

The predicting role of EFL/ESL teachers' self-efficacy and grit in their professional development

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ABSTRACT: Teacher professional development (TPD) has received a vast body of investigations in the past decades. Its features, dimensions, measures, and outcomes in English as a foreign language (EFL) context have been sufficiently studied. However, the role of psycho-affective factors in the TPD process has been neglected, especially in terms of demographic factors. To fill this gap, this quantitative study examined the predicting role of teacher self-efficacy and grit in Chinese EFL teachers' professional development. Three online questionnaires were completed by a sample of 305 EFL teachers with different backgrounds in China. The results of structural equation modeling and standardized regression weights revealed a strong association between demographic factors (gender, education, experience) and TPD. In addition, it was found that self-efficacy and grit could collectively predict 78% and 43% of changes in Chinese EFL teachers' professional development. Insights for future researchers and EFL teachers are provided at the end of the study to increase their understanding of TPD in light of psycho-emotional factors.

Keywords: teacher professional development, teacher self-efficacy, grit, EFL teacher, positive psychology

El papel predictivo de la autoeficacia y la perseverancia de los profesores de EFL/ESL en su desarrollo profesional

RESUMEN: En las últimas décadas, el desarrollo profesional de los docentes (TPD) ha sido objeto de mucha investigación. En el contexto del inglés como lengua extranjera, sus características, dimensiones, mediciones y resultados han sido ampliamente estudiados. Sin embargo, el papel de los factores psicoemocionales en el proceso de TPD se ha pasado por alto, especialmente cuando se trata de factores demográficos. Para llenar este vacío, este estudio cuantitativo examinó el papel predictivo de la autoeficacia y la perseverancia de los maestros en el desarrollo profesional de los profesores de inglés chinos. Tres cuestionarios en línea fueron completados por 305 profesores de inglés chino de diferentes orígenes. Los resultados del modelo de ecuaciones estructurales y los pesos de regresión estandarizados revelaron fuertes vínculos entre los factores demográficos (género, educación, experiencia) y TDP. Además, la autoeficacia y la perseverancia juntos podrían predecir el 78% y el 43% de los cambios en el desarrollo profesional de los profesores de inglés en China. Al final del estudio, los autores ofrecen a los futuros investigadores y profesores de inglés algunas ideas para aumentar su comprensión de los factores psicológicos-emocionales.

Palabras clave: Desarrollo Profesional de los Docentes, Autoeficacia de los Docentes, Persistencia, EFL los profesores, Psicología Positiva

1. INTRODUCTION

Due to the rise of popularity and spread of English language throughout the world, many institutions and universities oblige their teaching staff to attend courses that help them improve their teaching quality (Sancar et al., 2021; Zerey, 2018). Moreover, the shift toward world Englishes and lingua franca multiplied the importance of updating pedagogical knowledge and practices for second/foreign language teachers in many countries (Estaji & Ghiasvand, 2022; Taguchi & Ishihara, 2018). These requirements put teachers and their pedagogical effectiveness at the top list of organizational policies and plans with rising budgets devoted (Cosgun & Savaş, 2019; Derakhshan et al., 2020; Jenkins, 2013). As a result, in many contexts, L2 teachers were recommended to partake in several formal and informal professional development courses to promote their pedagogical and assessment knowledge/practice repertoire in light of situational and need changes (Derakhshan et al., 2020; Estaji & Ghiasvand, 2021; McChesney & Aldridge, 2018; Thakur, 2012). Teacher professional development (TPD) has to do with various forms of training that teachers received formally (e.g., workshops, seminars, webinars, conferences etc.) and informally (discussion groups, reading articles/books, observing other teachers etc.) to enhance their knowledge, skills, and practices related to teaching (Petty et al., 2016; Yan, 2021).

