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Motivation and Quality of Work Life among Secondary School EFL Teachers

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Abstract: This study set out to investigate the relationship between quality of work life and teacher motivation among 160 secondary school English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers in Tehran, Iran. In addition, 30 of the participants were randomly selected to take part in follow-up interviews which asked why they felt the way they reported. The results revealed that the participants enjoyed a medium level of quality of work life and experienced a medium-to-low level of motivation. In addition, a significant relationship was found between motivation and quality of work life categories. Furthermore, the sub-scales of the quality of work life that best predicted teacher motivation were identified. The findings of this study have implications for teacher educators and educational decision makers in bringing about higher levels of motivation and quality of work life among English language teachers.

Introduction

The tenets of educating candidates for teaching English to the speakers of other languages (TESOL teacher education) have long been based on our knowledge about the subject matter of language teaching. However, this trend has been widely affected by recent developments in our understanding of the sociocultural processes of language learning and teaching. According to Johnson (2000), TESOL teacher educators have now begun to realise that the processes of learning to teach are of a collaborative effort in which a team of stakeholders participate and to which they contribute. Johnson (2000) further argues that:

A collaborative effort between and among the stakeholders in the processes of learning to teach marks an important step forward for TESOL teacher education. It spreads the rights and responsibilities for learning to teach among all those who participate in and have an impact upon it. It forces all those who are involved to recognise and communicate with one another, to establish common bonds and goals and to build on each other's strengths to foster teacher learning and professional development in a range of instructional contexts. (p.3)

Today, teachers are expected to work and socialise into diverse cultural, linguistic, and social contexts. Teacher educators need to be familiar with and to familiarise the teachers with different aspects of the language education process. One of the primary features of this process is the issue of teachers' motivation and the quality of their working life. Once teachers realise, in advance, the fact that not all structures may be in place for their professional development as a language teacher, they will be in a better position to prepare themselves for the possible shortcomings and take the necessary actions.

The topic of motivation as an influential criterion for effective teaching began to be approached seriously in the 1990s. Various studies (e.g., Dornyei, 1998; Oxford, 1998) have

shown that students place their teachers' enthusiasm and commitment at the first place in the hierarchy of factors that motivate them in learning a foreign language. The principal point then would be to know what motivation is and how we can account for this seemingly complex phenomenon.

Literature Review

Motivation in General Psychology and Second Language Research

To illustrate the concept of motivation, as Dornyei (2001) states, psychologists have focused on two research traditions: (1) motivational psychology, which links behaviour to motives stemming from human mental processes (for example, expectancy-value theories, self-determination theories, goal theories) and (2) social psychology which looks at the action in the light of a broader social and interpersonal context, as reflected primarily by the individual's attitudes (for example, the theory of reasoned action, the theory of planned behaviour).

To account for this seemingly complex construct in the field of foreign/second language learning, previous research has followed the same tradition as in general psychology. Social psychology, in particular, was in the limelight when Gardner and Lambert (1972) proposed their influential motivation theory. Since then many studies have been carried out, especially in the 1990s in relation to this theory and on the dichotomy of instrumental/integrative motivation with contradictory results (Dornyei, 2001; Dornyei & Otto, 1998; Oxford & Shearin, 1994). It was hoped that through these studies, teachers would be able to identify efficient ways of motivating their own students.

Motivational psychology components have also been the focus of many studies. Some, for example, have attended to value-expectancy related components (Clement, 1980; Ushioda, 1996, as cited in Dornyei, 2001) and many have tried to examine the dichotomy of intrinsic versus extrinsic motivation following the main principles of self-determination theory proposed by Deci and Ryan (1985).

While most, if not all, of the aforementioned studies in second/foreign language learning have focused on the concept of language learner motivation, the amount of past research has been far too little given its importance.

There are very few studies discussing the nature of the motivation to teach. This seems, however, surprising since the teacher's level of enthusiasm and commitment is one of the most important factors that affect the learners' motivation to learn. Broadly speaking, if a teacher is motivated to teach, there is a good chance that his/her students will be motivated to learn (Dornyei, (2001).

