



Teacher Individual Self-Efficacy and Collective Efficacy as Predictors of Teacher Work Engagement: The Case of Iranian English Teachers

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Abstract

As a result of the role of teachers' psychological factors in affecting their performance, there has been an ever-increasing interest in the significance of teachers' constructs in influencing their effectiveness and work engagement. As an attempt to shed more light on the relationships between teacher psychological factors in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context, the objective of this research was to probe the role of teachers' self-efficacy and their collective efficacy as the predictors of work engagement for Iranian EFL instructors. To this end, a sample of 168 English teachers completed the self-report scales of the constructs under investigation. Structural Equation Modeling was adopted to evaluate the causal relationships among the variables. The findings revealed that teachers' sense of efficacy explained 23.7% of the work engagement variance whereas teacher collective efficacy accounted for 10.5% of the variance in work engagement. It was revealed that, although each variable had a unique contribution to work engagement, teachers' individual self-efficacy was a more powerful predictor of work engagement than their collective efficacy. Based on the findings, important implications can be provided for EFL teacher education programs.

Keywords: collective efficacy, EFL teachers, structural equation modeling, teacher self-efficacy, work engagement

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Introduction

Teaching is considered as a complicated activity associated with improvisation, unpredictability, and parallel processing (Clandinin & Connelly, 1986; Goldman & Kearns, 1995). It is worth noting that teachers have their own specific personality characteristics, thinking patterns, ideologies, and cognition that significantly affect their choices and the actions in the classroom (Kim et al., 2018; Kim et al., 2019). The increasing evidence has verified the high associations of teachers' perceptions, cognition, and emotions with their learners' achievements (Cross & Hong, 2012; Klassen & Tze, 2014; Schutz & Zembylas, 2009; Zembylas & Schutz, 2009). As a result, much research attention has been directed to examining constructs such as teacher efficacy (e.g., Friedman & Kass, 2002; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001), work engagement, and collective teacher efficacy, burnout, and teacher attrition is increasing (e.g., Friedman, 1991; Grayson & Alvarez, 2008; Parker et al., 2012; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010).

An increasing number of studies on teacher education have called for the necessity of investigating teacher engagement as one of the key teacher-related factors (e.g., Klassen et al., 2013; Skaalvik, & Skaalvik, 2014). This necessity is precipitated when it has been found that low teacher engagement and work satisfaction can be a main causal variable for teachers' turnover and their decisions to give up the teaching enterprise (Kelchtermans, 2017; Klassen & Chiu, 2011). Considered as a motivational construct, teacher engagement indicates teachers' willingness in devoting their mental, physical, and affective capacities to their instructional practices (Klassen et al., 2012). This conceptualization is rooted in a multi-faceted view of work engagement introduced by Klassen et al. (2013). According to Klassen et al. (2013), teacher engagement is considered as a motivational variable constituting four underlying elements pertaining to emotional, social, and cognitive engagement. From their perspective, emotional engagement is concerned with teachers' positive emotional feelings and reactions to their activities. Engagement with pupils and coworkers refers to instructors' degree of attention, commitment, and interactions with pupils and co-workers.

Teacher engagement is conceptualized as a dimension of teacher effectiveness which can shed more light on teachers' success or attrition (Bakker & Schaufeli, 2008; Hakanen et al., 2006; Louis & Smith, 1991; Perera et al., 2018). Moreover, work engagement may be concerned with the employee's positive, work-oriented structure of mind recognized by vigor, dedication, and absorption as its components (Schaufeli et al., 2002). Vigor refers to high degrees of energy and mental efforts during engagement with the work. Dedication is characterized as getting strongly engaged in doing the work and experiencing a feeling of importance, interest, as well as challenge, and absorption refers to one's full concentration and immersion in the work (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Notwithstanding the accumulated evidence confirming the significance of teachers' work engagement in positively affecting teacher as well as learner performance, the exploration of teacher engagement is essentially lacking on L2 teacher education research agenda.

