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The Effect of Social Activity on Occupational Resilience and the Performance of Elementary School Teachers

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ABSTRACT

This study examines how social activity influences occupational resilience and job performance among elementary school teachers. Drawing on a survey of 374 teachers in Tabriz, Iran, the research applied structural equation modeling to explore the relationships between these variables. The findings reveal that teachers who are more socially engaged demonstrate stronger resilience and higher performance in the classroom. These results underscore the importance of fostering collegial networks, supportive school climates, and communication practices that build a sense of belonging and shared responsibility. By highlighting the role of social activity as a driver of both resilience and performance, this study provides actionable insights for educational leaders and policymakers seeking to enhance teacher wellbeing, professional growth, and long-term retention.

Introduction

Social activity is widely recognized as a central element of social welfare, contributing not only to individual wellbeing but also to the collective quality of life. A "good society," as described by Wallace and Pichler (2009), is one in which citizens actively participate in voluntary associations, fostering satisfaction and engagement. In teaching, a profession characterized by complex challenges and sustained emotional demands; social activity plays a vital role in sustaining motivation, enhancing creativity, and improving outcomes. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted this even further, as abrupt instructional changes and disrupted social networks underscored the need for intentional strategies to support teacher wellbeing and performance (Barhalescu, 2025).

Although resilience has been extensively studied in education, most research frames it as an individual psychological trait rather than a socially and communicatively constructed capacity. This leaves an important gap: the role of teachers' social activity and communication practices in fostering resilience and sustaining performance has received limited attention. While scholars have demonstrated that wellbeing can be strengthened through supportive environments (Landgren et al., 2024; Steger, 2024), and that leadership and collegial support reduce burnout (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2025; Collie, 2024), the communicative mechanisms, such as rhetoric, discourse, and school messaging, have not been fully integrated into resilience research. This study addresses that gap by examining how social activity functions as both a relational and communicative process that strengthens occupational resilience and enhances teacher performance.

Literature Review

Resilience in Education. Resilience is not simply an individual capacity, but a socially embedded process shaped by relational, cultural, and institutional contexts (Gu & Day, 2007; Price et al., 2012). Narratives of experienced educators highlight how adaptability, efficacy, and identity sustain long-term success in teaching (Taylor, 2013). Research further shows that organizational practices, including collegial support and shared values, are central to sustaining teacher resilience (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2025; Corbin et al., 2024).

Social Activity and Wellbeing. Social activity reflects optimism, belonging, and confidence, and contributes to multidimensional constructs of health and empowerment (Landgren et al., 2024). Teachers who engage in collegial networks and collaborative practices demonstrate higher vitality and professional growth, while reduced social engagement can contribute to burnout (Collie, 2024; Allen et al., 2023). These findings situate social activity as an important but underexplored determinant of teacher performance.

Communication and Rhetoric. Communication practices play a decisive role in shaping resilience. Supportive messaging from administrators and colleagues promotes belonging and job satisfaction, whereas poorly managed discourse can increase burnout risks (Ivančević et al., 2025). Language and rhetoric influence teacher–student relationships: credibility and care rhetorically expressed by teachers directly foster student engagement and motivation (Lv, 2024). In inclusive education, equity goals often risk remaining rhetorical rather than actionable; however, rhetorically grounded approaches can enhance resilience and performance (Deroncele-Acosta & Ellis, 2024). Linguistically responsive teaching also strengthens resiliency and job performance in diverse classrooms (Wilson-Brown & Bagwell, 2025).

Organizational Conditions. Institutional practices that support autonomy, competence, and relatedness foster intrinsic motivation, reflective practice, and sustained engagement (Vedder-

Weiss et al., 2025). Balanced workloads, recognition, and meaningful communication can reduce burnout and strengthen performance (Deep et al., 2025; Ferreira et al., 2025). Strategies such as energy management likewise buffer stress and sustain wellbeing (Chaudhury & Chhajer, 2023).

Gap and Contribution

While resilience research in education is robust, it has often overlooked **the communicative and social dimensions that shape teachers' capacity to thrive**. Few studies integrate how discourse, school messaging, and rhetorical framing contribute to resilience alongside social activity. This study addresses this gap by situating social activity within a communicative framework, demonstrating how professional networks and discourse practices both foster resilience and enhance teacher performance.

