

## Mediating Effect of Work Motivation on the Relationship between Competency and Professional Performance of EFL Teachers

### *Pengantaraan Kesan Motivasi Kerja ke atas Hubungan antara Kecekapan dan Prestasi Profesional Guru EFL*

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#### ABSTRACT

*Considerable evidence indicates that teachers' competency, work motivation, and professional performance are related. However, insufficient research has investigated the mediating effect of work motivation on the relationship between competency and professional performance in the context of teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Therefore, the main purpose of this paper is to investigate the mediating effect of EFL Teachers' Work Motivation (EFLTWM) on the relationship between EFL Teachers' Competency (EFLTC) and EFL Teachers' Professional Performance (EFLTPP) at public secondary schools in Yemen. The discussion arises primarily based on the considerable theoretical vagueness and empirical inconclusiveness in the existing literature concerning EFL teachers' competency and work motivation, and their contribution. As of interest to resolve this controversy, a research framework is developed in which EFLTWM acts as the mediator between EFLTC and EFLTPP. For this purpose, three instruments were used to collect data which are: EFL Teachers' Competency Questionnaire, Multidimensional Work Motivation Scale, and EFL Teachers' Professional Performance Evaluation Instrument. The sample of this study consisted of 375 female and male EFL teachers at public secondary schools in Yemen who were selected through a simple random sampling technique to be the participants of the study. The partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM), using SmartPLS, was performed to test the hypothesized model. Findings revealed that EFLTWM partially mediates the effect of EFLTC on EFLTPP. Based on the findings, some recommendations have been provided and some implications for teacher training have been discussed.*

*Keywords: EFL teacher; mediation; competency; motivation; performance*

#### ABSTRAK

*Terdapat banyak bukti yang menunjukkan bahawa kecekapan, motivasi kerja, dan prestasi profesional guru adalah berkaitan. Walau bagaimanapun, tidak banyak penyelidikan telah mengkaji kesan pengantaraan motivasi kerja terhadap hubungan antara kecekapan dan prestasi profesional dalam konteks guru bahasa Inggeris sebagai bahasa asing (EFL). Oleh itu, tujuan utama kertas ini adalah untuk mengkaji kesan pengantaraan motivasi kerja guru EFL (EFLTWM) terhadap hubungan antara kecekapan guru EFL (EFLTC) dan prestasi profesional guru EFL (EFLTPP) di sekolah menengah awam di Yaman. Perbincangan ini timbul terutamanya berdasarkan terdapatnya teori yang kurang jelas dan kajian empirical yang tidak konsisten dalam literature berkenaan kecekapan dan motivasi kerja guru EFL, dan sumbangan mereka. Bagi menyelesaikan kontroversi ini, sebuah rangka kerja penyelidikan telah dibangunkan di mana EFLTWM bertindak sebagai mediator antara EFLTC dan EFLTPP. Untuk tujuan ini, tiga instrument digunakan untuk mengumpul data iaitu: Questionnaire Kompetensi Guru EFL, Skala Motivasi Kerja Multidimensi, dan Instrumen Evaluasi Prestasi Profesional Guru EFL. Sampel kajian ini terdiri daripada 375 guru EFL perempuan dan lelaki di sekolah menengah awam di Yaman yang dipilih melalui teknik pensampelan rawak mudah untuk menjadi peserta kajian. Pemodelan 'partial least squares structural equation' (PLS-SEM), menggunakan SmartPLS, dijalankan untuk menguji model hipotesis. Dapatan menunjukkan bahawa hanya sebahagian sahaja daripada EFLTWM mengantara kesan EFLTC terhadap EFLTPP. Berdasarkan*

*penemuan tersebut, beberapa cadangan telah disediakan dan beberapa implikasi untuk latihan guru telah dibincangkan.*