Self-efficacy is regarded by Bandura (2006) as "the foundation of human motivation, well-being, and accomplishments" (p. 3). From his

perspective, self-efficacy acts as a motivational construct in a sense that “unless people believe they can produce desired effects by their actions they have little incentive to act or to persevere in the face of difficulties” (p. 3). As a result, efficacy perceptions can affect individuals’ objectives and desires and their capability to inspire themselves. From a socio-cognitive perspective, self-efficacy perceptions may influence individuals’ emotions in a sense that more self-efficacious individuals usually experience further positive emotions and feelings (Linnenbrink & Pintrich, 2003). Individual self-efficacy of teachers is expected to be inter-connected with teachers’ motivational constructs such as work engagement, which is defined by Schaufeli et al. (2002) as “a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption” (p. 74). The positive association between work engagement and teacher self-efficacy has been reported in the literature (Burić & Macuka, 2018; Granziera & Perera, 2019).

A significant body of research has reported that teachers’ perceptions of efficacy are associated with greater degrees of teacher engagement and satisfaction as well as lower degrees of burnout or teaching stress (Ghasemzadeh et al., 2019; Granziera & Perera, 2019; Sariçam & Sakız, 2014; Schwarzer & Hallum, 2008; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2014, 2019). It is also argued that teacher self-efficacy is significantly correlated with job satisfaction (e.g., Demirdag, 2015; Klassen & Chiu, 2010; Moè et al., 2010). In other words, teachers’ beliefs about their capabilities affect their beliefs about how well they have accomplished their teaching activities and how satisfied they are with these accomplishments (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Job satisfaction is also related to teachers’ motivation, behavior, and work engagement (van den Berg, 2002; Weiqi, 2007). Therefore, teachers’ sense of accomplishment and their confidence that they can help learners learn more effectively will contribute to increasing their engagement in their teaching activities (Bakker & Bal, 2010; Fiorilli et al., 2020). Against this backdrop, it is hypothesized that that teachers’ individual self-efficacy can significantly predict their work engagement in Iranian EFL context.

Having received less research attention than teacher individual self-efficacy, collective efficacy is conceptualized as instructors’ attitudes “about the ability both of the team and of the faculty of teachers at the school to execute courses of action required to produce given attainments” (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2007, p. 613). It is worth noting that the present knowledge on collective teacher efficacy indicates that this construct is positively correlated with teaching enthusiasm as well as job satisfaction and is inversely associated with teacher burnout and attrition (Lim & Eo, 2014; Ross & Gray, 2006; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2007). As another facet of teacher efficacy, collective efficacy has been characterized as a crucial construct affecting effectiveness of teachers. Employing this construct for groups of teachers, Goddard et al. (2000) designed the measuring instrument of collective teacher efficacy. From their perspective, teacher collective efficacy is conceptualized as “the perceptions of teachers in a school that the effort of the faculty as a whole will have a positive effect on students” (Goddard et al., 2000, p. 480). It should be stated that “Collective efficacy is not simply the sum of the efficacy beliefs of individuals. Rather, it is an emergent group-level attribute that is the product of coordinative and

interactive dynamics” (Bandura, 1997, p. 7). Also, it is worth noting that collective teacher efficacy is not a unitary group trait, but it can be used at the member level and its degrees can change between members of the same group. As far as the related literature is concerned, few studies have ever investigated the interplay between collective efficacy of teachers and their work engagement (Stephanou & Oikonomou, 2018). Inspired by the findings of a number of previous studies (Lee et al., 2011; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2019), the present study hypothesizes that collective teacher efficacy can act as a correlate of instructor work engagement. From this perspective, it is hypothesized that teachers who are endowed with greater degree of collective efficacy perceptions are hypothesized to be more active, energetic, devoted, committed, and resilient.

Although an alluring line of inquiry into teachers’ individual constructs prevails in L2 literature, a thorough investigation of the variables influencing teachers’ professions and their work engagement requires greater empirical support. Despite the significance of teacher psychological constructs in influencing teachers’ effectiveness, less body of research has explored the impact of collective efficacy of teachers on their work engagement in EFL contexts. In addition, to the best of the authors’ knowledge, no previous research has ever uncovered the concurrent effects of teacher individual self-efficacy and collective efficacy on teacher work engagement among EFL practitioners. Consequently, the present research sought to examine the significance of teachers’ individual sense of efficacy and their collective efficacy in predicting work engagement for EFL instructors. As a result, three research questions were formulated for the purpose of the current research:

1. Does teacher individual self-efficacy significantly predict work engagement among Iranian English teachers?
2. Does teacher collective efficacy significantly predict work engagement among Iranian English teachers?
3. Which of the two types of efficacy is a stronger predictor of work engagement among Iranian English teachers?

