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Occupational Stress and Turnover Intentions in L2 Teachers: The Mediating Roles of Teacher Grit, Psychological Well-Being, and Harmonious Passion

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Abstract

In the contemporary age of ever-changing adaptations, transformations, and innovations in educational contexts, L2 teachers' affective responses to pedagogical complexities are likely to impact their performance. This study investigated whether L2 teachers' occupational stress predicts their turnover intentions via the mediation of grit, psychological well-being, and harmonious passion. The predictive effect of occupational stress on well-being through the mediation of harmonious passion and grit was also examined. The data were collected through a survey battery consisting of five validated instruments administered to 353 Iranian L2 teachers. The data were subjected to SEM analysis via SmartPLS. The results confirmed the direct associations except for a lack of a direct link between harmonious passion and turnover intention. The results of indirect paths further demonstrated the mediatory role of grit in the association between occupational stress and turnover intention. Harmonious passion did not function as a mediator between occupational stress and turnover intention; however, its mediatory role between occupational stress and psychological well-being was observed. The results showed that psychological well-being performs a mediatory role between occupational stress and turnover intention. Accordingly, it is suggested that L2 teachers' emotional states could be regulated by continuing professional development programs and informal learning communities involving dialogic exchanges, mutual collaborations, and peer reflections.

Keywords: Grit, Harmonious passion, Occupational stress, Psychological well-being, Structural equation modeling (SEM), Turnover intention

In their daily teaching environments and on their path to professional growth, L2 teachers may encounter a myriad of complexities that impact their psychological state and classroom performance. In such changing instructional contexts, L2 teachers' psychological condition have been gaining more interest, where "the ability to maintain well-being and respond resiliently to professional challenges is recognized as a valuable capacity for teachers" (Hascher et al., 2021, p. 416). To counteract turnover intention, a focus on positive psychology could address teachers' strengths and marginalize their weaknesses (Derakhshan et al., 2022).

Since teaching is an emotionally challenging profession that imposes emotional labor on the teachers in complex teaching milieus (Liu et al., 2021) and triggers occupational stress, providing deeper insights into L2 teachers' psychological state has turned into an urgent concern. As Pham and Phan (2023) acknowledged, during the COVID-19 pandemic which put teachers under tremendous pressure, teachers' emotional experiences clearly affected their teaching quality and well-being. In this context, the teachers who were more engaged with their work tended to be full of energy, dedicated to and passionate about their jobs, persistent in the face of difficulties, and engrossed in what they did (Greenier et al., 2021).

L2 teachers are increasingly expected to adapt themselves to the shifting landscape of language education. In response to critical pedagogical conditions, teachers need to regulate their emotional state and get empowered by positive psychological mediators that safeguard them against negative job-related consequences such as turnover, burnout, and attrition. In the present study, we aimed to investigate how the non-linear and dynamic relationship between L2 teachers' occupational stress and their turnover intention could be mediated by positive emotional features such as teacher well-being, grit, and harmonious passion.

Review of the Literature

The ELT work and turnover

Teaching is a fundamentally stressful occupation (MacIntyre et al., 2019). Language teachers, in particular, are prone to job-related stressors due to the complexity of their professional lives. This complexity arises from the challenges that language teaching/learning generates especially for non-native teachers, who may suffer from foreign language anxiety and low self-confidence. As Ershadi et al. (2024) demonstrated, non-native speaking teachers may feel more marginalized, assume institutional policymakers as inequality sources, and suffer from lack of confidence in their pedagogical efficiency. According to Turner et al. (2022), teachers suffer from increasingly higher levels of stress, anxiety, exhaustion, and burnout. Jin et al. (2021) further acknowledge that teaching is known as a job with high risks of burnout as well as intellectual, emotional, and physical pressures. Jerrim and Sims (2021) also showed that the longer working hours that teachers often have are associated with higher levels of workload stress. As Ezeugwu et al. (2016) asserted, job stress and depression significantly predict turnover intention. Therefore, depressed teachers may feel insecure with themselves, their jobs, and others.

Given the complex nature of language teaching and the fact that the results of L2 teachers' efforts might not be observable in the short term, they are prone to frustration, burnout, and turnover intention (Sudina et al., 2021). Occupational or work-related stress is claimed to be one of the major threats to teachers' psychological well-being and their professional growth (Mercer et al., 2016). According to MacIntyre et al. (2019), language teachers' well-being is susceptible to occupational stress. They emphasize that language teachers are exposed to

context-specific stressors such as unstable working conditions, job insecurity, identity crisis, and language anxiety. Hiver and Dörnyei (2017) describe language teaching as *a profession in crisis*. As reported by Borman and Dowling (2008), approximately 40% of teachers leave their careers during their first five years. Teachers' turnover intention can be influenced by a multitude of factors such as job stress, low job satisfaction, demographic variables, and organizational climate (Belete, 2018). Recent research in the Iranian English as a foreign language (EFL) context also reveals that teachers are struggling with occupational stress during their career life, which can influence their physical, mental, and professional performance (e.g., Karimi & Bani Adam, 2023; Khani & Mirzaee, 2015).

Negative impacts on turnover in ELT work

Recent demands for online teaching have caused additional stress for teachers. For instance, McDaniel et al. (2024) demonstrated that teachers with more workload and COVID-19 stressors have more burnout symptoms and perceived stress. In another study, Emir et al. (2023) showed that remote teaching triggered certain stressors driven by dissatisfaction with the job, political issues, lack of support from society, and feeling of incompetence. In this context, Heikonen et al. (2024) supported a collective approach to the co-construction of teaching competence in professional communities.

In extreme cases, context-specific challenges can even increase L2 teachers' actual turnover decisions and lead to teacher attrition. Turnover intention is predicted by a number of individual and profession-related factors such as work-related stressors, organizational policies, and low income (Samadi et al., 2020), which may have detrimental impacts on students' overall performance due to the lack of committed and highly skilled teachers. According to Zhang et al. (2024), professional turnover intention is influenced by teachers' burnout as well as dissatisfaction with salary, students' behavior, and school management system. As Räsänen et al. (2022) demonstrated, teacher turnover intentions are triggered by exhaustion, inadequacy and cynicism, and burnout symptoms. Li and Yao (2022) further showed that whereas burnout, workload, and stress were the important predictors of teachers' turnover intentions, trust, professional identification, and organizational commitment were considered as most important protectors against turnover intentions.

