EFL Instructors' Occupational Wellbeing during the COVID-19 Pandemic in Türkiye: A Study of Burnout and Work Engagement[1]

Türkiye'de COVID-19 Pandemisi Sırasında Yabancı Dil Olarak İngilizce Eğitmenlerinin Mesleki İyi Oluşu: Tükenmişlik ve İşe Bağlılık Üzerine Bir Araştırma

Esra CAM [iD] , Lecturer, Yalova University, esra.cam@yalova.edu.tr

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Abstract. The online teaching experiences following the COVID-19 pandemic have produced significant changes in educators' work lives bringing extra stress factors in their working conditions. This mixed-methods study examined the well-being of English instructors trying to continue their teaching activities online in pandemic conditions in Türkiye, based on the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Theory. Quantitative data were gathered through an inventory from 69 English instructors. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 12 instructors. The results revealed an average level of burnout and work engagement among the participants. Uncertainty and the limitations of technology emerged as two new job demands faced by instructors in online teaching during the pandemic. Besides, the results provided evidence for the necessity to add a fourth aspect to the JD-R: personal demands. E-teaching readiness and openness to interaction as personal resources and security as a job resource have appeared as three new resources specific to the online teaching mode. Student-related factors, which were found to be causes of poor well-being in general in previous studies, have been found to be sources that promote higher well-being among instructors in online education. The study carries major implications for school administrators and teacher trainers.
Keywords: JD-R Theory, Occupational Wellbeing, Teacher Burnout, Teacher Wellbeing, Work Engagement.

Öz. COVID-19 pandemisi ve sonrasında yaşanan online eğitim deneyimleri, eğitmenlerin iş yaşamlarında ve çalışma koşullarında önemli değişikliklere neden olmuş ve ekstra stres faktörlerini beraberinde getirmiştir. Bu karma yöntemli çalışma, İş Talepleri-Kaynaklar (JD-R) Teorisine dayalı olarak, Türkiye'de pandemi sırasında öğretim faaliyetlerine çevrimiçi öğretim yoluyla devam etmeye çalışan İngilizce eğitmenlerinin iyi oluşunu incelemektedir. Nicel veriler 69 İngilizce eğitmeninden bir envanter aracılığıyla toplanmıştır. 12 öğretim görevlisi ile yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler yapılmıştır. Sonuçlar, çalışma örnekleminde ortalama bir tükenmişlik ve iş bağlılığı düzeyini ortaya koymaktadır. Belirsizlik ve teknolojinin sınırlılıkları, pandemi sırasında çevrimiçi öğretimde eğitimcilerin karşılaştığı iki yeni iş talebi olarak ortaya çıkmaktadır. Bulgular ayrıca JD-R'ye dördüncü bir boyut ekleme olasılığına dair kanıt sağlamaktadır: kişisel zorluklar. Kişisel kaynaklar olarak e-öğretime hazır olma ve etkileşime açıklık ve iş kaynağı olarak güvenlik, çevrimiçi öğretim moduna özgü üç yeni kaynak olarak ortaya çıkmıştır. Daha önceki araştırmalarda genel olarak zayıf iyi oluşun nedeni olarak bulunan öğrenciyle ilgili faktörlerin, çevrimiçi eğitimde eğitmenler arasında daha yüksek iyilik halini destekleyen kaynaklar olduğu bulunmuştur. Çalışma, okul yöneticileri ve öğretmen eğitimcileri için önemli çıkarımlar ortaya koymaktadır.
Anahtar Kelimeler: İşe Bağlılık JD-R Teorisi, Mesleki İyi Oluş, Öğretmen İyi Oluşu Öğretmen Tükenmişliği.

Genişletilmiş Özet

Giriş. COVID-19 salgınının ardından, Türkiye'deki yükseköğretim kurumları eğitime devam edebilmek çevrimiçi öğretim gibi acil kararlar almak zorunda kaldı. Ancak, bu dönemde çoğu üniversitede verilen öğretim, dikkatli bir tasarım ve planlama sürecinden yoksundu ve öğretim elemanlarının öğretim süreçlerini yeni koşullara uyum sağlayacak şekilde gözden geçirmelerini ve yeniden planlamalarını zorunlu hale getirdi. Ayrıca, büyük bir belirsizliğin ve benzeri görülmemiş bir değişimin olduğu bir dönemde öğretim yapmak, onları yeni talepler ve kaynaklarla zorladı ve iyi oluşlarını etkiledi. Bu çalışma, öğretmen iyi oluşu ile ilgili araştırma alanına katkıda bulunmak ve gelecekteki araştırmalar için etkili sorular sormak açısından önemlidir. İngilizce eğitmenlerinin iyi oluşunu etkileyen faktörleri anlamak, gelecekteki olağanüstü koşullara bağlı ortaya çıkabilecek uzaktan öğretim durumlarına onların adaptasyon süreçlerine önemli katkılar sağlayacaktır (Beltman ve diğerleri, 2011). Ayrıca bu tür araştırmalar, yükseköğretim kurumlarında böylesi koşullarda öğretim kalitesinin sürdürülmesinden sorumlu bütün paydaşlar için de oldukça önemlidir.