Literature Review

The present research is theoretically grounded in the socio-cognitive career theory of job satisfaction (Lent & Brown, 2006), providing a social cognitive theory as the framework to explore the inter-connections among individual self-efficacy, collective efficacy, and work engagement of EFL practitioners. From this model’s viewpoint, self-efficacy is concerned with instructors’ perspectives regarding their competence to accomplish specific activities needed to achieve desired objectives. As far as teaching is concerned, self-efficacy is conceptualized as instructors’ perceptions of their capability to attain teaching activities required to accomplish instructional objectives. The predominant framework of instructor self-efficacy widely referred to in the literature considers instructor self-efficacy as a composite of three components (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001): 1) efficacy in classroom management, indicating teachers’ perception of their competence in establishing discipline and managing the classroom; 2) efficacy in instructional strategies, referring to the perceived ability in employing effective techniques and strategies in

teaching and testing; and 3) efficacy in student engagement, denoting the perceived skills to establish interactions with pupils and enhance their interest and involvement in tasks.

Additionally, from the social cognitive career theory perspective, work engagement of teachers can be characterized as being involved in objective-oriented tasks (Perera et al., 2018). According to the main framework of engagement, engagement is concerned with the voluntary devotion of cognitive, physical, and emotional competencies to teaching-related activities (Schaufeli et al., 2002). Teachers that are more involved in their work pay further attention and exert more efforts to their teaching activities and those that are emotionally engaged are more likely to experience pleasant emotional states while doing their teaching-related tasks.

Regarding social cognitive career theory, it can be argued that teachers' self-efficacy perceptions are likely to affect their engagement in carrying out goal-directed activities (Perera et al., 2018). Self-efficacy perceptions influence individuals' perception of opportunities and obstacles in the context and affect their decisions about selecting, exerting efforts in, and pursuing objective-directed tasks and thus are expected to be correlated with engagement (Bandura, 1997). In other words, teachers that are more confident about their abilities in carrying out particular work-related activities show higher degrees of work engagement.

Compared with teachers' individual sense of efficacy, collective efficacy has received less research attention (Pajares, 1997). Like self-efficacy, which refers to the degree of effort and perseverance devoted to an activity and the perceived success of that activity (Bandura, 1997), collective teacher efficacy addresses collective perceptions of a group towards their capability in doing activities and their efforts and persistence in accomplishing the desired objectives (Bandura, 1997). The underlying assumption is that if instructors consider themselves as members of a successful staff in a school, they may make further personal attempts to contribute to the effective functioning of the group (Goddard, 2001). It is argued that the sources fueling teachers' individual self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997) may affect the collective efficacy perceptions of teachers (Klassen et al., 2010). Therefore, it is stated that collective teacher efficacy is affected by the group's previous mastery experience, vicarious experience through observing other groups' mastery, and being encouraged by valued others (Goddard & Goddard, 2001). Collective efficacy is raised in case students, teachers, principals, and administrators are usually more supportive. This sense of collective capability fosters motivations of the teachers to overcome the challenges they face.

As far as Iranian EFL setting is concerned, psychological teacher variables have received adequate research attention recently (e.g., Fathi & Derakhshan, 2019; Fathi & Saeedian, 2020; Moradkhani et al., 2017; Shirazizadeh & Karimpour, 2019; Shirazizadeh et al., 2019). With regard to the previous empirical studies investigating these three variables, the more illustrating studies are reviewed here. For example, employing SEM analyses, Xanthopoulou, Bakker et al. (2007) explored the significance of personal resources including self-efficacy, optimism, and organization-oriented self-esteem as predictors of work engagement. The findings demonstrated that self-

efficacy and other personal resources could partially mediate the association among resources and engagement. In another study, Federici and Skaalvik (2011) probed the correlation between principal self-efficacy and work engagement. Three hundred principals selected randomly from Norway served as the participants of this study. Using SEM approach for the data analysis, the researchers reported that principal self-efficacy and work engagement were significantly interconnected. The researchers finally maintained that “creating and sustaining a work environment that promotes work engagement may have a positive impact for the exercising of not only the principal and teacher professions, but also for student outcomes” (p. 595).