Career Motivation Versus Job Satisfaction

There are a number of studies which focus on related issues such as teacher job satisfaction and then discussing the results under the label of motivation. This is understandable since the two phenomena are very closely linked through the influence each has on the other. Nadler and Lawler (1991, as cited in Dinham & Scott, 1998) try to clarify the terms 'career motivation' and 'career satisfaction'. Motivation is generally taken to mean a stimulus for behaviour and action in the light of a particular context, while *satisfaction*–and indeed *dissatisfaction*–is usually taken to mean a product of behaviour and action in the light of a particular context or environment.

In general, the concept of career motivation applies motivation theory to understanding career plans, behaviours and decisions. Many researchers (London, 1983; Pinder, 1998) have theorised about the content of career motivation and the association among career motivation,

situational characteristics, and behaviours. Pinder (1998) defines work motivation as 'a set of energetic forces that originate both within as well as beyond an individual's being, to initiate work-related behaviour and to determine its form, direction, intensity, and duration' (p.11).

Similarly, London (1983) conceived of career motivation as a multidimensional construct that included three major domains: *career resilience, career insight,* and *career identity*. Career resilience is the ability to adapt to changing circumstances. It includes welcoming job and organisational changes, looking forward to working with new and different people, having self-confidence, and being willing to take risks. Career insight is the realism and clarity of the individual's career goals. It also involves having self-knowledge, particularly knowing one's own strengths and weaknesses. Career identity is the degree to which people define themselves by their work and by the organisation for which they work. It involves the extent to which they immerse themselves in activities related to their jobs and their organisations, view themselves as professional or technical experts, and express pride in their employers.

Studies on teacher motivation

The question that has preoccupied researchers in most of the studies on teacher motivation has been to find the factors that influenced language teachers 'to do the job well' and not only 'to get the job done' (Johnson, 2000). This comes as no surprise because:

With such a specific professional activity as teaching it might be realistic to expect to find certain unique motivational characteristics – for example, to identify some factors that have a special significance in terms of their impact on the motivation complex underlying teaching. (Dornyei, 2001, p.157)

For example, Freeman and Freeman (1994 cited in Johnson, 2000) claimed that the exposure to new ideas, the availability of materials, the quality of colleagues and supervisors as well as the types of students they have are the factors that influence language teachers in their jobs. Similarly, Auerbach (1991) contended that 'alienation', as a demotivating state, occurs when some language teachers work at more than one job for economic security and as a result they fail to see themselves as being part of any one institution or group.

Moreover, Crookes (1997a) found that teachers' motivation was influenced by the fact that the curriculum and textbooks' choice was mandated from authorities above or outside the institution because of the need to prepare students for standardised tests. Additionally, he claimed that another factor that affected language teachers' motivation was their ability to participate in decision making concerning their own students. Similarly, Barrs (2005) classified some of the motivational factors identified by Pakistani teachers as potential dissatisfiers as including a lack of resources to deliver adequate levels of training and follow up and described potential satisfiers as including monitoring and accountability systems.

In addition, Butler (2007) tried to account for teacher motivation by adopting goal-orientation theory, which had previously been applied to learner motivation as the framework. Butler's study confirmed that mastery goals predicted positive perceptions of help seeking, preferences for receiving autonomous help, and frequency of help seeking; ability avoidance predicted negative perceptions and help avoidance; and work avoidance predicted expedient help seeking. These findings validated the proposed structure and measure of teacher goal orientations.

Davidson (2007) identified teacher motivation as a key factor that had been shown to affect the quality of education in Tanzania. At a basic level, he asserted, teacher motivation is linked to how teachers feel they are being treated and how they perceive their own living and learning conditions. This study called for more concern for teachers and specifically improvements to their welfare.