Positive mitigators of turnover in ELT work

A key dimension of positive psychology that could mediate teachers' emotional state and safeguard them against turnover is teacher well-being (Mercer, 2021). Teacher well-being is one of the most influential predictors of teachers' effectiveness which can affect their entire performance (Mercer, 2018). According to Mercer et al. (2016), L2 teacher well-being is greatly influenced by positive emotions since they help "build teachers' personal resources such as their intellectual resources and better equip them for their future work and teaching" (p. 221).

Recent years have witnessed an increasing interest in scientifically studying teacher well-being (Hascher et al., 2021). Teacher well-being shaped by the complicated social interactions between the teachers and their ecological environments is characterized by three features of "multidimensionality", "dynamism", and "context-dependency" (Sulis et al., 2021). Well-being is dynamically developed in socially and situationally mediated contexts to represent the complex interaction between the teachers and their environments. Teacher well-being is influenced by the social context, where a holistic interaction between teachers' professional and personal lives is established (Jin et al., 2021).

Positive psychology has been suggested as one way to help teachers overcome stress. According to Thien and Lee (2022), teachers' working context has a significant nonlinear effect on their well-being. In another study, Hascher and Waber (2021) showed that social relationships play a pivotal role in moderating teacher well-being. Turner et al. (2022) further called for an in-depth understanding of teachers' adoption of positive psychology for the purpose of improving their well-being. In their study, the researchers found that work-related social support that engages teachers in altruistic activities, collegial relationships, and professional development-based pedagogical practices promotes teacher well-being. Dreer (2024) also showed that teachers' job-related well-being, especially positive emotions in the workplace, contributes to teachers' job satisfaction.

According to McCain (2017), teacher grit is another predictor of teacher performance. Defined as "sustained perseverance and passion for reaching long-term goals and conceptualized as a facet of conscientiousness" (Sudina & Plonsky, 2021, p. 829), grit has been reported to be a significant determinant of teachers' achievement that may protect them against turnover intentions. Grit has received substantial research attention in L2 settings. Grit is a positive psychological construct that tends to influence teachers' cognition (e.g., Shabani et al., 2022), identity, and pedagogical performance (Duckworth, 2016). According to Duckworth et al. (2007), high levels of grit contribute to "working strenuously toward challenges, maintaining effort and interest over years despite failure, adversity, and plateaus in progress" (p. 1087). Duckworth et al. (2007) further highlighted the two main properties of grit: effort perseverance and interest consistency. Dobbins (2016) found a significant association between teacher grit and teacher self-efficacy, which can lead to teacher effectiveness.

Recent literature has also addressed the role of teachers' grit in preserving their positive psychological state while confronting challenging instructional conditions. For instance, Azari Noughabi et al. (2024) showed that L2 teachers with higher work engagement and grit seem to be more immune to professional challenges, could overcome stress factors, and remain dedicated to their profession. In another study, Derakhshan et al. (2022) showed that L2 teachers' well-being and grit significantly influenced their foreign language teaching enjoyment, where grit acts as the strongest predictor. Therefore, gritty teachers are more likely to enjoy their teaching experiences. As reported by Sudina et al. (2021), L2 teachers with high levels of grit tend to show more passion toward their profession, and improve their students' performance with more effective methods of teaching. In particular, grit helps teachers develop their growth mindset and show more resistance to the obstacles and failures they might face in their careers.

Harmonious passion or "free acceptance of the activity in one's identity, without obligation" (Moe, 2016, p. 431) is another psychological construct, which has the potential to augment teacher well-being. In general, passion is defined as "a strong inclination toward a self-defining activity that one loves, finds important and meaningful, and invests time and energy in. These activities come to be so self-defining that they represent central features of one's identity (Vallerand, 2016, p. 33). In an attempt to conceptualize passion, Vallerand (2012) proposed a dualistic model of passion, comprised of two sub-constructs: Harmonious Passion (HP) and Obsessive Passion (OP). The former refers to an individual's tendency toward incorporating an engaging, voluntary, and controlled activity into his/her identity, which is harmoniously interconnected with his/her life events. The latter is characterized by a strong propensity for an activity, which has been integrated into one's identity and entails serious repercussions for

cognition and motivation (Moe, 2016). Along the same vein, Moe (2016) showed that passionate teachers are motivated to engage with teaching, and if the passion is harmonious, they experience positive affect, job satisfaction, and self-efficacy. The focus of the current study is on HP as it is argued to expand the cognitive-motivational resources increasing academic engagement and job satisfaction, and decreasing burnout (Vallerand, 2012, 2016). Research shows that teachers' HP is associated with students' enjoyment and motivation, and perceived instructional quality (Frenzel et al., 2009).

Positive psychological outcomes (well-being, health, happiness, resilience, and growth during trauma) correlated positively with approach coping and negatively with avoidant coping (MacIntyre et al., 2020, p. 1). As MacIntyre et al. (2022, p. 2) further stated,

> Greater use of approach strategies, which are more active in attempting to modify the stressor or recruit resources to deal with it, was associated with more positive outcomes including self-assessed well-being, resilience, growth, and physical health. Use of avoidant coping strategies which ignore, distract from, or set aside stressors were associated with lower levels of well-being, resilience, and health, but higher levels of loneliness, sadness, anger, and anxiety.

It has been argued that the association between occupational stress and turnover intention can be mediated by different psychological components of teacher psychology such as harmonious passion (Moe, 2016), teacher well-being (Spilt et al., 2011), and teacher grit (McCain, 2017). Our investigation into the relevant literature reveals that the previous research has not systematically examined the causal association between L2 teachers' occupational stress and turnover intention with regard to the mediating factors of grit, well-being, and passion. Thus, the present study aimed to address the existing lacuna in L2 teacher psychology by adopting an SEM approach.