Also, Lim and Eo (2014) investigated the associations among organizational atmosphere, collective efficacy, and burnout. The participants of the study were school instructors in Korea. SEM was employed for the data analysis. Their findings revealed that school organizational climate was positively inter-connected with collective efficacy perceptions and it was inversely related with burnout of the instructors. Moreover, it was found that climate of the school and burnout were correlated through the mediation of collective efficacy. The positive correlation between instructor individual self-efficacy and work engagement was verified by Simbula et al., (2011) who employed a quantitative longitudinal design to divulge the inter-connection among engagement, efficacy beliefs, and job resources. The results of SEM analyses for a dataset obtained from Italian teachers indicated that job resources and self-efficacy had significant effects on work engagement which in turn could also influence resources and self-efficacy.

Concerning collective efficacy studies, Goddard and Goddard (2001) carried out a project to divulge the association between individual teacher self-efficacy and collective efficacy perceptions of instructors. Hence, a sample of teachers from forty-seven schools in an urban district served as the subjects of this research. The teachers responded to the items of the valid measures of the two constructs under investigation of this project. The findings revealed that collective efficacy beliefs could significantly account for individual teacher self-efficacy. In another study, Caprara et al. (2003) probed the role of both individual and collective efficacy perceptions as the independent variables of teachers' job satisfaction. The participants were Italian teachers who completed the measuring instruments of the constructs. Multilevel structural equation modeling analyses verified a structural model in which individual and collective efficacy perceptions acted as correlates of teachers' job satisfaction. However, it was divulged that collective efficacy was a stronger correlate of satisfaction and individual self-efficacy of teachers was a mediator affecting collective efficacy beliefs.

Methodology

Participants

The participants of this study were 168 English teachers teaching at various schools and language institutes in various Iranian provinces. The teachers were selected based on convenience sampling, and their participation was entirely voluntary. The sample included both male (N = 73) and female (N = 95) teachers whose age ranged from 19 to 41 (M = 25.36, SD = 7.12) with

teaching experience between 1 and 21 years ($M = 7.84$, $SD = 3.01$). All the teachers were graduate or college students of English majors at B.A., M.A., or PhD levels. They were teaching at different proficiency levels varying from elementary to the advanced levels.

Instruments

Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale. To gauge individual self-efficacy of teachers, the Teachers' Self-Efficacy Scale (TSES) validated by Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) was employed in this study. This scale is used for examining the teachers' self-efficacy. This scale contains 24 items measuring three underlying components, including efficacy in engaging students, using instructional strategies, and managing the classroom. Each item was responded on a 5-point Likert scale varying from (1) "not at all" to (5) "a great deal". TSES is argued to have high reliability and validity. In the current research, the internal consistency index for the total questionnaire was high (0.87), suggesting that the reliability of the items was relatively high.

Collective Efficacy Scale. As far as collective efficacy of teachers was concerned, this construct was gauged by a short self-report questionnaire designed by Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2007). The questionnaire is a one-dimensional scale. The items assess the respondents' perception of teaching, enthusiasm, directing learner behavior, dealing with their needs, and creating a comfortable atmosphere. All items are concerned with what "we" or "teachers at this school" could do or accomplish. A sample item of this scale is as follows: "At this school, we have a common set of rules and regulations that enables us to handle disciplinary problems successfully.". The answers were given on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (never) to 5 (always).

Engagement Scale. To measure work engagement of teachers, the questionnaire constructed by Schaufeli et al. (2002) was administered to the participant teachers. This questionnaire constitutes three underlying dimensions: Vigor (VI), Dedication (DE), and Absorption (AB). Each item is evaluated on a 7-point Likert scale which ranges from 0 ("never") to 6 ("always").

Data Collection Procedure

The goal of the existing research was to explore the associations among Iranian EFL teachers' self-efficacy, collective teacher efficacy, and their teaching engagement. The present research is a non-experimental, correlational study whose data were collected through administering three valid questionnaires measuring the constructs under investigation. The data collection began in September 2019 and lasted for three weeks. The teachers were requested to answer the items of questionnaires in the presence of the researchers. It took the respondents about an hour to answer all the items. Before answering the items, the participants were provided with the necessary explanation on how to complete the questionnaires. The participants were also ensured that their completed questionnaires and answers would be confidential.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using the SPSS AMOS 22. As a kind of data screening, the missing data and outliers were determined and checked.

