makes me so tired of teaching English (P7, P10)

Also, the participants highlighted the differences between learners as the source of stress, as follows:

> Teachers are not spared from stress all over the world. But, the amount, the source and the cause of stress varies in accordance with places, individuals and times. In Kurdistan region, teachers of English language experience stress throughout teaching process. During the process multitude difficulties arise such as cultural differences, poor background knowledge of the learners. (P4)

4.2.4.2 Students' Demotivation

The participants expressed their frustration because of the fact that their students were not enthusiastic about learnings and they had no motivation to learn. The economic crisis in Iraq and Kurdistan Region created a state of unemployment among most of the graduates of universities except those graduating from colleges of medicine and dentistry. The chances of employment outside government universities were scarce because of the economic situation. The result of this situation affected the desire of students to learn negatively and this indirectly affected their instructors

60

because the instructors had to find other ways of motivating those students. These instructors were already full of stress due to the reasons mentioned previously. Their students with little or no motivation to learn put an extra burden on those instructors, leading them to feel burnout. The following quotes show how they expressed it.

> Dealing with students who have no zeal and passion for study and they see no future for themselves due to the current situation in Kurdistan. (P8)

> There are extra difficulties, for example some students are claiming that they do not like the department and they are accepted to the department. centrally, it was not their own choices. Therefore, this problem makes work of us harder. Beside teaching we have to encourage them to like their major. (P5)

4.2.4.3 Students' Carelessness

According to the findings, the instructors were facing many difficulties due to dealing with students who were not appreciating that they are university students and that they have to study harder and open their minds in order to learn. Some of those students were still under the influence of secondary school teachers. Other students did not care about gaining knowledge and they were only aiming to get their certificates. This carelessness by the students affected the moral of the instructors and caused emotional exhaustion and sense of low achievement among those instructors. The following quotes are descriptions of this feeling among the participants.

> Well, in the context of teaching at universities here, usually students and people in general expect you to be like a primary school teacher where you explain everything for the students. This is something not right, and something I personally don't like. (P12)

> Students are coming to the class without knowing what to do because they don't study for the class. Or they don't know what the topic is. And it is not appropriate at this level to translate the topic into their first language. (P8)

> When I see that my students only tires for getting their certificate without considering that they will become English teachers or translator. They need

61

to improve themselves by studying according to their teachers teaching. Those kinds of things make me demotivated and tired of teaching as I feel I am teaching without having any outcomes. (P15)

Yes, I felt burnout many times because when you try to demonstrate or explain new topic and your students demand you to repeat it for several time because they never get prepared before. (P13)

4.3 Research Question #3: How do they cope with their burnout?

In this part the methods of coping with burnout are analyzed from the statements of the participants in the semi-structured interviews. The analysis of the answers directed us to classify the answers into two main categories:

a) Self-produced coping as initiated by English language instructors

b) Coping methods to be provided by the university administration as proposed by the English language instructors.

Participants' answers had to be classified further into various sub- themes under each category as it is shown in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Participants' Perceptions as regards Coping strategies with Burnout

Theme	Sub-themes
Self-produced coping as initiated by English language teachers	Taking a break
	Teaching different classes or modules
	Spending more time with intelligent students
	Searching for a coping strategy in different resources
	Rationalization
	Switching tasks
Coping methods to be provided by the university administration as proposed by the English language teachers	Providing training course
	Relieving the instructors from part of their responsibilities
	Rewarding teachers
	Improving the education system

4.3.1 Self-produced Coping as Initiated by English Language Instructors

The teachers who were suffering from symptoms of burnout had to find ways to cope with their symptoms. These coping methods are subjective and related to the individual instructors. Some of the instructors perceived the process of coping as a defense mechanism to deal with stress resulting from working in a stressful profession.

4.3.1.1 Taking a Break

The participants suggested that taking time off work occasionally will help in refreshing their abilities to teach and deal with the stress of their profession. It seems that the social structure in Iraqi Kurdistan Region and the geography of the region are helpful in inventing coping methods; therefore, they were spending time with

their families and relatives as well as going on trips to the mountains or swimming in the rivers. Presence of sports facilities in the community inspired instructors to use them as coping methods. The following quotes from the instructors demonstrated this theme

> As a defense mechanism, I usually take breaks and go on holidays, immersing myself into social and recreational activities such as swimming, hiking and climbing. (P4)

> I take short break to spend more times with my family, and do sports. (P1)

> Well, I cannot honestly think of a good way to continue. However, I just try to make myself motivated and remind myself that soon in May I will get a break. (P12)

4.3.1.2 Teaching Different Classes or Modules

The findings reveal some of the participants tried to overcome the daily routine of teaching the same students and the same subject by trying to teach a different group of students or swap modules with other colleagues in their department. This change was found to be helpful as indicated in the following quote.