Metot. Bu açıklayıcı sıralı karma yöntem çalışması, İş Talepleri-Kaynaklar Teorisini bir çerçeve olarak kullanarak Türkiye'de COVID-19 salgını sırasında çevrimiçi öğretim uygulayan İngilizce eğitmenlerinin mesleki iyi oluşunu araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu doğrultuda, ilk olarak katılımcıların tükenmişlik ve işlerine bağlılık derecelerine bağlı olarak mesleki iyi oluş düzeylerini anlamak için bir ölçek aracılığıyla nicel veriler toplandı. Daha sonra, bazı İngilizce eğitmenleri ile onların tükenmişliğine neden olan talepleri ve çevrimiçi öğretim sırasında işe bağlılıklarını sürdürmelerine yardımcı olan kaynakları keşfetmek için yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler gerçekleştirildi. Çalışmada nicel ve nitel veriler birbirinden bağımsız analiz edildi. Nicel verilerin istatistiksel analizi SPSS yazılımı ile gerçekleştirildi ve nitel verilerin analizi için tematik içerik analizlerinden yararlanıldı.

Bulgular ve Tartışma. Demerouti ve arkadaşları (2001) tarafından geliştirilen Oldenburg Tükenmişlik Envanteri aracılığıyla 69 katılımcıdan toplanan nicel veriler çalışma örnekleminde ortalama bir tükenmişlik ve işe bağlılık düzeyi ortaya koydu. Bu katılımcıların arasından seçilen 12 eğitmen ile gerçekleştirilen yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler çevrimiçi öğretim sırasında katılımcıların tükenmişliklerine neden olan talepleri ve işe bağlılıklarını sürdürmelerine yardımcı olan kaynakları ortaya koydu.

Önceki araştırmaların da gösterdiği gibi, iş yükü ve zaman baskısı, değer çatışması, idareden destek alamama, takdir eksikliği, düşük maaş ve karar vermede söz sahibi olmama çevrimiçi öğretim sırasında eğitmenlerin iyi oluşunu tehdit eden en temel iş talepleriydi. Bununla birlikte, bu çalışmada pandemi sürecine bağlı ortaya çıkan çevrimiçi eğitime özgü iki yeni iş talebi ortaya çıktı: belirsizlik ve teknolojinin sınırlılıkları. Eğitmenler, nasıl öğreteceklerinden öğrenci başarısını nasıl ölçeceklerine kadar pek çok bilinmeyenle karşı karşıya kaldılar ve öğretmenlik faaliyetleri dışında teknolojik sınırlılıklar ve bunların beraberinde getirdiği sorunlarla mücadele ettiler. Bu bulgular, yeni zorlukların eğitmenler için yeni iş taleplerini beraberinde getirmesinin muhtemel olduğu iddiasını destekleyerek diğer araştırmaların bulguları genişletmek adına önemlidir.

JD-R teorisi, profesyonel iyi oluşu iş talepleri, iş kaynakları ve kişisel kaynaklar olmak üzere üç boyutta incelemektedir. Bu çalışmanın bulguları, olağanüstü koşullara bağlı ortaya çıkan çevrimiçi öğretim durumlarında eğitmenlerin iyi oluşunda dördüncü bir boyutun etkili olabileceğini buldu: kişisel talepler. Katılımcılar pandemi ve pandemi sürecine bağlı ortaya çıkan çevrimiçi öğretim süreçlerini etkileyen üç

önemli kişisel talepten bahsetti: iş-ev çatışması, sağlıkla ilgili endişeler ve teknolojik yetersizlikler. Bu değişkenlerin, katılımcıların kişisel yaşamlarıyla doğrudan ilişkili olsalar da onların çevrimiçi öğretim sürecindeki işlerine bağlılıklarını önemli düzeyde etkilediği görüldü.

Önceki araştırmalarla uyumlu olarak olumlu örgüt iklimi, kolektif kültür, sosyal iklim ve mesleki gelişim fırsatları bu çalışmada da eğitmenlerim iyi oluşuna olumlu katkı sağlayan temel iş kaynakları olarak ortaya çıktı. Bununla birlikte önceki araştırmalarda zayıf iyi oluşun nedenleri olarak bulunan öğrenciyle ilgili faktörler (örneğin sınıf yönetimi), bu çalışmada eğitmen motivasyonunu ve işe bağlılığını besleyen iş kaynakları olarak görüldü. Son olarak, katılımcıların çoğu devlet üniversitelerinde görev yaptığından pandemi sürecinde konfor alanlarından çıkmadan işlerine devam edebildiklerinden güvenlik teması yeni bir iş kaynağı olarak ortaya çıktı.

Önceki araştırmaların bulgularına benzer şekilde, uyum sağlayabilme, öz yeterlik, iyimserlik, özerklik, yenilikçilik ve öğretmen değerleri, ahlak ve motivasyon, bu çalışmada eğitmenlerin faydalandığı kişisel kaynaklar olarak bulundu. Bununla birlikte, e-öğretime hazır oluş ve etkileşime açıklık çevrimiçi öğretimin gereklilikleri karşısında eğitmenlerin daha az bunalmış hissetmelerine, mesleki iyi oluşlarını korumalarına ve işlerine bağlılıklarını sürdürmelerine yardımcı oldu.

Sonuç. Sonuç olarak, bu çalışma, eğitmenlerin tükenmişlik ve bağlılık arasında ince bir çizgide olduğunu ortaya koydu. Önceki araştırmaların iddialarını doğrulayan bulgular, eğitmenlerin aynı iş taleplerine verdikleri yanıtlarda farklılık gösterdiğini ve karşılaştırılabilir durumlarda farklı tükenmişlik seviyeleri yaşadıklarını göstermiştir (bkz. McCarthey vd., 2009; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017b). Bazıları çevrimiçi öğretimi, yeni öğretim tekniklerini keşfetmelerine ve teknolojik bilgilerini artırmalarına yardımcı olan hoş bir meydan okuma olarak değerlendirdi. Artıları ve eksileriyle bu süreci kabul ettiler ve mesleklerine bağlı kalmayı başardılar. Diğerleri yeni durumu stresli olarak algıladı. Bu sürecin beraberinde getirdiği zorluklar karşısında bunaldılar ve öğretmenlik mesleğine bağlılıklarını kaybetme noktasına geldiler.