During the initial analyses, no wrongly coded data were found. Moreover, the expectation– maximization (EM) algorithm was employed for random assignment of the missing items. Then, Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was used to test the causal relationships. A set of fit indices were taken into account for the model evaluation phase. The indices used were: χ^2/df (chi-square to degrees of freedom ratio), Tucker-Lewis index (TLI), comparative fit index (CFI), goodness-of-fit index (GFI), and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) (Hu & Bentler, 1999).

Results

In order to make sure about the internal consistency and validity of the measures used in this research, a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was performed in the dataset. The aim of running CFA was to verify the psychometric features of the measuring instruments of the three constructs. The obtained values of fit indices showed an overall good fit of the dataset ($\chi^2/df = 2.242$, $p = 0.00$, GFI = 0.973, TLI = 0.987, CFI = 0.985, RMSEA = 0.041). As far as the reliability coefficients of scales are concerned, Table 1 shows that the internal consistency of all questionnaires was more than 0.70, confirming their acceptable reliability indices. As presented in Table 1, Alpha coefficients varied from 0.77 (collective teacher efficacy) to 0.87 (self-efficacy). Also, the factor loadings for the items of the three questionnaires were significant ($p < 0.001$).

Table 1
Variables and Factor Loading of Items

Variable	Items	Cronbach's α	Factor loadings	t- value
Self-efficacy	How much can you do to get through to the most difficult students?	0.87/0.87	0.76	11.892***
	How much can you do to help your students think critically?		0.81	11.741***
	How much can you do to control disruptive behavior in the classroom?		0.78	10.928***
	How much can you do to motivate students who show low interest in school work?		0.82	12.338***
	To what extent can you make your expectations clear about student behavior?		0.88	12.385***
	How much can you do to get your students to believe they can do well in school work?		0.79	11.201***
	How well can you respond to difficult questions from your students?		0.87	10.215***
	How well can you establish routines to keep activities running smoothly?		0.79	12.691***

	How much can you do to help your students value learning?	0.82	12.550***
	How much can you gauge student comprehension of what you have taught?	0.66	12.411***
	To what extent can you craft good questions for your students?	0.86	12.336***
	How much can you do to foster student creativity?	0.84	10.284***
	How much can you do to get children to follow classroom rules?	0.71	12.123***
	How much can you do to improve the understanding of a student who is failing?	0.69	11.591***
	How much can you do to calm a student who is disruptive or noisy?	0.78	11.543***
	How well can you establish a classroom management system with each group of students?	0.82	11.892***
	How much can you do to adjust your lessons to the proper level for individual students?	0.82	11.741***
	How much can you use a variety of assessment strategies?	0.68	10.920***
	How well can you keep a few problem students from ruining an entire class?	0.80	12.338***
	To what extent can you provide an alternative explanation for example when students are confused?	0.88	12.257***
	How well can you respond to defiant students?	0.71	11.201***
	How much can you assist families in helping their children do well in school?	0.69	10.011***
	How well can you implement alternative strategies in your classroom?	0.73	8.652***
	How well can you provide appropriate challenges for very capable students?	0.78	9.867***
Collective teacher efficacy	As teachers of this school, we can get even the most difficult pupils engaged in schoolwork.	0.77/0.77	0.68 9.652***

	Teachers in this school prevent mobbing effectively.		0.71	11.458***
	As teachers of this school, we handle conflicts constructively because we work as a team.		0.66	10.523***
	At this school, we have a common set of rules and regulations that enables us to handle disciplinary problems successfully.		0.68	10.387***
	Teachers in this school successfully address individual pupils' needs.		0.71	12.408***
	At this school we are able to create a safe and inclusive atmosphere even in the most difficult classes.		0.71	11.562***
	Teachers at this school succeed in teaching language skills even to low ability pupils.		0.80	11.725***
Work engagement	When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work.	0.83/0.83	0.79	10.212***
	At my work, I feel bursting with energy.		0.85	11.618***
	At my work I always persevere, even when things do not go well.		0.81	11.458***
	I can continue working for very long periods at a time.		0.82	10.523***
	At my job, I am very resilient, mentally.		0.89	10.387***
	At my job I feel strong and vigorous.		0.88	12.408***
	To me, my job is challenging.		0.68	10.219***
	My job inspires me.		0.71	11.618***
	I am enthusiastic about my job.		0.71	11.458***
	I am proud on the work that I do.		0.80	10.523***
	I find the work that I do full of meaning and purpose.		0.68	10.387***
	When I am working, I forget everything else around me.		0.67	12.408***
	Time flies when I am working.		0.68	10.562***
	I get carried away when I am working.		0.71	12.725***
	It is difficult to detach myself from my job.		0.71	11.842***