For years, TPD programs, worldwide, led to few (if any) improvements in teaching quality enhancement due to their top-down, deficiency-oriented, and one-size fits all approaches (Bhatt, 2021; Cosgun & Savaş, 2019). They were usually delivered collectively to a large group of teachers on a one-shot basis (Porter & Freeman, 2020). However, recent developments in L2 research turned TPDs to ongoing, dynamic, self-initiated and directed, and active attempts driven by internal and external factors (Derakhshan & Nazari, 2022; Lopes & Cunha, 2017; Sims & Fletcher-Wood, 2021; Zepeda, 2013). Most of the studies on L2 teachers' TPD have focused on the dimensions, realizations, and features of a good TPD from different perspectives (Barrera-Pedemonte, 2016; Bett & Makewa, 2018; Borg, 2018; Fitri et al., 2021). To a large extent, the external layers of TPD have been examined, to date (Freeman, 2001). Nevertheless, the role of psycho-affective factors in the process and success of such courses has been considerably neglected by researchers (Gu et al., 2022). As teaching is an emotional occupation and the sustainment of TPD has been shown dependent on teacher emotions (Derakhshan, 2022a, b; Sokal et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2021), psycho-affective factors like self-efficacy and grit can influence and transform EFL/ESL teachers' professionalism.

Self-efficacy concerns teachers' certainty and assurance in their pedagogical knowledge and skills to produce learning in learners (Bandura, 1997). It has been shown that L2 teachers' self-efficacy influences their instructional practices and behaviors in the classroom as well as their feelings (Fathi & Derakhshan, 2019; Fathi et al., 2021; Mok & Moore, 2019). Additionally, research indicates that teachers' self-efficacy positively affects various work-related factors like resilience, job commitment, reflection, job satisfaction, well-being, classroom management, and enthusiasm (Fathi et al., 2021; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2014; Zee & Koomen, 2016). However, the way it can predict and influence TPD has remained unclear in EFL/ESL contexts. Regarding grit, as another influential factor in TPD, much has been written about the complexities and challenges inherent in L2 teaching requiring teachers

to stay resilient and tough (Dai & Wang, 2023; Derakhshan, 2022a; Mercer, 2020). Grit is a personality feature similar to intrinsic motivation, which highlights one's passion and eagerness to reach his/her goals at work in spite of difficulties and problems (Duckworth & Quinn, 2009). It provides the required energy and interest for teachers to work diligently (Duckworth, 2016). Teachers' sense of grit has been revealed to incur pedagogical success, interest, and productivity (Keegan, 2017). However, few studies (if any) have investigated the impact of grit on L2 teachers' professional development in an Asian context. To fill the gaps in this area, this study took a quantitative approach to examine the predictive power of EFL/ESL teachers' self-efficacy and grit in their professional development in China. In doing so, it tries to expand the literature by adding a psycho-emotional side to TPD research and practice.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. The Concept of Teacher Self-efficacy

The notion of self-efficacy originally belongs to social cognitive theory and capitalizes on the development and use of agency by an individual to have some influence on what he/she does (Bandura, 2006). Based on this conceptualization of self-efficacy, people have the capacity to self-regulate, self-organize, and self-reflect on their behaviors and practices (Bandura, 2006). Therefore, their perceived self-efficacy influences their goals and behaviors considering the contextual conditions (Schunk & Meece, 2006). Simply, the concept refers to the self-assurance and certainty that a person has concerning his/her abilities to do a task (Bandura, 2011). It is at variance with self-concept and self-esteem (Han & Wang, 2021; Mok & Moore, 2019). Self-concept denotes an individuals' overall image of his/her abilities, while self-esteem pertains to one's perception of his/her self-worth. In teacher education, the concept of teacher self-efficacy has scarcely been defined. Yet in a landmark piece of research, Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2010) drew on social cognitive theory and described teacher self-efficacy as a teacher's beliefs in his/her own capability to plan, consolidate, and practice instructional activities necessary for learning and meeting educational objectives. The construct is best seen as a dynamic factor, which is context-specific and guided by personal factors like experience and emotion (Bandura, 2011). One of the most important affective factors with which teacher self-efficacy may interact is grit, as described below.