Finally, Ciani, Summers, and Easter (2008) took a 'top-down' approach by examining

contextual elements of school goal structures and teacher communities on teachers' sense of self- and collective efficacy, and classroom goal structures. Their results indicated that teachers in more performance-oriented schools reported significantly less adaptive motivational beliefs, lower community, and more performance-oriented instruction than teachers in less performance-oriented schools.

Quality of Work Life

An issue closely related to career motivation is that of the quality of work life. Walton (1973) defines quality of work life as the conditions and characteristics of work that contribute to motivation, performance, and job satisfaction. The difference between quality of work life and career motivation seems to lie in the fact that quality of work life is a contributor to motivation. In other words, the higher the quality of work life, the more motivated employees will be.

As Flippo (1980) mentions, quality of work life programmes include any improvements in the culture of the organisation that will lead to the employees' development and growth. Studies suggest that implementing such programmess will lead not only to a reduction in employee complaints and the number of absences from work but also to an increasing level of optimism and cooperation on work-related issues.

The concept of quality of work life appeared near the end of the 1960s, encompassing a variety of theoretical concepts that aimed at counterbalancing organisational problems. Luthans (1998) believed that the concept of quality of work life had become an important social issue around the world while in previous decades the only focal issue was the quality of peoples' personal lives. Today quality of work life is a dynamic multidimensional concept that includes such concepts as job security, rewarding systems, promotional opportunities, and involvement in decision-making processes. Akdere (2006) holds that researchers interested in the concept of quality of work life are looking for new mechanisms to help employees to balance their work and personal lives.

According to Johnstone (2004), adequate conditions of work are among the factors that can exercise a positive or negative influence on language teacher education. Crookes (1997a, 1997b) believes that the general working conditions of many second and foreign language teachers are unsatisfactory, with the consequence that the relationship between teaching and research is almost non-existent. They often have far less autonomy than in other professions, and 'there are grounds for grave concern when we consider the factors influencing second and foreign language teachers and teaching in many parts of the world' (Crookes, 1997a, p.67). Crookes (1997b) concludes that the work conditions of second and foreign language teachers, the conception of teaches' responsibilities, and the conception of schools' responsibilities in maintaining professional development must all change.

Therefore, there has been considerable research into the quality of work life within organisations. Generally, results suggest that it has a positive relationship with the other variables within the organisation such as performance, efficiency, job satisfaction, and organisational commitment (e.g., Lu, 2007; Spector 1997; Tsai et al., 2007). However, there

is a dearth of research when it comes to examining the quality of work life within educational organisations especially with regard to the specific discipline of language education. Day, Elliot, and Kington (2005) assert that the relationships among teachers' motivation, efficacy, job satisfaction and commitment and between their commitment and the quality of their work have not been the subject of extensive research.

Theoretical framework

The present study used Noe, Noe, and Bachhuber's model of career motivation (1990) and Walton's model of quality of work life (1973) to examine the relationship between motivation and quality of work life among Iranian secondary school EFL teachers.

Noe et al. (1990) conceived of career motivation as a multidimensional construct that included three major domains: *career resilience, career insight,* and *career identity*. Career identity is defined as the degree to which people define themselves by their work and by the organisation for which they work. It involves the degree to which they immerse themselves in activities related to their job and the organisation, view themselves as professional or technical experts, and express pride in their employers. In addition, career insight is explained as the realism and clarity of the individual's career goals. It also involves having self-knowledge, specifically about one's own strengths and weaknesses. Finally, career resilience is defined as the ability to adapt to changing circumstances. It includes welcoming job and organisational changes, looking forward to working with new and different people, having self-confidence, and being willing to take risks.

Walton (1973) defined quality of work life as employees' reactions toward their jobs, especially the conditions necessary for satisfying their vocational needs and mental health. Accordingly, quality of work life emphasises personal growth, working experience, and the ways to improve work in order to fulfil personal needs.