Given that teacher psychology and learner psychology are inextricably intertwined (Mercer, 2018), and considering the teachers' decisive roles in the socio-cognitive processes, which are at play in the complex milieu of the classroom, it seems necessary to inspect teachers' psychological conditions and professional well-being. Accordingly, the current study aimed to investigate the mediating roles of teacher grit, psychological well-being at work, and harmonious passion between their occupational stress and turnover intention.

The hypothesized model

Our structural model (see Figure 1) was hypothesized based on the review of theoretical and empirical literature to examine the causal interactions among the following latent variables that impact teachers' turnover: teacher grit, occupational stress, psychological well-being at work (PWBW), HP, and turnover intention. Given that high levels of work stress may result in emotional exhaustion and burnout, which can, in turn, diminish teachers' long-term passion and perseverance (MacIntyre et al., 2019), we hypothesized that L2 teachers' occupational stress negatively predicts their grit (H1). As outlined by Vallerand's (2012) dual model of passion, negative affective factors such as stress can lead to job dissatisfaction, which can prevent teachers from engaging in passionate job-focused activities, hence lowering their levels of HP. Thus, it was hypothesized that L2 teachers' occupational stress negatively predicts their harmonious passion (H2). Additionally, a large number of researchers (e.g., Liu & Onwuegbuzie, 2012; Samadi et al., 2020) referred to work-related stress as one of the reasons forcing teachers to leave their profession. Therefore, we hypothesized that L2 teachers'

occupational stress positively predicts their turnover intention (H3). In compliance with McInerney et al. (2018), who stipulated that job-related stressors exert a detrimental influence on teachers' psychological health and well-being, it was hypothesized that L2 teachers' occupational stress negatively predicts their PWBW (H4). As argued by Zeng et al. (2019), teachers with higher levels of grit have lower intentions to leave their jobs and a more growth mindset, which empowers them to have more resistance against failures, and contributes to their well-being. Accordingly, it was hypothesized that teachers' grit positively predicts their well-being (H5). Sudina et al. (2021) reported that grittier teachers are less susceptible to burnout and thus they are less likely to leave their career. As such, it was hypothesized that L2 teachers' grit negatively predicts their turnover intention (H6). The seventh hypothesis was formed in line with Moe (2016), where HP is viewed as an influential factor in predicting teachers' well-being. The hypothesized impact of HP on teachers' turnover intention (H8) is based on the assumption that there is a significant positive relationship between HP for teaching and work satisfaction, which, in turn, leads to a lower rate of turnover intention (Carbonneau et al., 2008). The last direct effect pertains to the impact of PWBW on teachers' turnover intentions (H9), which is based on the premise that the lack of professional well-being can result in burnout, thus increasing teachers' intention to leave (MacIntyre et al., 2019). Concerning the mediating effects (H10, H12, H14), it was hypothesized that positive affective factors such as grit, HP, and PWBW can mediate between teachers' negative emotional components such as occupational stress and turnover intention (e.g., McCain, 2017; Moe, 2016; Spilt et al., 2011). It was also suggested by H11 and H13 that grit and HP can mediate between teachers' occupational stress and PWBW (Dewaele et al., 2019).

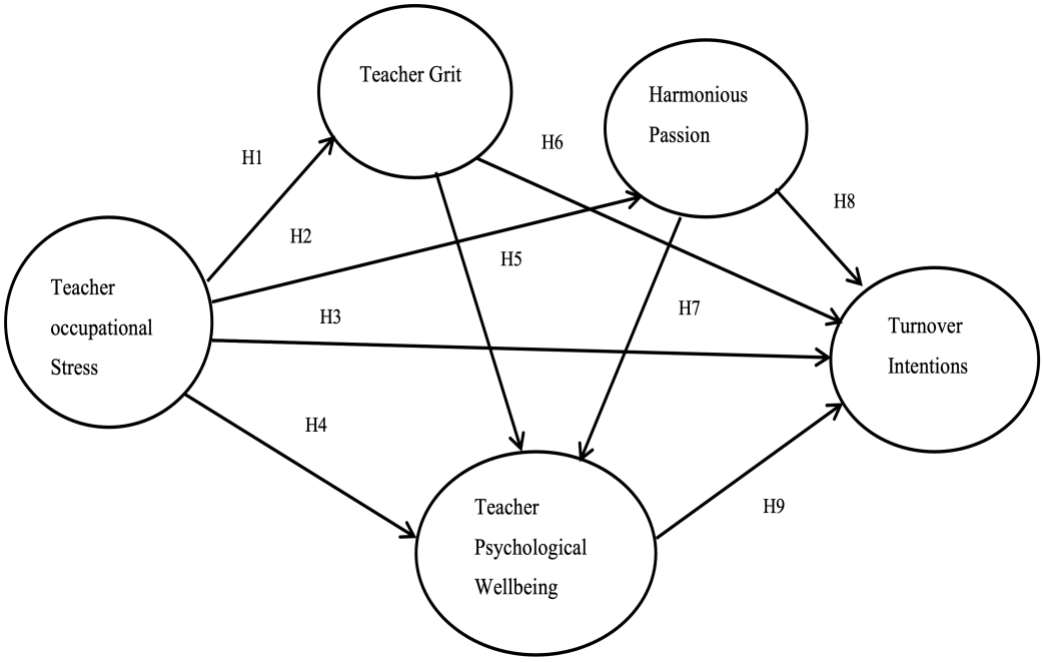

Figure 1. The hypothesized structural model of the variables

Method

Participants

The minimum sample size required for structural equation modelling was estimated to be 85 through power analysis, which was conducted by G*Power 3.1.9.2 for the effect size = 0.15, α

= 0.05, and power = 0.80 (Hair et al., 2017). 353 EFL teachers including 225 females (63.74%) and 128 males (36.26%) were recruited as the participants of the study. The teachers were teaching English at different private language institutions in central Iran and held BAs (61.75%, *n* = 218), MAs (34%, *n* = 120), or PhDs (4.25%, *n* = 15). The participants' age ranged between 23 and 45 (*M* = 32.11, *SD* = 6.66). Of the 101 teachers, (28.70%) had 1–5 years of teaching experience, 174 (49.30%) had 6–10, and 78 (22%) had more than 11. This data is summarized in Appendix 1. Participation was voluntary and informed consent was obtained.

