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Research Paper

Scrutinizing the Affective Predictors of Teacher Immunity in Foreign Language Classrooms

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Abstract

This study tried to specify the extent to which Iranian EFL instructors' teacher immunity was influenced by their affective factors. To this end, first, the researchers selected 129 (61 male & 68 female) EFL teachers from among the teachers at diverse language institutes, high schools, and universities in Urmia as the participants of the study. Second, they used an emotional intelligence questionnaire, a personality scale, and a teacher immunity questionnaire in order to determine the participants' emotional intelligence, personality traits, and teacher immunity, respectively, during a three-week period of time. The results of the study accentuated that the participants' emotional intelligence, along with their neuroticism, openness to experience, and conscientiousness personality traits made unique contributions to explaining their teacher immunity in descending order of statistical significance. The researchers ascribed the obtained results to the close affinity between the aforementioned affective factors and the sub-components of teacher immunity. The results may assist the teacher

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education course developers to overhaul the pre-service and in-service teacher education courses in foreign language contexts.

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1. Introduction

In light of painstaking and assiduous studies (e.g., Ahmadi, Amiryousefi & Hesabi, 2020; Haseli Songhori, Ghonsooly & Afraz, 2018; Hiver, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018; Hiver & Dörnyei, 2017; Pourbahram & Sadeghi, 2020; Rahmati, Sadeghi & Ghaderi, 2019), *teacher immunity* has captured particular attention in the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA). It is akin to a number of teacher characteristics comprising *teacher burnout* (Akbari & Eghtesadi, 2017; Alinejad, Nemati, & Ghaemi, 2021; Bailey, 2006; Farshi & Omranzadeh, 2014; Ghanizadeh & Ghonsooly, 2014; Ghanizadeh & Jahedizadeh, 2015, 2016; Gholami, 2015; Sadeghi & Khezerlou, 2016), *teacher identity* (Dobinson, 2001; Jafari, & Razmjoo, 2022; Kalali Sani, Motallebzadeh, Khodabakhshzadeh, & Zeraatpisheh, 2021; Pelini, 2016), *job satisfaction* (Bell, 2007; Breen, Hird, Milton, Oliver, & Thwaite, 2001; Hendrawijaya, Hilmi, Hasan, Imsiyah & Indrianti, 2020; Khun-inkeeree, Mohd Yaakob, WanHanafi, Yusof & Omar-Fauzee, 2021; Rezaee, Khoshsima, Zare-Bahtash & Sarani, 2018; Rezai, Namaziandost, & Çakmak, 2022; Soodmand Afshar & Doosti, 2015, 2016), and *teacher reflection* (Ashraafi, Talebinejad, & Shahrokhi, 2020; Burns, 2003; Cirocki & Farrell, 2017; Farrell, 2015, 2016, 2018, 2019; Teo, Khazaie, & Derakhshan, 2022), which exert considerable influence on the teachers' classroom practices.

The scrutiny of this teacher factor highlights the fact that it clearly delineates the teachers' psychological well-being. Hiver (2015) borrowed the metaphor of *immunity* from the field of biology in order to particularize language teachers' psychological suit of armor, which is used as a means of defusing nervous tensions in the context of the classroom. Indeed, teacher immunity is comparable to the immune system of the body, which shields the body against different viral and bacterial diseases and infections. Considering this issue, Hiver and Dörnyei (2017) delved deeply into the construct of teacher immunity and argued that it is comparable to a two-edged sword that may improve or exacerbate teachers' professional self-efficacy. Accordingly, they classified it into two major categories, including *productive* and *maladaptive* according to their main characteristics. Productive teacher immunity characterizes a certain sort of mindset which alleviates language teachers' psychological problems, obviates their grave reservations about their efficacy, and prompts them to adopt more favorable attitudes towards their profession and academic setting. On the other hand, maladaptive teacher immunity acts as a major impediment to the language teachers' professional development mainly due to the fact that it amplifies their strict adherence to spurious and fallacious principles and fossilizes their false and misguided assumptions about language learning in classroom settings.

