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Submitted and Defended by:

**Khaoula AZZOUZ**

# **Investigating the Relationship between Teacher Self-Efficacy and Teacher Stress**

The Case of Primary School Teachers of English in Biskra

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**Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Foreign Languages in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree of Master in Sciences of Language**

**Dr. Abdelhak Chenini**

**Supervisor**

**Pr. Bashar Ahmed**

**Examiner**

**Dr. Nadia Rezig Betka**

**President**

**Academic year: 2023/2024**

**Declaration**

I, Khaoula AZZOUZ, do hereby declare that this submitted work is my original work and has not previously been submitted for any institution or university for a degree. I also declare that a list of references is provided forward indicating all the sources of the cited and quoted information. This work was certified and completed at Mohammed KHEIDER University of Biskra. Algeria

Certified: Khaoula AZZOUZ

Master student, Department of English

Signature:

Date:

## **Dedication**

**This study is wholeheartedly dedicated to my beloved parents Hmaida and Hasnat Nassima, who have been my source of inspiration and gave me strength when I felt like giving up.**

**To my brother, sisters, friends and relatives who shared their words of advice and encouragement to finish this study.**

**It would not have been possible without your unwavering love and support.**

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I would also like to thank all teachers of English who participated in this research for their contribution and cooperation.

## Abstract

Teacher self-efficacy, or one's belief in their own capabilities, is a crucial construct in teachers' ability to succeed. However, one of the risks to this belief is the stress present in this profession. While research explored these concepts individually, limited research was conducted in Algeria EFL context. This study aims to explore the relationship between teacher stress and teacher self-efficacy of 21 Primary school teachers of English in Biskra, Algeria. They were selected through the cluster sampling technique. On the methodological aspect, this study falls under the mixed-methods approach. To obtain the necessary data, an interview was conducted with eight teachers. In addition, a structured questionnaire was administered to 21 teachers. This instrument contained two tests the Teacher Stress Inventory and Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale. Furthermore, the thematic analysis of the interview indicated the prevalence of stress and factors influencing teacher sense of self-efficacy. While the statistical analysis suggested the lack of a significant correlation between the variables. The findings of the study may encourage the decision makers to attempt at developing the sense of efficacy of teachers and decrease their stress level. Thus, it is a call for the immediate support and assistance of Teachers of English, primary schools in particular.

**Keywords:** Teacher stress, teacher self-efficacy, EFL education.

### **List of Abbreviations and Acronyms**

<b>EFL</b>	English as a Foreign Language
<b>GAS</b>	General Adaptation Syndrome
<b>SCT</b>	Stress and Coping Theory
<b>DCT</b>	Demand-Control Theory
<b>TSI</b>	Teacher Stress Inventory
<b>TSES</b>	Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale
<b>SPSS</b>	Statistical Package for Social Sciences

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**General**

**Introduction**

## **General introduction**

### **Background of the study**

Teaching has always been a challenging profession. Teachers face immense demands from the class management and the student evaluation to the parent communication and the expectations of the administration. The weight of these responsibilities and challenges contributes to the pervasive sense of stress among most teachers; which may, in turn, negatively impact the teacher's well-being and effectiveness.

The concept of self-efficacy was first developed by Bandura, and defined it in as the belief in one's abilities to execute and complete tasks successfully (1997). It does not refer to the ability itself, but to how the person views his/ her own abilities. Bandura clarified that people who have high self-efficacy tend to be more motivated to achieve challenging goals. Whereas, low self-efficacy leads to high levels of stress, procrastination and a fear of failure. Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy in 2001 have defined Teacher self-efficacy as the judgment of one's own capabilities to realize the desired engagement and understanding from even the unmotivated and difficult learners. In brief, self-efficacy shapes the teacher's own perception of their goals and approaches to teaching.

Teacher stress is an experience that comes from different aspects of the teaching profession, like student discipline and disinterest, lack of professional and community support, etc. (Gold & Roth, 2013). Teacher stress is defined as a negative response involving negative emotions, like anger, or depression, etc. It is triggered by what teachers see as a threat to their self-esteem or well-being (Kyriacou, 2001; Kyriacou & Sutcliffe, 1978). The constant stress teachers face

may result in a decrease in the teacher's morale, and an increase in the number of teachers leaving or intending to leave the profession (Gold & Roth, 2013).

The teaching profession is difficult and challenging for the mindset of teachers. The educators' professional well-being is greatly influenced by the interplay of teacher self-efficacy and teacher stress. It is important to study the relationship between both issues to investigate how teacher self-efficacy and teacher stress affect one another. While there is a significant body of research that investigates these problems and their relationship, there is little to no research done on the EFL Algerian teachers.

### **Statement of the problem**

The relationship between teacher self-efficacy and teacher stress has acquired significant attention due to its impact on education. This issue is highly relevant in the context of Algerian EFL classes. Teachers in general experience high levels of stress, which may have a negative impact on their effectiveness in teaching. A teacher who feels no stress can reach his/her full potential in the classroom. However, experiencing a constant level of stress would lead to them experiencing anxiety, depression, or even burnout and leaving the profession. Moreover, teacher self-efficacy is an important factor in their success in teaching. As Bandura mentioned in 1997, the level of teacher self-efficacy may determine the teacher's emotions while performing his/ her job.

It is necessary to draw a relationship between teacher stress and self-efficacy in order to gain more insights into how to improve learner outcomes and teacher experience for a better English learning process, given the novelty of the decision to teach English in primary schools in Algeria by teachers with a short training and burdened by the weight of expectations.

There is little to no information about the interplay of self-efficacy and stress levels in EFL classrooms in Algeria. As increasing a teacher's self-efficacy and lowering the stress level are crucial for a successful teaching/learning process, some research should be carried out to investigate the relationship between them. This research will first explore teacher stress and teacher self-efficacy in Algerian EFL classes. Second, it will examine how teacher self-efficacy and teacher stress are connected. Lastly, it will suggest practical insights to improve the experience of teaching in EFL classes.

### **Research questions**

This research seeks to answer the following research questions:

RQ 1: What is the prevalence of teacher stress among Algerian EFL teachers?

RQ 2: What factors influence teacher self-efficacy among Algerian EFL teachers?

RQ3: What is the relationship between teacher self-efficacy and teacher stress in an EFL context in Algeria?

### **Research hypotheses**

Based on the abovementioned research questions, we propose the following research hypotheses:

H1: There is no relation between teacher stress and teacher self-efficacy among the Algerian EFL teachers.

H2: There is a relation between teacher self-efficacy and teacher stress in EFL education in Algeria.

### **Aims of the study**

The study aims to investigate the complex relationship between teacher self-efficacy and teacher stress in Biskra EFL classrooms, Algeria.

### **Specific Aims**

1. To identify the factors influencing teacher self-efficacy and teacher stress in Biskra.
2. To measure the levels of stress and levels of self-efficacy among EFL teachers.
3. To explore the type of relationship between teacher self-efficacy and teacher stress in EFL classes in Biskra, Algeria.
4. To generate practical insights and recommendations to enhance teacher self-efficacy and decrease teacher stress in the Algerian EFL context

### **The Research Methodology for this Study**

For this research, the researcher will adopt a mixed-methods approach due to the nature of the study. Specifically, it will attempt to assess whether and to what degree teachers have experienced of stress, as well as, measures the level of teacher self-efficacy. Additionally, since the study aims at uncovering factors influencing both constructs, the study will attempt to answer these questions. Hence, the use of the mixed-methods approach balances the limitations of either choosing a qualitative approach or a quantitative one.

The correlation nature of this non-experimental investigation involves using qualitative and quantitative measures. Accordingly, the study aims to measure teacher stress and self-efficacy using two tests. As well as a semi-structured interview to capture the experiences of teachers.

### **Population and sampling**

Teachers of English in primary schools in Biskra, Algeria for the year 2023/2024 will be the population of the study. This population has been selected for their lack of training and the novelty of teaching experience and the teaching materials. The sample will consist of 21 teachers selected through cluster sampling for the questionnaire. The sample for the interview is selected through purposive sampling.

### **Significance of the study**

The study will serve to gain more insights into teacher self-efficacy and stress in the EFL Algerian context. It will study the potential relationship between the variables. Its ultimate potential is to improve the experience of EFL teachers and the outcomes of students in the Algerian EFL classes. Moreover, most people are indifferent to the issue of stress especially concerning teachings. Thus, awareness must be raised and spread for all people to know. Understanding the influence of teacher self-efficacy on teacher stress and vice versa is important to develop a positive and motivating learning environment, and benefiting both educators and students.

### **The Referencing Style of the Dissertation**

As the present investigation belongs to educational research, APA (American Psychological Association) the 7<sup>th</sup> edition was adopted to write the different sections of this study. However, it should be noted that the arrangement, including the layout and cover page, is guided by the standards of the supervisor and the institutional conventions.



## **Structure of the Dissertation**

**Chapter One** is a review of past research about teacher stress. It delves first into the phenomenon of stress, and then its relation with teaching.

**Chapter two** addresses the self-efficacy theory, its origin, and concept closely related to it. It reviews its sources, and its influence on teacher well-being, job satisfaction, and student outcomes.

**Chapter three** is the fieldwork the researcher attempted to conduct. It first discusses the methodology and rationale, then the data collection and analysis procedures. And finally the illustration of the data and discussion or results.

# **Chapter One**

**Demystifying Teacher**

**Stress as a Psychological**

**Problem Construct**

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## **Chapter One: Demystifying Teacher Stress as a Psychological Problem Construct**

### **Introduction**

In the fast-paced world humans live in and the uncountable challenges of life, stress has become a companion for most people. Teaching as a profession is not excluded from this phenomenon, as it is described as demanding and stressful by many. This chapter attempts to define the problem of stress, present several related theories, and identify its types and sources. It delves deeper later into the problem of teacher stress to define it and present its sources, management, and impact on teachers' health and teaching.

### **1.1. The Problem of Stress**

#### **1.1.1. Definition of stress**

The word stress is usually used in different contexts, referring to different concepts such as the stimulus, the response to the stimulus, or the physiological consequences of the response. Therefore, the phenomenon of stress itself became a subject of debate among researchers, and defining it became an interest for researchers.

The theory of stress had expanded from Selye's initial definition of "the nonspecific response of the body to any demand made upon it" (Selye, 1973, p. 692). That is to say, it is the body's vague reaction to whatever demands are placed upon it. This definition, however, proved insufficient to include all the complex aspects of this phenomenon (Koolhaas et al., 2011). Other researchers reevaluated this concept, as they described stress as "Psychological stress refers to a relationship with the environment that the person appraises as significant for his or her wellbeing and in which the demands tax or exceed available coping resources" (Lazarus and Folkman 1986, p. 63) or a relationship when the demands from the environment place a strain on or beyond the coping mechanisms that the individual considers important for their well-being.

Furthermore, one of the definitions of stress is a state in which the individual experiences a real threat or is just perceived to be so, to their equilibrium or homeostasis. It is then restored through a repertoire of physiological and behavioral adaptive responses (Chrousos, 2009). Homeostasis is “maintenance of a stable balance, evenness, or symmetry” (APA Dictionary of Psychology, 2018). The organisms’ homeostasis is challenged regularly by a wide range of external or internal potentially harmful pressures named stressors (Chrousos, 2009). Chrousos also differentiated between a "stressor" (the disruptive element) and the "stress response" (the body's attempt to regain balance). However, defining stress as only a threat to homeostasis becomes a rather incomplete explanation. As it failed to capture the intricate nature of the stress response and its potential for both positive and negative consequences (McEwen, 2017).

Additionally, the American Psychology Association Dictionary of Psychology defines stress as “the physiological or psychological response to internal or external stressors. Stress involves changes affecting nearly every system of the body, influencing how people feel and behave” (2018). This definition encompasses both the physiological and psychological aspects of the stress response, as well as highlights the widespread impact of stress, influencing not only the physical well-being of humans but also the emotions and behaviors.

### **1.1.2. Theories related to stress**

Numerous theories evolved from or are connected to the concept of stress:

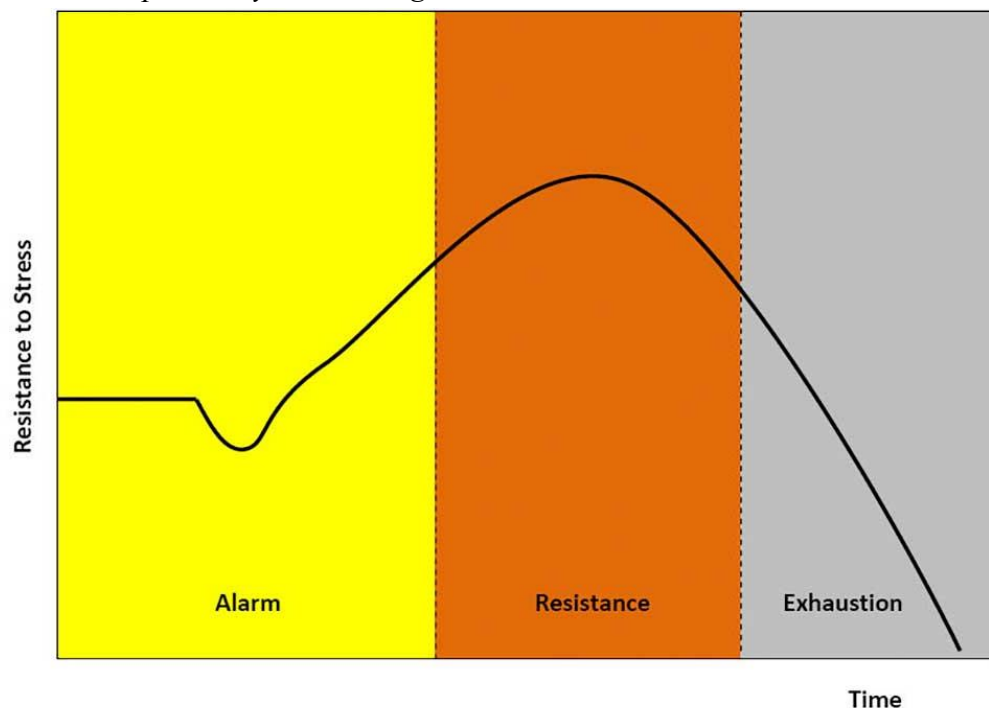
#### **a) General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS) (1956):**

GAS outlines the physiological three stages we experience when faced with a challenge, a threat, or any form of a stressor.