Instruments

Since all the participants were English teachers, there was no need to translate the scales; thus, the English versions of the questionnaires were used in this study.

Index of Psychological Well-Being at Work. The Index of Psychological Well-Being at Work was developed by Dagenais-Desmarais and Savoie (2012). The index consists of 25 items on a six-point Likert scale ranging from '*disagree (0)'* to *'entirely agree (5)'*. The average of the scores ranged between 0 and 5. The questionnaire measures five different factors, including perceived recognition at work, thriving at work, interpersonal fit at work, desire for involvement at work, and feeling of competency at work.

Harmonious Passion Scale. The harmonious passion (HP) section of the Passion scale was utilized. The scale was initially developed by Vallerand and Houlfort (2003) and it was later adapted for teaching by Carbonneau et al. (2008). The six items of HP were assessed on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from *'do not agree at all (=1)'* to *'very strongly agree (=7)'*. The average of the scores ranged between 1 and 7.

Grit Scale. The Grit Scale was developed by Duckworth and Quinn (2009). This instrument is comprised of eight items assessed on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from *'Not like me at all (1)'* to *'Very much like me (5)'*. A higher score indicates a high level of teachers' grit. The scale measures two main factors, interest and effort. Items 1, 3, 5, and 6 are reversely scored. The average of the scores on this scale varied between the highest (5 = extremely gritty) and the lowest (1 = not at all gritty) scores.

Turnover Intention Scale. The profession-focused section of the Turnover Intention Scale was used in the present study. The scale was originally developed by McInerney et al. (2015), in which the four items were rated on a seven-point Likert scale, ranging from *'strongly disagree (1)'* to *'strongly agree (7)'*. The unit of measurement in this scale is based on the participants' intentions to leave their own profession, and a higher score indicates a high level of turnover intention. The average range of the scores varied between 1 and 7. Since the context of the present study did not include schools, only the profession-related section was employed.

Perceived Occupational Stress Questionnaire. The Perceived Occupational Stress Questionnaire was developed by Weinstein and Trickett (2016), consisting of 40 items assessed on a five-point Likert scale ranging from *'not at all stressful (1)'* to *'extremely stressful (5)'*. The questionnaire measures four main subscales, namely systematic impacts, social support/climate, formal job characteristics, and informal job duties. Five items were discarded based on theoretical reasoning, i.e., they were not in accordance with the Iranian culture. The average range of the scores varied between 1 and 5.

Data Collection Procedure and Data Analyses

A total of 500 questionnaires were distributed through different ways: (a) sending the online scales via email (b) in-person distributions of the questionnaires among the teachers in three language institutions, and (c) using different social media such as Instagram, WhatsApp, Telegram, and LinkedIn. It took between 25–40 minutes to complete the instruments of the study. Four hundred and twenty questionnaires were obtained. However, 67 questionnaires were discarded due to incomplete responses. Consequently, 353 L2 teachers were selected as the final participants of the study. The demographic profile of the respondents is presented in the appendix. After collecting the required data, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 25) was utilized for descriptive statistics. Furthermore, the data were subjected to an SEM analysis to measure the adequacy of the hypothesized model via SmartPLS 3.3.9

Results

Descriptive Statistics and Preliminary Analyses

The results of descriptive statistics indicated that all the skewness and kurtosis values fell between ±2, which confirmed that the data were normally distributed. Since a single source of data was employed, the data were tested for the Common Method Bias by Harman's single factor test (Podsakoff et al., 2003). The results indicated the percentage of variance accumulated in the first component (18.985%), which was well below the threshold value of 50%. Then, the data were analysed using SEM in SmartPLS 3.3.9.

Evaluation of measurement model

Based on the literature review, occupational stress, PWBW, and Grit were treated as second-order constructs with four, five, and two dimensions, respectively. In this study, all first-order and second-order factors in the proposed model were reflective. Thus, a two-stage approach was employed for the evaluation of the measurement model (Becker et al., 2012; Ringle et al., 2012). The following subsection presents the initial step of assessing the validity and reliability of the model, involving the first-order factors.

Evaluating the Validity and Reliability of First-Order constructs

In the first step, following Sarstedt et al.'s (2019) guidelines, a repeated indicators approach was used for assessing the validity and reliability of the measurement model (First-order factor). In this step, the measurement quality was assessed based on construct reliability, and convergent and discriminant validity (Sarstedt et al., 2019). Therefore, outer loading was employed to examine the indicator reliability, which should exceed 0.707 (Chin, 1998). However, Chin (1998) considered the minimum of 0.707 as a rule of thumb and claimed that "loadings of 0.5 or 0.6 may still be acceptable if there exist additional indicators in the block for comparison basis." (p. 325). As indicated in Appendix B, items OS18, OS19, OS27, OS30, and PW14 with factor loadings less than 0.5 were eliminated, and all factor loadings in the revised measurement model exceeded the recommended level of acceptance (0.50). Then, to examine the internal consistency reliability, we used composite reliability (CR) and Cronbach's alpha. Cut offs for CR and α values for main constructs were set at 0.7 or more, following Bagozzi and Yi (1988). Convergent validity was measured through the average variance extracted (AVE), and a cut-off of 0.50 or greater was used following Fornell and Larcker (1981). To assess the construct reliability, standard statistical tests of convergent and

discriminant validity were applied. Further discussion of the results can be found in Appendix B and Appendix C.

To assess discriminant validity, the Fornell-Larcker criterion (Fornell & Larcker, 1981), and Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio (Henseler et al., 2015) were used. The HTMT criterion was met, as shown in Table 1, with shared variance between constructs not exceeding 0.90 (Henseler et al., 2015), indicating the distinctiveness of our constructs.