In his later work, Hiver (2017) used factor analysis in order to determine the sub-constructs of teacher immunity. He contended that this construct encompasses seven major sub-constructs comprising *attitudes to teaching*, *coping*, *openness to change*, *burnout*, *classroom affectivity*, *teaching self-efficacy*, and *resilience*. As he noted, attitudes toward teaching refer to the attitudes that language teachers adopt toward their teaching practices in the classroom. Coping involves the stress-management strategies which are formulated and implemented by the teachers to relieve their classroom-

induced nervous tension. Openness to change highlights the teachers' cognizance of the fact that changes constitute the sine qua non of the teaching profession. Furthermore, it determines their voluntary attempt to acclimatize themselves to the requisite changes in their academic settings. Burnout refers to a psychological syndrome which is characterized by the feelings of lack of efficiency and fatigue and is caused by lingering stressors in the teachers' workplace. Classroom affectivity comprises the teachers' various emotions which are aroused during the process of language teaching. Teaching self-efficacy expounds on the teachers' perspectives on their capability to meet and relish the daunting and formidable challenges of teaching the target language to their learners under difficult circumstances. Finally, resilience depicts the teachers' potentiality to become attuned to unfamiliar instructional conditions and resolve their emotional crises.

A close examination of the inherent idiosyncrasies of teacher immunity underlines the fact that it is likely to be influenced by the language teachers' individual differences (Hiver, 2015). Dörnyei (2005) argued that individual differences encompass the "enduring personal characteristics that are assumed to apply to everyone and on which people differ by degree" (p. 4). This definition highlights the fact that teachers' individual differences comprise a wide range of their personal, cognitive, and affective factors (Ellis, 2008). Personal factors characterize teachers' biological factors such as their *gender* and *age* along with their academic and professional qualifications including their *education* and *experience* among others (Bachman, 1990). On the other hand, cognitive and affective factors characterize the variables which exert a considerable influence on the teachers' classroom-induced perceptions and emotions, respectively (Brown, 2014).

Among the language teachers' individual differences, *emotional intelligence* (Goleman, 1995, 1998) and *personality* (McCrae & Costa 2003; Pervin & John, 2001) have received considerable attention as affective factors which influence their psychological well-being. These factors appear to be relevant to the construct of teacher immunity since they have a profound impact on the teachers' management of classroom-aroused emotions (Hiver, 2015). Emotional intelligence refers to a specific mode of intelligence that is contingent upon the management of diverse emotions instead of the cognitive perceptions (Goleman, 1998). This type of intelligence is deemed to be vastly superior to cognitive intelligence owing to the fact that it empowers the individuals to take advantage of their emotions in order to regulate their behavior and to acclimatize themselves to a variety of situational contexts (Goleman, 1995).

Goleman (1998) argued that emotional intelligence deals with various competencies which exert an influence on human behavior. Considering this issue, he argued that five major sub-constructs including *motivation*, *social skill*, *self-regulation*, *empathy*, and *self-awareness* underlie emotional intelligence. As he explained, motivation refers to the individuals' awareness of the factors that guide their behavior. Social skill involves the individuals' capability to establish harmonious relationship with other people in different situations. Self-regulation refers to the individuals' ability to stifle their negative and disagreeable emotions. Finally, self-awareness refers to the degree to which individuals are cognizant of their feelings and abilities and are able to appraise the influence that they exert on the other individuals in the pertinent situational contexts.

Likewise, personality constitutes an affective factor that characterizes the characteristics that "account for consistent patterns of feeling, thinking, and behaving" (Pervin & John, 2001, p. 4). The empirical studies of this affective

factor have used diverse models of personality (e.g., Eysenck & Eysenck, 1964, 1975, 1985; Goldberg, 1992). Nonetheless, the *Big Five* model of personality (Goldberg, 1992) has been one of the most widely used models of personality in the relevant studies (Dörnyei, 2005). This model distinguishes five major dimensions of personality involving: *openness to experience*, *conscientiousness*, *extraversion-introversion*, *agreeableness*, and *neuroticism-emotional stability*.

Dörnyei (2005) explained the idiosyncrasies of each of the above-mentioned dimensions. As he noted, openness to experience shows the individual's proclivity toward novelty and appraises their appreciation of creativity. Conscientiousness determines the individuals' perseverance and evaluates the degree to which they are meticulous and organized. Extroversion-introversion assesses the individual's sociability and inspects their attitudes toward the outside world. Agreeableness highlights the extent to which individuals attempt to harmonize themselves with the other individuals in the society. Lastly, neuroticism-emotional stability specifies the individual's tendency to be shaken by vexatious emotions in diverse situations.