> I try to change the class and take some other classes and teach a new group of students. Sometimes, I try a different module to teach. (P11, P6)

4.3.1.3 Spending More Time with Intelligent Students

Some of the participants found that spending some time with students who are smart and motivated to learn is rewarding, therefore, they spent extra time with those students. This process helped some of those instructors to be more interested in their profession and cope with the challenges facing them in their daily work with the rest of the students. The quotes below are examples of this coping method.

> In these times I looked at the small number of my students who are smart and they keep trying to improve themselves through my teaching and they always give me hope to love my job and continue. (P1)

> A small number of interested, smart, hopeful students always give me an impetus to tire myself more and more. (P10)

4.3.1.4 Searching for a Coping Strategy in Different Resources

Some participants who felt unable to find coping methods for themselves thought of asking for help from more experienced colleagues to share their personal coping methods with those instructors. Instructors who did not seek help from colleagues suggested asking help from psychiatrist to help them to deal with their difficulties.

> When something makes me tired, I try to study more about ways of coping with that to find a solution or at least find the reason of that problem and understand more about it in different aspects and also in different contexts. (P14)

> I will try to talk to those teachers who went through the same experience to find out how they overcome this issue. (P3)

> I try to talk to a teacher who I think is active and motivated to teach. (P2)

> In my opinion, it is better to visit psychiatrist to solve the problem or taking some rest. (P15)

4.3.1.5 Rationalization

In this theme one of the participants tried to convince himself in dealing with the hard situations by focusing on the mission of his occupation to help him deal with the stress. This instructor looked at the positive side of his job to avoid going into a state of burnout. The quote from this instructor is highly impressive and useful as an example for other instructors:

> Well, I never feel bored or being fed up with my career but in the hard times, I just focus on my mission, vision and the holiness of my profession. This will give me power and courage to pursue and not surrender. (P8)

4.3.1.6 Switching Tasks

Another strategy put forward by one of the participants while dealing with the hard times she was facing during teaching was reported to be finding easier tasks and

involving the students by making them more responsive to this easy task. Eventually

the instructor feels better because of the students' responses. The following quote

demonstrates this action:

> I involve all students to participate in an easy activity or talk about something that make you happy, then, start the class again. (P13)

4.3.2 Coping Methods to be Provided by the University Administration

The participants proposed some methods of coping that could be applied by the

university administration that may help the instructors in general to cope with

burnout. These suggestions can be regarded as cost effective because a large number

of instructors can be helped at the same time. These suggestions are described below.

4.3.2.1 Providing Training Courses

The participants suggested that the university raise the professional capability of the

teaching staff by involving them in training courses so that they become more skilled

in facing difficult tasks. Some of those instructors also suggested counseling and

training by phycologists to teach the instructors coping methods. The following

quotes are examples:

> Opening different training courses for teachers in a different area, especially in psychology. (P6, P3, P1, P5)

> Yes, administration can do a lot to help burn out teachers through giving them different experiences and tasks. Including them in trainings… or at least listen to their voice. (P2, P7)

> Yes, for sure, as I mentioned before they can help teachers by providing some training course regarding how to deal with these kinds of psychological issues. (P15, P13)

4.3.2.2 Relieving the Instructors from Part of Their Responsibilities

One participants suggested that the university administration redistribute the

workloads and duties of the instructors so that those instructors who are overworked

can be relieved from some of their duties and allocate those duties to other staff.

66

> Yes, for example, here in Kurdistan, some responsibilities of teachers should be transferred to other non-teaching staff. (P12)

4.3.2.3 Rewarding Teachers

Another suggestion made by some participants was the incentives and rewards that may raise the self-esteem of the instructors and help them cope with burnout. These incentives could be the form of psychological encouragement or financial rewards that could be provided by families, friends, and administration of the university. It was also mentioned that improving the environment of the university and providing more facilities by university administration will be rewarding to the instructors. Some of the quotes from the participants are as follows:

> Sure, family members, partners, friends and colleagues can play a great positive role in decreasing the impact of burnout on the teachers. Encouragement, alleviation and providing the sense of self-worth can contribute in reducing and healing the sense of burnout. (P4)

> Colleagues, friends, administration can have main role in decreasing burnout by supporting the burnout teacher to increase his or her self-esteem through continues encouragement. (P9)

> Administrators should support teachers and create a calm, motivating atmosphere for them. They can sometimes reward teachers for their hard work and achievements. They can also provide equipment and facilities by which and allocate some places in which teachers can physically and mentally relax and spend an enjoyable and amusing time. (P8)