Table 1. Results of discriminant validity -HTMT (first-order factors)

First-order constructs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Desire for involvement a work													
Feeling of competency at work	0.79												
Formal job characteristics	0.22	0.22											
Harmonious passion	0.42	0.45	0.30										
Informal job duties	0.21	0.23	0.57	0.21									
Interest	0.25	0.32	0.13	0.52	0.12								
Effort	0.31	0.35	0.30	0.49	0.21	0.69							
Interpersonal fit at work	0.74	0.79	0.19	0.45	0.19	0.38	0.38						
Perceived recognition at work	0.77	0.80	0.18	0.42	0.15	0.31	0.31	0.80					
Social support	0.22	0.23	0.56	0.25	0.69	0.13	0.26	0.24	0.21				
Systematic impact	0.30	0.27	0.54	0.24	0.67	0.12	0.26	0.23	0.22	0.72			
Thriving at work	0.72	0.74	0.17	0.38	0.21	0.29	0.30	0.74	0.79	0.18	0.21		
Turnover intention	0.42	0.40	0.38	0.42	0.39	0.31	0.43	0.38	0.35	0.37	0.41	0.34	

Evaluating the Validity and Reliability of Second-Order Constructs

Following Ringle et al. (2012) and Sarstedt et al. (2019), second-order factors were evaluated in the measurement model. All loadings of the dimensions of occupational stress, PWBW, and Grit were greater than 0.50. Furthermore, the CR values, alpha values, and the AVE values (see Appendix B and C) exceeded their respective cut-off values, thus confirming construct reliability and convergent validity. Table 2 shows the discriminant validity of second order factors. They indicate that the second-order constructs were all validated, since the square root of the AVE values of all the constructs were greater than the inter-construct correlations and each construct's HTMT ratio of correlation is below 0.9.

Table 2. Results of discriminant validity -HTMT (second-order factors)

Constructs	1	2	3	4	5
Occupational Stress					
Psychological well being	0.305				
Harmonious passion	0.297	0.481			
Turnover intention	0.491	0.430	0.420		
Grit	0.257	0.439	0.609	0.452	

Path Coefficients and Hypotheses Testing

After testing the reliability and validity of the first and second-order measurement models, the hypothesized direct and indirect effects (illustrated in Figure 2) were tested using the bootstrapping method with 10000 bootstrap resamples (Hair et al., 2011; MacKinnon et al., 2004; Preacher & Hayes, 2004). Following Hair et al. (2017) and Sarstedt et al.'s (2017) recommendations, predictive accuracy (R^2), predictive relevance (Q^2), the effect sizes'(f^2), the

multicollinearity (variance inflation factor; *VIF*), and the path coefficients (standardized Beta (β) and *t*-statistics) were applied to the assessment of the structural model.

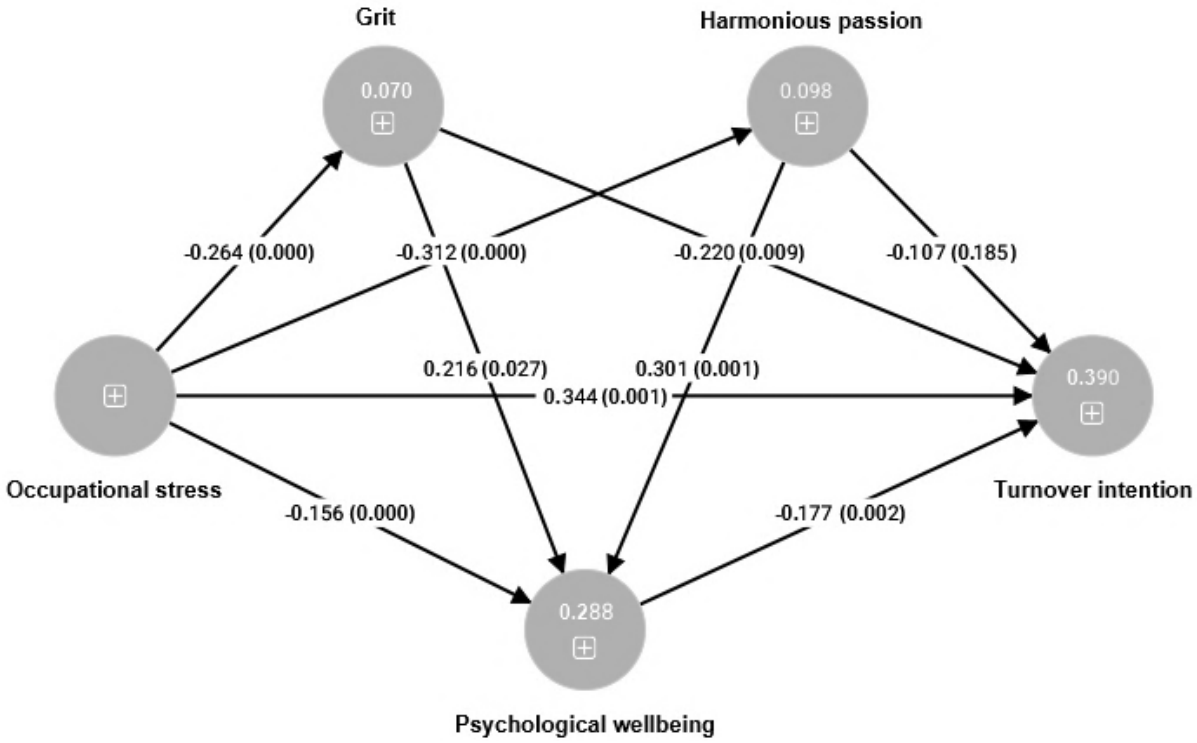

Figure 2. Results of the direct effects

Direct Effects

Table 3 shows the results of the direct effects in our modal. Multicollinearity was assessed via variance inflation factor (VIF), with values varying from 1.000 to 1.781, showing noncollinearity following Hair et al. (2019).