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Introduction

Following the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, higher education institutions in Türkiye had to make urgent decisions to continue education online. However, the instruction provided at most universities at that period reflected the characteristics of emergency remote teaching (ERT) mostly as it was deprived of a careful design and planning process. Starting the 2020-2021 academic year with online education made it compulsory for instructors to revise and re-plan their teaching processes to adapt to the new conditions. Furthermore, teaching amid a time of uncertainty and unprecedented change challenged them with new demands and resources and affected their wellbeing.

Prior research unveils a number of resources and demands affecting teachers' professional wellbeing. Some studies have focused on job demands, such as increased workload, workplace-related stress, time pressure, and students' misbehavior and lack of motivation (Bermejo-Toro et al., 2016; Dicke et al., 2018; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2018), and they have associated these demands to poor wellbeing and a higher level of burnout among teachers (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2018). Others have investigated work-related and personal resources and their relation to higher wellbeing and work engagement among teachers (Collie et al., 2018; De Carlo et al., 2019; Dicke et al., 2018; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2018). The literature on online teaching and teacher wellbeing has been limited to a few studies investigating teachers' increased workload in e-teaching and its correlation with role stress and emotional exhaustion (Kraft et al., 2020; Mamun et al., 2015).

The present study is significant in contributing to the research area related to occupational wellbeing of EFL teachers and posing influential questions for future research. Understanding the factors affecting EFL instructors' wellbeing may provide additional insight into how they will achieve to survive and thrive (Beltman et al., 2011) during future ERT conditions. Besides, this kind of research is also significant to the other stakeholders in higher education institutions responsible for sustaining teaching quality.

A pragmatic worldview suits best for the study as the research questions require gaining comprehensive knowledge about the research problem (Creswell, 2014). In this regard, this explanatory sequential mixed methods study aims to investigate Turkish EFL instructors' occupational wellbeing during the online teaching period following the COVID-19 pandemic, and it uses the Job Demands-Resources Theory as a framework. First, quantitative data are collected through a scale to understand the level of participants' wellbeing depending on the degree of their burnout and work engagement. Then semi-structured interviews are conducted with 12 EFL instructors to explore the demands causing burnout among EFL instructors and the resources helping them sustain work engagement during online teaching.

Literature Review

Teaching is a demanding job (Collie et al., 2012; Hakanen et al., 2006). Stressors of the job lead to unpleasant outcomes, such as burnout, disengagement, lower job satisfaction, and even willingness to leave the profession (Collie et al., 2012; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011, 2015, 2016). Burnout and work

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engagement are highlighted as two significant variables of occupational wellbeing by prior research, and they are considered two opposite poles of one continuum (Demerouti & Bakker, 2008; Maslach & Leiter, 1997). According to Maslach and Jackson (1986), burnout is a condition that roots in emotional exhaustion, personalization, and reduced personal accomplishment. It occurs due to chronic stress in the working environment, where job demands are high but resources are low (Demerouti & Bakker, 2008). Otherwise, work engagement is defined as "a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigour, dedication, and absorption" (Schaufeli et al., 2002, p.74).

Theoretical Framework

Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Theory was introduced in 2001 as a model to understand employee wellbeing by Demerouti et al. (2001). Since then, it has been an influential conceptual framework that is frequently referred to measure employee wellbeing (Granziera et al., 2021). JD-R theory puts forward that all occupations share two common characteristics: job demands and job resources. According to Bakker and Demerouti (2016), job demands refer to the physical, psychological, social, or organizational facets of the job that require a constant physical or mental effort. Therefore, they are associated with certain costs such as attrition and exhaustion.

Job resources, however, are the physical, psychological, social, or organizational dimensions of the job that offer employees opportunities for achieving work goals, coping with job demands, and developing in their profession. They increase job satisfaction and work commitment (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007, 2014; Bakker et al., 2003; Demerouti et al., 2001; Hakanen et al., 2008). Personal resources are the third dimension added in more recent conceptualizations of JD-R theory. They refer to one's evaluation of his ability to influence the working environment, and they predict how job demands and resources influence occupational wellbeing (Granziera et al., 2021). JD-R theory claims a buffering effect that job or personal resources (e.g., administrative support and organizational climate) may buffer or lessen the negative impacts of job demands (e.g., emotional exhaustion and work overload) and foster occupational wellbeing (Bakker et al., 2007; Demerouti & Bakker, 2011).

Key Demands and Resources Specific to Teaching Profession

Prior studied have revealed various resources and demands that predict teachers' wellbeing. Studies on job demands have unveiled disruptive student behaviours, low student motivation, workload, time pressure, lack of a supportive school environment, value conflicts, and role stress as the key job demands that threaten teacher wellbeing (Hakanen et al., 2006; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011, 2015, 2018). Furthermore, they have provided numerous examples of the unintended outcomes of these demands, such as stress, emotional exhaustion, reduced job satisfaction, disengagement, burnout and lower self-efficacy (Collie at al., 2012; Hakanen et al., 2006; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011, 2015, 2017a, 2018).