2.2. L2 Grit

Due to numerous complications and challenges of teaching English to non-native speakers in EFL settings, teachers need to be gritty and pursue their goals diligently (Taşpınar & Külekçi, 2018; Pan, 2022). In comparison to many teacher-related factors, grit has received insufficient attention and its conception is not sturdy in L2 education. However, it has recently been defined by some researchers owing to its essentiality in one's academic success (Christopoulou et al., 2018; Yang, 2021). According to Duckworth et al. (2007), the construct of grit is the force that stir teachers and students to work energetically and enthusiastically in pursue of their long-term goals. It is a psycho-affective factors created by a combination of

sustainable perseverance and interest despite adversities (Duckworth & Quinn, 2009). While grit has been associated to intrinsic motivation, some regard it as a characteristic beyond motivation and equal to conscientiousness (Credé et al., 2017; Duckworth & Quinn, 2009). It has been claimed that L2 grit is hardly affected by contextual changes (Reed et al., 2013), yet this contention seems to require more research evidence. As depicted by Duckworth et al. (2007), two components underlie grit known as *perseverance in effort* and *persistence of interests* (Figure 1).

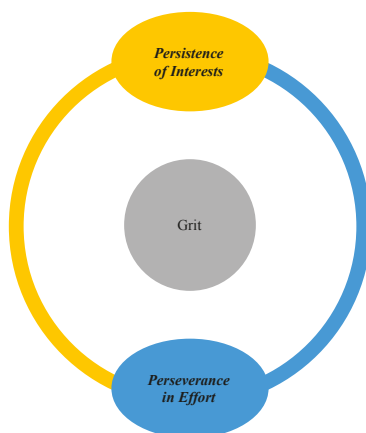


Figure 1. *The Components of Grit*

2.3. Teacher Professional Development

The swift growth of English language education worldwide imposed several pressures and demands on teachers to remain functioning and innovative so that they can succeed in their profession and produce student-learning (Liu & Phelps, 2020; Jiang et al., 2019). These demands motivated L2 educators and policy-makers to make efforts to strengthen EFL teachers' professionalism through multifarious courses and programs (Borg, 2018). Consequently, TPD programs gain popularity and prominence as enduring efforts and methods to become a professional instructor with an outstanding identity (Avalos, 2011; Estaji & Ghiasvand, 2022; Hartono, 2016). TPD can be defined as various forms of teacher-learning that enhance their pedagogical expertise and instructional effectiveness (Derakshan & Nazari, 2022; Yan, 2021; Wang et al., 2022). For some researchers, TPD is a dynamic process, meaning teacher growth and students' stable learning (Bhatt, 2021; Wong, 2011). As put by Avalos (2011), the concept of TPD concerns educating pre-service and in-service teachers about different teaching, learning, and assessment methods and facilitate the transmission of theories into practices in the classroom. Given its direct impact on learning, TPD has been unanimously regarded as an opportunity to promote teacher and teaching quality in L2 contexts (Tajeddin & Rezanejad, 2019; Zhang, 2022).

Different tasks and activities can be given to teachers in formal and informal events to ensure their sustainable development in tune with learners' needs and emerging teaching

approaches (Gu et al., 2022; Gudeta, 2022). Nowadays, TPD is more than the presentations of teaching methods and strategies; instead, it is a situated and critical practice by which teachers theorize from their own practices (Abedinia, 2012; Kumaravadivelu, 2003). Furthermore, modern TPD programs consider a significant place for the role of emotions, beliefs, identity, and cognition in TPD courses (Ahmad & Shah, 2022; Gu et al., 2022; Porter & Freeman, 2020). However, there is a need for further empirical support for these aspects of TPD, especially in EFL contexts.

2.4 Related Studies

With the implementation of the principles and practices of positive psychology (PP) in second language acquisition (SLA), an increasing interest was made among educational scholars, especially in EFL contexts (e.g., Derakhshan, 2022 a, b; Fathi et al., 2021; Mercer, 2020; Xie & Derakhshan, 2021; Wang & Derakhshan, 2023; Wang, 2023; Wang, Wang, & Xin, 2023; Derakhshan, Wang, Wang, & Ortega-Martín, 2023). These studies have pointed to the pivotal role of positive emotions and psycho-affective factors in teaching and learning English language. One of the variables that has long entered into SLA research, but remained limited to students' perspectives for decades is self-efficacy (Liu et al., 2022). However, in light of PP, teacher-self-efficacy has lately been operationally defined and studied (Fathi & Derakhshan, 2019; Mok & Moore, 2019). Empirical investigations show that EFL teachers' self-efficacy has a large impact on their students' learning, motivation, performance, and engagement (Fackler et al., 2021; Mojavezi & Tamiz, 2012; Corry & Stella, 2018). Additionally, scholarship related to teacher self-efficacy demonstrated a positively interaction between this construct and teachers' sense of resilience, enthusiasm, commitment, professional well-being, job satisfaction, classroom management, and reflection (Fathi et al., 2021; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2014; Zee & Koomen, 2016). Likewise, different correlational studies have been carried put on L2 teacher self-efficacy arguing that it has the potential to produce positive emotions and diminish negative ones in the class (Bing et al., 2022; Fathi et al., 2021; Fathi & Saeedian, 2020; Ghasemzadeh et al., 2019, to name a few).