The initial stage is referred to as the Alarm Reaction or Alarm Stage, it is described as entering a state of heightened alertness. The changes in the body happen in rapid succession as it prepares itself for immediate action. This stage is characterized by increased heart rate, elevated blood pressure, and a surge in energy. The second stage is called the resistance stage. This stage can be viewed as the body's attempt to adapt and maintain a state of balance, or homeostasis, in the face of the stressor. The state of the body remains as the first stage, but with an effort rather than immediate response. This stage might involve increased focus to effectively handle the stressor. However, if the stressor persists for a longer period, the body's resistance is drained. Then the body enters the exhaustion stage. In this stage, the body's ability to maintain homeostasis is weakened, as it may result in negative consequences for both physical and mental health. It is characterized by Symptoms like fatigue, less concentration, and increased exposure to illness (Higuera, 2018; Ohwovorirole, 2024).

**Figure 1:**

*General adaptation syndrome stages*



*Note.* This figure is an illustration of the GAS model, the three stages facing a stressor, introduced by Hans Selye (1956). From “What Is General Adaptation Syndrome?” by V. Higuera, 2018, <https://www.healthline.com/health/general-adaptation-syndrome>

Thus, understanding the GAS model offers a useful start for comprehending the complex dynamic of the stress response, and by recognizing the signals of each stage, people can employ the appropriate coping mechanisms of each stage accordingly.

“Coping mechanisms are strategies that help people deal with stress and uncomfortable emotions.” (Cht, 2022)

#### b) Stress And Coping Theory (SCT)(1984):

SCT developed by Richard Lazarus and Susan Folkman (1984), emphasizes the nature of this experience. According to this theory, stress is a result of the interaction between an individual and their environment, with a particular focus on cognitive appraisal. The core concept of this theory is cognitive appraisal. The latter refers to the way individuals evaluate a situation and the ability to cope with it. Two key aspects are:

- Threat appraisal: Is the situation perceived as a threat to the individual's well-being or resources?
- Coping appraisal: Does the individual have enough resources and capabilities to manage the situation effectively?

The outcome of this process significantly the intensity and duration of the stress. For example, if the individual finds themselves in a threatening situation with insufficient coping resources, it would most likely cause them a more pronounced stress response compared to situations where the threat is insignificant or manageable.

This theory moves beyond the physiological aspects of stress and highlights the role of the psychological factors that shape the experience of stress. It emphasizes the importance of developing effective coping mechanisms (Biggs, Brough & Drummond, 2017)

c) Demand-Control Theory (DCT) (1979)

The DCT was proposed by Robert Karasek, it sheds light on how the relationship between job demands and control influences stress levels.

The model focuses on two key concepts: Job demands and Job control.

- Job demands refer to the psychological, social, and physical requirements of the position. High demands can include heavy workloads, tight deadlines, and constant emotional labor.
- Job control, on the other hand, refers to the level of the employee's autonomy and decision-making power they have. Low control can be characterized by limited influence over tasks, work pace, and working conditions.

The Four Work Quadrants:

Karasek's model uses a matrix to illustrate the interaction between demands and control.

This creates four distinct quadrants representing different job types:

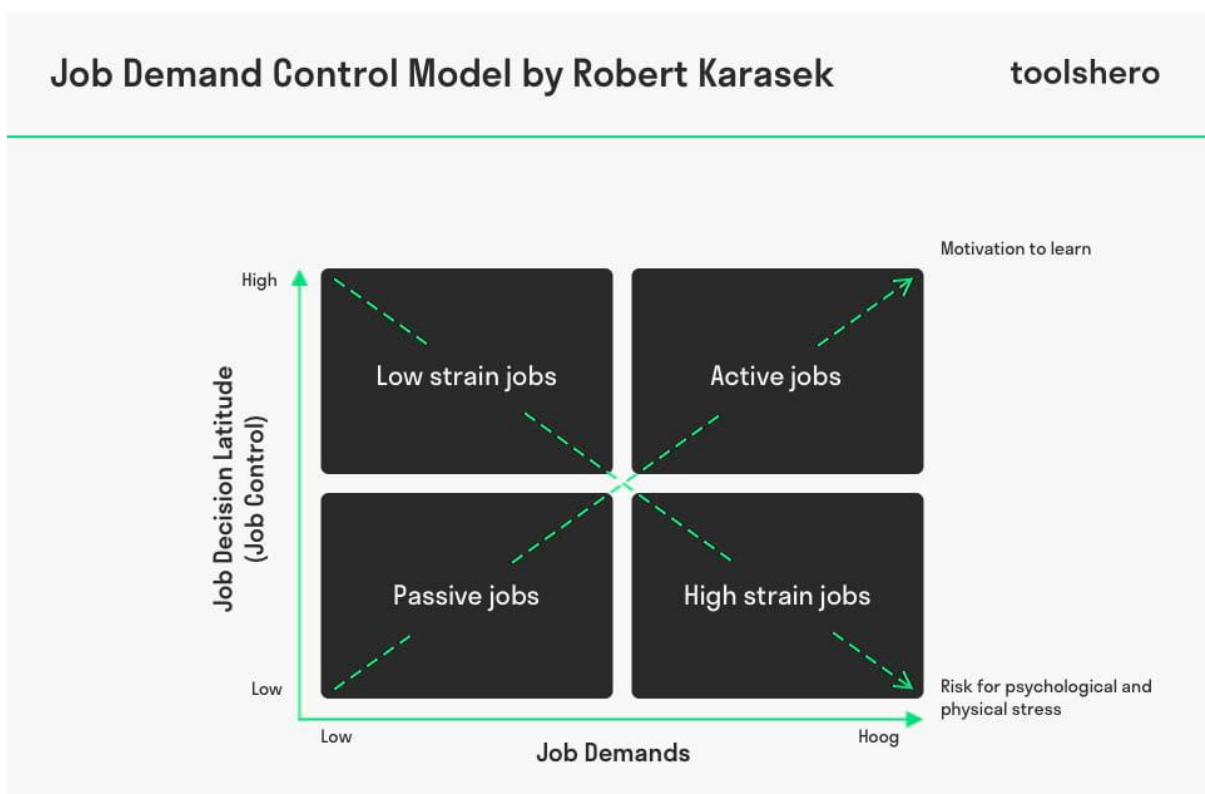
- High Demand, High Control: This quadrant represents jobs with significant challenges but also the autonomy to manage them effectively. Examples might include surgeons or professors. These jobs may be demanding, but the control aspect can lead to a sense of accomplishment and lower stress levels.
- High Demand, Low Control: This quadrant includes jobs with high pressure and limited autonomy. Assembly line or customer service workers face constant demands with limited control over their work environment, they fall into this category. These jobs are often associated with high stress and burnout.
- Low Demand, High Control: This quadrant represents jobs with minimal pressure but high control, such as administrative or supervisory roles where the work may be routine but allows for independent decision-making. These jobs may have lower stress levels, but the lack of challenge may lead to boredom if they are stimulating enough.



- Low Demand, Low Control: This quadrant represents jobs with minimal pressure and limited autonomy. Security guard positions with long periods of inactivity and limited control over tasks might fall into this category. While these jobs might have low stress, the lack of stimulation could lead to disengagement and boredom.

**Figure 2:**

*Job Demand Control Model*



*Note.* This figure is an illustration of The Job Demands-Control Model, introduced by Robert Karasek (1979). It depicts a quadrant model with "Job Demands" on the x-axis and "Job Control" on the y-axis. The quadrants are labeled as High Strain (high demands, low control), Low Strain (low demands, low control), Active Work (high demands, high control), and Low Strain (low demands, high control). From "Job Demand Control Model by Robert Karasek" by P. Mulder, 2022, <https://www.toolshero.com/human-resources/job-demand-control-model/>

The Demand-Control Model does not operate in isolation. The theory acknowledges the importance of social support in lessening the negative effects of high demands and low control (Karasek, 1979, De Jonge et al., 2000, Bakker et al., 2010).

### **1.1.3. Types of stress**

Friedman categorized stress into three types (2013):

- a) Acute stress: it is an immediate and short-lived response triggered by a specific situation or experience. For instance, the stressor could be a public speaking, a sudden challenge in life, an exam, etc. This type of stress is common and normal to humans and could be motivation. However, prolonged exposure with no healthy coping mechanism could lead to severe health issues.
- b) Chronic stress: it is a persistent presence of stress that would consequently lead to challenges in life. The common stressors of chronic stress could be financial issues, job dissatisfaction, chronic health conditions, or relationship problems. Moreover, it could lead to severe mental and physical issues like depression, anxiety, and immune system dysfunction.
- c) Eustress; it is the positive stress that helps motivate and energize people to attain their goals, and adapt to new experiences and life events. Unlike negative stress or distress, eustress is the reason people feel joy, motivation, anticipation, and excitement when preparing for a competition, starting a new job, or getting to know new people. This type of stress helps improve the personal development, resilience, and well-being of individuals.

### **1.1.4. Sources of stress**

Stress could be triggered by several factors in people's lives.

- a) Major Life Events: they refer to milestones and major events in the individual's life that may either be beneficial or determinant to one's mental and physical wellbeing. These

events often include modifications in roles, routines, and relationships that may lead to a heightened emotional state and a strain on mental well-being. For example, marriage, divorce, job loss, etc. are recognized as significant stressors due to their effect on the individual's equilibrium. (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

- b) **Chronic Stressors:** these ongoing sources of stress are prolonged stressors that happen in daily life and may affect the individual's life. Unlike major life events, these stressors lack a clear endpoint which may result in a prolonged heavy strain on the individual; by result a risk to physical and psychological health issues. For instance, stressors such as financial problems, work demands, or long-term health problems, may be a constant strain on individuals over time (Pearlin, 1989).
- c) **Individual Factors:** they refer to both physical and emotional factors individuals have that affect their mental health. To illustrate, individuals with high levels of neuroticism are more prone to view certain situations as threatening and experience heightened levels of stress. On the other hand, individuals who have adaptive coping skills may reduce the effect of stressors on their body.

Furthermore, individual factors such as personality traits, coping styles, and cognitive reviews are crucial to enhance the understanding of how people experience and respond to stress. (Carver & Connor-Smith, 2010).

“Neuroticism is a trait that reflects a person's level of emotional stability. It is often defined as a negative personality trait involving negative emotions” (Cuncic, 2023).

- d) **Environmental Factors:** they refer to factors in the environment the individual lives in that affect the individual's equilibrium, it may be physical or emotional. For example, These factors like social support, safe neighborhoods, and good community resources shape the experience of stress of people. Therefore, having access to supportive social circles and a safe, well-maintained environment helps protect individuals against stress-inducing factors.

The exposure to environmental stressors, on the other hand, such as pollution, crime, or lack of clean spaces can increase the probability of experiencing stress and endanger the individual's health (Evans, 2003).

- e) **Unforeseen Events:** these events are the ones that cannot be predicted like surprises and accidents. They are characterized by their abrupt and unanticipated nature and they have the ability to influence the individual's stress levels. As an example of these events, natural disasters, accidents, or traumatic incidents can affect the individual's sense of safety and stability; consequently, leading to heightened emotional distress (Bonanno & Mancini, 2012).
- f) **Biological Factors:** it refers to factors that influence personal lives from birth or issues that develop naturally. They include genetic predispositions, neurobiological mechanisms, and physiological responses, and they play a significant role in the individual's risk of disorders related to stress (McEwen & Gianaros, 2011).

## **1.2. Teacher stress**

Teachers have a vital role in the educational system. They function as controllers, facilitators, instructors, mentors, motivators, role models, etc. (Ly, 2024) This duty may create a feeling akin to a burden they have to shoulder. Therefore, several studies were done to investigate this phenomenon as it may have severe consequences in the teaching/ learning process.

### **1.2.1. Definition of teacher stress**

Kyriacou and Sutcliffe's (1978) definition of teacher stress is a "response to negative effects". Kyriacou (2001) argued that a teacher may suffer unpleasant emotions as a result of their work as a teacher, as it varies from tension, anger, worry, frustration, or despair. This definition was based on a model of teacher stress created by both researchers. It saw stress as a negative

emotional experience resulting from the teacher's beliefs that their working conditions are posing a danger to their well-being and/ or sense of self-worth.

Gold and Roth (1993) attempted to define teacher stress as

a condition of disequilibrium within the intellectual, emotional, and physical state of the individual; it is generated by one's perceptions of a situation, which result in physical and emotional reactions. It can be either positive or negative, depending upon one's interpretation. (Gold & Roth, 1993, p.17)

It refers to stress as a disruption to the individual's state. They emphasized that stress is not outside the teacher, but within the individual and how they interact with the environment. They further argued that the external events do not necessarily result in experiencing stress but it is the evaluation of the situation that pushes the teacher into an unpleasant reaction. However, some situations are more likely to cause stress than others, as some are inherently stressful and may be perceived as a threat. To illustrate, they gave an example of a teacher encountering a situation where students are running around the classroom or making loud noise, the teacher's stress level depends on how they interpret the event. However, when they think of the principal's reaction to that classroom at that moment, including the fear of being reprimanded, is considered a threat and would inherently cause a higher level of stress. Gold and Roth describe the experience of stress as an arousal of emotions that alerts the organism, and this arousal is usually intellectual, emotional, physiological, or combinations.