Moorhead and Griffen (1998) describe the model as including eight items ranging from adequate and fair compensation to human progress capabilities. First of all, adequate and fair compensation means equal payment for equal work and a balance between payment and social factors and also other kinds of work. Secondly, safe and healthy working is related to physically immune working conditions and rational working hours. Third, opportunity for continued growth and security has to do with conditions for improving personal capabilities, having opportunities to make use of what one has learned and make progress and assure employment and income. Next is constitutionalism, which involves freedom of speech without being afraid of reaction from authorities and the dominance of rules and regulations over individuals. Similarly important is the social relevance of work life, which includes employees' perceptions about their social responsibilities in the organisation. Another item is the total life space, which is defined as a balance between working life and other aspects of employees' lives such as education, free time, and family life. Social integration in the work organisation is as important as family life and involves an atmosphere in which there is a sense of belonging to the organisation among the employees. Finally, there is the human progress capability, which is to do with opportunities for independence and self control, access to job-related information, and various skills at work.

Objectives of the Study and Research Questions

This study sought to investigate the relationship, if any, between the quality of work life and career motivation among Iranian secondary school EFL teachers through the following research questions:

1. What is the nature of their motivation?
2. What is the quality of their work lives?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the quality of their work lives and their motivation to teach?
4. Which quality of work life categories are the most effective predictors of their motivation to teach?

Method

Participants

For the purpose of this study, six educational districts from among the 22 in Tehran were selected via the cluster sampling procedure. Later, 160 EFL teachers were randomly selected from among public secondary schools in these districts to participate in the study.

Instruments

The participants' motivation to teach was assessed using the questionnaire developed by Noe et al. (1990), which includes three major sub-scales: career insight (8 items), career identity (5 items), and career resilience (13 items). The questionnaire uses a 1 to 5 point scale showing the extent to which each corresponds to the participant's motivation to teach English. The overall reliability of the questionnaire was found to be 0.82 for the present study and context.

In addition, this study used Walton's (1973) quality of work life questionnaire. This includes eight sub-scales: adequate and fair compensation (4 items), safe and healthy working conditions (3 items), chance of growth (3 items), constitutionalism in the work organisation (5 items), the social relevance of work life (3 items), total life space (4 items), social integration in the work organisation (4 items), and human progress capabilities (3 items). This questionnaire, whose reliability was found to be 0.926, also uses a 1 to 5 point scale to examine the quality of work life.

Finally, semi-structured interviews were carried out with 30 of the participants. Questions were designed to determine why Iranian EFL teachers felt the way they reported to help identify aspects of their teaching and work life conditions.

Data Collection and Analysis

The questionnaires were administered during in-service training sessions held by the educational office of each district, which provided opportunities for all EFL teachers of that district to get together. Before the questionnaire was administered, the participants were provided with an explanation of the purpose of the study and assured that the given responses would be treated as confidential. Each questionnaire was supposed to take 10 minutes to complete. The participants were also encouraged to ask questions and seek clarification, if needed.

Follow-up interviews were carried out later by the second researcher visiting the teachers in their school. The interviews were carried out by the second researcher using a

voice recorder in a quiet room in order not to be disturbed. The completed questionnaires by the interviewees determined the topics to be covered and questions to be asked. The second researcher took care to reassure teachers that their opinions were valued no matter how much negative or positive they may look on the surface.

After the teachers' responses to the questionnaires were codified, quantitative analyses were carried out on the data collected. First, descriptive statistics were applied to quantify the teachers' motivation and the quality of their work lives. Pearson product moment correlation was conducted to compare job motivation aspects (dependent variable) with the quality of work life factors (independent variable). Moreover a step-by-step regression was carried out to find out about the effects of the quality of work life factors on job motivation. Finally, the interviews were transcribed and analysed by the researchers to identify specific aspects of the work life that teacher educators could do something about to help EFL teachers to improve.

Results and Discussion

Quality of Work Life

Table 1 shows that the mean score for the quality of work life among the participants was 2.63, with a standard deviation of .39. It amounted to saying that the participants perceived themselves as having a medium level of quality of work life. The participants reported the highest level of quality of their work life in the category of social integration in the organisation (M=3.75, SD=.56) and the lowest level in the category of chance of growth (M=1.26, SD=.68).