I am immersed in my work.	0.80	11.278***
I feel happy when I am working intensely.	0.88	10.813***

Note : *** significant at the 0.001 significance level

Then, the descriptive statistics (i.e., mean & standard deviations) and correlations (see Table 2) between the variables and their components were calculated. As shown in Table 2, the total teacher self-efficacy and work engagement are significantly correlated ($r = .51, p < .01$) and their correlation coefficient is higher than that between collective teacher efficacy and work engagement ($r = .41, p < .01$).

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations Between Variables

	M (SD)	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. CTE	20.68 (8.13)	1.00					
2. SE	42.63 (11.71)	.24*	1.00				
3. IP	38.40 (11.47)	.27*	.28*	1.00			
4. CM	43.79 (13.08)	.25*	.24*	.27*	1.00		
5. Total SE	129.37(31.22)	.31**	.28*	.30**	.31**	1.00	
6. Work engagement	45.83 (15.87)	.41*	.25*	.32**	.33**	.51**	1.00

CTE= collective teacher efficacy; SE= Student engagement; IP= Instructional practices; CM=classroom management; Total SE= Total teacher self-efficacy.

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

In the follow-up analysis, SEM was adopted to investigate the structural model accounting for the relationship among the three teacher-related constructs. For the SEM analyses, two hypothetical models (see Fig. 1) were tested. As the structures of the associations for the two proposed models are identical, they can be statistically interpreted in the same way. However, the two models were examined to substantiate the results. Also, the unique contributions of the two predictor variables (i.e., the collective efficacy & individual self-efficacy) were taken into considerations by examining fit indices of the hypothesized models. The model evaluation indicated a satisfactory fit for the data (Table 3). As model A indicates, the correlation coefficients between the three constructs turned out to be significant. More specifically, individual self-efficacy and collective efficacy had 8 % of shared variance ($R^2 = .286$). Teacher individual self-efficacy and work engagement demonstrated 23.7% common variance ($R^2 = .487$). Likewise, collective teacher efficacy and work engagement shared 10.5 % of variance ($R^2 = .325$). Therefore, it can be argued that teacher individual self-efficacy acted as a more powerful correlate of work engagement than collective teacher efficacy.

Consequently, to identify the unique contribution of teacher individual self-efficacy and collective efficacy separately, incremental R^2 in correlational analyses were considered by juxtaposing the amount of variation in work engagement demonstrated in the two models. As shown by model B, collective

teacher efficacy and teacher self-efficacy jointly accounted for 31% of the variance in work engagement. Consequently, it could be stated that collective teacher efficacy accounted for the additional percentage of 8% of the variation of teacher work engagement, beyond individual teacher self-efficacy as the single correlate ($\Delta R^2 = .31 - .23 = .08$). Furthermore, the unique impact of teacher individual self-efficacy as the predictor of work engagement above the collective teacher efficacy factor was 21% ($\Delta R^2 = .31 - .10 = .21$). Given these results, it can be argued that the unique impact of individual self-efficacy was greater than the impact of collective teacher efficacy in predicting work engagement.