Burnout "is a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, despondency, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment which can occur among individuals who work with people in some capacity" (Maslach & Jackson, 1984, p. 134).

Teacher Burnout: it is a phenomenon that has three components. The first is emotional exhaustion; it is a state where teachers are emotionally drained because of the stress. The second component is depersonalization; which manifests in their negative attitude toward their

students. It may be exhibited in behaviors like the use of derogatory language, cold or distant conduct, physically distancing themselves from the students, and tuning students out through psychological withdrawal. The third and last is experiencing a low sense of personal accomplishments. It occurs when teachers lose faith in their ability to provide a positive impact on students' outcomes which leads to frustration and disappointment (Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1996, as cited in Mulhern, 1999).

### **1.2.2. The Impact of Teacher Stress**

In the same study done by Ahmed (2019), several effects of stress on teachers' performance and health were identified through a report from teachers. Impact of stress may affect not only the teachers' ability to complete the lessons of the course on time, but also their focus on the action of teaching itself and attempt to only do the minimum work. In addition, stress could hinder their cognitive abilities and social networking, as it weakens their ability to think and/or engage in interpersonal relationships. Furthermore, this phenomenon may influence their behavior toward students and colleagues into "rude behavior". Lastly, stress could hinder the teachers' ability to learn new skills, implement new teaching methods, and/or improve their performance, resulting in constant criticism of the school management. In summary, teacher stress has a significant negative impact on teachers' performance including all aspects and individuals in the educational system.

From a different perspective, the effects of stress on teachers' health were identified through a report as well. There is a noticeable increase in the mental and physical problems of stressed teachers like anxiety, anger, and headaches, and an increase in the use of medicines like painkillers. They were mentally absent with an increase in self-doubt and isolation. Lastly, the stress in some cases even caused teachers to seek medical consultation weekly or monthly. In conclusion, teacher stress affects several aspects of teacher's life like their performance, their interpersonal relationships, and their mental and physical health. Prolonged stress with no

appropriate coping mechanisms, may lead to worse and more serious mental and physical problems (Reilly et al., 2014). One of this study's limitations is that the selected sample was limited and based on personal opinion of teachers that could be limited to their state at that time. Nevertheless, it brought a significant body of information to this area of research.

### **1.2.3. Sources and management of teacher stress:**

According to a study done by Haydon et al. (2018), the sources of teacher stress were categorized into five categories

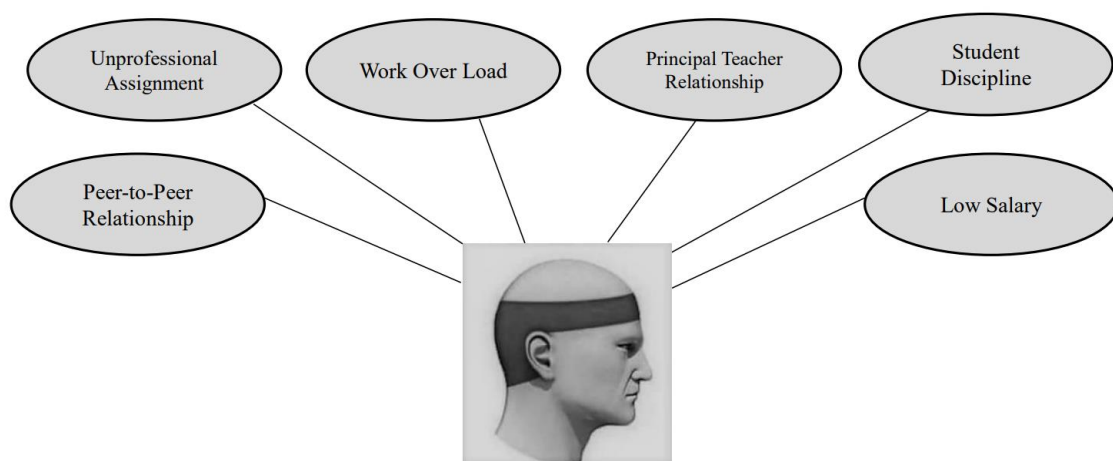
- **Lack of Administrative Support:** it is the most commonly mentioned source between teachers. The absence of administrative support includes (a) staff members' lack of supervision; (b) lack of understanding of special educational laws and policies; and (c) lack of trained administrators. This inability to support educators may also include the short notice of change within the schedule, the placement of students of different disabilities within one class, terminating successful programs and supports or imposing ineffective programs or supports on both teachers and students, and lastly the presence of a negative educational environment.
- **Individual Students Challenges:** most teachers viewed the challenges of individual students as a major stressor. Each student has several daily demands like personal hygiene, transportation, and personal care. Besides the physical care, there are students who have psychological and behavioral needs like autism and other communicative difficulties. Moreover, the pupil's disruptive behavior in the classroom that frequently occurs often leads to unpleasant situations.
- **Teacher Perception:** teachers' way of viewing, processing, interpreting, and internalizing the changes at schools: district, and state levels greatly affected their stress level. Teachers have been unable to cope with these rapid changes. Therefore, it led to excessive worry, apathy, isolation, and burnout.

- State Mandates: some teachers viewed the changes in the programs, and the reforms of tests, policies, procedures, and curricula as a stressor. Whereas some teachers could live with this constant stress, others view them as unmanageable.
- Peer Interaction: the coordination of multiple adults and/ or co-teaching in one educational classroom was perceived as a source of stress. These challenges included struggling to set an appropriate time to meet and maintaining reasonable communication. Moreover, the “lack of integrity”, situations when peers did not follow up on promises or obligations, was stressful for it was considered undependable.

Ishtiaq Ahmed conducted a study in 2019 investigating the causes of teacher stress and its effects on teachers. Similar to what was stated previously, stressors of teachers are highly related to the teacher’s environment and workplace. It varies from peer interactions and peer-to-peer relationships, principle-to-teacher relationships, unprofessional assignments, work overload, student discipline, and low salary.

**Figure 3:**

*The causes of stress (Ahmed, 2019)*



- The peer-to-peer relationship, or the relationship between the individual and their colleagues is very important. A healthy positive relationship creates a knowledge-sharing culture, while a negative relationship creates pressure and stress.



- Principal-teacher relationship is crucial to achieving the ultimate goal. The collaboration between the administration and teachers creates a sense of responsibility that will be greatly appreciated by the teachers. Situations where the relationship between the principal and teacher could only cause a strain on the teacher's mental health.
- Unprofessional assignments negatively affect the teacher's performance. When the teacher gets occupied with assignments outside of their responsibility, they would be unable to cover all the lessons on time; consequently, they would stress more.
- Work overload is an extra burden the teachers have to shoulder disturbing their social and personal life. At school teachers focus on delivering the lesson and at home they focus on paperwork, preparing results, and lesson planning. As a result, the life the teachers have outside the profession is disturbed which may cause stress.
- Student discipline is a serious issue in schools where their behavior toward the teachers is inappropriate and disrespectful, and the teacher might not be allowed to give punishments. This type of situation causes severe stress experiences for teachers.
- Low salary is also a cause of teacher stress. If the salary does not fulfill the basic needs of teachers or if there is no balance between the amount of work they have to do and the salary, the teachers would suffer severe stress.

Prilleltensky et al. (2016) summarize in a table the risks of teacher stress and suggest their protective factor

**Table 1:**

*Risk and Protective Factors for Teacher Stress at Various Levels of Analysis (Prilleltensky et al., 2016)*

Level	Risk Factors	Protective Factors
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Personal	Isolation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support Network</li> <li>- Mentor match in the same teaching area within the school</li> <li>- Mentor match in same teaching area outside the school</li> <li>- Participation in induction programs</li> </ul>
	Inadequacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Professional development</li> <li>- Safe friend or mentor</li> <li>- Self-efficacy</li> </ul>
	Anxiety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Proper sleep, nutrition, and exercise</li> <li>- Organizational skills</li> <li>- Engagement in well-being activities</li> <li>- Acceptance, mindful meditation, growth mindset</li> </ul>
Interpersonal	Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Classroom Management</li> <li>- Student's voice</li> </ul>
	Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Regular communication</li> <li>- Parents as partners</li> </ul>
	Colleagues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Minimize competition</li> <li>- Sharing</li> <li>- Caring and compassion</li> </ul>
Organizational	Role clarification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Definition of principal's expectations</li> <li>- Workload clarification</li> </ul>

	Disempowering policies and practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Create participatory structures</li> <li>- Enhance teacher control of policies</li> <li>- Increase teacher voice and choice</li> </ul>
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#### 1.2.4. Coping mechanisms for stress

The World Health Organization (2022) suggested some tips on how to manage and cope with stress to people, and teachers included:

- Keep a daily routine: having a daily schedule can help in time management and feeling more in control, for example setting time for regular meals, spending time with family members, exercising, doing daily chores, and having a regular sleeping schedule.
- Get a sufficient amount of sleep: it is important for both physical and mental health as sleep repairs, relaxes the body, and can help reverse the effects of stress.
- Limit the use of electronic devices, such as TVs, computers, and smartphones, before sleeping.
- Avoid large meals, caffeine, and alcohol before bedtime.
- Connect with others: keeping in touch with family and friends and sharing concerns and feelings with trustworthy people will spread positive energy and help in feeling less stressed.
- Eat healthy: what individuals eat and drink can affect their health. Trying to eat a balanced diet at regular intervals, drink enough fluids, and eat a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables helps the body and mind.
- Exercise regularly: daily exercise can help to reduce stress. This can include walking, as well as more intensive exercise.

- Limit time following news: spending too much time following news on television and social media can increase stress.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter delved into the phenomenon of teacher stress and analyzed and synthesized a body of research concerning the problem. It has defined teacher stress, identified its sources, and its effect on teachers. Furthermore, most research in this area is based on the self-report condition of teachers, and little to no research was done differently for more objective data. However, it can still be inferred that teacher stress is a problem that would endanger the teacher's well-being and performance with the risk of developing into something more serious. Therefore, the entirety of the educational system ought to come together and invest in reducing the level of stress of teachers by implementing the appropriate strategies.

# **Chapter two**

## **Unpacking the Power of Self- Efficacy**

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## **Chapter Two: Unpacking the Power of Self-Efficacy**

### **Introduction**

What teachers think, believe, and know is a strong indication of how their performance in the classroom would be, specifically, their belief in their capabilities to overcome any challenges and achieve the set goal. Teacher self-efficacy is recognized as a powerful aspect of the success of the educational process. This chapter presents a general review of the literature concerning this construct, teacher self-efficacy. It attempts first to present a general introduction to the self-efficacy theory, its definition, its difference from similar concepts, and its sources. Then it presents the relationship of self-efficacy with other constructs and its effect on them. Lastly, it dives into teacher self-efficacy giving its definition, its challenges, and its impact on other concepts.

### **2.1. Self-Efficacy theory**

Self-efficacy is a crucial construct in reaching any goal in life. The concept of self-efficacy was introduced by the psychologist Albert Bandura (1997) as “beliefs in one’s capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments” (p.3) or believing in one’s abilities to achieve the goal desired despite any challenges and obstacles. It was first introduced in Bandura’s social cognitive theory which assumes that human achievements are dependent on the interaction of the person’s behavior, personal factors, and environmental conditions (Bandura, 1986).

Other scholars attempted to define self-efficacy from other perspectives

#### **2.1.1. Self-efficacy versus Self-concept**

Self-concept and self-efficacy are two core constructs in psychology. They both influence motivation and achievement. However, they represent different but interrelated parts of the individual's self.

Self-concept is defined as a person's general view of themselves. It encompasses various areas like academic, social, emotional, and physical aspects. It is shaped by various factors such as social interactions, academic success, and self-evaluations (Rosenberg, 1979). Self-efficacy, on the other hand, focuses specifically on an individual's belief in their capabilities to perform a particular task or achieve a specific goal (Bandura, 1997). It's domain-specific, which means it varies depending on the task, skill, or activity. Self-efficacy is described as future-oriented i.e. it is more prospective, whereas self-concept is past-oriented i.e. it is based on past experiences (Lazarides & Warner, 2020).

### **2.1.2. Self-efficacy versus Self-esteem**

The terms self-efficacy and self-esteem are often used interchangeably as though they refer to the same concept. However, a distinction has to be made, as both concepts serve different meanings. Self-efficacy is concerned with the belief in one's personal capabilities. Its level varies depending on the activity or goal that is set. For example, someone may have a high sense of self-efficacy in playing football and a low sense of self-efficacy in cooking. Self-esteem, on the other hand, is defined as the overall judgment of the self-worth of the individual. Self-esteem, in contrast, reflects a more global evaluation of one's self-worth. It reflects a sense of personal value that does not include any specific accomplishments. An individual may face obstacles or failures without a decrease in their sense of self-esteem, as long as their sense of worth remains positive.