An examination of the empirical research on teacher immunity shows that the pertinent studies have focused on certain lines of research to the exclusion of others. More specifically, a number of studies (e.g., Hiver, 2015, 2017) have attempted to determine the construct validity of teacher immunity and its sub-constructs. Other studies (e.g., Hiver & Dörnyei, 2017) have distinguished and particularized various modes of teacher immunity. Moreover, certain studies (e.g., Haseli Songhori et al., 2018; Maghsoudi, 2021) have made an endeavor to determine the prevalence of teacher immunity varieties (i.e., productive & maladaptive) among the teachers in foreign language contexts. Finally, a group of studies (e.g., Rahmati et al.,

2019) have tried to expound on the development of teacher immunity in diverse academic settings. The above-mentioned research endeavors accentuate the fact that SLA researchers have scrutinized the construct of teacher immunity without examining the factors that influence it in the classroom context. More specifically, the above-mentioned studies have mainly used Hiver's (2017) teacher immunity questionnaire to characterize EFL teachers' psychological well-being on a continuum ranging from productive to maladaptive. Nonetheless, these studies have neglected the significance of teachers' individual differences. That is, the relevant research has not explored the role of these differences in the prediction of teacher immunity in the second and foreign language contexts. Considering this issue, the present study inspected the degree to which Iranian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instructors' teacher immunity was swayed by their affective factors. To be more specific, the study strived to answer the following research question:

Do Iranian EFL teachers' affective factors significantly predict their teacher immunity in EFL classrooms?

2. Method

2.1 Design

This study used a *predictive correlational design* (Creswell, 2011) to answer the relevant question. More specifically, in this study, the EFL teachers' affective factors involving their emotional intelligence and personality factors were considered to be the predictor variables and their teacher immunity was regarded as the outcome variable. The study aimed to determine the extent to which the above-mentioned affective factors predicted the participants' teacher immunity.

2.2 Participants

Considering the foremost aim of the study, the researchers used convenience sampling to select 129 (61 male & 68 female) EFL teachers from among the

teachers at different language institutes, high schools, and universities in Urmia (Iran) as the participants of the study. The selected participants ranged in age from 24 to 57 and were native speakers of Turkish, Farsi, or Kurdish. Moreover, they had either a B.A. or M.A., and Ph.D. in English Language Teaching, English Language and Literature, or English Translation. Finally, the participants' experience level was in the range of six to nineteen years.

2.3 Instruments

2.3.1 Teacher immunity questionnaire

In the study, the researchers used Hiver's (2017) *Teacher Immunity Questionnaire* to examine the participants' teacher immunity. The above-mentioned questionnaire involved 39 items which were rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree*. Hiver (2017) argues that this questionnaire examines the major sub-constructs of teacher immunity comprising *attitudes to teaching*, *coping*, *openness to change*, *burnout*, *classroom affectivity*, *teaching self-efficacy*, and *resilience*. Hiver (2017) notes that the reliability and validity indices of this questionnaire are satisfactory. Nonetheless, the researchers used Cronbach's alpha measure of internal consistency to examine its reliability. Based on the results of reliability analysis, the reliability index of the questionnaire (.89) was satisfactory, and it could be used in the Iranian EFL context.

2.3.2 Emotional intelligence questionnaire

In order to determine Iranian EFL teachers' emotional intelligence, the researchers used Wong and Law's (2002) *Emotional Intelligence Scale*. This self-report questionnaire examines four dimensions of emotional intelligence including *self-emotion appraisal*, *others' emotion appraisal*, *use of emotion*, and *regulation of emotion*. It encompassed 16 items which were rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from *totally agree* to *totally disagree*. Each of the above-mentioned emotional intelligence dimensions was assessed by means

of five items of the questionnaire. A number of relevant studies (e.g., Law, Wong, Huang & Li, 2008; Law, Wong & Song, 2004) have highlighted the fact that the validity and reliability indices of this questionnaire are satisfactory. Notwithstanding, in this study, the researchers used Cronbach's alpha measure of internal consistency to assess the reliability of the above-mentioned questionnaire. The results of the reliability analysis evinced that the reliability index (.85) of this instrument was satisfactory. Consequently, the questionnaire could be used in the present study.