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Level
Fair and appropriate compensation	160	1.37	.57	L
Work conditions	160	2.94	.49	M
Chance of growth	160	1.26	.68	L
Constitutionalism	160	2.55	.53	M
Social relevance of work in life	160	2.74	.50	M
Work and total space of life	160	3.37	.65	M-H
Social integration in the organisation	160	3.75	.56	M-H
Use and development of capacities	160	2.86	.61	M
Total	160	2.63	.39	M

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Quality of Work Life

Some teachers have spent many years teaching the same materials with the same approach. That is why they do not feel they need to apply their full capacities to their teaching. The most important concern for teachers is to have the opportunity to work at their goals and feel purposeful, thereby reaching the highest levels of their performance. Textbooks are prescribed by the Ministry of Education and teachers are expected to cover the materials within the given time constraints. This is illustrated by the following description made by one of the teachers:

This book I know by heart. Tell me a sentence and I will give you the page number… I am really bored with all the repetition in my classes… I wish I was free to choose a suitable textbook available in the market.

On the other hand, the participants perceived teaching as desirable in at least two respects. Firstly, their job gave them an opportunity to balance the total space of their lives. In other words, they were able to allot enough time for leisure with their families. In addition, the policies of the Ministry of Education did not impose geographical changes on them. Secondly, they saw themselves as being socially integrated into the school community, namely they had good relations with their colleagues and they did not feel any prejudice against them. In the words of some teachers:

This is the best part of my job. My friends envy me enjoying my summer vacation with no preoccupation in mind… there is also the New Year holidays which last for at least 13 days. I work three days a week and I am off for the rest doing other activities.

In school I have a warm relationship with my colleagues; we are friends. Sometimes we go camping together and we spend out of school time together.

As Freeman (1999) holds, teaching should be understood as an activity that is suited in a particular time and place. In other words, according to Johnson (2000), the place where teaching occurs is not neutral to the activity of teaching, but a powerful force that affects what and how teachers teach. The corollary to TESOL teacher education and Iranian teacher educators is the recognition that the process of learning to teach is shaped by these specific contexts.

Career Motivation

Table 2 displays the participants' perceptions of their motivation to teach. Overall, the participants perceived themselves as having medium-to-low levels of job motivation (M=2.23, SD=.32). They reported the highest level for the category of career resilience (M=2.90, SD=.42) and the lowest for career insight (M=1.83, SD=.66).

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Level
Career insight	160	1.83	.66	L
Career identity	160	2.37	.46	M-L
Career resilience	160	2.90	.42	M
Total	160	2.23	.32	M-L

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Career Motivation

The fact that they have had to deal with the same materials for years obviates the need for teachers to consider their own strengths and weaknesses (insight). It may also be that there is no formal mechanism for communication between teachers and the authorities.

Identity, too, is not so high among the participants. Teachers do not immerse themselves in activities related to their job and the organisation. The fact that the participants do not perceive themselves as professionals or technical experts stifles their desire to work hard, so they do not express pride in the work they do. Although some teachers attempt to keep abreast of developments in their field, most of them do not find it necessary to do so. That is why few of them have ever taken time to do the best possible work possible in the classroom. As one of them observes:

I am an MA student in English Language Teaching and I do have extensive reading on issues related to teaching languages…. I don't feel it is necessary to know professional teaching stuff to be an English teacher for secondary school students.

Medium levels of resilience–the ability to adapt to changing circumstances– imply not welcoming change, having little self-confidence, and unwillingness to take risks. It seems that teachers have been following the same teaching practice for a long time and they do not feel any need to change or revise their goals. As one teacher explains:

I don't discuss work-related issues with my colleagues much… we need to relax and calm down the pressure of teaching crowded classes. I don't meddle in what they do and no one interferes in mine even the principal… I've been teaching a long time and I know my way around… I like it when they admire students' high achievements.