While both can influence motivation, self-efficacy plays a direct role in achievement behavior. High self-efficacy in a particular skill translates into exerting more effort to achieve challenging goals. On the other hand, self-esteem, while it is important for the well-being of the individual, does not directly translate into an action (Bandura, 1997)

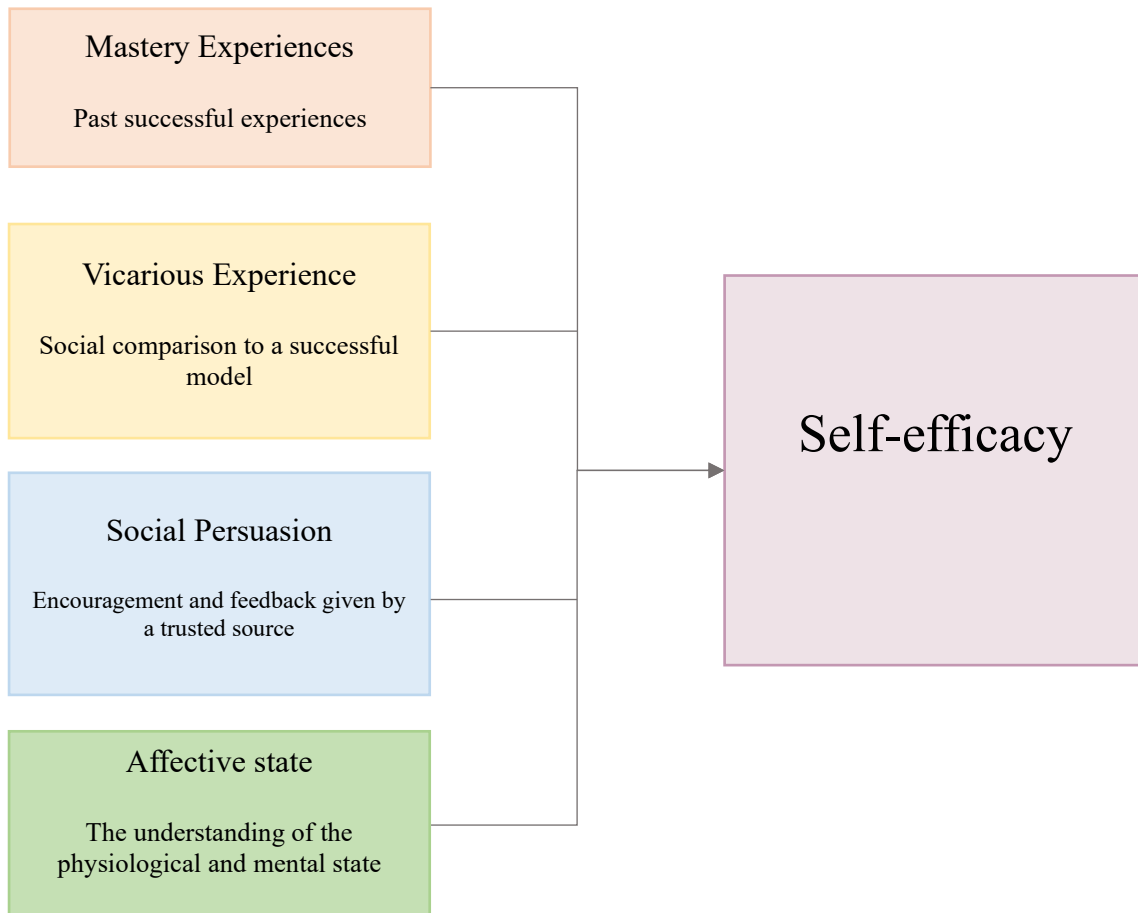


### 2.1.3. The sources of self-efficacy:

Bandura has explored four key factors that shape an individual's belief in their ability to achieve desired outcomes (Bandura, 1995).

**Figure 4:**

*The sources of self-efficacy*



a. **Mastery Experience:** it is one of the most impactful influences on self-efficacy, it is defined as the successful experiences encountered in the individual's life. When people overcome challenges and achieve goals through their own efforts, it builds a strong sense of self-efficacy. On the other hand, failures can weaken this belief, especially if they occur before a strong sense of self-efficacy is established. The core concept here is that developing a resilient sense of self-efficacy does not involve simply replicating past successes. It is about acquiring the mental, behavioral, and self-management skills to tackle new situations and overcome

difficult challenges. In addition, experiencing only easy victories may lead to a preference for quick results and discouragement when encountering setbacks. A robust sense of self-efficacy thrives on overcoming obstacles through determination and effort.

b. Vicarious Experience: the second influential factor is vicarious experiences, also known as social modeling. Observing similar people succeed through perseverance raises the belief in the observer's capabilities to master and execute similar skills and activities. In contrast, witnessing others fail despite their best effort lowers the sense of self-efficacy and motivation. Furthermore, the stronger the perceived similarity becomes, the more persuasive it would be to the observer. If the model that is being observed has fewer similarities to the observer, less influence is going to be held on the latter's self-efficacy beliefs. People tend to seek successful models to acquire knowledge, effective strategies, and skills for managing various situations. However, the model's resilience in the face of challenges is more empowering than the specific skill they demonstrate.

c. Social Persuasion: the third influence is social persuasion. Verbal encouragement and affirmations can strengthen self-efficacy. Individuals who are convinced they have the capabilities to finish a task are more likely to exert more effort and face more difficult challenges compared to those with greater self-doubt. However, it is important to note that unrealistic boosts in self-efficacy are met by disappointing results.

d. Affective state: it is the physiological and emotional state and the final influence of the individual's self-efficacy. People often interpret stress, aches, and fatigue as signs of weakness and that could cause poor performance. Thus, the fourth factor that influences self-efficacy beliefs involves improving physical health, reducing stress and negative emotions, and more importantly correcting any misunderstanding of the bodily states. The main point that must be taken into consideration is that the emotional and physical reactions themselves are not as important as how they are interpreted. For example, the stress that accompanies an

important event will either be interpreted as a sign of weakness and lack of preparation, or a body preparation of an action like an adrenaline rush.

There are additional factors that form the individual's self-efficacy that have been identified by other scholars.

- Personal factors such as self-esteem, self-confidence, and endurance can influence self-efficacy expectations. (Strecher, DeVellis, Becker, and Rosenstock, 1986)

- Environmental factors like expectations and support from others can also affect self-efficacy. (Bandura, 1986)

- Social support, whether instrumental or persuasive, can help overcome obstacles in the pursuit of behavioral goals. The attribution theory emphasizes the causal processes and information cues involved in the formation of self-efficacy. "Attribution theory deals with how the social perceiver uses information to arrive at causal explanations for events. It examines what information is gathered and how it is combined to form a causal judgment" Fiske and Taylor (1991, p. 23). The theory describes how individuals use information gathered from the observations of social events to generate a causal judgment.

Some factors can change immediately (such as knowledge), while others may be changeable but only after a long period (such as ability or general physical condition). Perceived control may be higher over determinants that are immediately variable than over those that are relatively more stable.

In addition, Gist and Mitchel (1992) emphasized how crucial it is to take into account the variability (across time and situations) and controllability of self-efficacy determinants. When evaluating their own self-efficacy, people consider whether they have control over the factors and whether the determinants are highly or lowly changeable. Certain factors are mainly within one's control, like effort; while other factors are mainly at the control of others, like the willingness to give support. Individuals mostly have little to no control or influence over

outside forces. Therefore, the control over internal issues is most probably larger than control over external ones. When it comes to variability, some things (like knowledge) can change instantly, while other things (like ability or general physical condition) might change eventually. (as cited in van der Bijl & Shortridge-Baggett, 2001)

#### **2.1.4. Self-efficacy and motivation in job performance and satisfaction**

Motivation is defined as the individual's willingness to exert physical and mental effort toward attaining a specific goal (American Psychological Association, 2018). Self-efficacy has a strong relation with motivation, job performance, and satisfaction. There is a great body of research investigating this intricate relationship. In 2004, Randhawa explained that there is a positive relationship between self-efficacy, motivation, and work performance. The higher the job-specific efficacy beliefs, the better the work performance would be. Self-efficacy influences greatly the motivation and performance of any assigned job. Hence, to ensure the goals of any institution or organization, employers are required to nurture the sense of self-efficacy of each individual.

Furthermore, self-efficacy can be a motivational process that influences the choices, effort, and persistence of people. The motivational outcomes of self-efficacy translate into the individual choosing challenging activities, exerting more effort, persisting through any difficulties, and achieving the goal (Schunk and DiBenedetto, 2021). The higher the sense of self-efficacy is, the more challenging the goals that are set; consequently, intensifying the motivation to achieve what has been set. Regardless of whether or not the goal is fully attained or not, the individual is motivated to exert the same effort (Bandura, 1995; 2011).

#### **2.1.5. Self-efficacy and behavior**

The self-efficacy theory has emerged as a framework for understanding and achieving behavior change. It argues that self-efficacy plays an influential role when it comes to the behaviors of individuals, both in adopting and eliminating good and bad behaviors respectively.

These processes generally include the individuals first having the intention to adopt/ eliminate, then attempting the action. While outcome expectancies are important in having the intention and less in the execution of the action, self-efficacy is crucial to both stages. Perceived self-efficacy helps in the belief that the individual has the capability to change risky behaviors by action. In other words, efficacy beliefs affect the intention to change the unwelcomed behavior, the effort to attain the goal, and the persistence to continue in the face of any challenges along the way (Schwarzer & Fuchs, 1995). Self-efficacy has been found to be effective in oncology, orthopedic nursing, and health promotion programs. Manipulating self-efficacy has been influential in the initiation and modification of health behaviors (Holloway & Watson, 2002)

#### **2.1.6. Collective efficacy**

Collective efficacy is another concept introduced by the psychologist Albert Bandura that contributes to the achievement of certain goals. It is defined as “a group's shared belief in its conjoint capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given levels of attainments.” (Bandura, 1997, p. 477) It refers to the shared belief among members of the same group about their capabilities to work to achieve desired outcomes. This belief as a unit is perceived as the most crucial factor in the success of this group. Moreover, the decisions groups make to pursue their objectives with dedication and perseverance are strongly influenced by their collective efficacy.

The most appropriate means to describe the ethical and behavioral effects of an organization's culture is through its perceived efficacy. For instance, understanding collective efficacy beliefs is essential to comprehend how school culture affects teachers' professional development and, student accomplishment.

#### **2.1.7. Dimensions of self-efficacy**

Bandura in 1977 identifies three dimensions of self-efficacy: magnitude, strength, and generality. Magnitude refers to the difficulty a person finds it to adopt a specific behavior,

strength reflects their certainty of performing a specific task, and generality refers to the degree to which self-efficacy beliefs are positively related. Self-efficacy is measured by obtaining ratings of strength, magnitude, and generality.

Some researchers have developed instruments to measure self-efficacy in a more general personality level. They argued that broad dispositional measurements offer better predictions of the patterns of behavior and outcomes. However, Bandura emphasized that self-efficacy should be assessed using specific measurements of the individual's own abilities, which can differ between activity domains, different levels of task demand within a given activity domain, and under different situational circumstances (van der Bijl & Shortridge-Baggett, 2001).

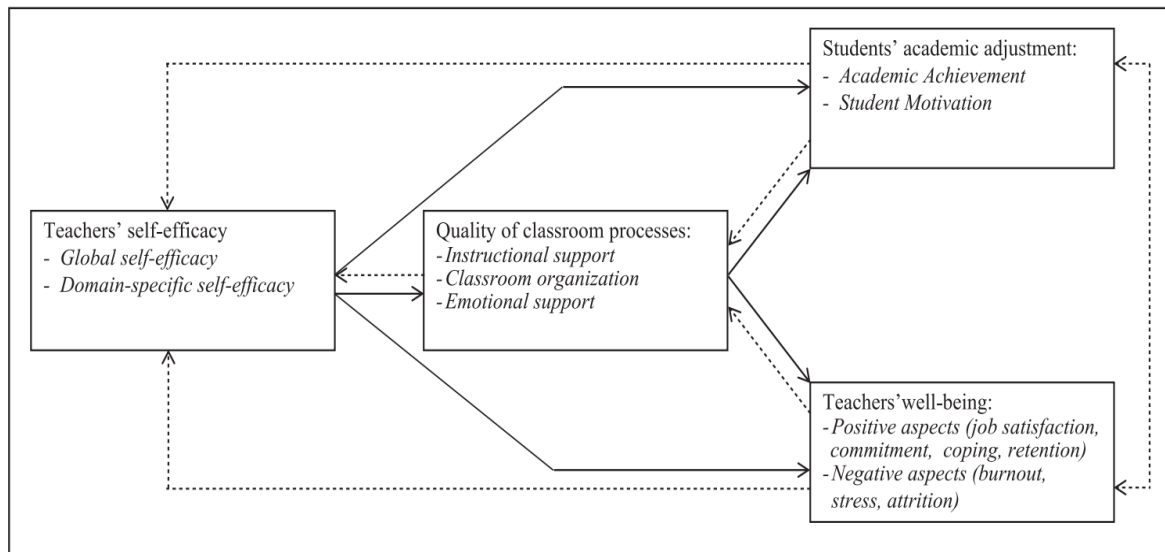
## **2.2. Teacher self-efficacy**

Teaching as a complex profession demands teachers to have a large set of skills and resolute confidence in their abilities to attain their goals, also known as self-efficacy. This belief in teachers developed as a significant concept in educational studies. It represents teacher's confidence in their capacity to manage the complex process of teaching and learning effectively. Creating an effective learning environment that helps develop the student's cognitive abilities depends heavily on the teacher's level of self-efficacy. The level of this belief can determine if and to what degree they would attain the goal they set. Thus, teachers with high self-efficacy believe that even challenging students can learn with extra effort and the appropriate methods. They also believe they can find solutions to overcome negative influences like involving families. They are more open to adapting new ideas and employing new strategies in teaching.

On the other hand, teachers with low self-efficacy feel limited in their ability to help unmotivated students. They believe that factors outside their control, like as unsupportive families or societies, hinder their impact significantly on students' development (Bandura, 1997).