*Kata kunci: Guru EFL; pengantaraan; kecekapan; motivasi; prestasi*

## INTRODUCTION

Foreign language (FL) education is critical throughout the world and should be taken into consideration (Aladdin 2017). In Yemen, teaching English as a foreign language has a very important role at secondary school level because it is a compulsory subject at this stage. It should really be considered in order to achieve national education goals and to prepare students for the tertiary level (Al-Sohbani 2016). At the tertiary level, English language is indispensable and there is a great interest among Yemeni students to study it (Yassin & Abdul Razak 2017). However, current conditions in Yemen, especially in secondary schools, present poor students' performance in English language. Al-Sohbani (2016) states that, in Yemen, as a result of teaching English in schools by incompetent/unskilled teachers, school leavers are incompetent/unskilled and ineffective in using the English language. In recent years there has been a growing consensus that EFLTPP can be the main factor affecting EFL students' performance (Wang 2010). The central task of the EFL teacher is to provide students with the opportunity to learn English language and to make them do things that will lead to learning the language (Shihiba 2011). Similarly, Blank (2003) argues that teachers' performance has become a major issue in current movements of education reform and school improvement. In light of the EFL teachers' professional and specialist standards, Danielson's (2013) framework of teaching, and the framework of EFL teaching in the Ministry of Education in Yemen, EFLTPP can be defined as what EFL teachers do in the classrooms including planning and preparation, teacher's competencies and characteristics, classroom management, effective teaching and learning, and evaluation.

Clearly from the above discussion, EFL teachers' professional performance is an indispensable and influential factor which affects EFL students' achievement and performance. Unfortunately, the problem is that there are clear shortcomings in EFLTPP at Yemeni secondary schools (Zuheer

2013). Al-Sohbani (2013) indicates that "teaching of English at the Yemeni public schools has been criticized as ineffective due to the poor level of the language competency of most school leavers although they spend six years studying English" (p. 41). In addition, he explains that EFL teachers have difficulties in using the English language proficiently at secondary schools in Yemen. Most of them show poor abilities in oral and written expression of English, and these teachers all cannot teach effectively. Jimbo et al. (2010) say that up skilling and developing EFL teachers are the most direct ways of influencing educational practices at the school and classroom levels. Finally, by reviewing previous studies related to this issue, it is clear that many similar contexts (EFL contexts) suffer from this issue. For instance, there are clear shortcomings in EFL/ESL teachers' professional performance in Yemen (Al-Sohbani 2016; Zuheer 2013), Saudi Arabia (Alfahadi et al. 2016), Jordan (Al-Wreikat & Abdullah 2010), China (Xiongyong et al. 2012); and in some ASEAN nations (Waterworth 2016). All these studies confirmed the issue of low professional performance of EFL teachers which has been attributed by these studies to the insufficiency of influential factors. Consequently, they assured the weaknesses of EFL teachers' professional performance in their contexts and recommended the necessity of searching for the influential factors which affect EFL teachers' professional performance in order to improve it. Thus, among various factors that influence EFL students' learning and performance, EFLTPP can be considered of great significance and should be focused upon. Subsequently, a very important question is raised. What might have caused the weaknesses in EFL teachers' performance? This paper is a try to answer a part of this broad question. To be more specific, teachers' performance is the result of a combination of an individual's work motivation, job satisfaction, and ability or competency (Campbell et al. 1993; Kreitner 2009; Maier 1955). This paper helps in understanding how the relationship between EFLTC and EFLTPP can be positively affected in the presence of high EFLTWM.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Theoretically, in the theory of performance, a model of causal patterns of relations between the professional performance and its determinants is presented by Campbell et al. (1993). In the model of Campbell et al. (1993), it is supposed that the performance components as a function of three determinants, including competency and motivation.

Firstly, EFLTC is a factor to enhance their work motivation and to develop their professional performance which is capable of developing EFL students' performance (Dweik & Awajan 2013; Nzulwa 2014). EFLTC is certain abilities of EFL teachers that enable them to demonstrate appropriate specific actions, thereby leading to effective EFL teaching performance (Arshad 2009). In light of three theories of Cross (2003), Mulhauser (1958), and Richards (1998), Arshad (2009) proposes three main domains and dimensions of EFLTC: knowledge competency, professional competency, and personal competency.

Secondly, another factor that supports EFL teachers to work or to support the high professional performance of the EFL teachers is their work motivation. Erkaya (2013) argues that, about ESL/EFL teachers' motivation research, not much has been found. She attributed that to the previous focus of researchers on students' motivation since they thought it was the only prerequisite for language success. But, the concept of teachers' motivation is gradually receiving attention in TESOL nowadays, especially in educational psychology and teacher education (Tsutsumi 2014; Boset, Asmawi, & Abedalaziz 2017a). Basically, the studies about motivation aim to explain the reasons behind individuals' specific choices, engaging in actions, making efforts, and persisting in actions (Alqahtani 2017). EFLTWM

is the process that arouses, energizes, directs, and sustains EFL teachers' behaviors and performance (Dweik & Awajan 2013). In light of Deci and Ryan's (2000) Self-Determination Theory (SDT), the Multidimensional Work Motivation Scale (MWMS) was developed by Gagné et al. (2015) to measure six motivational constructs: a motivation, external regulation - social, external regulation - material, introjected regulation, identified regulation, and intrinsic motivation.