Another teacher-related construct with which self-efficacy may correlate is grit (Dobbins, 2016). In another study, Fabelico and Afalla (2020) found a positive relationship between teacher grit and self-efficacy and argued that their interaction influences teachers' professional passion, performance, and burnout level. Similarly, Riddle (2018) maintained that pre-service teachers' grit could predict their self-efficacy beliefs in a correlational study in Virginia. Teacher grit, itself, has been empirically examined by different researchers approving its positive effect on various aspects of teachers' work such as commitment, competence, well-being, enjoyment, satisfaction, success, resilience, and interest (Hodge et al., 2018; Keegan, 2017; Moen & Olsen, 2020; Reed & Jeremiah, 2017; Steinmayr et al., 2018; Yang, 2021). What is left under-researched is the possible impact of the interplay of these two constructs on EFL teachers' professionalism and professional development. A vast body of research exists on the significance of TPD programs for EFL teachers' pedagogy and practice (e.g., Cosgun & Savaş, 2019; Fan & Wang, 2022; Fu & Wang, 2022; Zerey, 2018). Additionally, the purposes, dimensions, measures, and characteristics of effective TPDs have been examine din different educational contexts (Borg, 2018; Haug & Mork, 2021; Yan, 2021).

Moreover, research endorses the facilitative role of TPD courses in developing teachers' professional and positional identity (Garner et al., 2016; Moore, 2008) as well as teaching quality (Bicaj & Treska, 2014). Nevertheless, the affective side of TPD and the mediating role of demographic factors have been limitedly examined, to date. TPD programs are by no means exclusively oriented to linguistic and pedagogical issues. Instead, an essential place should be considered for teachers' psycho-affective factors and their associated awareness. To cast some light on this area of research, this quantitative research examine the effect of teacher self-efficacy and grit on Chinese EFL teachers' professional development in light of demographics. More specifically, it probed into the power of self-efficacy and grit in predicting professional development. By doing so, it summons the attention of educators and researchers in L2 teacher education to the psycho-affective angles of TPD. The following research question guided the research process:

1. How much variance in the EFL teachers' professional development can be predicted by EFL teachers' demographic factors, self-efficacy, and grit?

3. METHOD

3.1. Participants

Based on a convenient sampling method, 305 EFL teachers from Jiangsu Province, China were invited to participate in the study. The sample consisted of 20 male teachers (6.56%) and 285 female teachers (93.44%), of whom 137 (44.92%) had B.A. degrees, 161 (52.79%) had M.A. degrees and 6 (1.97%) had Ph.D. degrees. The age of the sample ranged from 23 to 45 years old and the teachers attended the study with informed consent and self-reported willingness.

3.2. Instruments

3.2.1 Teacher Self-efficacy Questionnaire

In order to assess the participants' self-efficacy, Tschannen-Moran and Hoy's (2001) questionnaire was employed. It was comprised of 24 items presented through a 5-point Likert scale that ranged from 1 "nothing" to 5 "a great deal". The reliability of the scale was measured by Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, which indicated an acceptable reliability index of .89.

3.2.2 Teacher Grit Questionnaire

The short version of Duckworth and Quinn's (2009) grit scale was utilized in this research. It encompassed eight items designed based on a 5-point Likert scale in which "1" represented "very much like me" and "5" represented "not like me at all". The items were divided into two categories of consistency of interest (4 items) and perseverance of effort (4 items). Of the items, item 1, 3, 5, and 6 were reversely coded. The reliability of the scale was also calculated by Cronbach's Alpha whose results illustrated a reliability of .83.

