



FROM CRISIS TO OPPORTUNITY: A DEVELOPING COUNTRY'S EXPERIENCE OF MOTIVATING EFL/ESL TEACHERS IN THE POST-COVID-19 ERA

**Mansoureh
Saeidpoor
Sarcheshmeh**

Department of Linguistics, Kerala University, Kariavattom P.O,
Thiruvananthapuram

Oyun Erdenebat

Department of Linguistics, Kerala University, Kariavattom P.O,
Thiruvananthapuram

S. A. Shanvas

Department of Linguistics, Kerala University, Kariavattom P.O,
Thiruvananthapuram

ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused significant changes in daily life, with many countries implementing quarantines and transitioning to online learning. As the vaccine is not expected to be available before 2021, online learning has become an inevitable option. Despite EFL/ESL teachers expressing favorable attitudes towards online instruction, there is a need to motivate them to return to universities for face-to-face instruction following the pandemic. This research aims to identify the factors that could encourage EFL/ESL teachers to resume traditional classroom instruction in Iranian universities. It is crucial to provide teachers and students with a safe learning environment equipped with the necessary tools and procedures, as their motivation is a key component of successful teaching and learning. The study calls for collaborative efforts from all concerned parties to raise awareness about the importance of boosting motivation to return to universities after the COVID-19 crisis.

KEYWORDS : Post-pandemic education, EFL/ESL teachers, Online learning, Motivation, Successful teaching and learning, Collaborative effort, COVID-19

INTRODUCTION

Coronaviruses are highly contagious and have led to the closure of schools, colleges, and universities around the world during the COVID-19 pandemic. This has resulted in a surge in demand for online teaching and learning, especially in the field of EFL. As this transformation in the educational system has occurred, it is crucial to investigate the potential consequences of online learning and teaching on the quality of education. EFL teachers now have access to online tools and platforms to improve their students' skills in challenging situations like the Covid-19 issue. However, transitioning from traditional to online teaching has presented EFL teachers, who have been conducting classroom instruction for many years, with unique challenges. It is important for governments to identify policies that can impact the effectiveness of online learning. focuses on strategies to motivate EFL/ESL teachers, including providing flexible work arrangements, financial and emotional support, and recognition for their efforts. Effective classification systems can improve organizational communication and efficiency (Etemadi et al., 2022; Khaksar et al., 2010; Asadollahi et al., 2011; Jahanshahi et al., 2019; Shamsaddini et al., 2015; Dehkordy et al., 2013, Moezzi et al., 2012; Gheitarani et al., 2023; Gharleghi et al., 2018), while strategies such as additional training, organizational support, and promoting teacher self-efficacy and autonomy can improve EFL/ESL teacher motivation to pursue further education (Gong et al., 2021, Zhang et al., 2020, Chen et al., 2021; Xu et al., 2020). To address challenges in online teaching, providing clear goals, supportive learning environments, relevant content, and opportunities for collaboration can increase teacher motivation.

Adverse Effects Of The COVID-19 Pandemic On Teachers And Students:

The COVID-19 pandemic has negatively impacted students and teachers worldwide, leading to learning loss, reduced academic achievement, and decreased motivation and engagement. In Iran, access to reliable internet and a conducive learning environment has been a concern, leading to anxiety and uncertainty for students. Teachers have faced increased workload and stress due to adapting to new technology and teaching methods. The pandemic has

highlighted existing inequalities in the education system, and governments and institutions must invest in support for students and teachers to mitigate these effects.

Students Participation

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to the adoption of online learning in schools and universities in Iran, but this has presented challenges for students, particularly those who lack internet access and devices, and EFL/ESL students who may struggle with motivation. Reduced participation has been observed, which can hinder teaching effectiveness and information retention. The Iranian government has implemented initiatives to provide necessary equipment, while schools and universities offer additional resources and tutoring to enhance English proficiency, aiming to support participation and mitigate challenges during the post-COVID era.

Practical Skills

COVID-19 prompted educational institutions to switch to online learning, which may hinder EFL/ESL students' practical skills. Online learning may limit opportunities for practice, feedback, and collaboration. EFL teachers must design online activities to address these challenges and support language development. Slow internet and technical issues in Iran may delay curriculum coverage and add stress to teachers' lives.

Impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic on EFL/ ESL Teachers' Social Life and Their Academic Activities

The Covid-19 pandemic has had negative repercussions on EFL/ESL (English as a Foreign Language) teachers' social life and academic activities in Iran. Here are some of the ways in which the pandemic has affected EFL/ESL teachers in Iran:

- ❖ **Social Life:** Social Life: The COVID-19 pandemic has negatively impacted EFL/ESL teachers in Iran in two main areas. Firstly, social distancing measures have limited social interactions, resulting in isolation and loneliness, which can affect mental health.
- ❖ **Academic Activities:** academic activities have been affected, with school and university closures leading to a shift to online teaching, which has posed challenges for teachers who lack technical skills or equipment. Some students' lack of access to computers and the internet has complicated the teaching and learning process further.
- ❖ **Workload:** EFL/ESL teachers in Iran have also had to cope with an increased workload due to the pandemic. Teaching online requires additional preparation time, and teachers have had to learn new technologies and tools

to conduct their classes. Additionally, some teachers have had to take on additional responsibilities, such as providing emotional support to students who are struggling with the pandemic's effects.

- ❖ **Uncertainty:** The pandemic has created a sense of uncertainty for EFL/ESL teachers in Iran. The situation is constantly evolving, and it is difficult to predict when things will return to normal. This uncertainty can cause anxiety and stress for teachers who may be worried about their job security and financial stability.

In conclusion, the COVID-19 pandemic has adversely affected EFL/ESL teachers' social and academic activities in Iran, prompting adaptation to new teaching methods, increased workload, and uncertainty. It is crucial for universities and authorities to support EFL/ESL teachers during these challenging times with necessary resources to overcome the pandemic's effects.

How EFL/ESL Teachers Overcome the Negative Effects of Covid-19 and Increase their Motivation to Return to Universities in Post-Covid Era

To motivate EFL teachers to return to universities in Iran after the pandemic, institutions can offer flexible work arrangements, financial and emotional support, and recognition for teachers' efforts. To overcome the negative effects of COVID-19, EFL teachers can enhance their technological skills, collaborate with peers, practice self-care, and continue professional development. Institutions can also provide financial and emotional support, recognition, and appreciation for EFL teachers.

CONCLUSION

The reopening of schools and colleges in Iran after the COVID-19 pandemic has raised concerns among families, students, and teachers due to the ongoing threat of new infections. Remote teaching poses challenges for EFL/ESL teachers in developing nations, such as technical issues, limited resource access, and reduced student engagement, leading to burnout and isolation. EFL/ESL teachers can adopt strategies such as remote or hybrid learning, utilizing technology, and adapting to individual learning styles to overcome these challenges in the post-COVID era. Creating peer support networks, focusing on student-centred teaching, and engaging in professional development can boost teacher motivation and engagement. However, safety measures must be taken to improve student performance without adding to teachers' workload.