Correlation of Quality of Work Life Categories and Career Motivation

There was a significant correlation between the categories of the quality of work life

and career motivation and this was a positive direct relationship (p<.01, r=.72). In other words, the more the quality of work life is improved, the higher the level of motivation will be. However, the causality between quality of work life and career motivation is not defined. These results are shown in Table 3 below.

Variable	Pearson correlation	Sig
Fair and appropriate compensation	.51**	.004
Work conditions	.79**	.001
Chance of growth	70**	.007
Constitutionalism	.53**	.003
Social relevance of work in life	.61**	.004
Work and total space of life	.78**	.001
Social integration in the organisation	.66**	.001
Use and development of capacities	.84**	.002
Total	. 72**	.001

Table3: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Between Quality of Work Life Categories and Career Motivation

It should be noted that although there is a significant correlation between all of the factors of quality of work life and career motivation, the relationship between fair and appropriate compensation and career motivation is not that high. Oshagbemi (1997) contends that in spite of the popular belief that high salary and productivity profits are the main reasons for creating motivation, they should only be looked upon as maintenance factors so as to ensure that employees are not dissatisfied.

In addition, Bandura (1977) holds that the intrinsic motivation from self-evaluation is more effective than the extrinsic reinforcement given by others. There seems to be a misunderstanding among the public that higher salaries and productivity profits are the only ways of improving the motivation of EFL teachers in public schools, although they play an important role in satisfying the teachers and eliminating the need for them to work extra hours or adopt second jobs.

Quality of Work Life Used to Predict Career Motivation

A stepwise multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the most effective quality of work life predictors of career motivation. The eight categories of the quality of work life were specified as the independent variable (predictors), with the teachers' motivation as the dependent variable (criterion). Preliminary analyses were conducted to examine the assumptions underlying a regression model. Test of Durbin-Watson amounted to 1.720 and since this score was within an acceptable range of 1.5 to 2.5, it was assumed that multicollinearity considerations were met and we could make use of regression.

As Tables 4 and 5 show, quality of work life categories were significantly correlated with career motivation F(16, 113)=21.005, p=.000, with R 2 =.527, suggesting that 52 per cent of variability in career motivation could be accounted for by categories of the quality of work life according to the regression model.

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
.726	.527	.502	.876	1.720

Table 4: Stepwise Regression: Quality of Work Life Categories to Predict Career Motivation

Model	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig
Regression	128.907	8	16.113	21.005	.000
Residual	115.837	151	.767		

Table 5: ANOVA for Quality of Work Life Categories and Career Motivation

The column standardised coefficients of Beta in Table 6 shows the sequence of factors affecting career motivation. The regression model implied that a combination of four of the quality of work life variables (work conditions, chance of growth and security, social integration in the organisation, and the use and development of capacities) were significantly correlated with career motivation. The multiple regression analysis using the least square solution yielded the following equation:

$$Y= 1.142 + 0.107(x1) + 0.112(x2) + 0.186(x3) + 0.122(x4)$$

Where Y represents the predicted career motivation, x1 refers to work conditions, x2 refers to chance of growth and security, x3 refers to social integration in the organisation and x4 is the use and development of capacities.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
Constant	1.142	.419		2.726	.007		
Fair and appropriate compensation	-.080	.085	.166	-.947	.345	.637	1.570
Work conditions	.029	.067	.107	1.442	.032**	.843	1.187
Chance of growth	.100	.075	.112	2.346	.023**	.842	1.188
Constitutionalism	-.022	.072	.111	-.309	.758	.659	1.518
Social relevance of work in life	.013	.065	.114	.195	.846	.614	1.629
Work and total space of life	.679	.068	.151	.919	.520	.679	1.472
Social integration in the organisation	.048	.077	.186	2.634	.000**	.592	1.690
Use and development of capacities	.166	.068	.122	1.448	.005**	.717	1.394

Table 6: Coefficients: Quality of Work Life Categories to Predict Career Motivation

Therefore, in order to heighten the motivation of teachers, creating a high quality working conditions becomes crucially important. A combination of four of the quality of work life variables (work conditions, chance of growth, social integration in the organisation, and the use and development of capacities) significantly improved the career motivation. Therefore, it can be concluded that these factors are stimulating and result in higher levels of teacher motivation. In other words, for teachers to be motivated, aside from improving their work conditions, groundwork should be laid so that they feel they are capable of realizing their potentials and conditions created in which they can practically make progress.