However, the causal relationships between competency and work motivation, competency and professional performance, and work motivation and professional performance have not been explored in the context of the EFL teachers, especially in Yemen (Boset, Asmawi, & Abedalaziz 2017b). In addition to these gaps, there has been very little research examining the mediating effect of work motivation on the relationship between competency and performance in non-EFL teachers' context as well as no study has been found, in this regard, in the context of EFL teachers. Therefore, the present paper aims to bridge this gap in research. For the purpose of the present paper, the following question was addressed: Does EFL Teachers' Work Motivation (EFLTWM) mediate the relationship between EFL Teachers' Competency (EFLTC) and EFL Teachers' Professional Performance (EFLTTP)? It can be assumed that the higher the EFLTC, the higher the level of work motivation, thus the higher the level of professional performance. Figure 1 shows the conceptual model of the present study.

HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

*The Relationship between EFLTC and EFLTWM*  
 EFL teachers' beliefs about their capabilities to organize and engage in various activities are required to gain their established performance or achievement. So, competent EFL teachers feel confident of their performance and achievement. They have the self-confidence/self-efficacy and

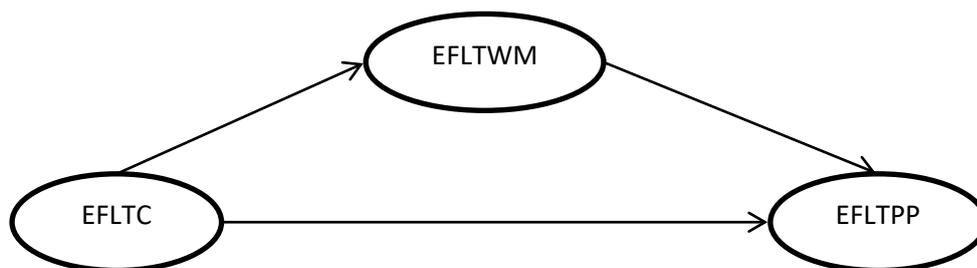


FIGURE1. Conceptual Model of the Study

do not avoid tasks and situations beyond their abilities (Duffin et al. 2012; Iqbal & Dastgeer 2017). Moulding et al. (2014) argues that "Teacher efficacy is a teacher's belief in his or her ability to successfully perform the tasks of teaching" (p. 61). This assumption is supported by Bandura's (1977) theory of self-efficacy. However, Depaepe and König (2018) say that self-efficacy is only one kind of motivation and they recommend investigating other teacher motivational constructs in the future studies. In addition, based on Deci and Ryan's (2000, 2002) Self-Determination theory, motivated behaviours stem from the innate psychological needs which are the needs for competence (feeling of self-efficacy), relatedness (feeling connected to the outside setting) and autonomy (feeling of control). This is supported by findings of previous studies (Aziz et al. 2014; Sukrapi et al. 2014; Wetipo et al. 2015) which reveal that teachers' competency has a positive relationship with their work motivation. Thus, it can be assumed that the higher the EFL teachers' competency, the higher their level of work motivation. However, there were limited studies about the relationships between teachers' competency and work motivation (Wetipo et al. 2015). In fact, there is a lack of studies which reflected the link between EFLTWM and EFLTC.

*The Relationship between EFLTWM and EFLTPP* One of the factors that support EFL teachers to work or support the high professional performance of the EFL teachers is their work motivation. Based on the theory of performance of Campbell et al. (1993), EFLTWM is one of the three determinants of EFLTPP. A review of relevant psychological theories offers important insights about the influence of EFLTWM on their professional performance. For example, Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory emphasizes that EFLTWM leads to efforts encourage EFLTPP which result in positive or negative outcomes. EFLTWM is fundamental to enhance and drive the interest of EFL teachers to teach actively or achieve organizational goals (Praver & Oga-Baldwin 2008). EFLTWM refers to the force that motivates teachers to perform properly (Ozturk 2015). With a high level of work motivation, EFL teachers will put their efforts in improving their teaching and thus their performance level will be improved (Boset, Asmawi, & Abedalaziz 2017b; Erkaya 2013). There is a scarcity of studies that have investigated the impact of EFLTWM on their professional performance. However, generally, the impact of teachers' motivation on

their performance has been investigated by some studies (Inayatullah & Jehangir 2012; Nzulwa 2014; Ondima et al. 2014). These studies show that teachers' motivation holds a significant power for predicting and explaining teachers' performance (Nzulwa 2014). Arifin (2015) and Nzulwa (2014) conclude that teachers' work motivation causes superior professional performance. That means if teachers are motivated to work they will work vigorously and responsibly. Vice versa, low levels of EFLTWM might be one of the reasons behind the problems that can create damage to the condition of school organization such as absenteeism, poor professional performance, lazy work, teachers' complaints, poor quality of teaching, and teachers' indiscipline.