2.3.3 Personality questionnaire

The researchers used the *NEO-Five-Factor Inventory* (Costa & McCrae, 1992) to determine the EFL teachers' personality traits. This self-report questionnaire examined the afore-mentioned five dimensions of personality involving: *openness to experience*, *conscientiousness*, *extraversion-introversion*, *agreeableness*, and *neuroticism-emotional stability*. It comprised 60 items which were rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. Costa and McCrae (1992) argue that their questionnaire has high reliability and validity indices. Nonetheless, the researchers used Cronbach's alpha measure of internal consistency to ensure that this questionnaire could be used in the EFL context of Iran. The results of reliability analysis showed that the reliability index of the questionnaire (.82) was acceptable. As a result, the questionnaire was used in the present study.

2.4 Procedure

In the study, first, the researchers identified six private language institutes, four public high schools, and four universities in Urmia (Iran) as the research sites in light of the aforementioned objectives. Second, they contacted the administration department of the above-mentioned sites, apprised them of the main purpose of the study, and requested them to provide the researchers

with the WhatsApp numbers of the teachers who were inclined to take part in the study. The researchers were furnished with the numbers of 143 EFL teachers during a two-week period.

Third, during a three-week period, the researchers contacted the above-mentioned teachers, imparted information on the general aims of the study to them, assured them of their anonymity, and noted that strict confidentiality was maintained with regard to their data. At this stage, 14 teachers withdrew from the study due largely to the fact that they did not want to provide the requisite information on the examined variables.

Fourth, the researchers used the Google Forms to administer the relevant questionnaires of the study to the participants. To this end, they administered Wong and Law's (2002) Emotional Intelligence Scale, Costa and McCrae's (1992) NEO-Five-Factor Inventory, and Hiver's (2017) Teacher Immunity Questionnaire to the EFL teachers during a three-week period (i.e., one questionnaire per week). Finally, the researchers used SPSS 20 to analyze the obtained questionnaire data and to answer the raised question of the study.

3. Results

Considering the aim of the study, the researchers used Multiple Regression analysis to examine the extent to which the EFL teachers' emotional intelligence and personality traits predicted their teacher immunity. To this end, a Standard Multiple Regression test was run between the above-mentioned variables. Prior to the analysis, the researchers checked the *multicollinearity* assumption. More specifically, they evaluated the *Tolerance* and *Variance Inflation Factor* (VIF) collinearity diagnostics. Table 1 provides information on these values.

Table 1
Collinearity Diagnostics of the EFL Teachers' Affective Factors and Teacher Immunity

Affective Factor	Tolerance	VIF
Emotional Intelligence	.312	3.206
Openness to Experience	.361	2.771
Conscientiousness	.206	4.864
Extraversion	.878	1.139
Agreeableness	.384	2.605
Neuroticism	.610	1.639

As shown in Table 1, all of the Tolerance values are larger than .10. Furthermore, the VIF values are less than 10. Consequently, the multicollinearity assumption was not violated. In addition to the above-mentioned assumption, the researchers examined the *Mahalanobis distance* value and the *Cook's distance* value to test the *outliers* assumption and the *normality*, *linearity*, *homoscedasticity*, and *independence of residuals* assumptions, respectively. Table 2 provides these results:

Table 2
Residuals Statistics of the EFL Teachers' Affective Factors and Teacher Immunity

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Mahal. Distance	1.401	19.384	5.953	3.381	129
Cook's Distance	.001	.123	.010	.019	129

Pallant (2007) notes that in a multiple regression analysis with six independent variables the maximum Mahalanobis distance value must be less than 22.46. As shown in Table 2, the maximum Mahalanobis distance value is 19.384. Therefore, the outlier's assumption was not violated. Finally, as Pallant (2007) points out, Cook's distance value must be less than 1. According to Table 2, the maximum value of Cook's distance is .123. Consequently, none of the afore-mentioned assumptions was violated and the regression model could be evaluated. Table 3 shows this model:

Table 3
Regression Model Summary of the EFL Teachers' Affective Factors and Teacher Immunity

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.928	.861	.855	25.985

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As shown in Table 3, the R Square value is .861. This value can be expressed as a percentage by multiplying it by 100. Therefore, the model explains 86.1 percent of the variance in the participants' teacher immunity. In order to determine the statistical significance of this model, the researchers examined the results of the ANOVA test. Table 4 provides the results of this test.