The hypothesis testing (i.e., *t* and *p* values) in the model supported all of our hypotheses as being significant with the exception of H8; i.e., harmonious passion directly impacted turnover intention. Therefore, it seems that occupational stress predicted grit, HP, TI, and PWB, that grit had a predictive effect on psychological well-being and turnover intention, that HP predicted psychological well-being, and that psychological well-being had a predictive impact on turnover intention.

We interpreted the strength of R^2 according to Plonsky and Oswald (2014), the size of f^2 effect sizes according to Avkiran and Ringle (2018), and the predictive relevance of Q^2 values according to Latan and Noonan (2017). Accordingly, we found that psychological well-being and turnover intention were substantial predictors, whereas grit and harmonious passion were weak. Furthermore, except for the effect size of occupational stress on turnover intention, which indicates a moderate effect size, the effect sizes of the rest of the significant paths were weak at the structural level.

Table 3. Hypothesized direct effects.

	Path	Estimate	S. E.	T-Values	P-Values	VIF	*f*
H1	Occupational stress => Grit	-0.264	0.056	4.675	0.000	1.000	0.075
H2	Occupational stress => Harmonious passion	-0.312	0.042	7.518	0.000	1.000	0.108
H3	Occupational stress => Turnover intention	0.344	0.055	6.297	0.001	1.153	0.169
H4	Occupational stress => Psychological well-being	-0.156	0.042	3.745	0.000	1.119	0.030
H5	Grit => Psychological well-being	0.216	0.098	2.211	0.027	1.604	0.041
H6	Grit => Turnover intention	-0.220	0.084	2.619	0.009	1.669	0.047
H7	Harmonious passion => Psychological well being	0.301	0.094	3.213	0.001	1.654	0.077
H8	Harmonious passion => Turnover intention	-0.107	0.080	1.326	0.185	1.781	0.010
H9	Psychological well-being => Turnover intention	-0.177	0.058	3.053	0.002	1.404	0.036
				R^2		Q^2	
	Grit			0.070		0.032	
	Harmonious passion			0.098		0.041	
	Psychological well-being			0.288		0.172	
	Turnover intention			0.390		0.220	

Indirect (Mediation) Effects

Table 4 shows the results of hypothesis testing for indirect effects. The hypothesis testing (i.e., *t* and *p* values) in the model supported all of our hypotheses as being significant with the exception of H12; i.e., the indirect predicting effect of occupational stress on turnover intention via harmonious passion was significant. Overall, it seems that grit mediated both the relationships between occupational stress and turnover intention, and occupational stress and well-being. In addition, the mediating role of harmonious passion in the association between the occupational stress and psychological well-being was significant. Finally, the significant indirect association between occupational stress and turnover intention via psychological well-being was confirmed.

Table 4. Results of Hypotheses Testing (Indirect Effects).

	Path	Estimate	S.E.	T values	P values
H10	Occupational stress => Grit => Turnover intention	0.058	0.025	2.334	0.020
H11	Occupational stress => Grit => Psychological well-being	-0.057	0.028	2.018	0.044
H12	Occupational stress=>Harmonious passion =>Turnover intention	0.033	0.026	1.289	0.198
H13	Occupational stress=>Harmonious passion=>Psychological well-being	-0.094	0.031	2.992	0.003
H14	Occupational stress=>Psychological well-being=>Turnover intention	0.027	0.011	2.502	0.012

Discussion and Conclusion

Summary of Findings

As the findings indicated, the L2 teachers who enjoy higher levels of well-being and grit are assumed to be more resilient to occupational stress and turnover intention. Hascher et al. (2021) highlighted teachers' capacity to preserve their well-being and resiliently counteract professional challenges. The teachers' positive psychological conditions also safeguard them against their weaknesses and pedagogical shortcomings (Derakhshan et al., 2022).

The present study attempted to cast light on the complex associations among teacher variables in L2 teacher psychology. To this end, we examined the role of L2 teachers' grit, well-being, and harmonious passion that mediate the interactions between their occupational stress and

turnover intentions. The predicting effect of occupational stress on PWBW through the mediation of HP and grit was also investigated. The results confirmed that occupational stress accounts for L2 teachers' turnover intentions, which is compatible with Ezeugwu et al.'s (2016) findings. In fact, there is substantial evidence showing that the chronic stressors in L2 teachers' professional lives can dramatically influence the intention to leave the profession, which can, in turn, lead to teacher attrition (Liu & Onwuegbuzie, 2012; MacIntyre et al., 2019).

Consequently, during difficult times, to overcome their turnover intentions, teachers need small online networks and communities that support them to do joint troubleshooting, raise questions, discuss immediate classroom-based critical incidents, and ask for experience-driven solutions. By establishing clubs for teachers to collaboratively reflect on their shared teaching experiences and common student responses, they become motivated enough to deter the negative outcomes of loneliness and turnover. Social support acts indirectly through job satisfaction in relation to turnover intention (Pomaki et al., 2010). As Fu et al. (2022) further showed, social support is negatively related to the turnover intention.

Concerning the positive psychological constructs (i.e., grit, HP, and PWBW), it was found that grit had the most, whereas HP did not have any effect on predicting teachers' turnover intention. The findings concerning grit are supported by Sudina et al. (2021) who described grit as an empowering trait that can assist teachers to overcome work-related obstacles and remain in their career. Thus, it is justifiable that the grittier the teachers are, the less they intend to leave their profession. Azari Noughabi et al. (2024) similarly showed that L2 teachers' higher grit makes them more immune to professional challenges and helps them downgrade stress factors and remain committed to their profession.

As reported by Sudina et al. (2021), L2 teachers with high levels of grit tend to show more passion toward their profession and improve their students' performance with more effective methods of teaching. In particular, grit helps teachers develop their growth mindset and show more resistance to the obstacles and failures they might face in their careers. Derakhshan et al. (2022) also stated that L2 teachers' grit supports language teaching enjoyment, which could potentially safeguard the teachers against turnover decisions.