*The Relationship between EFLTC and EFLTPP: Mediating Effect of EFLTWM* Another factor that can affect the professional performance of EFL teachers is their competency. For the purpose of the present paper, the relationships between EFLTC and their performance can be divided into a direct relationship and indirect relationship through work motivation. To begin with the direct relationship, in the performance theory, Campbell et al. (1993) state that competency is one of the three determinants of professional performance. Despite the increasing attention paid to the influence of competency on performance, there is still very little published work on the subject in the context of EFL teachers (Boset, Asmawi & Abedalaziz 2017b). However, generally, a number of studies related to teachers' performance state that teachers' competency is a factor that prominently affects teachers' professional performance since it plays a prominent role in the success of teachers' performance (Arifin 2015; Hakim 2015; Rahman 2014; Xu & Ye 2014).

In addition, the indirect effect of EFLTC on their professional performance through their work motivation is proposed in the present article because it is believed that the low or high level of EFLTC is not enough to ensure success or failure in their teaching performance without teaching motivation. It was found that high levels of teachers' competency lead to high levels of work motivation, thus improve their professional performance (Sukrapi et al. 2014; Wetipo et al. 2015). These studies encourage others to investigate the mediating role that work motivation plays, but very little research has been undertaken since. However, all existing evidences for mediation role of work motivation in the relationship between teachers' competency and

their professional performance were found about general (not EFL) teachers in non-Yemeni cultures. The purpose of the current study was therefore to investigate the mediating effect of teachers' work motivation in the relationship between teachers' competency and their professional performance in the context of EFL teachers at public secondary schools in Yemen.

To sum up, the review of the related literature proposed that competency and work motivation have important impacts on teachers' performance. However, there were limited studies about the relationships between these variables. In fact, there is a lack of studies which reflected the mediating role of EFL teachers' work motivation in the relationship their competency and professional performance. Thus, the present study is an attempt to bridge this gap in research.

## METHODOLOGY

### RESEARCH DESIGN

As was established earlier, the aim of this paper is to examine the indirect effect of competency on professional performance through the mediation of work motivation of EFL teachers at public secondary schools in Yemen. For this purpose, the current study is a correlational one and it was conducted using a survey design through a quantitative approach. A correlational research design is a quantitative research which provides an opportunity for the researcher to predict scores and assess/explain the relationships among variables (Creswell 2012).

### INSTRUMENTS

Three instruments of data collection were utilized in the present study to elicit data on the study variables.

#### EFL TEACHERS' COMPETENCY QUESTIONNAIRE

Data of EFL teachers' competency were collected using EFL Teachers' Competency Questionnaire adopted from (Arshad 2009). Arshad (2009) validated and used this instrument in order to assess the competency of in-service EFL secondary school teachers in the Pakistan context. This questionnaire was

used in the present study because it reflects the conceptualization of EFL teachers' competency in a manner that is consistent with the researchers' perspective. Also, because of the similarity of contexts and for the purpose of the present study this questionnaire is adopted. In addition, in such self-assessment instrument, teachers can identify areas of improvement priorities to better understanding of the key skills, knowledge, and abilities that EFL teachers need to know and able to do (Gedviliene 2015). This approach makes a critical look at ourselves as EFL teachers and can serve as a tool for professional development. In this questionnaire, EFL teachers' competency was divided into three main areas: teachers' knowledge competency, teachers' professional competency, and teachers' personal competency. These categories represent areas in which teachers require knowledge and a variety of competencies and abilities to make decisions related to teaching EFL (Arshad 2009). This questionnaire consisted of 36 descriptors of competencies related to English language teaching.