**Figure 5:**

*Heuristic model of teacher self-efficacy in relation to classroom processes (Zee, 2016)*



### 2.2.1. Challenges to teacher self-efficacy

Several aspects challenge the level of teacher self-efficacy. For a start, the often lack of resources and support within the educational system may affect this belief in teachers. For example, poorly funded schools struggle to provide teachers with up-to-date textbooks, technology, and trained support staff. In addition, crowded classes with diverse needs of students would overwhelm teachers which may result in a less satisfying performance. The lack of necessary support and poorly managed classes can lead to a feeling of inadequacy that results in a decrease in the sense of self-efficacy. (Lamture & Gathoo, 2017; Wray et al., 2022). Students' behavior is one of the difficulties teachers encounter that may affect their level of self-efficacy. Challenging students may make keeping a positive and productive learning environment difficult. Therefore, when teachers feel unprepared to manage these behaviors effectively or maintain an organized classroom, it leads to feelings of ineffectiveness and decreases their confidence in their ability to do their profession effectively (Lauermaann & Berger, 2021)

Finally, the constant criticism and lack of constructive criticism may diminish the level of self-efficacy. Being constantly bombarded with negative feedback without being given a chance to

grow can make them demotivated to develop. Furthermore, a lack of trust from the administration may also weaken their sense of self-efficacy (Johansson & Johansson 2021)

### **2.2.2. Teacher self-efficacy and teacher well-being**

Research in the field of education and psychology has studied the close relationship between teacher self-efficacy and teacher well-being. Self-efficacy plays a significant role in predicting the teacher's psychological well-being. Self-efficacy is considered an essential component that contributes to teachers' mental health (Cansoy et al., 2020).

The connection was explored in relation to the workload and job demands. Challenging job demands can have a positive effect on teachers with high self-efficacy rather than being purely negative. Teachers with low self-efficacy or limited emotional regulation, on the other hand, are more at risk of feeling burnout. Teachers view challenges as opportunities for growth, and motivators in the face of difficulties. Moreover, teacher self-efficacy plays the role of the mediator, which means that it acts as a protective factor, lessening the negative impact of the demanding tasks and increasing the positive effects of the work on their psychological well-being. (Han et al., 2019; Xiyun et al., 2022)

Teachers are faced with stressors in the workplace from different sources leading to several physiological issues. Consequently, researchers have been studying several means to protect teachers from the aforementioned issues. Among them, self-efficacy has been discussed as a strong resource to prevent health problems (Schwarzer & Fuchs, 1995).

Teachers with a higher sense of self-efficacy reported higher job satisfaction, lower burnout, and fewer illness symptoms. They also reported lower levels of disassociation and intentions of quitting (Wang et al., 2015).

Wang et al. in 2015 found that teachers' self-efficacy with different instructional strategies have predicted a better sense of personal accomplishment. Despite this, teachers' beliefs in their capabilities to employ effective teaching strategies were related to a strong



intention to quit. It clarifies that beliefs in one's technical aptitude may help teachers feel more accomplished but may also lower persistence.

### **2.2.3. Teacher self-efficacy in relation to job performance**

Teacher self-efficacy contributes greatly to the work performance of teachers in all grades, as teachers who believe in their abilities are more likely to be dedicated and energetic in their work. Teachers with strong self-efficacy are more likely to be dedicated, committed, and able to socialize in their field. They are able to better handle challenging students, display compassion and determination, employ new concepts, and work with greater efficiency (An & Tao, 2024). Consequently, the higher self-efficacy in classroom engagement, instructional strategies, and management the greater job satisfaction and career satisfaction becomes (Abun et al., 2022). Furthermore, efficacious teachers tend to be more composed in controlling and solving the obstacles or any given task. The level of this belief helps when teachers encounter difficulties more effectively, as they are better at navigating the problems to find the solutions (Shahzad & Naureen, 2017).

However, the research suggests that self-efficacy may not directly protect teachers from feeling overwhelmed or their perseverance in teaching (Han et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2015).

### **2.2.4. Teacher self-efficacy in relation to students' motivation and achievements**

Teachers' self-efficacy or the belief in their abilities to prompt the engagement of the learners is a construct that strongly influences the success of the learning process.

According to Gardener (as cited in Mojavezi & Tamiz, 2012), students' motivation is significantly increased when they sense a caring attitude from their teachers. This behavior is displayed through their interaction styles, setting appropriate expectations, showing passion for their subject, and providing helpful feedback. Moreover, teachers who are enthusiastic may affect the emotional connection students have with their learning objectives, which is why high

self-efficacy teachers are more likely to have a caring attitude toward their students (Stipek et. al., 1998).

Studies have shown that teacher self-efficacy beliefs can significantly impact students' achievement and success in school. Teachers with high self-efficacy beliefs are more likely to employ new teaching strategies, use different classroom management approaches, and encourage the learners' autonomy. They are also more likely to take more responsibility towards students with special learning needs and keep students on task (Mojavezi & Tamiz, 2012b). Ross (1992) found that students' achievement was higher in classrooms taught by teachers with greater confidence in the effectiveness of education. However, there is a lack of practical work investigating the impact of teacher self-efficacy on students' motivation and achievement in the EFL classroom.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter explored the complex nature of teacher self-efficacy from its definitions to its sources and impact. After examining this body of research, the researcher may deduce that teacher self-efficacy plays a vital role in the success of the teaching process. Studies emphasize the positive influence of this construct on several aspects of the educational process. Therefore, by investing in the development of teacher self-efficacy, it would not benefit only the individuals but also the outcomes and motivation of students.

# **Chapter Three**

## **Fieldwork and Data**

### **Analysis**

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## **Chapter Three: Fieldwork and Data Analysis**

### **Introduction**

The previous chapters discussed the theoretical aspect of the study. They aimed to explore the complexities of teacher stress and self-efficacy from definitions to identifying their sources and effects on the educational process. This chapter will delve into the fieldwork and data analysis, discussing the methodology used, the population and sample, and the data collection and analysis.

### **3.1. Research Methodology: Choices and Rationale**

#### **3.1.1. Research Paradigms**

A research paradigm is a set of fundamental assumptions and beliefs about how to perceive the world. It serves as a framework for thinking that guides the researcher's behavior (Jonker and Pennink, 2010, as cited in Wahyuni, 2012). In social studies, a paradigm is the theoretical aspects that offer a practical model for investigating problems and seeking answers.

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), a paradigm consists of four components namely epistemology, ontology, methodology, and axiology (as cited in Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). These elements consist of the basic assumptions, beliefs, norms, and values that each paradigm holds.

Philip C. Candy 1989, one of the pioneers of the field, suggested the three main taxonomies called Positivist, Interpretive, and Critical paradigms. However, other researchers such as Tashakkori and Teddlie 2003 added a fourth paradigm, known as the Pragmatic paradigm.

- The positivist paradigm emphasizes the objectivity of research, measurable data, and scientific method. It is based on the assumption that knowledge must be obtained by experimentation, observation, and reason based on experience.

- The interpretive paradigm focuses on understanding the subjective experiences and interpretations of individuals. It aims to gather qualitative data (interviews, observations) to gain insights into how individuals understand and interpret the world around them.

- The critical paradigm focuses on social justice issues as it seeks to tackle political, social, and economic issues. The main aim of this research is to adjust politics to confront oppression and improve injustice. It explores the power structures and issues that might be shaping the phenomenon under study.

- The pragmatic paradigm is the most flexible as it emphasizes using a combination of elements from different other paradigms to provide a comprehensive understanding. Theorists emphasize using the most effective methods to address any specific research question. It often employs mixed methods that combine both quantitative and qualitative data collection. (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017)

According to what has been mentioned earlier, the pragmatic approach is the most suitable paradigm for this research, as it allows the researcher to examine the research issue in a practical manner while acknowledging the subjective nature of human experience. It allows the combination of both quantitative data, to measure stress levels and self-efficacy scores, with qualitative data, to gain a better insight into teachers' experiences and perceptions.

### **3.1.2. Research Approach**

The approach in academic research is heavily dependent on the nature of the study. Thus, the more understanding the researcher gains of the research's theoretical aspect, the easier choosing the appropriate research approach.

“Research approaches are plans and the procedures for research that span the decisions from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection and analysis. It involves the intersection of philosophical assumptions, designs, and specific methods.” (Creswell, 2014, para. 6). In other words, it is the plan for research that contains both philosophical assumptions

and specific methods and procedures. In educational research, there are three research approaches: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-method.

Creswell in 2014, gave a clear distinction and definition of the three research approaches.

- Qualitative research is “an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. The process of research involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participant’s setting, data analysis inductively building from particulars to general themes, and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of the data...” (para. 3)

- Quantitative research is “an approach for testing objective theories by examining the relationship among variables. These variables, in turn, can be measured, typically on instruments, so that numbered data can be analyzed using statistical procedures...” (para. 4)

He argues that the quantitative and qualitative approaches are not opposites or dichotomies, rather they represent “different ends on a continuum”. A study just tends to be more qualitative or more quantitative.

- Mixed methods research is “an approach to inquiry involving collecting both quantitative and qualitative data, integrating the two forms of data, and using distinct designs that may involve philosophical assumptions and theoretical frameworks. The core assumption of this form of inquiry is that the combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches provides a more complete understanding of a research problem than either approach alone...” (para. 5)

This approach resides in the middle of the quantitative and qualitative. It uses elements from both approaches, as well as balance their limitations. Therefore, based on the benefit of this approach and the nature of the research, the mixed-method approach corresponds most with this study.

### **3.1.3. Research Design**

Creswell (2014) defined research design, or research strategy, as “types of inquiry within qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches that provide specific direction for procedures in a research design” (para. 1). Therefore, it is the specific plan aligning with the type of approach to be followed in a research study. Research design falls into three types: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-method.

Since the present research adopts the mixed-method approach, there ought to be a brief explanation of the mixed-method design to have a better understanding of the approach.

The mixed-methods approach is a relatively new major to research, as it developed in the 1980s’. This design involves combining qualitative data, open-ended without predetermined responses, and quantitative data, closed-ended responses such as those found on questionnaires or psychological instruments (Creswell, 2014).

### **3.1.4. Population and Sampling Techniques**

The primary school teachers of English, in the academic year 2023/2024 in Biskra primary schools, comprise the population of this study. This population has been selected intentionally for reasons like the novelty of the decision to teach English in primary schools, and the recruitment of novice teachers with little to no experience in teaching.

The sample consists of 21 (17 females and four males) primary school teachers of English from Biskra schools to measure and assess their level of stress and self-efficacy. The targeted sample was selected through the cluster sampling technique. The word cluster refers to the group of elements residing in one geographical region, and sampling of clusters is called cluster sampling. This sampling technique is used when the population is spread over a wide geographical region (Alvi, 2016).



To gain more insights into the sources of stress of these teachers and factors influencing their self-efficacy, the researcher used a purposive sampling technique. The latter was used to recruit eight interview participants from the questionnaire respondents.

### **3.1.5. Data Collection Methods**

“In the social sciences, data collection methods are tools for measuring human behavior, human beliefs, or other aspects of the human population.” (Axinn & Pearce, 2006, p. 28). It is the process of collecting data about the variables in a systematic manner. Choosing the appropriate data collection method is an important step in any study. Any errors made at this point would severely affect the results and by extension the integrity of this research.

As the present research adopts a mixed-method approach, both qualitative and quantitative were employed. Therefore, two tools were used to gather data, one questionnaire (it contains two scales of teacher self-efficacy and teacher stress) and a semi-structured interview.

Due to the issues of validity, reliability, and the psychological nature of the variables being studied, the tests used had to be carefully adapted with only minor changes. Test adaptation had to be cautiously conducted so as not to influence any of the main elements of the test. The tests are employed to measure the variables of the study.

#### **I. Teachers' interview:**

##### **• Structure and aim**

With the intention of exploring and better understanding the variables at hand, the need for qualitative data was immensely important. The researcher intended to capture the full experience of teachers regarding stress and self-efficacy. Therefore, after a long process of generating and organizing elements, a 10-question semi-structured interview. It includes a set of questions to urge the interviewed teachers to describe and explain their experiences as teachers of English in primary schools.

The semi-structured interview is divided into three main sections, in which each one serves to gather the desired objectives.

**Table 2:**

*The Description of the Teachers' Interview*

<b>Sections</b>	<b>Items</b>	<b>Content</b>	<b>Objectives</b>
<b>Sections One</b>	<b>1-3</b>	<b>Background information</b>	To learn more about the teacher's profiles like their experience in teaching, their typical class environment, and their training.
<b>Section Two</b>	<b>4-6</b>	<b>Teacher self-efficacy</b>	To learn about their self-efficacy, their opinion on how to develop their sense of self-efficacy, and how their student's success influences their belief in themselves.
<b>Section Three</b>	<b>7-10</b>	<b>Teacher stress</b>	To learn about the type of stressors, how stress influences their health, and

			<p>how it affects their students' learning and motivation.</p> <p>And lastly, a question to give their opinion about any actions that could be taken to increase their level of self-efficacy and decrease their stress.</p>
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• **Piloting and validation:**

To ensure the quality of the interview, and avoid any misunderstandings the validation of the interview was required. A revised draft of the interview has been emailed to three teachers to review the instrument and give their approval of the content, structure, and language usage. The few modifications that the teachers asked for like the wording of some questions, were taken into consideration and applied in the final version.

• **Administration:** the data collection started by the end of April 2024. The questionnaire was administered Online via Google Forms survey software. It has been posted in several Facebook groups of teachers of English in the city of Biskra. The participants were informed of the privacy of their personal information, and the anonymity of their answers. At last, it took 11 days to gather the 21 responses.