3.2.3 Teacher Professional Development Questionnaire

The third questionnaire employed in the current study was teacher professional development questionnaire, which was designed and validated by Estaji and Molkizadeh (2022) in Iran. It included 76 Likert-based items in which the respondent had to choose from a scale ranging from 1 “strongly disagree” to 5 “strongly agree”. Seven sub-categories were provided in the scale, which were related to methods, motivators, beliefs, means, obstacles, beneficiaries, and needs of TPD. Like previous scales, Cronbach's alpha was consulted to ensure the reliability of this questionnaire, too. The results illustrated a reliability and internal consistency of .93.

3.3 Data Collection Procedure

To collect the data, the researcher provided an online version of the three questionnaires related to teacher self-efficacy, grit, and professional development. To this end, a popular platform in China called “Questionnaire Star” was used to create and share the links of the scales. The online questionnaires were filled in by 305 EFL teachers from Jiangsu Province with different background information. Before that, the aim of the study and the way the questionnaires were to be completed were explicitly described to the participants. The researcher gathered the data during a semester (3.5 months). It is worth mentioning that both Chinese and English versions of the questionnaires were used simultaneously in order to ensure the accuracy of the data and to facilitate participants' understanding. After obtaining all the data, the researcher re-examined the number of submitted questionnaires and the responses to identify the problems and mistakes before embarking on the final analysis. Finally, the data were entered into SPSS software to be analyzed carefully in line with the aims of the study. The results were then depicted through different statistical Tables and Figures.

3.4 Data Analysis

To provide answers to the formulated research question, in this study, the quantitative data collected via questionnaires were statistically analyzed by means of different techniques. First, structural equation modeling (SEM) was used to afford a hypothetical model of the interaction among teacher self-efficacy, L2 grit, and TPD. Then Chi-square test was run to see if there is any differences in the frequency of the variables. Additionally, standardized regression weights were calculated for each of the variables to determine their association and predictive power. The obtained results were then statistically visualized.

4. RESULTS

To answer this research question, which sought out how much variance in the EFL teachers' professional development can be predicted by their demographic factors, self-efficacy, and grit, the researcher took advantage of SEM analyses (Figure 2).

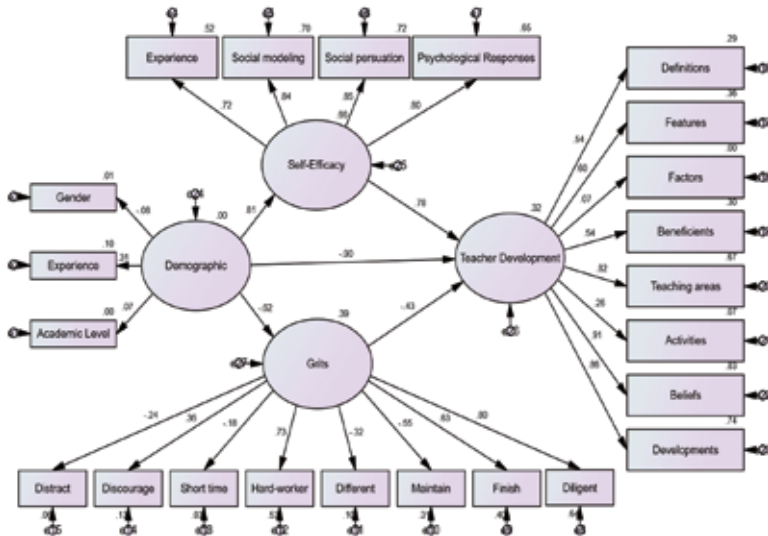


Figure 2. The Research Models in the Standardized Estimation Mode for the association between self-efficacy, grit and teacher development

Table 1. Result (Default model)

| | |
|--------------------|---------|
| Chi-square | 432.796 |
| Degrees of freedom | 225 |
| Probability level | .000 |

According to the software output (Table 1), Chi-square = 432.796, Degrees of freedom = 225, and Probability level = .000, Chi-square test is significant (Sig = 0.000 < 0.05), so it can be concluded that there is a significant difference in the frequency of variables (see table 2).