Table 3
Result of Fit Indices

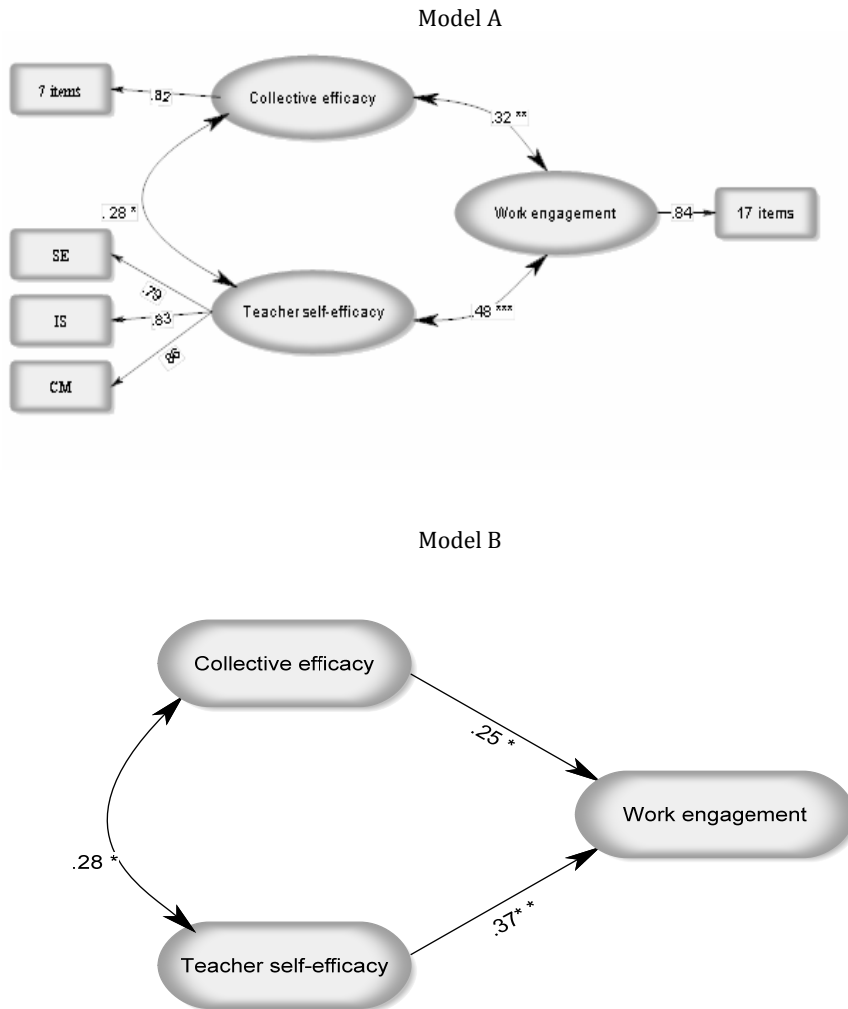
	χ^2	χ^2/df	GFI	TLI	CFI	RMSEA	$\Delta\chi^2$
Models A and B	6.13	2.24	.97	.98	.98	.04	
Model A1 (β CTE = 0)	11.39	3.45	.96	.97	.97	.05	5.26*
Model A2 (β TSE = 0)	12.01	3.76	.97	.96	.97	.03	5.88*

Note. CTE= collective teacher efficacy; TSE= teacher self-efficacy.

* $p < .05$.

Afterwards, the unique effect of collective efficacy and individual self-efficacy of teachers on work engagement was tested by making every of the pertinent beta weights constrained to zero and then their relevant χ^2 differences were investigated in model B. In case constraining beta weights to zero should lead to substantial decrease in χ^2 , the unique effect of each construct in predicting work engagement was considered to be significant. The values for fit indices of the hypothesized models are shown in Table 3. Constraining beta weights to zero in model A1 (β collective teacher efficacy = 0) as well as model A2 (β teacher self-efficacy = 0) resulted in remarkable chi-square changes [model A1 (β collective teacher efficacy = 0): $\Delta\chi^2 (1, N = 168) = 5.26, p < .05$; model A2 (β individual self-efficacy = 0): $\Delta\chi^2 (1, N = 168) = 5.88, p < .05$]. As illustrated by these result, it can be concluded that collective efficacy and individual self-efficacy can significantly predict work engagement for Iranian EFL practitioners.

Figure 1
Collective Efficacy and Individual Self-Efficacy as Predictors of Work Engagement



* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$

Discussion and Conclusions

The current research sought to investigate the contribution of teachers' individual self-efficacy and their collective efficacy as the predictive constructs for work engagement among Iranian EFL practitioners. The analyses of SEM results provided significant findings. First, it was found that collective efficacy of teachers served as a substantial predictive variable for teacher work engagement. This finding is partially supporting the Skaalvik and Skaalvik's (2019) study, which reported that collective efficacy was indirectly correlated with engagement via the mediation of teacher self-efficacy. Since teacher engagement can be regarded as the direct opposite of burnout (Maslach & Leiter, 2008), the present findings partially support those of Skaalvik and

Skaalvik (2007), who found that perceived collective efficacy and teacher burnout were negatively correlated. Similarly, Lim and Eo (2014) reported that school atmosphere and teacher burnout were negatively correlated via the mediation of collective teacher efficacy.