4.3.2.4 Improving the Education System

In this sub-theme, some of the participants suggested many general and specific steps to improve the educational system believing that these changes will update the curricula and the teaching system of those universities and create a more academic-friendly environment. The suggestions made by the participants can be first as follows:

> The administration, or rather the government, may work hard on developing curricula, decreasing the number of those admitted to university, improving the quality of teaching and assessment, choosing deans and department

chairs who are really versed in their profession, being strict in choosing university teachers, providing more technological teaching and learning equipment, appreciating teachers (and researchers) who really deserve to be appreciated and rewarded , providing a dignified living for teachers so that they may be completely dedicated to their job, encouraging a constant collaboration and cooperative relationship between teachers, administrators and course designer to avoid any unpleasant experience. (P10, P1)

4.4 Summary

This chapter presented the findings obtained from the survey and semi-structured interviews. The first section presented the findings of the survey, and the second section presented the findings of the semi-structured interviews. In the following chapter, these findings will be discussed.

Chapter 5

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS AND CONCLUSION

This chapter provides a comprehensive discussion of the major findings. The results are presented and interpreted in line with each research question of the study. The chapter continues with the conclusion, implications of the study, and limitations, and ends by suggestions for future research.

5.1 Discussion of Results

The findings related to each research question will be discussed in this section. The first research question was about whether the English language instructors in Iraqi Kurdistan region feel burnout, and if they do, what level of their burnout is. For this purpose, a survey called Maslach Burnout Inventory Educator Survey (MBI-ES) was used to determine the participants' level of burnout within three domains, namely Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization and, Personal Accomplishment.

The reported results revealed the existence of burnout among the participants. More specifically, the participants of the study had a moderate level of burnout within the Emotional Exhaustion and Depersonalization dimensions, while they had low Personal Accomplishment. Looking more closely at the rate of burnout prevalence, 65% of participants reported moderate level of burnout in Emotional Exhaustion and Depersonalization, while 93% of participants reported low level of burnout in Personal Accomplishment.

The result of Emotional Exhaustion, which is the most fundamental component of burnout was reported to be at a moderate level. It is possible that this finding reflects a situation where the cohort in this research study may be spending less time and effort in their work. They might be doing only what is basically required from them and therefore may experience more absences from their work.

To be successful at work, one needs to put more effort and be committed in order to become creative. Therefore, if an instructor experiences moderate level of Emotional Exhaustion, he or she might perform his or her routine commitments without new initiatives and the result will be a low quality of teaching.

The result of Depersonalization subscale reported a moderate level as well. This result showed that the participated English language instructors are likely to be less motivated to allocate enough time for their students. They may have taken more days off work which would affect their teaching ability and quality. The low level of instructor- students' encounters, i.e., less than what is required for a proper teaching process, will have a detrimental effect on the process of teaching. Thus, this moderate score reflects a poorer communication between instructors and students.

The result of Personal Accomplishment subscale reported low level. This result indicates that the participants have low self-confidence and they face difficulties in their work achievement. Those teachers may have felt that they are not able to perform their duties as expected from them. Thus, this result showed that the English language instructors participated in this research are at high level of burnout in terms of Personal Accomplishment.

A study similar to current study was conducted by Hismanoglu and Ersan (2016) to investigate the level of burnout among Turkish English language instructors teaching English in private, public and charity universities in seven different regions of Turkey. The results of their study using MBI-ES reported moderate level of Emotional Exhaustion and low level of Depersonalization. Regarding Personal Accomplishment dimension, high level was reported. The results of both studies regarding the dimension of Emotional Exhaustions might indicate that English language instructors who participated in the above mentioned researches in Turkey and Iraqi Kurdistan region are likely to spend less time and effort in their work. Maslach et al. (1996) state that Emotional Exhaustion happens because professionals develop feelings of fatigue and anxiety. Therefore, it makes instructors feel they can no longer commit themselves to their students as they once did.

About Depersonalization subscale, Hismanoglu and Ersan (2016) reported low level of Depersonalization while in the current research the score of Depersonalization was moderate, which means the participants were burnout, and thus they developed negative attitude towards their students. The difference between these two studies can be explained by the possibility that the instructors in the Iraqi Kurdistan region were not happy about their work and living circumstances and they displaced this feeling towards their students, because this was easier than displacing it toward the authorities. Therefore, it definitely leaves negative effect on the communication between students and instructors. As a result of this, the students would be ignored and there would be larger distance between the instructors and their students.