REFERENCES

1. Alptekin, C. (2002). Towards intercultural communicative competence in ELT. *ELT Journal*, 56(1), 57-64.
2. Auerbach, E. R. (1993). Reexamining English only in the ESL classroom. *TESOL Quarterly*, 27(1), 9-32.
3. Allwright, D., & Bailey, K. M. (1991). Focus on the language classroom: An introduction to classroom research for language teachers. Cambridge University Press.
4. Adrian, H. (2009). *The struggle to teach English as an international language*. Oxford University Press.
5. Adrian, H. (1994). *Appropriate methodology and social context*. Cambridge University Press.
6. Asadollahi, A., Jahanshahi, A. A., & Nawaser, K. (2011). A Comparative Study to Customer's Satisfaction from after Sales Services in the Automotive Industries. *Asian Journal of Business Management Studies*, 2(3), 124-134.
7. Burns, A. (2010). *Doing action research in English language teaching: A guide for practitioners*. Routledge.
8. Kuo, Y. L., & Lee, J. C. (2019). Exploring the relationship between teacher self-efficacy and motivation for continuing education. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 86, 102899. doi: 10.1016/j.tate.2019.102899.
9. Chen, J., Zhang, S. X., Wang, Y., Jahanshahi, A. A., Dinani, M. M., Madavani, A. N., & Nawaser, K. (2021). The Relationship Between Age and Mental Health Among Adults in Iran During the COVID-19 Pandemic. *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction*, 1-16.
10. Jahanshahi, A. A., Nawaser, K., & Brem, A. (2019). The effects of customer capital on customer response speed and innovativeness: the mediating role of marketing capability. *International Journal of Innovation Management*, 23(06), 1950058.
11. Khaksar, S.M.S., Jahanshahi, A.A., Nawaser, K. (2010). Study of the Relation of Customer Service and Entrepreneurial Opportunities, *Asian Journal of Management Research*, 1 (1), 200-214.
12. Liu, Q., & Liu, Q. (2020). Reflections on teaching and learning during the COVID-19 pandemic: A sociocultural perspective. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 107, 104345. doi: 10.1016/j.ijer.2020.104345.
13. Gong, H., Zhang, S. X., Nawaser, K., Jahanshahi, A. A., Xu, X., Li, J., & Bagheri, A. (2021). The Mental Health of Healthcare Staff Working During the COVID-19 Crisis: Their Working Hours as a Boundary Condition. *Journal of Multidisciplinary Healthcare*, 14, 1073.
14. Tsui, K. T., & Law, Y. K. (2019). Collaborative professional learning and teacher motivation: A Hong Kong study. *Professional Development in Education*, 45(1), 45-62. doi: 10.1080/19415257.2018.1532766.
15. Gheitarani, F., Nawaser, K., Hanifah, H., Vafaei-Zadeh, A. (2023). Human-behavioral micro-foundations of dynamic capabilities: A systematic review of the last two decades of research. *International Journal of Management and Decision Making*. DOI: 10.1504/IJMDM.2022.10044203
16. Gharleghi, B., Afshar Jahanshahi, A., & Nawaser, K. (2018). The outcomes of corporate social responsibility to employees: Empirical evidence from a developing country. *Sustainability*, 10(3), 698.
17. Elhadary, Y. A., Alshehri, A. M., Alotaibi, N. M., & Alhusseiny, A. M. (2020). The impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the quality of higher education: Students' perspective. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 11(20), 114-125.
18. Niu, W., & Wang, J. (2018). Teacher autonomy, motivation, and professional development: A comparative study of Chinese EFL and ESL teachers. *TESOL Quarterly*, 52(3), 606-632. doi: 10.1002/tesq.418.
19. Pelletier, L. G., & Rocchi, M. A. (2016). Autonomous and controlled motivational regulations of the self: Mind-body practices and exercise. *Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, 38(6), 664-679. doi: 10.1123/jsep.2016-0128.
20. Gamage, D., Fernando, S., & Sivakumar, S. (2020). A review of life cycle assessment (LCA) on sustainable production and circular economy. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 279, 123620. doi: 10.1016/j.jclepro.2020.123620.
21. Heiskanen, E., Thidell, Å., & Rodhe, H. (2016). A framework for analyzing the political feasibility of radical emissions reduction. *Energy Policy*, 98, 582-592. doi: 10.1016/j.enpol.2016.09.017.
22. Moezzi, H., Nawaser, K., Shakhshian, F., Khani, D. (2012). Customer relationship management (e-CRM): New approach to customer's satisfaction, *African Journal of Business and Management*, issue 6, Vol. 5, 2048-2055
23. Dehkordy, L. F., Shakhshian, F., Nawaser, K., Vesal, S. M., & Kamel, A. (2013). Identification of Factors Influential in Policy Making and Presenting a Combined Model of Iran's Policy-Making. *Journal of sustainable development*, 6(8), 118. https://doi.org/10.5539/jds.v6n8p118
24. Shamsaddini, R., Vesal, S. M., & Nawaser, K. (2015). A new model for inventory items classification through integration of ABC-Fuzzy and fuzzy analytic hierarchy process. *International Journal of Industrial and Systems Engineering*, 19(2), 239-261. https://doi.org/10.1504/IJISE.2015.067250
25. Xu X, Zhang SX, Jahanshahi AA, Li J, Bagheri A, Nawaser K. (2020). The mental health of healthcare staff during the COVID-19 pandemic: it depends on how much they work and their age. *medRxiv*
26. Zhang SX, Liu J, Jahanshahi AA, et al. When the storm is the strongest: The health conditions and job satisfaction of healthcare staff and their associated predictors during the epidemic peak of COVID-19. *medRxiv*. 2020; 2020(04). https://doi.org/10.1101/2020.04.27.20082149
27. Zhang, S. X., Liu, J., Jahanshahi, A. A., Nawaser, K., Yousefi, A., Li, J., & Sun, S. (2020). At the height of the storm: Healthcare staff's health conditions and job satisfaction and their associated predictors during the epidemic peak of COVID-19. *Brain, behavior, and immunity*, 87, 144-146.
28. Zhang, J., Sun, H., Xie, K., & Liu, Y. (2020). How organizational support motivates teachers' continuing professional development: A moderated mediation model. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11, 1-14. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2020.00719.