#### EFL TEACHERS' MULTIDIMENSIONAL WORK MOTIVATION SCALE

EFL Teachers' Multidimensional Work Motivation Scale was used to obtain information regarding EFL teachers' work motivation and was administered to EFL teachers at public secondary schools Yemen. This scale was used in the present study because it reflects the conceptualization of EFL teachers' work motivation in a manner that is consistent with the researchers' perspective. The scale was developed, validated and used by Gagne et al. (2010, 2015) to assess the multidimensional work motivation of teachers and it was used in the present study for the same purpose. The scale is constructed based on Deci and Ryan's (2000, 2002) Self-Determination Theory (SDT) as a theoretical basis. SDT distinguished between different types of motivation based on the different reasons or goals that give rise to an action. Therefore, this scale was created to measure six motivational constructs: amotivation, external regulation - social, external regulation - material, introjected regulation, identified regulation, and intrinsic motivation. These six motivational constructs consist of 19 items/descriptors which represent the work motivation section.

#### EFL TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION INSTRUMENT

EFL teachers' professional performance was measured using EFL Teachers' Professional Performance Evaluation Instrument developed by the Yemen Ministry of Education. The instrument is based on the Professional and Specialist Performance Standards for EFL teachers. It assessed the behavioral aspects of EFL teachers' professional and specialist performance at public secondary schools in Yemen. This instrument consisted of 25 items; each item represents a teaching performance indicator. These indicators were categorized under the five main categories: planning and preparation, teacher's competencies and characteristics, classroom management, effective teaching and learning, and evaluation. This observation form was used in the present study because it reflects the conceptualization of the EFL teachers' professional performance in a manner that is consistent with the researchers' perspective. In addition, it is the formal instrument which developed and used by the Yemeni Ministry of Education to assess the performance of EFL teachers at public secondary schools in Yemen.

These three instruments were pilot tested on 192 EFL teachers at public secondary schools in Yemen for their validity and reliability. Both exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) were employed for the pilot study. Once the uni-dimensionality of the constructs was achieved, each of the constructs was assessed for their reliability. Reliability of EFL Teachers' Competency Questionnaire was 0.96, the reliability of the Multidimensional Work Motivation Scale was 0.90, and the reliability of the EFL Teachers' Professional Performance Evaluation Instrument was 0.90. Experts in the fields of EFL teaching and human resource management verified the face validity and content validity of the instruments.

#### PARTICIPANTS

The participants of the present study included a sample of 375 (206 males, and 169 females) EFL teachers at public secondary schools in Yemen. Sampling using multistage probability techniques was applied in the present study. Multistage probability sampling is used because either the researchers cannot easily identify the population or the population is extremely large (Creswell 2012). In the first stage, cluster random sampling technique

was used because the population is spread across a wide area. Cluster sampling was employed because a logical cluster of the entire population can be clearly defined and easily identified. A logical cluster is defined as the governorates of Yemen. The population elements are already grouped into 22 Yemeni governorates (clusters).

In the second stage, the (7) governorates that covered in this paper were selected from the mentioned list (22) of governorates by using a simple random sampling technique. So, each governorate had equal opportunity and independent chance (probability) of being represented in the target sample. Seven governorates were selected in order to achieve the required sample size based on the expected response rate (70%).

The desired sample size for 4891 population size is 357, which was determined by using the sample size calculator. Based on the sample calculator and a 70% expected response rate, the researcher needs to ask at least 511 EFL teachers to participate in order to reach the desired sample size. Therefore, Amanat Al Asimah, Aden, Dhamar, Shabwah, Ma'rib, Raymah, and Abyan were selected by simple random sampling technique as the sample of the Yemeni governorates.

In the third stage, a proportional stratified random sampling technique was used to determine the number of subjects (male and female) that should be selected from each governorate.

In the final stage of the sampling technique, lists of EFL teachers at the seven governorates were obtained from the Ministry of Education offices. Then, a simple random sampling technique was used to select the 511 EFL teachers at public secondary schools in the seven governorates in order to be invited to participate in the study with 70% estimated response rate. A simple random sample was selected by assigning a number to each EFL teacher in those seven governorates and then using a random numbers table, available in many statistics books, to draw out the members of the sample.

Therefore, each EFL teacher at public secondary schools in Yemen has equal opportunity and independent chance (probability) of being represented in the target sample. This sample (511) represented 10.45% of the total 4891 EFL teachers at public secondary schools in the 22 Yemen governorates and 34% of the total 1505 EFL teachers at public secondary schools in the selected seven governorates. Respondents from these schools will provide the information about

the variables under study. Probability sampling produces a representative sample of the population and helps generalization to the population (Creswell 2012). Therefore, the members of the target sample may represent the target population and they may provide the best information to address the purpose of the research. The questionnaires were administered to the participants in person.