Positive and supportive relations in the school environment, perceived autonomy support, fairness, opportunities for professional development, value consonance, and collective culture have been noted in the literature as certain job resources available for teachers (Collie & Martin, 2017; Hakanen et al., 2006; Simbula et al., 2011; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011, 2017a, 2018). These resources

are believed to be linked with greater work-related wellbeing, engagement, and job satisfaction (Collie & Martin, 2017; Collie et al., 2018; Dicke et al., 2018; Hakanen et al., 2006; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011; 2018).

Additionally, an extensive literature has developed on personal resources over time. Self-efficacy and adaptability have been the two personal resources that have especially attracted the attention of the researchers. Several studies suggested that self-efficacy pertains directly to higher engagement, lower burnout, and more positive perceptions of job demands and indirectly to job satisfaction and commitment (Dicke et al., 2018; Simbula et al., 2012; Vera et al., 2012). Adaptability as another significant personal resource has been found to be related to commitment, engagement, and subjective wellbeing in some recent studies (Collie & Martin, 2017; Collie et al., 2018).

The Present Study

Unexpected changes in working conditions may bring about new resources and stressors for employees. The COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent online education are new and uncertain situations for instructors, and they bring about new resources and demands for them. Understanding what resources this challenging process offers instructors and what demands it brings is worth exploring to help them thrive during it and thereafter in future emergency conditions. Accordingly, this study has two objectives: (a) to investigate EFL instructors' occupational wellbeing during online teaching and (b) to understand the demands and resources available to them. In line with this purpose, the study directs four major research questions:

1. What is the degree of burnout among EFL instructors that practice online teaching in Türkiye during the COVID-19 pandemic?
2. What is the degree of work engagement among EFL instructors that practice online teaching in Türkiye during the COVID-19 pandemic?
3. What demands may lead to burnout among EFL instructors that practice online teaching in Türkiye during the COVID-19 pandemic??
4. What resources are available for EFL instructors that practice online teaching in Türkiye during the COVID-19 pandemic to sustain their work engagement?

Method

The present study was carried out in an explanatory sequential mixed methods design. In this regard, as suggested by Creswell (2014), the quantitative data were collected through an inventory first and analysed via the Statistical Package for Social Sciences software (SPSS) program. Qualitative data were then collected through semi-structured interviews and analysed through thematic content analysis to explain and better understand the quantitative results.

Participants

The quantitative data were collected from 69 EFL instructors (N=50 female, N=19 male) working at different universities in Türkiye during 2020-2021 academic year. Linear snowball sampling was utilized to access hard-to-reach individuals (see Creswell, 2012). For the qualitative phase of the

study, twelve instructors were purposefully selected (N=9 female, N=3 male) among survey participants who volunteered to participate in an interview in the online survey considering their burnout and engagement levels, gender, marital status, teaching experience, and the type of the institutions they worked at.

Table 1.
Frequency distribution for demographics

Baseline characteristic	n	%
Gender		
Male	19	27.5
Female	50	72.5
Marital status		
Married	37	53.6
Single	32	46.4
Highest completed education level		
Bachelor's	18	26.1
Master's	42	60.9
PhD	9	13.0
Institutions		
Private	7	10.1
State	62	89.9
Teaching experience		
0-3 years	3	4.3
4-7 years	13	18.8
8-15 years	48	69.6
16-23 years	2	2.9
24-30 years	2	2.9
31+ years	1	1.4

Data Collection Tools

Quantitative data were gathered through an online survey. It consisted of questions on demographics and the Oldenburg Burnout Inventory (OLBI). It is a 16-item scale designed by Demerouti et al. (2001) to measure two core dimensions of burnout: *disengagement from work* and *exhaustion.* Items under OLBI-Disengagement are associated with employees' identification with their job and their willingness to keep it. Items under OLBI-Exhaustion concern the physical, affective, and cognitive aspects of exhaustion (Demerouti & Bakker, 2008).

For both dimensions, four items are framed positively and four items are framed negatively (reversed items). Every item is scored between 1 (strongly agree) and 4 (strongly disagree). A higher score shows increased burnout and decreased work engagement. According to Demerouti and Bakker (2008), involving both positively and negatively worded items, OLBI represents not only exhaustion and disengagement but also their opposites, vigour and dedication. Depending on this claim, in this study, both engagement and burnout were measured through the same scale, OLBI. For assessing work engagement, negatively framed items were recoded as suggested by Demerouti and Bakker (2008).

The factorial validity of the OLBI was confirmed by a number of studies (Demerouti et al., 2001; Demerouti et al., 2002; Demerouti et al., 2003; Demerouti & Bakker, 2008; Halbesleben & Demerouti, 2005). Considering the reliability, Cronbach's alpha indices in the present study were 0.88 for OLBI, 0.78 for OLBI-Disengagement and 0.83 for OLBI-Exhaustion. Thus, the scale was found to be reliable (see Pallant, 2013).

Data Collection Procedure

In the first phase of the study, the survey was uploaded on a file-sharing platform. Participants were informed on the opening page about the aim of the study, its voluntary basis, anonymity, and ethical issues. An informed consent form was posted on the same page.

Qualitative data were gathered through semi-structured online interviews with twelve instructors who responded to the online survey and volunteered to participate in the interview sessions based on their burnout and engagement levels, gender, marital status, teaching experience, and the type of the institutions they worked at. Before the actual interviews, tentative interview questions were pilot tested with three randomly selected instructors. The adjusted versions of the four major questions were directed to the interviewees in their native language, Turkish. They were informed briefly about the interview questions beforehand so that they could think over their responses. At the beginning of the sessions, interviewees were reminded that the interview would be recorded for data analysis and that the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants would be ensured.