Table 2. The Results of Chi-square value

| Model | NPAR | CMIN | DF | P | CMIN/DF |
|--------------------|------|----------|-----|------|---------|
| Default model | 74 | 432.796 | 225 | .000 | 1.924 |
| Saturated model | 299 | .000 | 0 | | |
| Independence model | 46 | 2475.309 | 253 | .000 | 9.784 |

The results of Table 2 reveal that the CMIN value is less than 3, so the model is fitted, and there are significant associations between the variables.

Table 3. *Baseline Comparisons*

| Model | NFI Delta1 | RFI rho1 | IFI Delta2 | TLI rho2 | CFI |
|--------------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|-------|
| Default model | .825 | .803 | .908 | .895 | .906 |
| Saturated model | 1.000 | | 1.000 | | 1.000 |
| Independence model | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 |

Table 4. *The Results of Root Mean Square Error of Approximation*

| Model | RMSEA | LO 90 | HI 90 | PCLOSE |
|--------------------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| Default model | .055 | .047 | .063 | .138 |
| Independence model | .170 | .164 | .176 | .000 |

The results of Tables 3 and 4 show that the CFI value is more than .9 and RMSEA is between .05 and .08 that demonstrate that strong association between the variables.

Table 5. *Standardized Regression Weights for the Variables*

| | | Estimate |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------|
| Teachers' self-efficacy | ← Demographic Factors | .810 |
| Teachers' grits | ← Demographic Factors | -.624 |
| Teachers' professional development | ← Demographic Factors | -.899 |
| Teachers' professional development | ← Grits | -.430 |
| Teachers' professional development | ← Teachers' self-efficacy | .778 |
| Mastery Experiences | ← Teachers' self-efficacy | .721 |
| Social Modeling | ← Teachers' self-efficacy | .838 |
| Social Persuasion | ← Teachers' self-efficacy | .851 |
| Psychological Responses | ← Teachers' self-efficacy | .805 |
| Definitions | ← Teachers' professional development | .537 |
| Features | ← Teachers' professional development | .603 |
| Factors | ← Teachers' professional development | .069 |
| Beneficiates | ← Teachers' professional development | .544 |
| Teaching areas | ← Teachers' professional development | .817 |
| Activities | ← Teachers' professional development | .262 |
| Beliefs | ← Teachers' professional development | .912 |
| Developments | ← Teachers' professional development | .862 |

The results of Table 5 present the standardized regression weights for the variables. The results show there is a strong association between demographic factors and teachers' professional development. In other words, 90 percent of changes in teachers' professional development can be predicted by the gender, academic level, and teaching experiences of

the teachers. In addition, the results demonstrated that there is a strong association between teachers' self-efficacy, grit, and their professional development. The values indicate that 78 percent of changes in teachers' professional development can be predicted by their self-efficacy and 43 percent of changes can be predicted by their Grits. Moreover, among the four sub-factors of the teachers' self-efficacy, *social modeling*, *social persuasion*, and *psychological responses* with more than 80 percent attribution had a strong prediction power. This value emphasized the importance of others and psychological factors in teachers' professional development. Finally, among the sub-factors of teachers' professional development *teachers' beliefs* with about 91 percent attribution had the strongest prediction power. These results highlighted the role of teachers' psychology and their pedagogical beliefs in the process of their professional development.

5. DISCUSSION

This quantitative study explored the predicting capacity of EFL teachers' self-efficacy and grit in their professional development in terms of demographic factors. The results of SEM showed a strong association between demographic factors (i.e., gender, academic level, teaching experience) and TPD. More precisely, they jointly predicted 90% of the changes in Chinese EFL teachers' professional development. This finding resembles those obtained in previous research (e.g., Yoon & Kim, 2022; Zhiyong et al., 2020) in which the role of demographic factors in TPD was approved. It can be postulated that Chinese EFL teachers' demographics influenced/predicted their TPD because TPD is no longer an isolated practice done to teacher but with teachers, hence their socio-demographic factors are determinant in their professionalism. This conception is also in line with the socio-cultural and situated perspectives of TPD, which endorse the dynamic and context-specific nature of TPD.