DATA MANAGEMENT AND ANALYSIS

The management of the data began with coding of the instruments. Then, the data were scored, labeled, recorded, checked, cleaned, and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) for Windows version 22 and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) by using SmartPLS2.0.M3. SEM makes it possible to study complex patterns of relationships among the constructs in a conceptual model in an integrative way (Kline 2010). Also, PLS is particularly well suited to the study of mediation (Bontis, Booker & Serenko 2007).

FINDINGS

In the descriptive analysis, covariance matrix method was used to calculate the descriptive function so that all of the variables could be included in the analysis. The composite scores of the variables were computed by parceling the original measurement item scores. Parcels are sum or averages of several individual indicators or items based on their factor loadings on the construct (Hair, et al. 2006). Table 1 displays the means and standard deviation of the constructs, assessed on Likert scale:

The mean was applied as a measure of central tendency, which indicated that the mean values of the variables were above their midpoint level. As shown in table 1, the results indicated that, firstly, the mean value of EFL Teachers' Competency (EFLTC) was above the midpoint level of 3 out of the 5 point Likert scale. The phenomenon indicated that the consensus respondents' perception toward this construct were above the average. However,

there is an urgent need for pre-service and in-service training in order to improve EFL teachers' knowledge, skills, and abilities.

Secondly, the mean value of EFL Teachers' Work Motivation (EFLTWM) was above the mid-point level of 4 out of the 7 point Likert scale. This means that the EFL teachers were highly motivated to work and do not want to fail. However, for obtaining better levels of work motivation, it is strongly recommended that the Ministry of Education must review the financial matters and the current salary scheme for public schools teachers.

Thirdly, the mean value of EFL Teachers' Professional Performance (EFLTPP) was 3.157 out of 4 (the mean of EFL teachers' scores in this instrument was 78.9 out of 100) which indicated that the performance of the participants were above the mid-point level of 2.5. According to the instrument rating, the score between 70 and 80 represent a good performance. These results revealed that the levels of the professional performance of most of the participants in this research were good. However, these degrees/levels of professional performance of EFL teachers are neither the degrees/levels to be pursued nor the ultimate goal. In addition, although the mean scores of EFL teachers' performance in this study were good, the natural curve is a matter of fact. This reflected that, as it is noted through the participants' scores, there were low, medium, and high levels of EFL teaching performance among the participants which in fact should lead to an urgent need to focus on improving the professional performance of EFL teachers' performance. Therefore, the professional performance of EFL teachers needs to be improved to conform better or even to meet performance criteria.

More importantly, the main objective of this paper is to determine the mediation effect of EFL Teachers' Work Motivation (EFLTWM) as mediating variable on the effect of EFL Teachers' Competency (EFLTC) as independent variable on EFL Teachers' Professional Performance (EFLTPP) as dependent variable. Therefore, in order to determine the existence of the mediation effect and its mediating degree, the significance of

TABLE 1. Results of Descriptive Statistic for the Study Variables

Constructs	Scale	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
EFL Teachers' Competency (EFLTC)	5	3.721	0.695	1.3	5
EFL Teachers' Work Motivation (EFLTWM)	7	4.444	1.079	1.6	7
EFL Teachers' Professional Performance (EFLTPP)	4	3.157	0.605	2	4

the regression coefficients between EFLTC as an independent variable, EFLTWM as a mediator and EFLTPP as a dependent variable was examined. The results of examining the hypothesis with the standardized effects of different paths are displayed in Figure 2 and Table 2.

As shown in Figure 2 and Table 2, EFLTWM mediates the effect of EFLTC on EFLTPP. So, the hypothesis is supported. The results of the mediation analysis and indirect effect are discussed below.

As exhibited in Figure 2 and Table 2, results show that there is a significant relationship between EFLTC and EFLTPP in the absence of EFLTWM (path a), with the standardized total effect of 0.618 and P-value=0.000. So, the total effect of EFLTC as IV on EFLTPP as DV without the inclusion of EFLTWM as M was statistically significant at 0.001 level.

Even after the inclusion of EFLTWM into the model (path a'), this relationship is still significant with the standardized direct effect of 0.440 and P-value=0.000. So, the direct effect of EFLTC as IV on EFLTPP as DV with the inclusion of EFLTWM as M is statistically significant at 0.001 level.

As shown in Figure 2 and Table 2, path b (IV on M) which indicates the direct effect of EFLTC on EFLTWM is statistically significant at 0.001 level with the standardized effects of 0.539 and P-value=0.000.