Data Analysis

Quantitative and qualitative data were studied separately. First, the statistical analysis of the quantitative data was conducted with SPSS software. Descriptive analyses were used to present necessary information about the sample and answer the first two research questions. The means for OLBI and its two subscales were calculated. Instructors were labeled as having low, medium, or high OLBI scores based on scores above or below 1 standard deviation of the mean as in Delgadillo et al. (2018). Furthermore, scores for each respondent were categorized according to their OLBI scores, and then percentages were calculated.

The quantitative data collected through the questionnaire contributed to a better understanding of participants' burnout and work engagement levels and helped the purposeful sample selection for semi-structured interviews. Thematic content analyses were utilized to address research questions three and four. According to Creswell and Poth (2018), qualitative data analysis is performed in three stages: (1) preparing and organizing the data for analysis, (2) reducing the data into themes through coding, and (3) representing the data in visuals or a discussion. Thus, online interviews were recorded first and then transcribed. The transcribed data were studied for identifying the codes and reducing them into themes. Finally, the data were presented in tables. As suggested by Creswell (2016), one additional coder analysed the codes in three randomly selected transcriptions independently to ensure the consistency of placing codes into themes and provide a reliability check. There was a 94% agreement on 26 codes in the three randomly selected text passages. These results indicated a high

level of inter-coder agreement (see Creswell, 2016). The lists were re-examined to remove the divergences in the classification and reach a final agreement.

Findings

In this section, the quantitative and qualitative data results are presented sequentially. First, the degree of burnout and work engagement among Turkish EFL instructors during online teaching is illustrated. Next, the themes derived from semi-structured interviews are presented.

Quantitative Data Analysis Findings

To answer the first research question and ascertain the degree of burnout among EFL instructors that practice online teaching in Türkiye during the COVID-19 pandemic, a descriptive analysis was employed. Table 2 presents the participants' burnout status, including its two dimensions. Instructors were identified as having low, medium or high burnout scores, based on scores above or below 1 standard deviation of the mean (M = 2.45, SD = .43; ≤2.01 = low, 2.02 to 2.88 = medium, ≥2.89 = high). Thus, participants in this study were found to have moderate OLBI scores (M=2.45, SD=.43), indicating an average level of burnout. The mean scores for disengagement and exhaustion were 2.42 (SD = .49) and 2.48 (SD = .45), respectively.

Table 2.
Descriptive statistics of mean scores of OLBI for assessing burnout and its two dimensions

	n	*M*	*SD*	*Min.*	*Max.*
OLBI	69	2.45	.43	1.63	3.38
OLBI-Disengagement	69	2.42	.49	1.13	3.38
OLBI-Exhaustion	69	2.48	.45	1,88	3,50

The descriptive analysis also showed that 15% of the study sample was highly burnout. Moderately burnout teachers constituted 68% of all participants. Only 12% of the sample was found to have a low level of burnout.

To gain profound knowledge about the participants' wellbeing, their work engagement was also measured through OLBI. Descriptive analysis was carried out to address to the second research question which aimed to investigate the degree of work engagement among EFL instructors who were teaching online in Türkiye during the COVID-19 pandemic?. Participants were identified as lowly, moderately or highly engaged based on scores above or below 1 standard deviation of the mean (M = 2.54, SD = .43; ≤2.10 = low, 2.11 to 2.97 = medium, ≥2.98 = high). Thus, participants in this study were found to have a medium level of work engagement (M=2.54, SD=.43). The mean scores were 2.57 (SD =. 49) for engagement and 2.51 (SD = .45) for vigour. Table 3 shows the participants' work engagement status, including its two dimensions: vigour and engagement.

Table 3.
Descriptive statistics of mean scores of OLBI for assessing work engagement and its two dimensions

	n	*M*	*SD*	*Min.*	*Max.*
OLBI	69	2.54	.43	1.63	3.38
OLBI-Engagement	69	2.57	.49	1.63	3.88
OLBI-Vigour	69	2.51	.45	1.50	3.13

The descriptive analysis revealed that 20% of the participants had low work engagement. Highly engaged teachers constituted 21% of all the instructors that participated in the study. 59% of the sample was found to have an average level of work engagement.

Qualitative Data Analysis Findings

In this part, the qualitative data gathered from 12 EFL instructors through semi-structured interviews are demonstrated.

Factors That Threaten EFL Instructors' Occupational Wellbeing

The third research question explored the factors that threatened EFL instructors' wellbeing during distance education. The thematic analysis of the interview transcripts revealed that the factors causing poor wellbeing among EFL instructors were related to either job demands or personal demands. Under the category of job demands, seven themes emerged: (1) uncertainty, (2) workload, (3) limitations of technology, (4) lack of reward, (5) lack of support, (6) lack of teachers' voice, and (7) value conflict. Table 3 illustrates the themes emerging from textual data under the category of job demands for instructors.

Uncertainty was one job demand that all participants suffered from, especially at the beginning of the pandemic. Lack of planning, inexperience in online teaching or assessment, and the fear of unemployment caused unpleasant emotions among EFL instructors. Some participants reported emotional exhaustion, reduced free time, and increased tiredness due to a considerable increase in their workload during online teaching. They took on many new tasks that they did not have to carry out before, such as cutting, compressing, uploading videos, keeping in touch with students for more extended hours after classes, and giving reports to the managing staff. They also mentioned spending more time checking student papers, grading and providing feedback on assignments, preparing for classes, and catching up with the intensive syllabus.