As far as the Personal Accomplishment subscale is concerned, the result of the current study was low compared to high level in Hismanoglu and Ersan's (2016)

study. This result indicates that the participants in the current study have experienced a high level of burnout. According to Maslach et al. (1996) when the feeling of Personal Accomplishment decreases teachers loses their focus on their teaching and cannot perform their job effectively.

The second research question aimed to find out the causes behind English language instructors' burnout. Data were obtained via semi-structured interviews, and its analysis revealed that the major causes of burnout were related to the education system, government policies, instructors themselves and students. The participants of the current study criticized the education system as being old fashioned, and not updated by the modern educational understandings. They thought that their curriculum neither helps the students to learn nor supports instructors to develop their knowledge. They also described other causes for their burnout such as limited facilities including lack of good internet service, electronic library and proper class sizes in their universities. These factors seem to increase the level of stress among those instructors because they blocked their ability to improve their teaching and update their knowledge. Moreover, the participants in the current study pointed at the administration as another cause of burnout because some of the participants thought that their academic environment was not friendly and supportive.

Government policies was another factor which developed a sense of burnout among the participants, because majority of them highlighted that they were struggling with their poor economic status, which made them work in more than one place or more than one job. The result was they felt fatigued and overworked, and in the end, burnout.

Some of the participants blamed the interpersonal relations with their colleagues as a reason for their burnout. They said that there was no cooperation between them within the same institution. They were not sharing their personal experiences with each other in facing their work challenges and some of them were not up to their responsibility.

Furthermore, students' poor English was reported as another factor that increased a sense of burnout among the participants; therefore, the participants had to put more effort to enhance the English background of their students. Low motivation and carelessness among the students was also another challenge facing the instructors as they had to find ways to motivate their students through their teaching methods, which was not always successful.

The results of the current study supported the results of some studies conducted among English language instructors in different universities in China and Turkey (Demirel & Cephe, 2015; Hismanoglu & Ersan, 2016; Li, 2015; Lou & Chen, 2016). Similar to those studies, this study indicated that classroom environment, students' proficiency level and demotivation, materials and workloads were the essential factors leading English language instructors to develop the sense of burnout.

The third question attempted to find out coping strategies used by the participants in order to face their sense of burnout. Data obtained via semi-structured interviews revealed various coping strategies that could be classified into two groups. The first group included coping methods that were initiated by the participants themselves and the second group were coping methods to be provided by the university administration.

To exemplify the first group, some participants stated that while they were in a state of burnout, they tried to take a break in order to refresh their abilities. Other participants pointed out that they tried to teach other classes or modules to overcome their daily routine which was causing a sense of burnout. Another strategy reported by the participants was spending more time with those students who are motivated and smart, assuming that this would help teachers to be more excited towards their teaching. Another way for coping with burnout was voiced by some participants as asking for help from more experienced colleagues or from a psychiatrist (as there are only a few psychologists in the region and the task of counseling is provided by the psychiatrists). Furthermore, the participants reported that they also use rationalization and switching tasks as strategies to cope with burnout.

Regarding the second group of coping strategies (i.e., to be provided by the university administration), the participants suggested that university administration can help their instructors by providing training courses to make the instructors become more skilled at facing difficult tasks, relieving the instructors from part of their responsibilities, rewarding them to raise their self-esteem and finally improving the education system.

The findings of the current study support the previous literature (Küçükoğlu, 2013) which provided some strategies for English language teachers to be able to cope with their burnout. The participants in the current study are already familiar with and using some of these strategies such as talking about their difficulties or problems and sharing their feelings with those people who are going through the same experiences, taking a break, taking action to deal with problems, seeking support from the administrative staff and dedicating extra time to specific tasks.

5.2 Conclusion

This study investigated the issue of burnout among English language instructors in Iraqi Kurdistan region. The quantitative data obtained by Maslach Burnout Inventory Educator Survey (MBI-ES) indicated that majority of the participants felt they were facing, in their job, many challenges which were interfering with their ability to accomplish their teaching properly and achieve their teaching goals. The qualitative part of this research, on the other hand, revealed the causes behind those instructors feeling of burnout in their job. According to their perceptions, the education system, the government policies, teachers and students were among the causes which lead the instructors to feel fatigued from their job and expose them to burnout.

Moreover, this study attempted to find out how those instructors who have burnout continued their teaching and which strategies they used in order to be able to overcome burnout or even control and reduce their sense of burnout at their workplaces. Numerous strategies were reported to use such as taking a break, trying to teach different classes or modules, spending time with smart students to make themselves feel their teaching achievement from their students' performance, searching for coping strategies from various resources including colleagues and psychiatrists or using the mechanisms of rationalization and switching tasks.