Simultaneously, teachers were randomly chosen and contacted via Email, as they were required to write it in their answers. The consent form, which included all the terms, in addition to the interview in a Word document was emailed to them to answer. The interviews took one week to be finished. Therefore, the stage of gathering the data was officially completed.

**II. Teachers' questionnaire:**

• **Structure and aim**

- **Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) (Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy, 2001):**

This scale, also known as the Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale, was developed by Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy in 2001. It is one of the tools to measure the construct of teacher self-efficacy. It has a unified and stable factor structure and assesses a broad range of capabilities that most teachers consider crucial to teaching. TSES has two versions, the long one contains 24 items and the short one contains 12 items. The researcher chose the long scale for a better understanding and a clearer perspective.

TSES is a five-point Likert scale test that ranges from 1 "Nothing" to 9 "A Great Deal", However, the researcher reduced the number of choices to 5. Likert scales are closed-ended questions that give the participants the opportunity to choose from a predetermined set of options (Joshi et al., 2015).

It is composed of three sections like the following:

- Efficacy in Student Engagement: Items 1, 2, 4, 6, 9, 12, 14, 22
- Efficacy in Instructional Strategies: Items 7, 10, 11, 17, 18, 20, 23, 24
- Efficacy in Classroom Management: Items 3, 5, 8, 13, 15, 16, 19, 21

The validity of the test was verified by factor analysis and comparison of existing instruments. External validity was established through several pilot tests, which also defined reliability as a measure of internal consistency. When determining the principal axis -factoring, only one factor was issued by the reaction of pre-service teachers. In both instances, 24-point or 12-point statements charged to this factor from 0.60 to 0.85 and accounted for 57% and 61% of the variance for preservice teachers.

The general reliability of the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale is high with Cronbach Alpha = .90 (Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy, 2001, as cited in Bilali, 2015).

Compared to other teacher self-efficacy tests, this scale was the most appropriate for its simple language, ease of use and comprehension, reasonable number of questions, and availability of the test and scoring scale.

**- Teacher Stress Inventory (TSI) (Fimian, 1984):**

This scale was developed by Fimian in 1984 for the assessment of teachers' work-related stress. The original scale contains a 49-item scale that consists of two parts. The first is a Likert scale varying from 1 "Not Noticeable" to 5 "Very Noticeable". The second is a Checkbox question where the participants would select all the relatable items. This part is divided into two subparts entitled "I feel frustrated", and "I respond to stress". Moreover, there were minor changes where the researcher omitted, replaced, and reworded a few of the items in the inventory.

This scale consists of 10 factors, five representing sources of stress and five representing manifestations of stress as the following (Fimian & Fastenau, 1990):

- 1) Professional investment is the primary factor influencing teacher stress. For one reason or another, teachers are not personally involved and/ or have been distanced from their job.
- 2) Behavioral manifestations describe teachers' unhealthy coping mechanisms, and how they respond behaviorally to stressful situations and instances.
- 3) Time management addresses teachers who feel stressed by time problems. For example, when teachers do not have enough time to finish all the assigned work.
- 4) Discipline and Motivation have two parts concerning the teacher-student relationship. First is the sensitivity to discipline problems in the classroom, and perceiving their authority as being rejected by pupils and/ or administrators. The second aspect is the motivation problems, as some teachers experience stress when instructing unmotivated students.

- 5) Emotional manifestations describe the different ways teachers respond to stressful experiences. For example, feeling insecure, vulnerable, unable to cope, depressed, and anxious.
- 6) Work-related stressors represent the specific situations that act as stressors for teachers. They include having little time to prepare, having too much work to do, that their caseloads or class sizes are too big, etc.
- 7) Gastronomical manifestations involve several stomach disorders occurring in teachers under prolonged stress, including stomach pain and stomach acid.
- 8) Cardiovascular manifestations present a variety of cardiovascular problems related to stress. To illustrate, teachers under prolonged stress may feel an increase in blood pressure, and shallow or rapid breathing during times of stress.
- 9) Fatigue manifestations include stress-related fatigue problems. Stressed teachers tend to sleep more than usual, procrastinate, become fatigued in a relatively short amount of time, and experience physical weakness.
- 10) Professional distress represents how teachers perceive themselves as professionals. To elaborate, not progressing in one's job, needing more status and respect, receiving an inadequate salary, and lacking recognition may comprise a stressful experience.

The TSI has been revised and tested for validity and reliability. The alpha coefficients for the 10 factors were higher than 0.75, and the overall alpha for the entire inventory was 0.93.

The satisfying psychometric qualities of the TSI have contributed to its use in several studies that have investigated the association between stress and a variety of symptoms, situations, or characteristics such as self-efficacy, biographic variables, classroom management practices, and positive affectivity (Kourmoussi et al., 2015, p. 82)

Therefore, the researcher used this test for its simple language, detailed items, and encompassing nature of what the research requires.

**• Piloting and Validation:**

In the interest of uncovering any ambiguities, five teachers of English were requested to review and answer the questionnaire. After it was reviewed and approved by the supervisor, the researcher sent the online version of the questionnaire to the teachers on Facebook and asked them to answer it whenever they were available, for better comments and feedback. Due to the few changes in the original tests, no significant issues were noticed with the items of the questionnaire.

**3.1.6. Data Analysis Procedures**

In this study, quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The descriptive analysis was used to present the results and interpret the scores. Using the IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 26 for Microsoft to calculate, analyze, and display the data in the form of graphs and charts; as well as, to test the null hypotheses and find correlations between the variables. Pearson's correlation coefficient was calculated to identify the degree of correlation between teacher stress and teacher self-efficacy; hence, making use of inferential statistics

Concerning the qualitative data a thematic analysis was used in analyzing in order to identify the recurrent themes and patterns of the variables. Thematic analysis is a method used to identify, analyze, and report patterns or themes within data. Themes represent an important matter about the data in relation to the research questions. It represents some level of "patterned response" or meaning within the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

### **3.2.Results and Data Analysis:**

#### **3.2.1. Teacher's interview:**

The eight interviewee teachers were asked to answer the interview and elaborate on their thoughts and experiences. To report the findings, the researcher attempts to identify the most recurrent themes as follows:

- Challenges: the teachers of English in Biskra primary schools suffer from three major issues. The main stressor that all of the teachers mentioned is the large class sizes. It creates a drift between teachers and their pupils as individual attention becomes hard to maintain. Teachers are forced to prioritize control over engaging and interacting with the pupils which may create a negative environment for the educational experience.

In addition, time management appeared to be a great issue causing stress to teachers. They expressed feelings of being restricted by a curriculum that is not balanced with the appropriate time to complete it. It creates a constant sense of rushing, that leaves little to no room for creative teaching strategies or addressing challenges that may occur along the way.

Moreover, the weight of expectations can be a heavy burden on teachers. Some educators described the stress caused by unrealistic expectations from students, parents, and even the administration. With the novelty of the decision to teach English in primary schools, several stressors arise.

Finally, training before the beginning of their career was short in comparison of the responsibility and amount of assignments.

- Self-efficacy: despite the aforementioned burden, teachers expressed confidence in several aspects of their teaching. The areas vary as each teacher showcased their own unique strengths. The majority of teachers were confident in their capabilities for interaction and engagement in the classroom was a significant indicator of their high self-efficacy in that



specific area. Moreover, creativity in developing new strategies of teaching was one of the most efficacious aspects for teachers.

- Areas for improvement: the teachers emphasize their need for support and technology development in the Algerian EFL classrooms. They called for access to special training in areas like phonetics. Investing in the equipment and tools for teachers as they would most probably need to access them at one point in their teaching.

- Stress, for this study's participants, has several manifestations that affects both the mental and physical health. Loss of motivation was the most mentioned aspect as stress was perceived as the main influence on their drive to teach. This loss of motivation might manifest in the lack of initiative to prepare lessons, a monotonous lesson delivery style, and a decrease in the teacher's ability to maintain a connection with pupils. Consequently, students lose may lose interest, and get motivated.

In addition, feeling overwhelmed is another sign mentioned as the pressure of the class size and the time pressure creates a distortion in the teacher's own emotions. Teachers expressed their struggle throughout their experience with stress to maintain a positive learning environment. As a result, it may lead to harsher treatment of the pupils.

- Support for Teachers: Primary school teachers of English gave several valuable pieces of advice to increase and decrease teacher self-efficacy and teacher stress respectively. These suggestions included training and investment, reduction of the workload and class size, improvement of the working conditions, and recognition and appreciation.

As a conclusion, the interview paints a clear picture of the EFL classrooms in primary schools of Biskra, Algeria.

### **Teacher's questionnaire:**

- Section one: Personal Information

Q1- Age

**Table 3:***Teachers age distribution*

N		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	23	4	19.0	19.0	19.0
	25	1	4.8	4.8	23.8
	27	2	9.5	9.5	33.3
	28	2	9.5	9.5	42.9
	30	2	9.5	9.5	52.4
	32	4	19.0	19.0	71.4
	33	3	14.3	14.3	85.7
	36	1	4.8	4.8	90.5
	40	1	4.8	4.8	95.2
	43	1	4.8	4.8	100.0
Total		21	100.0	100.0	

**Table 3.2:***Teacher age distribution*

N		Median	Minimum	Maximum
Valid	Missing			
21	0	30.00	23	43

According to the data presented in Tables 3.1 and 3.2, the age distribution of teachers of English in Biskra- Algeria primary schools in 2024, indicates the wide range between the ages of 23 and 43. Table 3.1 details the data of the 21 teachers, with a significant concentration on the early thirties (ages 32 and 23). As indicated by Table 3.2, the median age is 30.00 years old, which suggests a relatively young population. This youthful

demographic could be a great contribution to educational development. At the same time, they could be exposed to several risks related to youthful teachers.

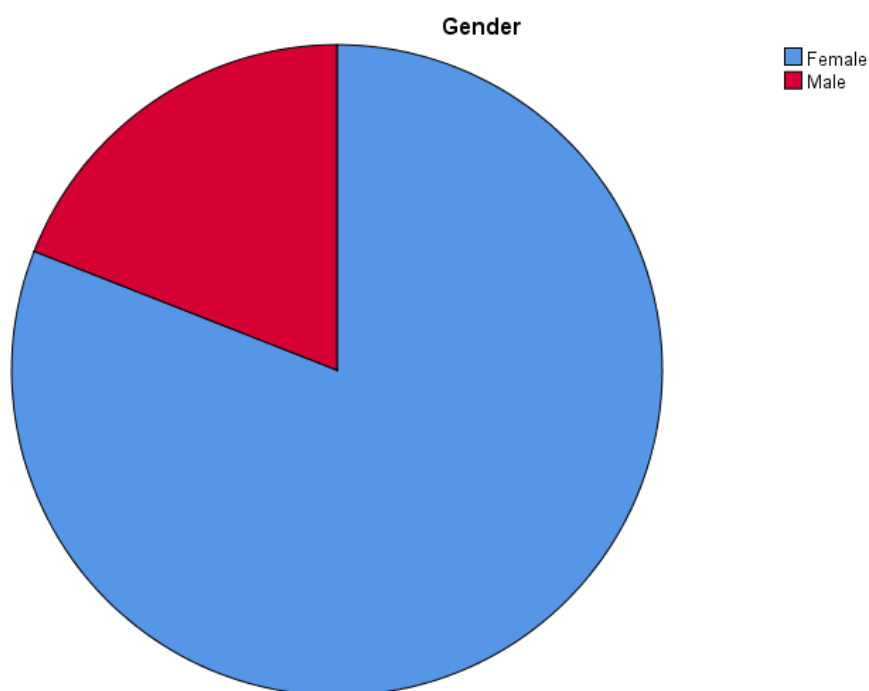
Q2- Gender

**Table 4:**

*Frequencies and percentages of teachers' gender*

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	17	81.0	81.0	81.0
	Male	4	19.0	19.0	100.0
	Total	21	100.0	100.0	

Table 4 is represented in the following chart:

**Table 5:***Teachers Gender*

The results in Table 4 and Figure 5 indicate the percentage of the gender variation of the teachers. It can be observed that the majority of the teachers are females (81%) compared to males (19%). This data suggests that teaching is more female-dominated in primary schools in Biskra.