Table 4
ANOVA Test of the Regression Model of the EFL Teachers' Affective Factors and Teacher Immunity

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	51192.100	6	85318.683	126.361	.000
Residual	82374.272	122	675.199		
Total	594286.372	128			

Table 4 highlights the fact that the predictive power of the regression model exceeds 0 and the p-value .000 (marked as Sig.) is less than .05. Considering this issue, the researchers examined the contribution of each of the independent variables (i.e., EFL teachers' affective factors) to the prediction of the variance in the dependent variable (i.e., EFL instructors' teacher immunity). Table 5 shows these results.

Table 5
Coefficients of the Regression Model of the EFL Teachers' Affective Factors and Teacher Immunity

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	14.091	15.219		.926	.356
Emotional Intelligence	1.902	.205	.560	9.274	.000
Openness to Experience	1.858	.373	.279	4.97	.000
Conscientiousness	1.042	.468	.166	2.22	.028
Extraversion	.386	.245	.057	1.57	.118
Agreeableness	.492	.436	.061	1.127	.262
Neuroticism	-1.546	.235	-.284	-6.58	.000

As shown in Table 5, emotional intelligence with a Beta value of .560 made the strongest unique contribution to explaining the participants' teacher immunity when the variance which was explained by the other variables in the pertinent model was controlled. Moreover, an examination of its relevant p-value (.000) shows that its unique contribution to equation is significant.

Furthermore, on the basis of the results, neuroticism (Beta = $-.284$), openness to experience (Beta = $.279$), and conscientiousness (Beta = $.166$) are the variables which make unique contributions to explaining the dependent variable in descending order of statistical significance. Likewise, their relevant p-values are less than the predetermined significance value ($.05$). Finally, the contributions of the extraversion and agreeableness affective factors to the relevant regression equation are not significant. Figures 1 to 4 display the above-mentioned significant relationships between the relevant affective factors and the participants' teacher immunity:

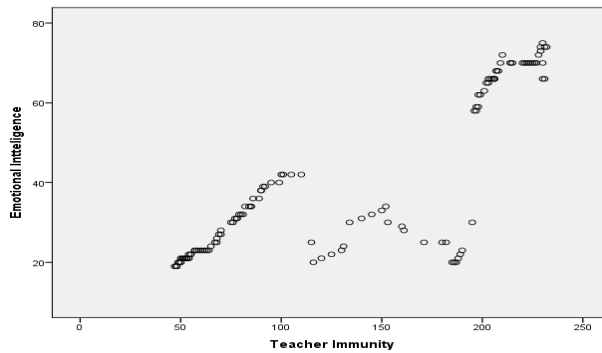


Figure 1. Relationship between EFL teachers' emotional intelligence and their teacher immunity

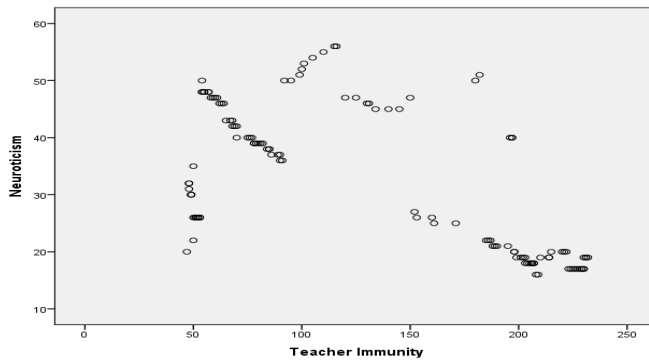


Figure 2. Relationship between EFL teachers' neuroticism and their teacher immunity

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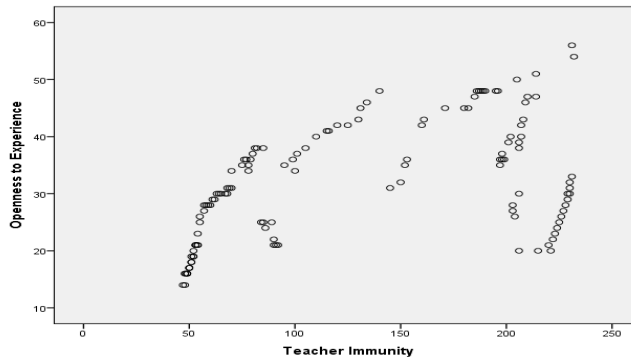


Figure 3. Relationship between EFL teachers' openness to experience and their teacher immunity