Moreover, it was found that EFL teachers' self-efficacy, grit, and professional development had a strong association. Self-efficacy could predict 78% of variations in teachers' professional development, while grit managed to predict 43% of changes in TPD. In other words, self-efficacy was a better predictor of TPD in this research. The results go together with Dobbins (2016) and Fabelico and Afalla (2020), who empirically attested the correlation between teachers' self-efficacy and grit as well their impact on TPD. The psycho-emotional nature of SLA might be the reason behind such a strong interplay. Additionally, self-efficacy could predict TPD better probably because EFL teachers' self-assurance of their pedagogical skills enhances their passion and enthusiasm to learn more and become better teachers. Teachers with high self-efficacy do not stop working on themselves to grow professionally and pedagogically. As a result, they seek for TPDs despite challenges and time constraints.

The results can also be attributed to Chinese EFL teachers' resilience and hope for their career despite overwhelming setbacks in L2 contexts. They seem to connect grit to TPD because one's eagerness to partake in TPDs depends on his/her toughness against L2 challenges and acknowledging their resolution through TPDs. When EFL teachers feel gritty and assured of themselves, they may show more zest for TPDs. That is why, the participants considered these two constructs as predictors of their professionalism. It was also found that *social modeling*, *social persuasion*, and *psychological responses*, as underlying factors of self-efficacy, had a stronger prediction power with more than 80% attribution. Again, this

might be due to the socio-psychological basis of TPD in EFL contexts in which observing others, social demands, and psychological reactions to teaching and teacher education influence TPD. Finally, it was indicated that *teachers' beliefs* with about 91% attribution had the strongest prediction power from among TPD components. This is consistent with Ahmad and Shah (2022) and Gu et al. (2022), who asserted that EFL teachers' pedagogical beliefs and cognitions have a significant place in their TPD process. It appears that Chinese EFL teachers, in this study, had an ample knowledge of teacher psychology and their pedagogical beliefs aligned with their needs for professionalism.

6. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Some conclusions can be made from the findings of this study. Firstly, it can be understood that TPD is a function of several pedagogical, demographic, and psycho-affective factors. It is not a passive practice but a social, dynamic, and emotion-sensitive endeavor. Secondly, it can be proclaimed that L2 teaching, as a challenging task for EFL teachers, requires a sense of grit and self-efficacy as two facilitators of TPD. The third conclusion drawn from this study is that TPD programs should not be seen as externally driven practices, but collective endeavors that are instigated by EFL teachers' inner states and factors, at first hand. Taken together, the results concerning the interplay of teacher self-efficacy, L2 grit, and TPD provide insights for teaching at teacher education at theory and practice levels. The main theoretical implication is that TPD models and frameworks need to integrate the constructs of PP beside pedagogical concerns. The findings may have significant implications for the understanding of how psycho-emotional factors like self-efficacy and grit (re)shape EFL teacher's professionalism. Practically, the insights obtained from this study may assist EFL teachers in that they understand the prominent role of their beliefs and self-assurance as well as toughness in their professional growth and success. Prior to this research, it was difficult to for EFL teachers to predict how their sense of self-efficacy and grit foster their professional development. TPD program designers and administrators may also gain insights from the findings by enriching their programs by adding a psycho-affective side to L2 teachers' education. They can emphasize on the hybrid nature of teaching and teacher education by underscoring the role of various factors beyond pedagogical ones.

Despite these implications, this study has some limitations. The quantitative research design does not allow the representation of the dynamics of the interplay of self-efficacy, grit, and TPD over time. The scope of the study is limited to China and generalizing the findings to other contexts must be done with caution. It is also unfortunate that a more balanced sample of both genders was absent in this study. Regardless of its limitations, the study indeed expands our understanding of the interconnected nature of TPD and psycho-affective factors. Yet, further research should be undertaken to examine how these variables affect TPD in different EFL contexts. Further research needs to be done through qualitative instruments to estimate the fluctuations in TPD in light of other psycho-affective constructs. In addition, large randomized and controlled studies may offer more evidence regarding the claimed interplay in this article. Likewise, it would be a useful area for future research to replicate this study in other contexts using different designs, tools, and stakeholders. Furthermore, the place of emotions and psychological factors in TPD programs designed

for EFL teachers' assessment practices can be explored, especially in light of alternative assessments (Derakhshan & Ghiasvand, 2022; Banitalebi & Ghiasvand, 2023). Overall, the findings call for actions to be taken by policy-makers and managers to modify TPDs so that EFL teachers' psycho-affective variables are taken into account.

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