It might be argued that teachers with greater collective efficacy beliefs are more engaged in their work by persisting in their attempts, setting higher goals, and doing their best in solving their problems. Collective efficacy perception of the EFL teachers might have enhanced their vigor, dedication and absorption in their teaching career. In other words, it may be stated that teachers with higher levels of collective efficacy beliefs become more energetic and mentally resilient during their work, devote efforts in their work, and persist while encountering difficulties. Such teachers are also more likely to feel a sense of effectiveness, interest, motivation, as well as pride and experience a sense of psychological identification with their work (Kanungo, 1982). These teachers may be totally focused and thoroughly immersed in their teaching activities in a sense that they have difficulty getting detached from their work and time passes quickly for them.

Moreover, the results of SEM analyses divulged that instructor individual self-efficacy was a stronger correlate of teacher work engagement than collective teacher efficacy. In other words, it was revealed that teachers' individual sense of efficacy could play a more significant role in affecting work engagement of EFL teachers. EFL teachers are likely to have good collaboration as well as team work and support each other; however, they are more reliant on their own competencies and skills when they are engaged in the actual practice of teaching. This finding is particularly in line with those of Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2019), who found that "in the actual teaching situation, the teachers are primarily alone and must trust their own skills and abilities" (p. 1406). Therefore, further teacher engagement is more affected by teachers' perceptions of their individual teaching abilities than by a sense of group competencies or being in a supportive environment. However, the significance of collective teacher efficacy should not be ignored as it is argued that individual self-efficacy beliefs are significantly influenced by collective efficacy perceptions (Goddard, & Goddard, 2001; Kurt et al., 2011; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2007).

Taken together, the results of this research showed that, if EFL practitioners have positive perceptions of their abilities in using effective teaching strategies, engaging students, and managing their classrooms and also if they possess positive perceptions of their own group's competencies, efforts, and cohesiveness, they are more likely to be engaged in their teaching activities (Nir & Bogler, 2008). More self-efficacious teachers can overcome challenges they face, exert more effort in their teaching, and are more perseverant in encountering difficult situations (Bandura, 1989). Such teachers are claimed to be more motivated and engaged in their teaching activities (Llorens et al., 2007). This finding is in line with that of Klassen & Chiu (2010), who found that practitioners with stronger self-efficacy beliefs are may be more engaged and satisfied with their teaching activities. Also, this finding is also in line with those of Granziera and Perera (2019) who investigated a structural model connecting teachers' individual efficacy perceptions, engagement, and satisfaction. Their

findings indicated that these teacher-related constructs were significantly inter-connected. Furthermore, it can be argued that increasing instructors' individual self-efficacy would contribute to enhancing their commitment and professional responsibility (Canrinus et al., 2012), thereby enhancing their work engagement.

As far as the world of practice is concerned, identifying the antecedents of teachers' work engagement can have significant implications. Exploring the underlying causes of work engagement may contribute to improving positive functioning of teachers, their teaching attitudes, and individual health (Schaufeli & Salanova, 2008). Teacher education programs should pay further attention to teacher work engagement and its causes. In so doing, teacher educators and policy makers are recommended to train supervisors and language school principals to raise their awareness of the emotional aspects of their teachers and to help them give helpful support to their teachers. Additionally, language centers, schools, and institutes can improve teachers' individual sense of efficacy and their collective efficacy by giving organizational support via establishing a friendly atmosphere and sense of community between teachers and administrators. Such organizational support is likely to enhance job satisfaction and work engagement among EFL teachers.

One notable limitation of the present research is the fact that collective efficacy was considered as the individual-level construct which was characterized as every practitioner's perceptions of the collective competencies of the faculty at the institution or school. However, instructors of the same institution are likely to have different perceptions of their conjoint competencies. This is of high significance as it is claimed that a teacher's individual perceptions about the competencies of the faculty can influence his or her teaching performance and functioning. As a result, future researchers are recommended to investigate this construct at the school level (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2019). In addition, future researchers are suggested to utilize qualitative research methods so as to obtain more in-depth knowledge of the associations among teacher constructs in EFL contexts.

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