Another factor mentioned by most instructors to negatively affect their work engagement during online teaching was the limitations of technology. Non-user-friendly teaching platforms, internet connection problems, program crashes, and breakdown of technological devices were the challenges they faced frequently. Some instructors complained about student absenteeism and the difficulty of monitoring student work. Students who never turned on their microphones or who lacked computers or smart phones posed real challenges for the instructors during online teaching.

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Lack of reward, administrative support, and instructors' voice in decision making and value conflict were the other job demands reported by a few instructors. Not feeling appreciated and supported at work and being excluded from decision-making processes made instructors feel worthless. Not getting the financial reward for their labour reduced their motivation. Furthermore, some instructors mentioned that they were assigned to do some perfunctory work by administrative staff, which contradicted their values and morals, making them feel bad.

Table 4.
Job demands for teachers

Themes	Codes	Extracts from textual data
Uncertainty	lack of planning	We didn't have enough time to plan online education. (P3)
	inexperience in distance education	I had never taught online. How I would lecture or evaluate the students was a great mystery. (P2)
	unemployment	I was already working part-time. The uncertainty of whether to lose my job was really worrying. (P9)
Workload	time pressure	I can't find time for anything. (P4)
	increased number of tasks	My workload has increased significantly. (P4)
	administrative duties	Having to report everything I do to the administration is really tiring. (P6).
limitations of technology	technology-related problems	The platform we use does not allow students to speak. (P6)
	the difficulty of monitoring student work	It bothers me not knowing what the students who turn their cameras off are doing there. I cannot see if they listen or understand. (P9)
	lack of necessary equipment	Most students in my class didn't have PCs. I don't think I can reach them. (P4)
lack of reward	lack of appreciation	The biggest problem is not being appreciated. The administrative staff does not realize how much of a burden we are under. (P6)
	unfair salary	When I think about my workload, I don't think I am getting the salary I deserve. (P6)
lack of support	less physical contact with colleagues	When we got together with my colleagues, we could exchange ideas. I feel a little bit lonely now. (P10)
	non-supportive administrative staff	The administrative staff does not bother solving our technical problems. (P6)
lack of teachers' voice	exclusion from decision-making	Although we are the ones who do the whole work, they (administrative staff) never ask for our ideas. (P8)
value conflict	perfunctory work	I sometimes feel that I have to do something for just doing it although it does not make any sense. (P9)

When the interviewees were asked about the factors that negatively affected their occupational wellbeing during online teaching, some of them referred to certain personal demands.

Although these factors were not directly related to their job, they considerably affected their wellbeing. The three themes of personal demands derived from interviews were (1) work-home conflict, (2) health-related concerns, and (3) inefficacy in technology use. For the list of the themes that emerged from textual data under the category of personal demands, see table 5.

Young children at home, increased housework (only mentioned by married female participants with children), and a lack of a suitable environment to work from home were the significant factors that influenced some instructors' wellbeing during distance education. Some participants reported that they were so terrified of getting infected or losing their loved ones at the beginning of the pandemic that their health concerns kept them from focusing on their job. Finally, more than half of the instructors mentioned lacking technology self-efficacy. The most challenging part of this process for those instructors was that although they felt incapable of using technology, their ability to do their job depended entirely on it.

Table 5.
Personal demands for teachers

Themes	Codes	Extracts from textual data
work-home conflict	parenting responsibilities	I have a small child who needs me all the time. (P2)
	household chores	My responsibilities at home increased because we were constantly at home as a whole family. (P10)
	lack of a suitable work environment at home	My house is very small. I don't have a personal space at home. (P4)
health-related concerns	loss of loved ones getting infected	At first, I was so worried about my health and my family's health that trying to teach English seemed ridiculous and pointless. (P3)
inefficacy in technology use	technological illiteracy	I felt incapable of using technology. (P4)
	disinterest in technology	I don't have any special interest in technology. (P5)

Resources Available for EFL Instructors to Sustain Occupational Wellbeing

Research question four aimed at identifying the resources that helped EFL instructors thrive during online teaching. The analysis of the transcriptions revealed two major resources: job resources and personal resources. Under the first category, instructors mentioned five aspects: (1) positive organizational climate, (2) collective culture and social climate, (3) classroom management, (4) opportunities for professional development, and (5) security. For the list of themes, see Table 6.

Some instructors highlighted their administrators' supervisory and supportive role as an essential construct for their work engagement. They appreciated the administrators who provided a supportive school environment for them, made the necessary preparation, improvement, and revisions, and provided them with materials suitable for e-teaching. Collective school culture and good

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relations with colleagues were also important resources in this process. The more they cooperated with other instructors, get involved in decision-making processes and shared their emotions and ideas, the better the instructors felt. Striving for a common purpose and learning from each other's experiences, they felt themselves as a part of the team, which, in turn, increased their motivation.

Most of the instructors stated that classroom management was no more a problem in online education. According to these instructors, when compared to the physical classes, some students were more motivated. They participated in the classes more actively, did their homework more regularly, and spent more time on learning and practicing during distance education. Besides, they had smaller class sizes than usual. Their interaction with students was more controlled, and they faced less student misbehaviour compared to the face-to-face classes in the past.

Table 6.