The reason behind the non-significant predictive effect of HP on turnover intention might be due to the teachers' individual differences (IDs) as well as socio-economic and institutional factors. For instance, the majority of the participants were experienced female teachers. Experienced teachers who have already established their professional identity and have a clear picture of their future selves might not need to increase their HP as a protective motivational force in order to remain in their profession. Moreover, female teachers seem to be more conservative than male teachers in the Iranian socio-cultural context, as they generally seek more job security and stability, and less change in their professional life despite facing challenges. Thus, female teachers may not observe HP as a predictor of turnover intention. The negative predicting effect of PWBW on turnover intention is firmly supported by the principles of positive psychology, which highlights the importance of well-being in teachers' personal and professional lives (MacIntyre et al., 2019).

Concerning the mediatory effects, the results revealed that grit and PWBW partially mediated between occupational stress and turnover intentions in that they diminished occupational stress, which in turn led to the reduction of turnover intentions. Iranian teachers' occupational stress might be intensified as they are overworked and underpaid. In this context, teachers' positive psychological state is not merely internal and teacher well-being, grit, and passion could be

influenced by their financial conditions. If teachers suffer from work-related tensions and pressures without receiving any financial support in return, they get demotivated and become more inclined to make turnover and burnout decisions. According to Wang et al. (2022), language teachers need to work in a psychologically thriving atmosphere that encourages them to become committed to their profession and remain immune to its various challenges. This could be partially fulfilled by providing financial incentives and monetary rewards. Accordingly, teachers need to be financially supported to become aware of the fact that their efforts are acknowledged and valued, which could potentially impact their grit for teaching profession.

Grit played a mediatory role in the association between occupational stress and PWBW as well. These findings are in line with the theoretical contributions of positive psychology to L2 teacher psychology, highlighting the pivotal role of positive emotions. Since teacher well-being is socially constructed in the interactions between their personal and professional lives (Jin et al., 2021; Sulis et al., 2021) and teacher well-being impacts their effective performance (Mercer, 2018), to promote teacher well-being in educational contexts, the institutions are expected to support them from moral, professional, and financial perspectives.

From a moral perspective, institutions could provide the teachers with non-monetary rewards and gift packages to further motivate them and prevent their turnover decisions. As Thien and Lee (2022) demonstrated, teachers' teaching context has a significant nonlinear impact on their well-being. Therefore, holding monthly social gatherings that engage the teachers in meeting each other, talking about their personal and professional lives, and doing fun activities to enjoy their time could more noticeably boost teachers' confidence and well-being. Guo et al. (2021) similarly showed that social support had a positive predictive effect on the intention to stay.

From a professional perspective, institution supervisors are required to act as supportive friends rather than critical observers so that such friendly educational environments encourage individual teachers to feel they belong to a flourishing community that attempts to make every member grow. In the same vein, Hascher and Waber (2021) stated that social relationships play a critical role in mediating teacher well-being. Furthermore, to improve teachers' digital pedagogical competence, the supervising teams may go beyond conventional short-term virtual workshops and take more innovative measures by holding small computer-assisted language learning (CALL) exhibitions for teachers, running competitions among teachers, sharing teachers' video reflections, presenting teachers' virtual products and educational materials, etc. Additionally, by involving teachers in collaborative projects, we could relieve their mental tensions and enhance their well-being. Turner et al. (2022) similarly showed that professional support promoting altruistic activities, collegial relationships, and professional practices positively contributes to teachers' well-being.

Furthermore, it was found that HP could partially mediate between occupational stress and PWBW. This outcome is in congruence with the theoretical foundations of the dualistic model of passion (Vallerand, 2016), which cites HP as a positive predictor of well-being. Nevertheless, the results showed that HP played no mediatory role concerning the relationship between teachers' occupational stress and turnover intention. This finding is inconsistent with those of Moe (2016) on HP. One justification could be the impact of the dynamic socio-cultural context of language teaching. As stated by Mercer (2018), L2 teachers are not situated within "externally defined, objective, monolithic contexts." They relate to them, however, in their own personal ways relying on their "personal frames of reference" (p. 14).

The findings of the current study attest to the idea that L2 teachers with high degrees of grit and psychological well-being are probably more apt to flourish in work-related challenges. To enhance the effect of these psychological constructs, intervention programs contingent on the principles of positive psychology need to be incorporated in teacher education to equip both pre-service and in-service teachers against stressors and teacher attrition. According to MacIntyre et al. (2019), positive psychology—as a thriving agenda– can strengthen teacher education by adhering to the interactive and dialogical nature of positive and negative emotions in the complex sociocultural context of language teaching/learning.

Implications

The present study provides implications for L2 teachers, L2 teacher educators, and L2 supervisors. To overcome the occupational stress induced through positive psychological state, L2 teachers are highly recommended to develop their pedagogical knowledge base by attending short-term workshops, exchanging practical solutions for shared classroom problems, joining small virtual communities, and relying on students as (digital) assistants. L2 teacher education programs need to take into account teacher voices in making important decisions about course design, materials development, teaching method, and assessment procedure, run short-term hands-on workshops and exhibitions, and engage in-service teachers in collaborative project-based technology-mediated instruction and task design. To ensure the teachers' well-being, grit, and passion, L2 supervisors are also expected to act as supportive friends for the teachers, and encourage the institution managers to provide financial aid and non-monetary gifts, organize different tours and field trips for the teachers, do immediate technical troubleshooting, and provide the basic infrastructure.

Limitations and suggestions for future studies

One of the limitations of the study concerned the larger number of female and experienced teachers due to their availability. Therefore, a more balanced population is recommended to be recruited in future studies. In addition, since most of the psychological constructs have a changing and dynamic nature, longitudinal studies deserve attention in further research. Future studies are also suggested to be conducted on different dimensions of occupational stress (e.g., systematic impact, social support) and PWBW (e.g., thriving at work, feeling of competency at work). Finally, future studies need to adopt a more exploratory approach by conducting mixed-methods research or deeper qualitative studies on the underlying factors leading to teachers' turnover intentions.