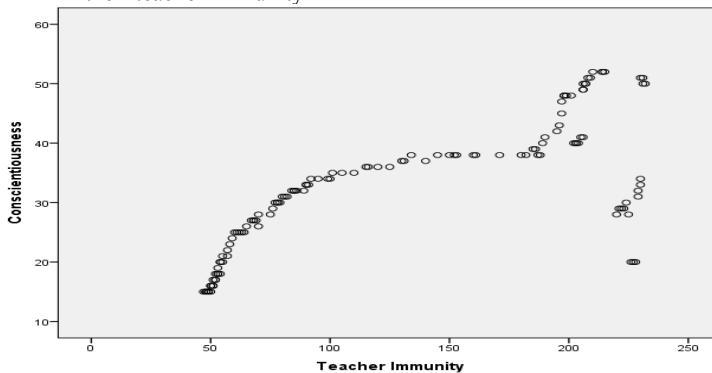


Figure 4. Relationship between EFL teachers' conscientiousness and their teacher immunity

4. Discussion

The study attempted to determine the degree to which Iranian EFL teachers' affective factors predicted their teacher immunity. The results highlighted the fact that these teachers' emotional intelligence made the strongest unique contribution to explaining their teacher immunity. In general, the obtained results corroborate the results of the studies by Pourmohammadreza-Tajrishi, Ashouri, and Jalilabkenar (2013), Ahmadi et al. (2014), Antiniene and Lekaviciene (2017), Guerra-Bustamante, Leon-Del-Barco, Yuste-Tosina,

Lopez-Ramos, and Mendo-Lazaro (2019), and Edara (2021) who reported a significant effect for emotional intelligence on the individuals' psychological well-being.

Moreover, based on the results, neuroticism, openness to experience, and conscientiousness are the personality traits which make unique significant contributions to explaining the participants' teacher immunity. Likewise, these results are in line with those of Ghadimifar and Dadkhah (2015), Taghvaininia and Mirzaei (2017), Abbasi, Mirderikvand, Adavi, and Hojati (2018), and Kayed and Kazemian Moghadam (2021), who underlined the significant relationships between the individuals' personality traits and their mental health.

Goleman (1998) maintains that emotional intelligence enables the individuals to adapt themselves to different situations by means of emotional regulation. That is, a higher degree of emotional intelligence augments the individuals' capacity to manage their positive and negative emotions and to take advantage of emotional information for maintaining and exercising control over their pertinent situation. This issue highlights the fact that emotional intelligence is comparable to the coping, classroom affectivity, and resilience sub-components of teacher immunity. More specifically, a teacher with a higher degree of emotional intelligence may be able to use a variety of stress management strategies (coping), manage a myriad of emotions which are aroused during the process of teaching (classroom affectivity), and acclimatize themselves to unfamiliar instructional conditions (i.e., resilience) (Hiver, 2017). It seems that emotional intelligence subsumes the aforementioned sub-components of teacher immunity. Considering these issues, it can be argued that emotional intelligence makes the strongest contribution to explaining the EFL instructors' teacher immunity and displays a high

correlation with it owing to the fact that it is subsumed under the construct of teacher immunity.

Dörnyei (2005) points out that the individuals with a high neuroticism score are likely to feel anxious and insecure in various situations. Furthermore, they are not able to achieve and maintain emotional stability in the face of adversities. Moreover, these individuals are particularly prone to depression due to the above-mentioned characteristics. The scrutiny of these issues highlights the fact that neuroticism is closely associated with maladaptive teacher immunity. More specifically, the teachers with a high neuroticism score are not able to adapt themselves to different teaching situations due to their anxiety and insecurity. In addition, they experience difficulty in accepting the changes in their field due to their cynicism and lack of emotional equilibrium (Hiver, 2017). In light of these issues, it can be argued that the high negative correlation between the Iranian EFL teachers' neuroticism personality trait and the teacher immunity stem from the fact that this personality trait acts as a major impediment to the development of their productive teacher immunity.