Furthermore, the participants suggested some coping methods that can be provided by the university administration which can help instructors who are in a state of burnout or about to enter the state of burnout. The coping methods suggested by them included training courses to be offered by the experts to guide them about how to deal with such psychological problems, making efforts for improving education

system, rewarding instructors and relieving the instructors from part of their responsibilities.

5.3 Implications of the Study

The findings of this current study have some implications to reduce the level of burnout among English language teachers, and thus to improve the quality of teaching in this region. Firstly, the low sense of personal accomplishment subscale which affects the instructors directly and the students' learning outcomes indirectly should be addressed by the university administration in Iraqi Kurdistan region to improve the education system. For this purpose, up-grading the facilities at the work place including the Internet service, electronic libraries and providing access to modern teaching methods can be effective to change their sense of Personal Accomplishment from low level to higher level.

Secondly, participating instructors' criticism about the English language curriculum's inefficiency to help the students to have a proper command of English language should stimulate the universities to revise their existing curriculum. This can be achieved by making use of modern technology and learning from the experiences of foreign universities. To this end, establishing networks with those universities seems inevitable.

Thirdly, this study highlighted the poor economic status of English language instructors as a factor which was distracting those instructors from concentrating their efforts on their students. Therefore, the government should reconsider the living requirements of those instructors in their future plans. This will help those instructors

to spend most of their time on their core duties rather than looking for other sources of income.

Fourthly, one of the findings of this study was related to students' poor English language background on their admission to the universities, which required extra efforts by instructors to help the students learn their subjects in the university. Therefore, the current study suggests revising the process of teaching English language in the pre-university, schools i.e., before their admission to the universities.

Finally, the current study revealed some coping strategies that were initiated and even invented by the participating instructors. These strategies can be applied by other instructors. Also, they expressed their expectations from the university administrations such as the provision of professional development course, incentives to motivate the instructors, reducing their course loads and responsibilities, all of which might help the instructors to face the challenges. This would definitely reduce their burnout level and/ or cope with it more successfully.

5.4 Limitations

Based on the results, the current study achieved its aim but still there are some limitations which can be summarized as follows:

- The number of participants involved in this study was limited only to 100. It was because most of the universities had a small number of English language instructors or the existing instructors were not willing to participate in the study.

- The data collection period has coincided with the financial crisis in Iraq and Iraqi Kurdistan region, which might have affected the results of the study.

- The number of instructors who were interviewed is relatively low (15 in total) because many of the instructors were either not willing to be interviewed or busy with their work.

- The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) inventory was designed in the United States of America and applied to the professionals there. There is no inventory which could be applied on professionals in the Middle Eastern countries. The study would have been better if the researcher had access to such inventories, which are specifically designed for professionals in Middle Eastern countries.

- Finally, the participants were from seven universities in Iraqi Kurdistan region. Therefore, the result cannot be generalized to all the universities in this region.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Research

This current study has some suggestions to be taken into consideration for further research. Firstly, this study can be replicated in all the universities in the region, encouraging almost all the English language instructors to join. This will give a clear picture about the level and causes of burnout in the research context.

Secondly, since this study was conducted during the financial crisis in the Iraqi Kurdistan region, the researcher recommends repeating the research when the economic status of this region becomes better. Comparing the results of that study with the current one would be interesting.

Thirdly, comparative studies can be conducted among the instructors of other subjects to find out whether the effect of the circumstances in the Kurdistan region of Iraq is similar in those instructors, as well.

Fourthly, it would be worth repeating the same study with the English language instructors in other parts of Iraq. Finally, researchers can work on adjusting the Maslach Burnout Educator Survey (MBI-ES) to the unique political, social, economic and culture peculiarities of the Middle Eastern countries so that the measurement will be more meaningful and accurate.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Maslach Burnout Inventory Educator Survey

MASLACH BURNOUT INVENTORY-EDUCATORS SURVEY

Please tick (✓) the appropriate answer or provide information in the blank provided.

1. Age group: ( ) 20-29   ( ) 30-39   ( ) 40-49   ( ) 50-59   (…) 60+

2. Gender: ( ) Male   ( ) Female

3. Academic rank:

    ( ) BA   ( ) PhD in progress

    ( ) MA in progress   ( ) PhD

    ( ) MA   ( ) Other: -----------------------------

4. Teaching hours in a week:

    ( ) 2-15 hrs   ( ) 27-30 hrs

    ( ) 16-21 hrs   (…) 31+ hrs

    ( ) 22-26 hrs

5. Work place (name of the university/institute): --

6. Years of teaching (total): ---

7. Years of teaching in this current university/institute: ---

PART B. Maslach Burnout Inventory-Educators Survey

There are 22 statements of job-related feelings. Please read each statement carefully and decide if you ever feel this way about your job. Please indicate your answer by putting a tick (✓) in the appropriate box.