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Appendix A

Variables	Items	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	128.0	36.3
	Female	225.0	63.7
Education	B.A.	218.0	61.8
	M.A.	120.0	34.0
	PhD	15.0	4.2
	Total	353.0	100.0
Job experience	1-5 years	101.0	28.6
	6-10	174.0	49.3
	11 years and more	78.0	22.1

Appendix B

First-order constructs	Items	*M (SD)*	Outer loadings		Com	Cron	AVE
			Initial	Revised			
Systematic impact	OS1	3.4 (1.3)	0.836	0.837	0.892	0.892	0.623
	OS2	3.5 (1.3)	0.792	0.818			
	OS3	3.5 (1.4)	0.815	0.787			
	OS4	3.2 (1.4)	0.725	0.778			
	OS5	3.2 (1.3)	0.775	0.722			
Social support	OS6	3.7 (1.4)	0.671	0.665	0.898	0.899	0.526
	OS7	3.7 (1.4)	0.720	0.722			
	OS8	3.7 (1.4)	0.689	0.688			
	OS9	3.6 (1.4)	0.695	0.701			
	OS10	3.6 (1.5)	0.746	0.748			
	OS11	3.8 (1.4)	0.805	0.802			
	OS12	3.6 (1.5)	0.797	0.795			
	OS13	3.6 (1.5)	0.666	0.668			
Formal job characteristics	OS14	3.2 (1.5)	0.782	0.785	0.898	0.897	0.524
	OS15	3.2 (1.5)	0.720	0.726			
	OS16	3.2 (1.4)	0.737	0.739			
	OS17	3.1 (1.3)	0.654	0.660			
	OS18	2.6 (1.3)	0.446	***			
	OS19	2.6 (1.4)	0.420	***			
	OS20	3.2 (1.4)	0.674	0.671			
	OS21	3.2 (1.4)	0.697	0.707			
	OS22	3.5 (1.4)	0.737	0.741			
	OS23	3.5 (1.4)	0.748	0.750			
Informal job duties	OS24	3.2 (1.4)	0.594	0.589	0.908	0.908	0.501
	OS25	3.4 (1.4)	0.786	0.802			
	OS26	3.1 (1.3)	0.589	0.583			
	OS27	2.8 (1.4)	0.485	***			
	OS28	3.5 (1.4)	0.818	0.822			
	OS29	3.4 (1.4)	0.746	0.758			
	OS30	2.8 (1.5)	0.426	***			
	OS31	3.3 (1.5)	0.591	0.588			
	OS32	3.6 (1.4)	0.791	0.788			
	OS33	3.4 (1.4)	0.740	0.731			
	OS34	3.2 (1.4)	0.676	0.674			
	OS35	3.1 (1.3)	0.689	0.691			
Interpersonal fit at work	PW1	3.5 (1.5)	0.745	0.747	0.897	0.895	0.637
	PW2	3.7 (1.3)	0.842	0.844			
	PW3	3.7 (1.3)	0.873	0.874			
	PW4	3.8 (1.3)	0.828	0.826			

	PW5	3.6 (1.4)	0.687	0.684			
Thriving at work	PW6	3.5 (1.4)	0.818	0.819	0.902	0.902	0.648
	PW7	3.7 (1.3)	0.844	0.844			
	PW8	3.6 (1.4)	0.844	0.843			
	PW9	3.5 (1.4)	0.756	0.757			
	PW10	3.6 (1.4)	0.759	0.758			
Feeling of competency at work	PW11	3.9 (1.4)	0.825	0.832	0.904	0.904	0.702
	PW12	3.8 (1.3)	0.826	0.833			
	PW13	3.6 (1.4)	0.809	0.821			
	PW14	2.9 (1.4)	0.415	***			
	PW15	3.9 (1.3)	0.858	0.864			
Perceived recognition a work	PW16	3.7 (1.4)	0.687	0.686	0.899	0.897	0.642
	PW17	3.7 (1.4)	0.787	0.790			
	PW18	3.7 (1.4)	0.783	0.784			
	PW19	3.6 (1.3)	0.826	0.826			
	PW20	3.8 (1.3)	0.906	0.905			
Desire for involvement a work	PW21	3.4 (1.4)	0.757	0.757	0.892	0.892	0.624
	PW22	3.5 (1.5)	0.797	0.797			
	PW23	3.7 (1.4)	0.784	0.785			
	PW24	3.7 (1.3)	0.808	0.808			
	PW25	3.6 (1.4)	0.802	0.803			
Harmonious passion	HP1	4.7 (2.3)	0.711	0.714	0.869	0.87	0.527
	HP2	4.7 (2.1)	0.833	0.838			
	HP3	4.1 (2.1)	0.633	0.627			
	HP4	4.4 (2.1)	0.693	0.691			
	HP5	4.5 (2.2)	0.783	0.783			
	HP6	4.3 (2.1)	0.686	0.684			
Interest	G1	3.6 (1.5)	0.767	0.767	0.818	0.817	0.531
	G2	3.4 (1.5)	0.668	0.666			
	G3	3.4 (1.6)	0.689	0.689			
	G4	3.6 (1.5)	0.782	0.784			
Effort	G5	3.4 (1.6)	0.699	0.698	0.832	0.831	0.553
	G6	3.4 (1.5)	0.735	0.736			
	G7	3.6 (1.5)	0.757	0.757			
	G8	3.4 (1.6)	0.782	0.782			
Turnover intention	TI1	4.1 (2.2)	0.832	0.831	0.869	0.868	0.625
	TI2	3.9 (2.3)	0.718	0.721			
	TI3	3.8 (2.2)	0.818	0.817			
	TI4	4.1 (2.3)	0.790	0.789			

Appendix C

Second-order constructs	Dimentions	Loadings	Com	Cron	AVE
Occupational stress	Systematic impact	0.777	0.836	0.838	0.561
	Social support	0.752			
	Formal job characteristics	0.799			
	Informal job duties	0.661			
Psychological well-being	Interpersonal fit at work	0.886	0.917	0.918	0.690
	Thriving at work	0.746			
	Feeling of competency at work	0.888			
	Perceived recognition at work	0.794			
	Desire for involvement at work	0.832			
Grit	Interest	0.732	0.726	0.725	0.570
	Effort	0.777			