**- Section one: Teacher Stress**

**Table 6:***Descriptive statistics about the first part of the TSI*

	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation
1. There is little time to prepare for my lessons/responsibilities.	2.62	3.00	1.117
2. My personal priorities are being shortchanged due to time demands.	2.29	3.00	1.231

3. I have too much work to do.	2.67	3.00	1.426
4. My caseload/class is too big.	2.05	2.00	1.396
5. There is too much administrative paperwork in my job.	1.81	2.00	1.401
6. I am not progressing in my job as rapidly as I would like.	2.14	2.00	1.389
7. I need more status and respect on my job.	1.67	2.00	1.426
8. I lack recognition for the extra work and/or good teaching I do.	1.71	1.00	1.454
9. My personal opinions are not sufficiently aired.	1.40	1.00	1.392
10. I receive an inadequate salary for the work I do.	2.20	3.00	1.542
11. I lack control over decisions made about classroom/school matters.	1.71	2.00	1.309
12. I lack opportunities for professional improvement.	2.52	3.00	1.327
13. I rush in my speech.	1.67	1.00	1.528
14. There isn't enough time to get things done.	2.71	3.00	1.146
15. I have to try doing more than one thing at a time.	2.81	3.00	.981
16. I become impatient if others do things too slowly.	2.05	2.00	1.284
17. I have little time to relax and enjoy the time of day.	2.19	3.00	1.250
18. I easily overcommit myself.	2.38	3.00	1.564
19. I think about unrelated matters during conversations.	1.95	2.00	1.627

20. I feel uncomfortable wasting time.	2.43	3.00	1.660
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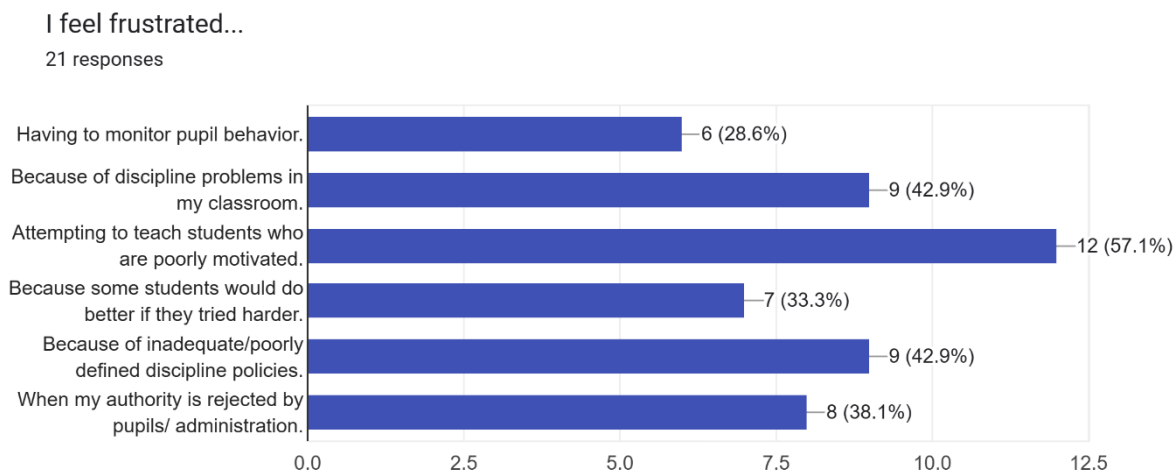
This table exhibits data on the first part of the second section teacher stress.

Statements like "There is little time to prepare for my lessons/responsibilities" (Mean: 2.62) and "There isn't enough time to get things done" (Mean: 2.71) have a significantly high mean score. They suggest that time management is one of the main stressors for teachers. Similarly, "I have too much work to do" (Mean: 2.67) and "I easily overcommit myself" (Mean: 2.38) indicate a heavy workload on educators that can be overwhelming. As a result, time pressures and the workload can be a major source of stress.

Furthermore, statements like "I receive an inadequate salary for the work I do" (Mean: 2.20) and "I lack recognition for the extra work and/or good teaching I do" (Mean: 1.71) highlight a potential source of stress, and a need for compensation and appreciation. Statements like "My personal priorities are being shortchanged due to time demands" (Mean: 2.29) and "I have little time to relax and enjoy the time of day" (Mean: 2.19) indicate a serious struggle for teachers to maintain a healthy balance between work and personal life.

Additionally, the standard deviations are mostly high, suggesting a variation in how teachers experience the different stressors. Where some might feel a specific reason stressful, others might not.

In conclusion, this data represents the different stressors any teacher, specifically primary school teachers, could experience like time pressure, heavy workload, being unappreciated and/ or lacking autonomy.

**Figure 6:***Checkbox of sources of frustrations to teachers*

Graph 6 shows the sources of frustration for teachers. The data reveals that the most prominent issue causing frustration to educators is the lack of student motivation (57.1%), in which it highlights a potential relationship between the teacher's effort and the students' engagement.

Moreover, 42.9% of teachers reported frustration about general discipline problems. It suggests that the disruption and behavioral issues occurring in a classroom would hinder the effectiveness of teachers. Similarly, 42.9% of teachers expressed their frustration with the inadequate and poorly defined discipline policies. This lack of clear discipline policies may hinder the teacher's management of the classroom, in turn causing a stressful experience. In relation to both factors, 38.1% of teachers expressed their frustration when either pupils or the administration questioned or rejected their authority.

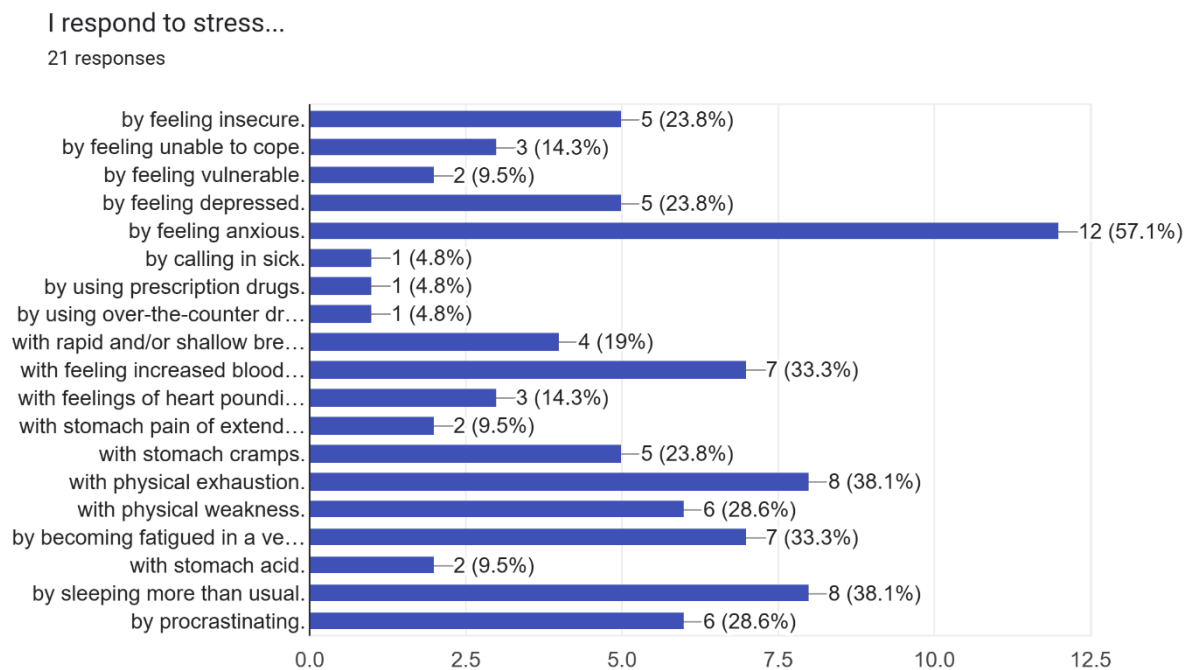
Furthermore, the data hinted at a potential link between teachers' stress and students' efforts and performance. 33.3% of teachers reported their frustration with students who "would do better if they tried harder."

Lastly, 28.6% of teachers felt that the need to constantly monitor pupils' behavior is a source of stress and frustration. Thus, the time and effort teachers spend on maintaining order in the classroom would potentially distract them from other obligations.

In conclusion, this analysis highlights the prevalence of teacher frustration and stress comes from management and issues and students' behaviors. Therefore, addressing these concerns could improve the teaching/learning experience.

### Figure 7:

#### *Manifestations of teacher stress*



Graph 7 represents the manifestations of stress on teachers. Some of the most common reactions is feeling anxious (57.1%) and feeling physically exhausted (38.1%). This may be interpreted as anxiety and exhaustion is the primary manifestation of teacher stress. Furthermore, other reactions may be presented as feeling insecure (23.8%), frustrated (28.6%), and sleeping more than usual (38.1%). The data also suggests that some teachers use



coping mechanisms like procrastinating (28.6%) or using prescription drugs (4.8%).

Moreover, some of the less common reactions are feeling vulnerable (9.5%), depressed (23.8%), or calling in sick (4.8%) are reported by a smaller percentage of teachers. Overall, the graph highlights the significant impact stress has on teachers' well-being.

- **Section two: Teacher self-efficacy**

**Table 7:**

*Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale*

	Valid	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation
1. How much can you do to get through to the most difficult students?	21	3.0952	3.0000	.99523
2. How much can you do to help your students think critically?	21	3.7619	4.0000	.88909
3. How much can you do to control disruptive behavior in the classroom?	21	3.6190	4.0000	1.11697
4. How much can you do to motivate students who show low interest in schoolwork?	21	3.7143	4.0000	1.23056
5. To what extent can you make your expectations clear about student behavior?	21	3.5714	4.0000	1.02817
6. How much can you do to get students to believe they can do well in school work?	21	3.8095	4.0000	1.03049
7. How well can you respond to difficult questions from your students?	21	4.1905	4.0000	.74960

8. How well can you establish routines to keep activities running smoothly?	21	4.0476	4.0000	.66904
9. How much can you do to help your students value learning?	21	4.0952	4.0000	.76842
10. How much can you gauge student comprehension of what you have taught?	21	3.4762	3.0000	.92839
11. To what extent can you craft good questions for your students?	21	3.8571	4.0000	1.06234
12. How much can you do to foster student creativity?	21	3.9524	4.0000	1.07127
13. How much can you do to get children to follow classroom rules?	21	4.0000	4.0000	1.14018
14. How much can you do to improve the understanding of a student who is failing?	21	3.8571	4.0000	1.06234
15. How much can you do to calm a student who is disruptive or noisy?	21	4.0000	4.0000	1.14018
16. How well can you establish a classroom management system with each group of students?	21	3.4762	4.0000	1.03049
17. How much can you do to adjust your lessons to the proper level for individual students?	21	3.5714	4.0000	1.36277
18. How much can you use a variety of assessment strategies?	21	3.6667	4.0000	1.27802

19. How well can you keep a few problem students from ruining an entire lesson?	21	3.6190	4.0000	1.24403
20. To what extent can you provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused?	21	4.0952	5.0000	1.13599
21. How well can you respond to defiant students?	21	3.7619	4.0000	1.04426
22. How much can you assist families in helping their children do well in school?	21	3.3333	3.0000	1.19722
23. How well can you implement alternative strategies in your classroom?	21	3.3333	3.0000	1.06458
24. How well can you provide appropriate challenges for very capable students?	21	4.0000	4.0000	1.09545

This table is a representation of the scores of the TSES of primary school teachers in Biskra. The data indicate that most statements appear to exceed 3.50, as it suggests that on average, teachers feel somewhat confident in their capabilities. High mean scores in statements like responding to difficult questions (above 4.00) or providing alternative explanations (possibly exceeding 4.00) suggest that teachers have confidence in their ability to explain concepts and adapt to students' needs.

In addition, some statements revealed significantly lower scores, which suggests areas teachers may benefit from some additional support. Mean scores for establishing routines (above 3.50) and calming unruly students (exceeding 3.50) show a significantly lower efficacy in managing students and maintaining the classroom environment. Moreover, the data indicated a lower mean for providing alternative instructions (above 3.50) which highlights a decreased level of efficacy in modifying and manipulating school materials to fit

the individuals' needs. As well as, motivating uninterested students (3.70), collaborating with families (possibly around 3.30), for implementing alternative teaching methods (3.30)

To summarize, the TSES data suggests that teachers in this study have a positive sense of self-efficacy in many instructional domains. However, aspects like student motivation, assessment, family collaboration, and instructional flexibility showed a more negative sense. By addressing these areas, schools can create a more positive learning environment for students.

### **3.2.2. Results of the Correlation Analysis**

Correlation is a form of measurement to prove whether and to what degree two variables are related. It measures covariance, but it does not establish a causal relationship (Chalil, 2020). The correlation coefficient is the statistic typically used to measure the degree of correlation. It is represented as  $r$  and ranges from -1 to 1. When the correlation is close to 0, it indicates a minimal relationship between the variables. Whereas, when is it close to 1, it indicates a positive relationship, in which an increase in one variable responds to an increase in the other, and vice versa. When it is close to -1, it is considered a negative correlation, in which an increase in one variable, responds to an increase in the other. Moreover, determining the significance of the correlation coefficient is statistically found (denoted as alpha,  $\alpha$ ) as  $P = 0.05$ . If  $P \leq 0.05$ , the results are statistically significant, and if  $P > 0.05$ , the results are not statistically significant.

The choice of the statistical analysis method determines the accuracy of the results. Therefore, if a researcher chooses an inappropriate test, the results would be less accurate. Furthermore, as this study's sample is quite small (21 participants), the researcher must follow the methodological procedures and guidelines and use the Spearman correlation test.

In this regard, the present study seeks to test the null hypothesis that denies any statistical association between teacher self-efficacy and teacher stress. The researcher proceeds to conduct a Spearman bivariate correlation to the scores obtained from the tests (TSI and TSES) using IBM SPSS. As table 8 demonstrates a Spearman  $p = -0.20$ , which is a negative coefficient that indicates an inverse relationship. This means that as scores on the TSES (teacher self-efficacy) increase, scores on the TSI (teacher stress) tend to decrease. In simpler terms, higher self-efficacy is associated with lower stress. The strength of the correlation is relatively weak.

As a rule, a significance level of 0.05 or lower is considered statistically significant. In this case, 0.386 is well above 0.05, meaning the correlation is not statistically significant. There is a chance this observed correlation could be due chance.

Figure 9 illustrates a scatterplot displaying the results of the two measured variables. The horizontal axis represents the values of TSI, while the vertical axis displays the values of the TSES.

Based on the data at hand, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is accepted as there was no significant relationship between the variable.