Quality of work life improvements, therefore, can be considered as any activity that seeks to achieve greater teaching motivation through the enhancement of human dignity and growth; a process through which the stake-holders in the educational system learn how to work together to determine for themselves what actions, changes, and improvements are desirable and feasible in order to achieve the interrelated goals of an improved quality of life at work.

Teacher motivation can be developed by improving the quality of work life. The indicators presented in this study must be periodically controlled in ways that strategies can be established and actions and managerial practices be implemented in favor of the continuous improvement toward effective quality of working life.

Conclusion

The present study has important implications for EFL teachers in their profession and can act as a guide to teacher educators and educational decision-makers. Authorities in the Ministry of Education should be aware of the influence of quality of work life factors on teacher motivation. In this way, they will be in a better position to take measures in order to overcome local obstacles for teachers such as unfair and inappropriate compensation and low chances of professional growth, as attested by the findings of this study. In recent years, the Ministry of Education has come up with an interesting annual programme based on which the teachers who carry out an interesting action research to solve a local problem will be rewarded. This is a positive step toward solving the problem of inappropriate compensation. It is the present researchers' firm conviction that motivating teachers on other similar occasions such as rewarding them for the best innovative practice will remove the barrier of unfair compensation and hence boost their motivation. Given the positive attitudes of the officials toward further improving the quality of education, it is quite practical to do many more things like the above in the context of Iran.

Regarding the problem of low chances of professional growth, educational decision-makers can provide opportunities for teachers to take part in workshops and in-service training programmes. Despite the fact that these services are regularly offered to teachers in almost all parts of the country, the findings of the present study show that most EFL teachers still think they have little chance of professional growth. This suggests that the quality of current workshops and in-service programmes needs to be seriously assessed to investigate why they do not produce the desired output. One important thing that teacher educators can train teachers in is the issue of materials development. They can, for example, guide teachers to produce their own supplementary materials. This has a number of advantages. First, the very experience of being involved in materials production contributes to teachers' professional development. Second, it gives them a good sense of achievement because they produce something which meets their local needs and has vast practical application. Finally, it partially solves the problem of boredom with teaching the same materials for a long time, as experienced by many teachers.

Additionally, educational decision makers should foster social integration within and between schools and develop the teachers' capacities in such a way that they feel they are constantly growing. Many teachers, for example, want to participate in decision making processes about the way their school operates. Thus, most teachers welcome opportunities to cooperate with colleagues, learn, grow, and expand their influence. Therefore, officials should try to establish and support a system of long-term, well-defined roles for their teachers. By agreeing upon a system for ongoing communication, teachers and educators can best monitor progress and address their needs regularly. Stakeholders within this system (educators, school officials, parents, and teachers) should agree upon a best time to meet and

communicate in a timely manner. The program should also set opportunities for teachers to be able to write and reflect on their practice through provision of necessary resources. This will truly help teachers reflect on their professional practice and believe in their personal growth.

It should be noted, however, that there are many other factors (other than quality of work life factors) involved when it comes to the issue of teacher motivation. This study indicated that the quality of work life factors account for 52% of English teacher motivation in the context of Iranian secondary schools. This is certainly for future research to determine other factors affecting teacher motivation which may range from intrinsic issues to student motivation.

Finally, an important limitation of the present study which needs to be taken into account while reflecting upon the findings is that the participants were merely selected from the capital city. In order to be able to generalise the results to a wider population, a larger group of participants should be involved in future studies.

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