Theoretical Model and Research Hypotheses

It is proposed that occupational resilience is not only a personal resource for coping with stress but also a powerful predictor of overall teacher performance. Findings suggest that investment in developing resilience plays a key role in innovation programs and enhancing individual and organizational capabilities among teachers.

Conceptual Model and Research Hypotheses

Given the research topic, examining the impact of social activity on occupational resilience and teacher performance among elementary school teachers, social activity is treated as the independent variable, while occupational resilience and teacher performance are considered dependent variables. A standardized questionnaire will be used to examine the relationships among these variables.

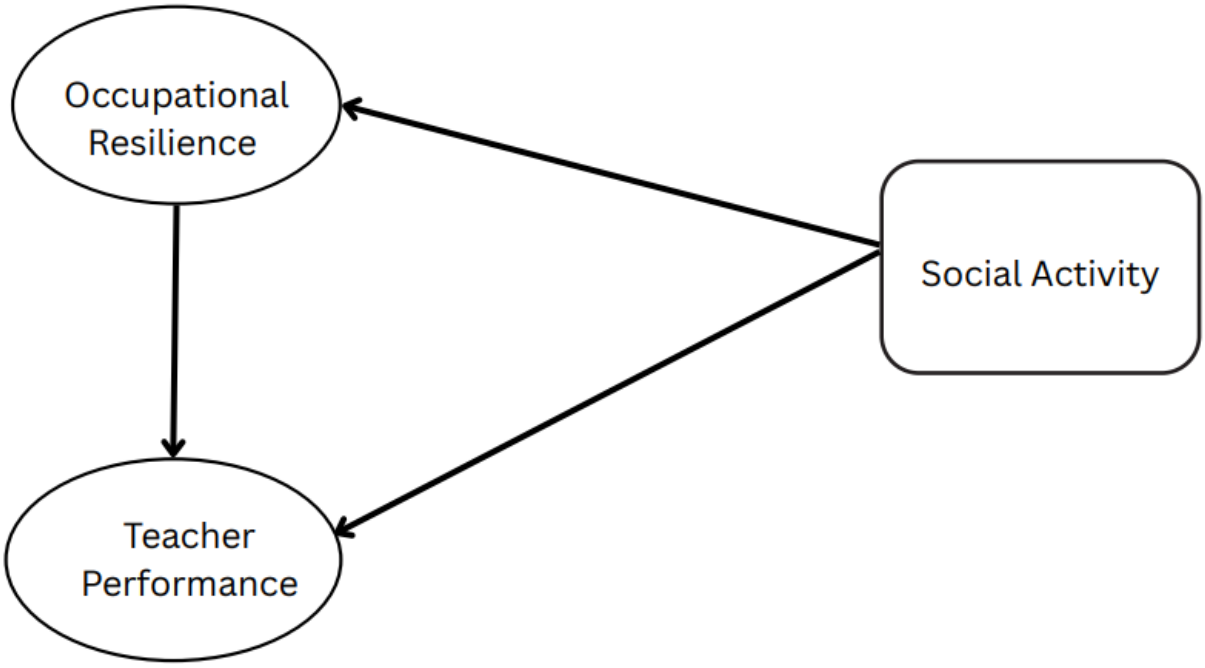


Figure (1): Conceptual Research Model

- Social Activity → Occupational Resilience

- Social Activity → Teacher Performance
- Occupational Resilience → Teacher Performance

Formulated Hypotheses

1. Social activity has a significant effect on teachers' occupational resilience.
2. Social activity has a significant effect on teacher performance.
3. Occupational resilience has a significant effect on teacher performance.

Research Methodology

This study employed an applied research design using a descriptive–analytical survey method with a correlational approach. The statistical population consisted of 12,700 elementary school teachers in Tabriz, Iran, during the 2023–2024 academic year. Using Cochran's formula with a 5% margin of error and 95% confidence level, a sample of 374 teachers was selected through multi-stage cluster random sampling. The sample included both male and female teachers, reflecting the gender distribution of the broader population

The sampling method used was multi-stage cluster random sampling. The sample size of 374 participants was determined using Cochran's formula with a 5% margin of error and a 95% confidence level. In the first stage, from among the 10 educational districts of Tabriz, 5 districts were randomly selected. In the second stage, 15 primary schools from each selected district (a total of 75 schools) were randomly chosen, and from each school, 5 teachers were selected. Of the total sample, 70% were female teachers (262 individuals) and 30% were male teachers (112 individuals), reflecting the gender distribution of the statistical population.