(0) Never   (4) Once a week

(1) A few times a year   (5) A few times a week

(2) Once a month or less   (6) Everyday

(3) A few times a month

	Never	A few times a year	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Everyday
1. I feel emotionally drained (tired, exhausted) from my work.							
2. I feel used up at the end of the workday.							
3. I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job.							
4. I can easily understand how my students feel about things.							
5. I feel I treat some students as if they were impersonal objects.							
6. Working with people all day is really a strain on me.							
7. I deal very effectively with the problems of my students.							
8. I feel burned out from my work.							
9. I feel I'm positively influencing other people's lives through my work.							

	Never	A few times a year	Once a month or less	A few times a month	Once a week	A few times a week	Everyday
10. I've become more callous (cold, hard-hearted) toward people since I took this job.							
11. I worry that this job is hardening me emotionally.							
12. I feel very energetic.							
13. I feel frustrated by my job.							
14. I feel I'm working too hard on my job.							
15. I don't really care what happens to some students.							
16. Working with people directly puts too much stress on me.							
17. I can easily create a relaxed atmosphere with my students.							
18. I feel exhilarated (excited) after working closely with my students.							
19. I have accomplished many worthwhile things in this job.							
20. I feel like I'm at the end of my rope.							
21. In my work, I deal with emotional problems very calmly.							
22. I feel students blame me for some of their problems.							

Thank you for your cooperation!

Appendix B: The Semi-Structured Interview

An Investigation of Burnout and Coping Strategies among English Language Teachers in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq

Semi-Structured Interview Questions

1. I would like to get some background information about your teaching career. Can you talk about your professional background a bit? For example,

> a) How long have you been teaching?
> b) Was 'teaching' your first choice? Or did you wish to have a different profession?
> c) Do you like your job? If yes, please tell me what you like most about teaching. And what do you like least? Why?
> d) Do you consider being a teacher a difficult job in general? Why (or why not)?
> e) In addition to teaching, are you responsible for any other duties, such as administrative duties? Or other duties? If yes what are they? Do you think they are putting extra stress on you?

2) Now, let's talk about being a teacher in this context, I mean in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. What do you think about it? Do you think there are extra difficulties (or sources of stress) here for teachers of English? If yes, like what?

3) Have you ever felt burnout? Are there times that you feel tired of teaching English? Demotivated? Can you describe when and why you feel/felt so? (If this is not valid for you, then perhaps you can mention about a colleague that you know who felt so.)

4) What kind of factors causes English teachers in Kurdistan universities to feel burnout? Can you talk about these factors that contribute to burnout among English teachers in your context?

5) What are the signs (symptoms) of burnout, in your opinion? How do you recognize a burnout teacher?

6) When you feel tired of teaching (or being an English teacher), how do you continue? What do you do to cope with this feeling? (Or other colleagues, what do they do to get rid of this negative feeling?)

7) In your opinion, can the administration (or other people) do anything to help such teachers to cope with burnout?

8) Is there anything else that you want to add?

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Appendix C: Consent Form for Survey

Consent Form for Survey

Dear respected teacher,

I am an MA student and conducting my thesis on the topic of *An Investigation of Burnout and Coping Strategies among English Language Teachers in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.* The survey below (named as Maslach Burnout Inventory - Educators Survey) aims to assess the burnout symptoms by asking about your feelings and attitudes towards your profession (i.e., teaching English).

Your participation is completely voluntary. No risks and no direct benefits are anticipated as a result of your participation in this study. You are free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, if you do not wish to answer any particular question or questions, you are free to decline. Answering this survey will take maximum 15 minutes.

It is very important that you answer all the questions sincerely. You are not required to write down your name on the survey. Other identity-related details such as workplace will be used only for research purposes, and no one except the researcher and her supervisor will be allowed access to the filled-in forms.

Further information can be obtained directly from me or my thesis supervisor. Thank you for your participation and cooperation.

Basta Nazar Mohammad	**Prof. Dr. Ülker Vancı Osam**
MA Student	MA Thesis Supervisor
Department of Foreign Language Education	Department of Foreign Language Education
Faculty of Education	Faculty of Education
Eastern Mediterranean University	Eastern Mediterranean University
E-mail: bastanazar1990@gmail.com	E-mail: ulker.osam@emu.edu.tr

✂- -

Consent Form

I confirm that I have read and understood the main purpose of this survey, and how my answers will be used. Thus, I agree to take part in this survey.