Job resources for teachers

Themes	Codes	Extracts from textual data (P=Participant)
positive organizational climate	supervisory support	Whenever I need help, I can contact the coordinators or administrative staff easily. (P1)
	organizational planning and control	We got prepared very well for this process as an institution. (P11)
collective culture and social climate	cooperation	We cooperated and worked in coordination. (P11)
	positive relations with colleagues	The communication between instructors is good. (P11)
	shared decision making	Before making important decisions, our opinions were asked through questionnaires. (P2)
classroom management	more controlled student-teacher interaction	As the classes were recorded, students were more respectful. (P2)
	small class sizes	I think I teach more effectively because the number of students attending the classes is a lot fewer than usual. (P10).
	motivated students	Students bought their materials, used the online resources, and were more motivated to follow the online classes. (P1)
opportunities for professional development	developing technology literacy	I learned how to use online platforms for teaching. (P12)
	improving teaching skills and practices for distance education	Since I could record my lectures and watch them later, I had the opportunity to go back and see what I was doing well or badly. (P3)
security	health security	I could do my job without going out in public during the pandemic. (P12)
	financial security	In this difficult process, I did not have any fear of losing my job. (P12)

Some instructors regarded the challenges they faced as opportunities for professional development. As a natural consequence of online teaching, they learned to use various technological tools, discovered new teaching methods, and became more knowledgeable about online education. Two interviewees mentioned that they became more reflective because they could record their classes, watch themselves, and reflect on their teaching practices. Finally, a few instructors mentioned security as a vital job resource in this challenging process. They did not have concerns about losing their jobs, and they could earn their life without going out during the pandemic.

Table 7.
Personal resources for teachers

Themes	Codes	Extracts from textual data
adaptability	adaptation to the changes	No matter how difficult the situation was, I chose to adapt and not to complain. (P3)
	problem-solving	There were many negative things, of course, but I preferred to be solution-oriented. I am a tough cookie. (P3)
	patience	There were too many changes in my life, but I had to be patient and calm to keep my mental health. (P12).
optimism	positivism	I tried to stay motivated by focusing on the positive aspects of online education. (P1)
	thankfulness	I was healthy, and my family was healthy. These were enough to be thankful and do my best. (P10)
e-teaching readiness	technology and internet self-efficacy	I was already familiar with the applications and programs I am currently using. (P7).
	access to technological tools	I have the equipment and tools I need for online education. (P2)
	innovativeness	I have been thinking about online education for a long time. I think the age we live in requires it. (P10)
autonomy	self-regulation	I am a planned person. I don't need anyone to support or motivate me. (P5)
	time management	I think online education is more efficient and less tiring when you carefully plan the time and things to do. (P5)
professionalism	teacher motivation	In fact, I am working harder for the students right now because they need me more. (P8)
	teacher values and morals	I do my best to do my job in the best way possible under any circumstances. (P3)
	job enthusiasm	I love my job. Whether it's face to face or online, it didn't make much difference to me. (P5)
openness to interaction with	accessibility	Communication with students is easier this way. We can contact each other any time we want. (P12)

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students	being easy-going/helpful	I am an easy-going person. Online education did not cause an obstacle in my communication with students as I expected. (P5)

While describing the factors contributing to their occupational wellbeing as a teacher during the pandemic, some participants also addressed some personal resources (see Table 7). The themes that emerged under this category were: (1) adaptability, (2) optimism, (3) e-teaching readiness, (4) autonomy, (5) openness to interaction with students, and (6) professionalism.

Interview data showed that instructors who could adapt to changes quickly overcame their negative emotions faster. These instructors regarded the changes as positive challenges rather than difficulties, so they were more patient and calmer when they faced problems. Looking at the bright side and being thankful helped instructors keep their wellbeing and stay engaged. E-teaching readiness was a significant resource mentioned by some instructors. Their familiarity with or interest in technological teaching tools facilitated them to adapt to online education faster. They utilized various technological tools, websites, applications, which made online teaching more manageable and fun. Innovative instructors were more open to technological developments. Thus, they felt less overwhelmed with the new tasks. Moreover, teacher autonomy was found to foster teacher wellbeing. Instructors with autonomy could plan, monitor, and evaluate their work. They found new ways of doing things and solved their problems.

Professionalism was another source for the participants to survive teaching online. Instructors who had motivation and job enthusiasm mentioned doing their best under any circumstances to benefit their students. Finally, most instructors mentioned that they were open to interaction with their students. Keeping communication channels open, using several platforms to connect with students, being accessible, approachable, and easy-going helped them overcome the limitations of online education.

Discussion

The present study was conducted to investigate the wellbeing of EFL instructors teaching online in Türkiye during the pandemic and explore the demands and resources available to them in this process. Regarding the first two research questions, the quantitative data demonstrated an average level of burnout and work engagement in the study sample. The thematic analysis of the qualitative data shed light on the underlying causes of these results revealing the resources and demands available to EFL instructors.

In regard to research question three, the results concerning job demands were similar to those of other studies investigating relationships between job demands and teacher wellbeing in the traditional delivery mode of instruction. As evidenced by prior research, workload and time pressure, value conflict, lack of support from administration, lack of appreciation and low salary, and lack of teachers' voice in decision making were the common factors that threatened teacher wellbeing during online instruction (Bakker & Demerouti, 2016; Bakker et al., 2007; Cephe, 2010; Hakanen, et al., 2005; Helou et al., 2016; Koruklu et al., 2012; Yirci et al., 2014). Nevertheless, in this study, two recent job

demands emerged from the interview sessions with online instructors: uncertainty and limitations of technology. Teachers faced many unknowns, from how to teach to how to measure student achievement. Besides, technology had its drawbacks, and teachers had to struggle with the limitations of technology and the problems it brought with it, apart from teaching. These findings are important to extend other research by supporting the claim that new challenges are likely to bring about new job demands for teachers.