On the other hand, path c (M on DV) which indicates the direct effect of EFLTWM on EFLTPP is statistically significant at 0.001 level with the standardized effects of 0.330 and P-value=0.000.

Consequently, these results indicated that EFLTWM mediates the relationship between EFLTC and EFLTPP. Since the paths, a, a', b, and c, are all statistically significant, the degree of mediation is partial. The phenomenon supported the hypothesis.

To ensure that, the results also reveal that path bc (IV on DV through M) which indicates the indirect effect of EFLTC on EFLTPP through EFLTWM is a significant indirect positive effect with the standardized indirect effect of 0.178 and P-value < 0.001.

Finally, this is a complementary partial mediation as that the indirect effect and the direct effect have the same sign (direction), which is positive (Baron & Kenny 1986; Nitzlet al. 2016). It indicates that a portion of the effect of EFLTC on EFLTPP is

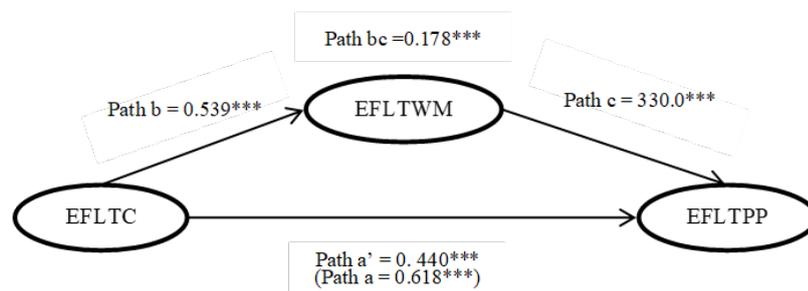


FIGURE 2. Results of the Hypothesized Mediation Model with EFLTWM as a Mediator between EFLTC and EFLTPP

TABLE 2. Results of Examining the Mediation Effect of EFLTWM

IV = EFLTC M = EFLTWM	DV = EFLTPP
Total Effect of IV on DV without M (path a)	0.618***(P-value=0.000)
Direct Effect of IV on DV with M (path a')	0.440***(P-value=0.000)
Indirect Effect of IV on DV through M (path bc)	0.178***(P-value=0.000)
Effect of IV on M (path b)	0.539***(P-value=0.000)
Effect of M on DV (path c)	0.330***(P-value=0.000)
Mediation Path	EFLTC → EFLTWM → EFLTPP
Mediation Effect	Yes
Degree of Mediation	Partial
Hypothesis Result	Supported

\*p < 0.05, \*\*p < 0.01, \*\*\*p < 0.001

mediated through EFLTWM, whereas EFLTC still explains a portion of EFLTTP that is independent of the EFLTWM. This complementary mediation hypothesis suggests that the EFLTWM explains, possibly confounds, or falsifies the relationships between EFLTC and EFLTTP. Complementary partial mediation is often called a 'positive confounding' or a 'consistent' model (Nitzlet al. 2016). So, the hypothesis has been supported.

## DISCUSSION

In order to answer the research question, the hypothesis: "EFLTWM mediates the relationship between EFLTC and EFLTTP" was proposed. The findings of this hypothesis show that EFLTWM play a partial mediating role ( $\beta = 0.178$ , T-value=12.705 and P-value < 0.001) in the relationship between EFLTC and EFLTTP. The results reveal that EFLTC has a significant indirect positive effect on EFLTTP through EFLTWM.

Despite, no similar study has been found in Yemen or in the context of EFL teachers, the findings of this hypothesis were supported theoretically by some related literature in the context of teachers in general. Previous studies assumed that teachers' work motivation mediates the relationship between their competency and professional performance (Wetipo et al. 2015). The indirect effect of EFLTC on their performance through their motivation is also supported by some studies which stated that the low or high level of teachers' competency is not enough to ensure success or failure in their teaching performance without teaching motivation (Azizet al. 2014; Sukrapi et al. 2014). It can be said that teachers' key success is based on being competent, motivated and hard-working (Uzum 2017). However, all these studies were conducted in different contexts and through different data collection methodology, different perspectives, and different conceptualizations. Actually, the mediating role of teachers' work motivation in the relationship between teachers' competency and professional performance especially in the context of EFL teachers was not explored prior to current study (to the best of found knowledge). Therefore, findings of the present study about the mediating role of EFL teachers' work motivation in the relationship between EFL teachers' competency and professional performance were novel and great

contribution of the present paper to the field of knowledge.