Costa and McCrae (1992) maintain that the individuals whose openness to experience scores are higher than the others are generally creative and do not follow the traditions. Moreover, they relish the prospect of novelty with the help of fundamental changes in their relevant settings. These issues highlight the fact that the openness to experience personality trait is congruent with the openness to change sub-component of teacher immunity. More specifically, the teachers who are imaginative and creative have a tendency to bring about various kinds of changes in their approaches to the instruction of the target language in order to facilitate and expedite the learners' language acquisition (Hiver, 2017). Consequently, it can be noted that the significant predictive power of the openness to experience

personality trait, regarding teacher immunity, stems from its affinity with the openness to change sub-component of this construct.

Finally, McCrae and Costa (2003) note that the individuals with high conscientiousness tend to be efficient and industrious. As they explained, these individuals have a systematic schedule and have a great sense of responsibility toward their profession. These characteristics are antithetical to teacher burnout. More specifically, as Hiver (2017) points out, teacher burnout is associated with the feelings of lack of efficiency in the academic settings. That is, the language teachers who suffer from burnout are likely to be aimless, inattentive, and irresponsible in the context of the classroom. These issues accentuate the link between conscientiousness and teacher immunity. More specifically, it can be argued that in this study conscientiousness made a significant contribution to explaining the variance in the EFL instructors' teacher immunity since it was the antithesis of teacher burnout.

5. Conclusion

This study aimed to determine the extent to which Iranian EFL instructors' teacher immunity is swayed by their affective factors. The results indicate that emotional intelligence along with neuroticism, openness to experience, and conscientiousness personality traits significantly predict the instructors' teacher immunity. It appears that a number of provisional conclusions can be drawn from the obtained results.

First, the affective variables exert a considerable and profound influence on language teachers' psychological well-being and mental health in their workplace. This issue highlights the fact that the pre-service teacher education courses have to be thoroughly redressed and revamped to encompass a self-awareness module. More specifically, teacher educators should make the prospective teachers aware of their emotional intelligence

and personality tendencies. They have to apprise the teachers of the fact that emotional intelligence encompasses a number of competencies that can be developed in appropriate circumstances (Goleman, 1995). Moreover, they are required to forewarn the teachers of the disagreeable and unfavorable impacts of specific personality tendencies such as neuroticism on their professional efficiency. Nonetheless, awareness of the above-mentioned factors per se does not guarantee self-sufficiency. That is, the teacher educators need to empower the pre-service teachers to deal with their emotional crises by prompting them to formulate and implement stress management strategies. These strategies might prevent the teachers from experiencing burnout. Furthermore, they may assist the teachers to reduce their students' language learning anxiety. This issue is eminently sensible considering the fact that teachers' self-awareness is a prerequisite to their cognizance of their students' psychological and emotional issues.

Second, a preponderance of the in-service teachers has not been provided with appropriate education and is negligent in implementing the above-mentioned affective strategies (Dogancay-Aktuna, 2006; Garrett & Shortall, 2002). A large number of these teachers have developed maladaptive teacher immunity due largely to the contextual stressors and intrinsic tendencies such as their personality traits. This issue accentuates the fact that similar to the pre-service teachers, the in-service teachers should be provided with awareness-raising education in the form of in-service programs. The human resources departments of different language education centers have to take cognizance of the fact that the above-mentioned programs are likely to promote the language teachers' professional efficiency and to preclude their burnout.

Lastly, the scrutiny of the sub-components of the construct of teacher immunity and the affective factors which influence it (e.g., emotional

intelligence) indicates that it might be swayed by teachers' reflective practice during the process of language instruction (Farrell, 2018, 2019; Jalilifar, Khazaie, & Ahmadpour, 2014). Considering this issue, explicit teacher reflection instruction might have a positive impact on the language teachers' development of productive teacher immunity. Consequently, the pre-service teacher education courses and the in-service programs have to highlight the consequential role of reflective practices in resolving the teachers' emotional crises and should provide the language teachers with efficient teacher reflection instruction.

The future studies need to deal with the limitations and delimitations of this study. More specifically, the relevant studies may examine the extent to which other affective factors such as *motivation* and *anxiety* among others sway the EFL instructors' teacher immunity. Furthermore, the pertinent studies have to determine the predictive power of the teachers' personal differences including their *age* and *gender* regarding their teacher immunity. Finally, the future studies can focus on the degree to which contextual factors such as *income level* and *workload* along with the teachers' educational qualifications comprising their *educational degree* and professional qualifications including their national and international *teacher education certificates* influence their teacher immunity development.

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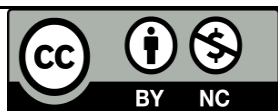
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