The stratification included:

- **District 1**: 15 schools (75 teachers total), 5 teachers were selected per school
- **District 2**: 70 teachers
- The gender breakdown was 162 women (59%) and 112 men (41%).

Assessment of Normal Distribution of Variables

To examine the normality of the variables, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, the skewness coefficient, the kurtosis coefficient, and their respective standard errors were used.

- **H_0 (Null Hypothesis):** The distribution of the data for each variable is normal.
- **H_1 (Alternative Hypothesis):** The distribution of the data for each variable is not normal.

If the significance level from the test is less than 0.05, it indicates that the data distribution is not normal. Conversely, if it is greater than 0.05, it suggests that data distribution is normal. Additionally:

- If the absolute values of the skewness and kurtosis coefficients are greater than 2, it indicates non-normality.
- Furthermore, if the standard errors of skewness and kurtosis are less than ±2, the distribution can be considered normal.

Study Variables	**Skewness**		**Kurtosis**		**Kolmogorov–Smirnov Test**		**Result**
	Skewness Coefficient	Standard Error	Kurtosis Coefficient	Standard Error	Z-Statistic	Sig. Level	
Social Activity	-0.236	0.35	0.266	0.445	0.074	0.145	Normal
Occupational Resilience	-0.239	0.35	0.278	0.445	0.069	0.077	Normal
Teacher Performance	0.189	0.35	0.266	0.445	0.125	0.196	Normal

Table (1): Results of the Normality Test

As seen in the above table, the significance levels for all variables are greater than 0.05. Therefore, based on the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, the distribution of all variables is normal (**P<0.05**). Additionally:

- The values of skewness and kurtosis for all variables are within the acceptable range (between -2 and +2).
- The standard errors also fall within this range, indicating normal distribution.
- Furthermore, according to the critical value theory, with an increase in sample size (more than 30 individuals), the distribution of the data becomes closer to normal.

Conclusion: Based on all criteria, it can be concluded that the distribution of all variables is normal.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation tests, and structural equation modeling (SEM) with SPSS and LISREL software. Model fit was evaluated using established indices such as CFI, AGFI, NFI, and NNFI, all of which indicated satisfactory model fit.
To streamline presentation, detailed tests of normality (e.g., Kolmogorov-Smirnov results, skewness, and kurtosis) and additional statistical outputs are omitted here but can be provided in an appendix if required by the journal.

This methodological design ensures both statistical rigor and practical relevance, allowing for the investigation of how social activity influences resilience and performance in educational settings.

Description of Research Variables

Before beginning the data analysis phase, it's essential that all research variables are clearly described. The descriptive report below summarizes the research variables presented in the table and chart format.

Each main research variable was measured using multiple items in a questionnaire. The average of responses to these items determined the value of the variable.

Variables	Sample Size	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Social Activity	374	3.25	0.18	1.00	5.00
Occupational Resilience	374	2.34	0.57	1.14	5.00
Teacher Performance	374	3.98	0.63	1.00	5.00

Table (2): Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables

The questionnaire was designed using a five-point Likert scale (1 to 5), and for each variable, a number of items were included. The averages for each variable were calculated using SPSS software.

All means fall within the expected 1–5 range, showing no outliers or anomalies. The reliability of this analysis depends on accurate data entry and coding.

Pearson Correlation Coefficients Between Variables

A correlation matrix for the model variables was calculated using the Pearson test, based on standardized variable scores. The results are shown on the table below.

A single asterisk (*) indicates **p < 0.05** significance level.
A double asterisk (**) indicates **p < 0.01** significance level.
These indicate significant correlations between all examined variables.