Name- Surname: --   Date: ------------------------------

Signature: --

Appendix D: Consent Form for Interview

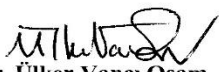## Consent Form for Interview

Dear respected teacher,

I am an MA student and conducting my thesis on the topic of *An Investigation of Burnout and Coping Strategies among English Language Teachers in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.* This interview aims to identify your ideas about the resons of burnout among English language teachers and how you (and they) cope with it .

Your participation is completely voluntary. No risks and no direct benefits are anticipated as a result of your participation in this study. You are free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, if you do not wish to answer any particular question or questions, you are free to decline.

It is very important that you answer all the questions sincerely. The interview will be recorded. The audio recording made for this interview will be used only for analysis. Your identity and individual responses will be kept confidential and be used only for research purpose. Extracts from the interview from which you would not be personally identified may be used in any conference presentation, report or journal article developed as a result of the research. No other use will be made of the recording without your written permission. And that no one except the researcher and her supervisor will be allowed access to the original recording. Further information can be obtained directly from me or my thesis supervisor.

Thank you for your participation and cooperation.

Basta Nazar Mohammad   **Prof. Dr. Ülker Vancı Osam**
MA Student   MA Thesis Supervisor
Department of Foreign Language Education   Department of Foreign Language Education
Faculty of Education   Faculty of Education
Eastern Mediterranean University   Eastern Mediterranean University
E-mail: bastanazar1990@gmail.com   E-mail: ulker.osam@emu.edu.tr

✂- -

Consent Form

I confirm that I have read and understood the main purpose of this survey, and how my answers will be used. Thus, I agree to take part in this survey.

Name- Surname: --   Date: -------------------------------

Signature: ---

101

Appendix E: Permission Letters

University of Sulaimani
College of Languages
Department of English

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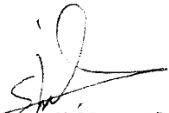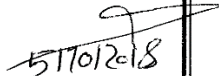

Ref. No. 1 8 1
Date: Oct. 3th **, 2018**

To: Eastern Mediterranean University

Subject: Permission Letter

This is to certify that (Ms. **Basta Nzar Mohammad**) has permission at the Department of English, College of Languages, University of Sulaimani to make a survey among the instructors to collect data for her (MA thesis).

Dr. Shilan Ali Hama Sur
Head of English Department
E-mail: Shilan.hamasur@univsul.edu.iq
Phone Number: 009647702216181

University of Human Development

College of Languages

Office of the Dean

| Ref. No. 10/380 | Date: Sep 12th,2018 |
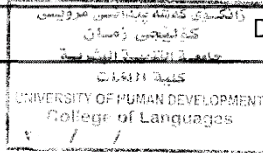
To: Eastern Mediterranean University

From: Assist. Prof. Rauf Kareem Mahmood/PhD

Dean, College of Languages, University of Human Development

Subject: Permission Letter

This is to certify that (Ms. Basta Nzar Mohammad) has permission at the Department of English, College of Languages, University of Human Development to distribute survey among the instructors to collect data for her (MA thesis).

Copy to:

__ Issued Letters

5110/ 2018

| University of Human Development | Slemani, Kurdistan Region of Iraq | Cell Phone : +964(0)7715710908 |
| College of Languages | e-mail: cl@uhd.edu.iq | Web: www.cl.uhd.edu.iq |

103

اقليم كوردستان-العراق

كمب جامعة جيهان/السليمانية

قسم اللغة الانكليزية

Kurdistan Region –Iraq
Cihan University Campus-Sulaimanya
English Language Department

هەریمی کوردستان- عیـراق

کەمپی زانکۆی جیهان/ سلیمـانی

بەشی زمانی ئینگلیزی

Permission Letter

To Eastern Mediterranean University

Ms. Basta Nazar Mohammad has permission at Department of English Language,
Cihan University/Slemani Campus in order to distribute survey among the
instructors to collect data to her thesis.