**Table 8:**

*The correlation between Teacher self-efficacy and teacher stress*

			TSI	TSES
Spearman's rho	TSI	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.200
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.386
		N	21	21

	<b>TSES</b>	<b>Correlation Coefficient</b>	<b>-.200</b>	<b>1.000</b>
		<b>Sig. (2-tailed)</b>	<b>.386</b>	<b>.</b>
		<b>N</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>21</b>

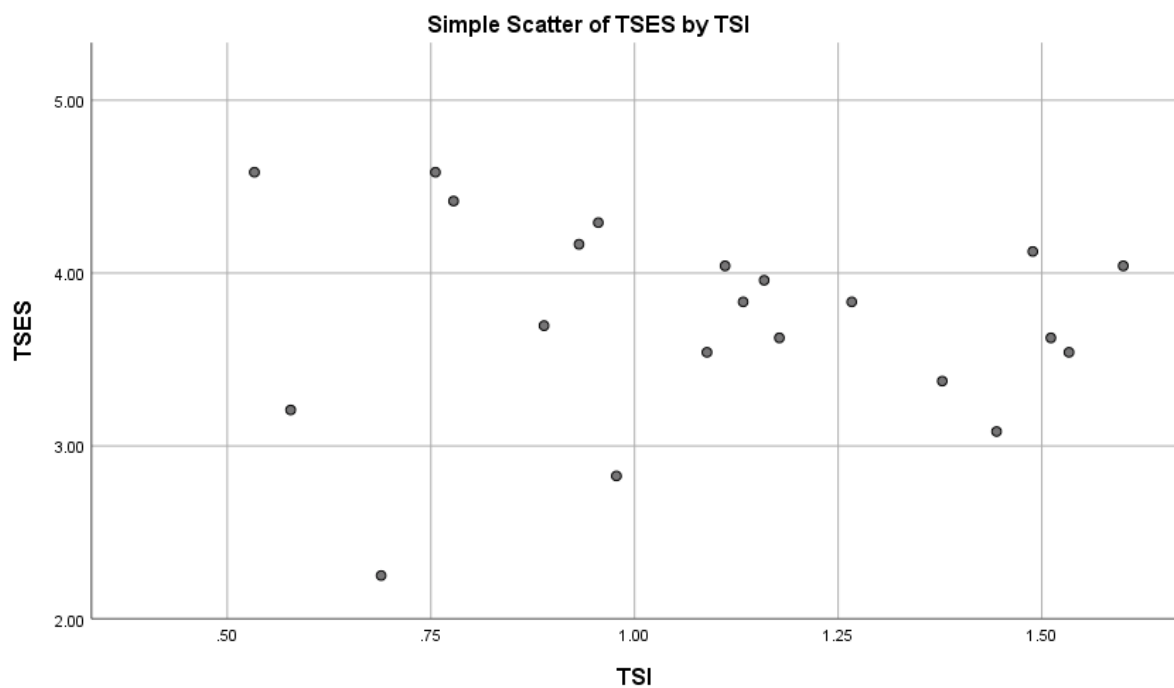
**TSI:** Teacher Stress Inventory

**TSES:** Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale

**Observation:** the alpha value was -0.2 meaning that the assumed correlation is not statically significant.

**Table 9:**

*Scatterplot displaying the correlation of TSI and TSES*



Overall, the data suggests a possible weak negative correlation between teacher self-efficacy and teacher stress. However, the small sample size and lack of statistical significance make it difficult to draw strong conclusions.

**Conclusion:**

This chapter dealt with an inclusive description of the methodology. The methodology and rationale were thoroughly described and justified at the beginning of this chapter. Subsequently, data collection methods, procedures, analysis, and sampling techniques were discussed. Then the researcher demonstrated the results and its interpretation. Finally, the results revealed that the teachers of English in Biskra face several stressors in their daily lives. However, their self-efficacy level is significantly high. Therefore, there is not significant relation between the variables.

# **General Conclusion**



## General Conclusion

Teacher stress is one of the areas researchers are interested in examining. With the great toll it has on teachers' well-being, it influences him/ her into negative consequences. Teacher sense of self-efficacy, as previous studies indicate, is one of the most impactful constructs on teachers' performance and well-being. Both concepts have either a negative and a positive effect on the teaching/learning experience. Thus, this study attempted to investigate the relationship between teacher stress and teacher self-efficacy.

The related literature was previously reviewed, in chapters one and two. Chapter One was devoted to teacher stress, explaining briefly stress history, and theories related to stress, then examining stress in relation to teaching. Chapter two delved into the self-efficacy theory, like what was previously done, it dealt with the self-efficacy theory and concept related to this construct. Then explore the teacher's self-efficacy and its influences, sources, and its connection to students' attitudes. Lastly, chapter three was concerned with the fieldwork of the study. It provided a full description of the methodology, data gathering tools, data analysis and procedures, etc. It, at last, provided a deep analysis, discussion, and interpretation of the findings.

The study adopted a mixed-method approach to both assess teacher stress and teacher self-efficacy and to explore these constructs in depth with a scope on the Algerian EFL context. Concerning the data, it was gathered using both qualitative and quantitative instruments, namely, the structured questionnaire (the two tests) and the semi-structured interview. The sample involved 21 teachers of English in primary schools of Biskra.

The findings revealed a prevalence of stress among teachers in Biskra, for factors like work overload, overcrowded classes, and low salary for a challenging profession, etc. As it also

revealed a significantly high sense of self-efficacy, in aspects like classroom management, engagement, and interaction, as well as, manipulating new techniques and strategies for a better teaching quality. As regards the correlation of the variables, the data revealed that there is no significant correlation between teacher self-efficacy and teacher stress in Biskra, unlike what previous research indicated.

Finally, teachers are the pillar of any success, so the investment in their well-being is quite equal to investing in a better future. Therefore, every concerned individual from the administration to the Ministry of Education, from parents to the whole society should unite to foster a better teaching environment and; consequently, a better learning experience.

## **Pedagogical Implications and Recommendations**

From the results obtained, it is necessary to raise the family of education awareness to adapt and improve the necessary areas. The researcher suggests the following implications and recommendations:

- Raising awareness regards stress for teachers would not benefit the teacher solely, but it would improve the whole educational experience.
- Teachers and school administrators should come together to collaborate and discuss sources and consequences of stress to find ways to alleviate it.
- School authorities and teachers should do more regarding the enhancement of the organizational aspect of teaching, that is, the capacity to work as an employee receiving services, assistance and support from others.
- Social support can help reduce stress.
- Implementing data-driven decision-making to guide policy changes and resource allocation in the Algerian EFL education system.
- Conduct longitudinal studies to track the impact of interventions over time, allowing for a more comprehensive understanding of how they influence teacher well-being, self-efficacy, and student outcomes.

## **Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research**

Limitations are found in any study and this one is no different. Thus, admitting to it does not disregard its credibility, but enhances the quality of future research. The first serious issue is the small number of the sample. It is for the fact that English in primary schools is a fairly new addition in Algerian schools. However, it is considered a limitation as it questions the credibility of the study. The second issue is the tests used. Although constructs like self-

efficacy are not something easily measurable which is why most tests are in the form of self-reports. Teacher stress, on the other hand, can be measured using special devices. However, the researcher cannot obtain any, neither do she have a sufficient amount of time to conduct such a study.

As for future research, the researcher suggests selecting a larger sample and conducting the study in a longer amount of time. Other researchers could conduct a longitudinal study opting for different measures and linking either Teacher stress or teacher self-efficacy to other construct, like job satisfaction or students' motivation.

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# Appendices

## Appendices

### Appendix A.

#### Teachers Questionnaire

You are kindly invited to thoroughly read and provide answers to this questionnaire. **It attempts to assess and measure the levels of stress and self-efficacy of primary school teachers of English.** Your participation is highly appreciated and will be of great help in the fulfillment of this Master dissertation “Investigating the Relationship Between Teacher Self-Efficacy and Teacher Stress”.

Be certain that your anonymity is ensured and the provided answers will be used only for academic purposes aligning with our research aims. Please bear in mind that your answers will not be judged (there is no correct or wrong answer), and that you can rightfully skip a possibly offensive or uncomfortable question item.

Thank You for your time and cooperation

#### Section 1: Personal Information

1- Age: \_\_\_\_\_

2- Gender:            Male             Female

3- Year of graduation: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Glossary:

Teacher self-efficacy: it is a teacher's confidence in their ability to effectively impact student learning and engagement in all situations.

Teacher stress: it refers to the negative physical, emotional, and mental responses that teachers experience due to the pressures and demands of their jobs.

## Section 2: Teacher Stress

Tick the most appropriate answer according to what you feel as a teacher.

Statement	Not Noticeable	Barely Noticeable	Moderately Noticeable	Very Noticeable	Noticeable
1- There is little time to prepare for my lessons/responsibilities.					
2- My personal priorities are being shortchanged due to time demands.					
3- I have too much work to do.					
4- My caseload/class is too big.					
5- There is too much administrative paperwork in my job.					
6- I am not progressing in my job as rapidly as I would like.					
7- I need more status and respect on my job.					
8- I lack recognition for the extra work and/or good teaching I do.					
9- My personal opinions are not sufficiently aired.					
10- I receive an inadequate salary for the work I do.					
11- I lack control over decisions made about					

classroom/school matters.					
12- I lack opportunities for professional improvement.					
13- I rush in my speech.					
14- There isn't enough time to get things done.					
15- I have to try doing more than one thing at a time.					
16- I become impatient if others do things too slowly.					
17- I have little time to relax and enjoy the time of day.					
18- I easily overcommit myself.					
19- I think about unrelated matters during conversations.					
20- I feel uncomfortable wasting time.					

Tick the statement that aligns with what you feel

**I feel frustrated . . .**

Having to monitor pupil behavior.

Because of discipline problems in my classroom.

Attempting to teach students who are poorly motivated.

Because some students would do better if they tried harder.



Because of inadequate/poorly defined discipline policies.

When my authority is rejected by pupils/ administration.

**I respond to stress . . .**

by feeling insecure.

by feeling unable to cope.

by feeling vulnerable.

by feeling depressed.

by feeling anxious.

by calling in sick.

by using prescription drugs.

by using over-the-counter drugs.

with rapid and/or shallow breath.

with feeling increased blood pressure.

with feelings of heart pounding or racing.

with stomach pain of extended duration.

with stomach cramps.

with physical exhaustion.

with physical weakness.

by becoming fatigued in a very short time.

with stomach acid.



8. How well can you establish routines to keep activities running smoothly?					
9. How much can you do to help your students value learning?					
10. How much can you gauge student comprehension of what you have taught?					
11. To what extent can you craft good questions for your students?					
12. How much can you do to foster student creativity?					
13. How much can you do to get children to follow classroom rules?					
14. How much can you do to improve the understanding of a student who is failing?					
15. How much can you do to calm a student who is disruptive or noisy?					
16. How well can you establish a classroom management system with each group of students?					
17. How much can you do to adjust your lessons to the proper level for individual students?					

18. How much can you use a variety of assessment strategies?					
19. How well can you keep a few problems students from ruining an entire lesson?					
20. To what extent can you provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused?					
21. How well can you respond to defiant students?					
22. How much can you assist families in helping their children do well in school?					
23. How well can you implement alternative strategies in your classroom?					
24. How well can you provide appropriate challenges for very capable students?					

Appendix B.

## **Teachers Interview Consent Letter**

### **Informed Consent**

Dear Teacher,

As a part of the completion of this research work, you are kindly invited to take part in this investigation. The present letter aims at detailing the study's main idea, aim and process.

Besides, it also serves to guarantee the safety of your personal information and the answers you provide.

The present study's purpose falls on investigating the relationship between teachers' stress and teacher self-efficacy. In addition, this study aims at exploring how teacher stress may affect teacher self-efficacy and vice versa in the case of teachers of English in primary schools of Biskra.

In this regard, you are kindly invited to take part in this research. In case of agreement, you will be invited to sit for an interview once the schedule is arranged.

Please be assured that your anonymity and privacy will be completely protected, and the data you provide will serve solely the present research.

If you agree on participating in this study, please sign the attached consent form. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

For any further inquiries regarding this research project, you are welcome to contact the researcher.

Yours sincerely,

### **Researcher Contact Details:**

Khaoula Azzouz

Email: [khaoula.azzouz2001@gmail.com](mailto:khaoula.azzouz2001@gmail.com)

Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra

Faculty of Letters and Foreign Languages

Department of English Language and Literature

I have read and clearly understood the researcher's request. I consent to the participation in the interview designed for the research project being undertaken by Khaoula Azzouz

Name:.....

E-mail/ Phone Number:.....

School:.....

Date: .. / .. / .....

Signature:

Appendix C.

**Teachers' Interview**

Thank you for participating in this interview. This research aims to understand the factors influencing teacher self-efficacy and stress in the Algerian EFL context. Your answers will be of great help to the fulfillment of this master's thesis "**Investigating the Relationship Between Teacher Self-Efficacy and Teacher Stress**".

Your answers will stay anonymous and will be only used for academic purposes aligning with the research aims.

**Teacher self-efficacy:** it is a teacher's confidence in their ability to effectively impact student learning and engagement in all situations.

**Teacher stress:** it refers to the negative physical, emotional, and mental responses that teachers experience due to the pressures and demands of their jobs.

**Section One: Background Information**

Q1.How many years have you been teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Algeria?

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Q2.Briefly describe your typical class size and pupil demographics.

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Q3.Have you received any additional training or professional development in EFL teaching methodologies?

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**Section Two: Teacher Self-Efficacy**

Q4.What areas of your teaching practice you are most confident in and what areas you would like to improve?

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Q5. What resources or support would be most helpful to you in strengthening your self-efficacy in these areas?

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Q6. What are some specific examples of your students' successes that contribute to your sense of self-efficacy?

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**Section Three: Teacher Stress**

Q7. In your experience, what are the main factors that contribute to stress among EFL teachers in Algeria? (e.g., workload, class size, administrative demands, student behavior, etc.)

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Q8. How does stress affect your overall well-being and performance as a teacher?

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Q9. Have you observed any negative consequences of teacher stress on your students' learning or motivation?

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Q10. In your opinion, what specific actions could be taken by school administrators or the Ministry of Education to reduce teacher stress and increase self-efficacy in Algeria?

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