JD-R theory proposes three dimensions, namely job demands, job resources, and personal resources. The findings here provide evidence for the possibility of another dimension in the online mode of teaching: personal demands. Participants mentioned three significant personal factors: work-home conflict, health-related concerns, and inefficacy in technology. Although these variables were directly associated with participants' personal life, they indirectly affected their work engagement in the online teaching process.

Considering the fourth research question, other studies revealed that positive organizational climate, collective culture, social climate, and opportunities for professional development facilitated teacher wellbeing and work commitment (Bakker & Demerouti, 2016; Çağlar, 2011; Koruklu et al., 2012; Simbula, 2010; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2018). Compatible with prior research, the same job resources appeared as common themes in the present study. However, interview transcriptions revealed some unexpected findings, as well. Student-related factors found to be the reasons for poor teacher wellbeing in previous studies emerged as job resources that increased teacher motivation and engagement in this study. Most instructors noted that their students were more motivated to learn online, so classroom management was easier. This, in turn, made them feel more satisfied with doing their primary job, teaching. Belonging to the generation Z, today's university students are called digital natives, and these results may be related to students' interest in technology and readiness for e-learning. Finally, security emerged as a recent job resource in this study. Many participants in the study sample were working at state universities. They could go about their work without leaving their comfort zones during the pandemic.

In line with the findings of prior research, adaptability, self-efficacy, optimism, autonomy, innovativeness, and teacher values, morals and motivation were the personal resources that the instructors in the present study benefited from (Bakker & Demerouti, 2016; Bakker &Sanz-Vergel, 2013; Collie & Martin, 2017; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2018). However, this study contributes to the literature by providing evidence for the existence of further personal resources available to instructors, especially in the case of online teaching. E-teaching readiness and openness to interaction helped them feel less overwhelmed with the requirements of online teaching, keep their occupational wellbeing, and stay engaged.

Overall, the present findings confirm several propositions of JD-R theory (see Bakker & Demerouti, 2016). First, job and personal resources can buffer the undesirable effects of job demands. Interviews revealed that instructors having many job and personal resources available (e.g., supportive social climate, autonomy, self-efficacy) could cope better with job demands (e.g., uncertainty). Second, job resources mainly affect motivation when job demands are high. The online teaching process challenged instructors to improve their teaching practices and motivated them to use new skills and

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strategies. Finally, motivation has a positive influence on job performance. Motivated teachers were more-goal oriented, and they had the energy and enthusiasm to carry out work tasks.

To conclude, this study revealed that instructors thread a fine line between burnout and engagement. Confirming the claims of prior research, findings showed that instructors differed in their responses to the same job demands and experienced different burnout levels in comparable situations (see McCarthey et al., 2009; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017b). Some considered online teaching a welcome challenge that helped them discover new teaching techniques and increase their technological knowledge. They accepted this process with its pros and cons and managed to stay engaged. Others perceived the new situation as stressful. They felt overwhelmed by the difficulties that this process brought with it and came to the point of losing their engagement in the profession of teaching.

Conclusion

Adopting an explanatory sequential mixed methods design, the present study investigated the level of burnout and engagement among EFL instructors during the pandemic and shed light on the factors behind them. The data revealed important results. First of all, the findings revealed an average level of burnout and work engagement in the study sample. Second, the limitations of technology and the uncertainties that the distance education brought were found as new job demands in the study. Also, participants mentioned three significant personal factors that they suffered from during this process: work-home conflict, health-related concerns, and inefficacy in technology. This finding is important for providing evidence that another dimension may be added to JD-R: personal demands. Besides, readiness for e-teaching and openness to interaction emerged as two new personal resources, and security emerged as a new job resource. Finally, student-related factors frequently addressed as causes of poor wellbeing in the literature were found as sources that promoted higher well-being among EFL instructors during distance education in the present study.

The findings suggest significant implications for school leaders, teacher educators, higher education institutions and policy makers. First, school leaders play the key role as teacher wellbeing can be directly influenced by their actions and the climate they create. Reducing instructors' workload, taking a positive and supportive attitude towards them, respecting their personal values, building a supportive social climate, and fostering cooperation and collective decision-making can reduce the instructors' stress and help them cope up with uncertainty and unforeseen changes. Providing instructors with in-service training opportunities on technology use and the necessary equipment for online teaching and appreciating the effort they put in are what school leaders can do to help them adapt and feel less burnout. Secondly, teacher education needs to be modified to equip prospective teachers not only with pedagogical and subject matter knowledge but also with the attitudes, behaviours, and skills they need to develop resilience. One way to do it may be offering elective or compulsory courses on teacher resilience and wellbeing. The likelihood of future wide-scale educational shutdowns because suchlike unforeseen crises may lead to increased emergency remote teaching situations in the future. Therefore, higher education institutions need to have special units that will design plan learning in these environments and provide instructors with necessary support. Finally, it is not likely to ensure student motivation and achievement in an environment where the

teacher does not feel well; thus, policy makers need to take teachers' knowledge, skills and needs into account in their urgent decisions in emergency situations.

Like any research, the present study has some limitations. First, data were collected from a small sample, making it difficult to make broad generalizations of the results within Türkiye and beyond. Besides, in this study, instructors' immediate reactions to their online teaching experiences were examined, and the findings were tied to the timescale under investigation. Future research can reach a larger sample size and use longitudinal designs better to understand the nature of teacher wellbeing during online education. Furthermore, interview discussions revealed that participants' demographic background (e.g., the type of institutions they work for and their marital status) was likely to influence the resources and demands. Although it was beyond the scope of this paper, these variables may be investigated by future studies. Finally, new resources and demands that could affect instructors' wellbeing during online teaching were found in this study; however, more research is required to test the validity of these findings.

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