Asst. Lecturer; Aras AL-Zangana
Head of the Department
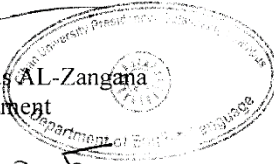
Wed, Sep 5

Kurdistan-Iraq
www.cihanuniversity.edu.iq
info@cihanuniversity.edu.iq

5/16/2018

104

حکومة اقليم كردستان-العراق

رئاسة مجلس الوزراء

وزارة التعليم العالي والبحث العلمي

رئاسة جامعة رابرين

كلية التربية- قلعدزة

قسم اللغة الانكليزية
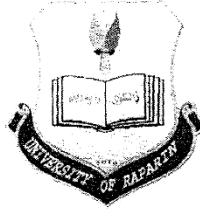
حکومەتی هەرێمی کوردستان- عێراق

سەرۆکایەتی ئە نجومەنی وەزیران

وەزارەتی خوێندنی بالا و توێژینەوەی زانستی

سەرۆکایەتی زانکۆی را پەرین

کۆلێژی پەروەرده - قەلادزێ

بەشی ئینگلیزی

University of Raparin / college of Education

Department of English Language
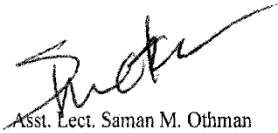

To: Eastern Mediterranean University (EMU)

Education Faculty, Department of Foreign language Education

August 7, 2018

To whom it may concern,

After reviewing the request for data collection for the purpose of the MA thesis on "An investigation of Burnout and coping strategies among language teachers in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq", presented by **Basta Nazar Mohammed**, an MA candidate at your department. We are consented to grant permission for the MA candidate to collect the required data at Department of English language, College of Education, University of Raparin.

Respectfully Yours,

Asst. Lect. Saman M. Othman

Head of English Department

College of Education, University of Rparin

Email: saman.cn@uor.edu.krd

City Entrance
Qaladze / Slemani
Kurdistan Region – Iraq

http://www.edu.raparinuni.org
edu.faculty@raparinuni.org

دەروازەی شار
قەلادزێ – سلێمانی
هەرێمی کوردستان - عێراق

Komar University of Science and Technology
College of Languages
Department of English Language and Literature

زانکۆی کۆمار بۆ زانست و تەکنەلۆجیا
کۆلیجی زمان
بەشی زمان و ئەدەبی ئینگلیزی

No. F18- 601-32

Date: 6/9/2018

Ethics—Knowledge—Skills

To: Prof. Dr. Ülker Vanci Osman

F18 –601- 32
2018 , 9 , 13

Permission

This is to kindly inform you that The Department of English Language and Literature at Komar University of Science and Technology has granted permission to Miss Basta Nazar Mohammed to collect the required data from English language teachers in the Department and also in the Center of the Intensive English Program.

Asst. Prof. Dr. Zanyar Faiq Saeed
Department Chairman,
Director of Center of Intensive English Program

Copy to:
- President's Office
- VPA Office

حكومة الإقليم كوردستان-العراق
وزارة التعليم العالي و البحث العلمي
رئاســـــة جامعة كـرمـــيان
مكتـب رئيـس الجامـعة

حكومهتی ههرێمی کوردستان-عێراق
وهزارهتی خوێندنی بالا و توێژینهوهی زانستی
سهرۆکایهتی زانکۆی گهرمیان
نووسینگهی سهرۆک

KURDISTAN REGIONAL GOVERNMENT-IRAQ
MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION& SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH
PRESIDENCY OF GARMIAN UNIVERSITY
PRESIDENT'S OFFICE

No:

Date: 12/ 09/ 2018   2718 /   /   2018/   /   ژمارە :

رێکهوت :

To: Eastern Mediterranean University (EMU)

Education Faculty, Department of Foreign Language English

To whom it may concern,

After reviewing the request for data collection for the purpose of the MA thesis on "An investigation of Burnout and coping strategies among language teachers in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq", presented by **Basta Nazar Mohammed**, and MA candidate at your department. We are consented to grant permission for the MA candidate to collect the required data at Department of English Language, College of Education, University of Garmian.

Respectfully Yours,

Assist Prof. Dr. Sirwan H. Salih

President of University

Email: herash1966@YAHOO.COM

A copy to:-
- President's office.
- Issued letters.

107

حکومهتی ههریمی کوردستان
وهزارهتی خوٚیندنی بالاو توێژینهوهی زانستی
سهروٚکایهتی زانکوٚی ههلهبجه
نووسینگهی سهروٚکی زانکوٚ

Issue No. 2 / 5 / 2861

Date: 16 Mar 2018

To: Eastern Mediterranean University(EMU)
Education Faculty, Department of Foreign Language English

To whom it may concern

After reviewing the request for data collection for the purpose of the MA thesis on "An Investigation of Burnout and coping strategies among language teachers in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq" presented by (Basta Nazar Mohammed) and MA candidate at your department. We are consented to grant permission for the MA candidate to collect the required data at department of English Language, College of Education , University of Halabja .

Respectfully Yours...

Assist. Prof. Dr.Tahseen Abdulkarim Zanga
president University

- A copy to:
- presidents office
- Out going

5/10/2018