Accordingly, teachers' competency is, in relation to teachers' performance, a necessary but insufficient condition (Niculescu 2014). Teachers cannot perform to standards without teachers' competencies (Darling-hammond 2010). On the other hand, teachers' competencies cannot guarantee that teachers will teach sufficiently or successfully (Gogeanu 2015). Sometimes, highly competent teachers may fail in their teaching because of a variety of personal, social or environmental factors. One of these factors is their work motivation which cannot be avoided or ignored. In other words, EFL teachers must own EFL teachers' competencies but that cannot guarantee perfect EFL teaching performance without the existence of the other influential factors including high levels of work motivation. Conversely, the absence of EFL teachers' competencies always predicts a poor level of EFL teaching performance (Gogeanu 2015). Competency measurement, as well, should not be confused with performance measurement. EFLTC is about being qualified to teach EFL in a particular situation. EFLTTP, on the other hand, is a result of the actual work of EFL teaching.

In short, this study clearly demonstrated that EFL teachers who have sufficient competency in carrying out the process of EFL teaching tend to exhibit a high level of work motivation, thus leading to a high level of professional performance. Consequently, effective EFLTTP does not typically depend only on teachers having the appropriate competencies but also on them being motivated to apply these competencies (Dweik & Awajan 2013). This is because EFL teachers are unlikely to make the effort to properly apply their competencies unless they are positively or strongly motivated. Therefore, policymakers, human resource management, educational administrators, and EFL teacher trainers have to provide professional development opportunities that are in line with specific teachers' needs in order to reinforce EFLTC and work motivation. It is, however, not possible to establish more than a partial match with results obtained by all above-mentioned researchers because of the contextual differences. From the available data, it could be argued that some previous findings make sense in a new context which is EFL teachers at public secondary schools in Yemen.

## IMPLICATION AND RECOMMENDATION

The current paper provided reliable evidences that EFLTC and EFLTWM enhance the levels of their professional performance. Since the roles of English language teachers in the outcome of reform and the effectiveness of English language teaching are essential, it has become crucial to focus on the factors which affect their performance such as their competency and work motivation (Gao & Xu 2014). So, finding ways to raise EFLTC and EFLTWM should be a primary concern. Based on the findings of the present paper, the researchers recommend performing professional training and improving conditions of EFL teachers at public secondary schools in order to gain higher levels of competency, work motivation, and professional performance thus potentially improve outcomes of the EFL teaching-learning process. In addition, policymakers must have deeper and broader knowledge about the pedagogy of EFL teachers to help improve their competencies, work motivation, and professional performance.

Specifically, there is a need for designing a balanced EFL teachers' education curriculum and programs to expose them to theoretical and practical experiences which will support equally their knowledge, professional, and personal competencies. Additionally, for obtaining better levels of work motivation and professional performance, it is strongly recommended that the Ministry of Education must review financial matters and current salary scheme for public schools teachers. It is important that the motivators that administrators and supervisors select as the basis for motivation ratings be thoroughly examined to ensure that they are performance related. For future studies, the researchers suggest replicating this study with a larger group of participants and in different contexts. Finally, in future, it is recommended to combine the self-reporting questionnaires with other more qualitative tools because the responses to this type of measuring instruments may be influenced by personal or social values.

## CONCLUSION

To date, little attention has been devoted to understanding the mediating role of teachers' work motivation in the relationship between teachers' competency and professional performance in

general. The present study addresses this gap in the literature. For the first time in EFL teachers' context, EFLTWM was tested as a mediator in order to explain the relationship between EFLTC and EFLTPP. The findings of the current study draw a conclusion that EFLTWM mediates the relationship between EFLTC and EFLTPP. Therefore, competent EFL teachers have high levels of work motivation and are confident in their performance. They have the self-confidence/self-efficacy and tend to accept tasks and situations beyond their abilities. This conclusion suggests that to improve aspects of EFLTPP, much attention has to be given to the role that EFLTC plays in improving EFLTWM. The findings of this paper suggest that the Ministry of Education and the education management must pay greater attention to the ways of increasing the levels of EFLTC and EFLTWM in order to increase the levels EFLTPP. Overall, the findings provide insights for the Ministry of Education, especially: Teacher Education, Teacher Training, Education Development, and Human Resource Management Divisions. It is hoped that policymakers, educational administrators, and teacher trainers should be better able to design professional development programs that promote EFL teachers' competency and work motivation.

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