Variable	1	2	3
Social Activity	1		
Occupational Resilience	0.62**	1	
Teacher Performance	0.54**	0.71**	1

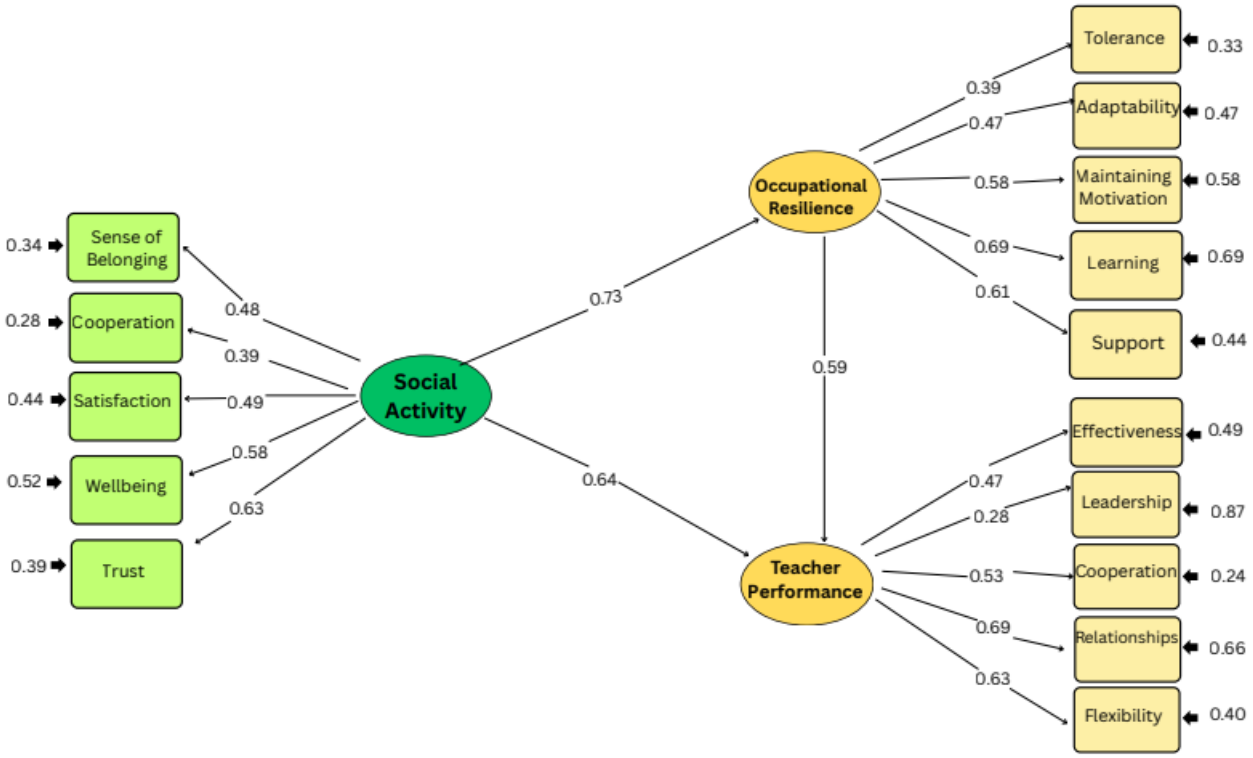
Table (3): Pearson Correlation Matrix Between Variables

All relationships shown above are statistically significant.

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

To evaluate the hypotheses, statistical indicators and regression coefficients (path coefficients) were used. The coefficients indicate whether the proposed hypotheses are confirmed or rejected statistically. At each stage, the intensity of influence of the variables on each other is determined using standardized path coefficients.

In this diagram, the path coefficients are presented in a standardized format and shown within the regression paths. These values must be interpreted based on both their signs and magnitudes.



chi-Square=254.34, Degrees of Freedom (df)=75, p-value=0.00000, RMSEA=0.073

Figure (2): standardized path coefficients between the studied variables

Fit Indices (Model Evaluation):

To evaluate the overall adequacy of the proposed structural equation model, several goodness-of-fit indices were examined. This table presents the values of the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI), Normed Fit Index (NFI), and Non-Normed Fit Index (NNFI). As shown, all obtained values exceed the recommended threshold of 0.90, indicating that the model demonstrates a satisfactory fit to the observed data. So, the Obtained Values are the numbers that this analysis produced (0.92, 0.99, etc.) and the Recommended Cut-off is the threshold (e.g., > 0.90) that indicates acceptable fit.

Fit Index	Obtained Value	Recommended Cut-off
CFI	0.92	> 0.90
AGFI	0.99	> 0.90
NFI	0.95	> 0.90
NNFI	0.91	> 0.90

Table (4): Acceptable Threshold

In general, no single fit index by itself (e.g., from LISREL software) can serve as a sole standard for evaluating model fit. Therefore, a combination of these indices must be reviewed together. The table above shows that the values for all indices are within appropriate ranges, indicating acceptable model fit. Hence, the conceptual model of the study is confirmed based on the observed data.

Hypothesis Testing Results:

The results of testing the first group of hypotheses are shown in the following table.

Hypothesis			Path Coefficient	T-Value	Pearson Correlation		Result
					R (Correlation)	Sig Level	
Social Activity	→	Occupational Resilience	0.73	23.41	0.62	0.00	Confirmed
Social Activity	→	Teacher Performance	0.64	27.12	0.54	0.00	Confirmed
Occupational Resilience	→	Teacher Performance	0.59	35.91	0.71	0.00	Confirmed

Table (12): Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis 1:
Social activity significantly affects teachers' occupational resilience
The structural equation modeling results show a path coefficient of 0.73, indicating a strong and positive effect of social activity on occupational resilience. For every one-unit increase in social activity, teacher resilience improves (i.e., decreases) by 0.73 units. The correlation coefficient is 0.62, and the T-value of 23.41 (greater than the critical value of 1.96) along with a significance level of 0.000 confirms the significance of this relationship.
This means that high levels of social activity are associated with reduced occupational resilience among teachers. These findings support the role of social activity as an important strategy for reducing resilience and improving work environments. As such, this relationship can provide a scientific and practical foundation for educational policies aimed at enhancing working conditions for teachers.
Hypothesis 2: Social Activity Significantly Affects Teachers' Job Performance
The structural equation modeling analysis shows that the path coefficient of 0.64 between social activity and teacher performance is positive and relatively strong. This means that for each one-unit increase in social activity, teacher performance improves by 0.64 units. The correlation coefficient is 0.54, further confirming a positive and significant relationship between these two variables.
The calculated t-value (27.12) is much higher than the critical value of 1.96, along with a significance level of 0.000, clearly confirming the significance of this relationship. These results show that higher scores in social activity are associated with better teacher performance, which emphasizes the functional importance of social activity in educational settings. It can be used as a guide to improve teacher performance and promote positive work environments. These findings provide practical insight for designing educational policies that create more supportive spaces for teachers.

Hypothesis 3: Occupational Resilience Significantly Affects Teachers' Job Performance
The results from the structural model indicate that occupational resilience significantly impacts

teacher performance, as the path coefficient is 0.59. This suggests that for each one-unit increase in occupational resilience, teacher performance decreases by 0.59 units. The correlation coefficient is 0.71, showing a strong and negative relationship.
The calculated t-value (35.91) is again higher than the critical value of 1.96, and the significance level is 0.000, confirming the validity of this relationship. These findings emphasize the importance of managing and reducing occupational resilience to improve teacher performance. Thus, designing educational programs and environments that lower teacher resilience can be an effective strategy for improving overall educational quality.

Standardized Path Coefficients Between Studied Variables
The visual SEM diagram illustrates the relationships between three key latent variables:

- **Social Activity (green)**
- **Occupational Resilience (yellow)**
- **Teacher Performance (yellow)**

Social activity is shown to influence both occupational resilience and teacher performance directly. In turn, occupational resilience also affects teacher performance. The model includes observed indicators (measurable sub-variables) for each latent construct.
The analysis confirmed strong and significant relationships among social activity, occupational resilience, and teacher performance. Teachers with higher levels of social activity reported stronger occupational resilience, suggesting that professional engagement and collegial networks provide essential resources for managing stress and adapting to classroom challenges. This demonstrates that social participation within schools is more than an extracurricular factor—it directly contributes to teachers' ability to remain motivated and effective.
Social activity was also shown to have a direct positive effect on teacher performance. Educators who are more engaged in professional communities and collaborative practices consistently performed better in instructional duties. This finding underscores the role of collegial interaction and social support in fostering creativity, sustaining motivation, and improving educational outcomes.
In addition, occupational resilience itself significantly influenced teacher performance. Teachers with stronger resilience reported higher instructional effectiveness, greater adaptability, and stronger commitment to their professional roles. This highlights that resilience functions as a vital bridge between social activity and performance, ensuring that teachers can translate social engagement into concrete classroom success.
Overall, the results point to the central role of social activity and resilience as psychosocial drivers of teacher effectiveness. These findings emphasize that supportive communication, collaborative school cultures, and intentional opportunities for teacher participation are key strategies for improving both resilience and performance in educational environments.

Discussion on Research Findings

The findings of this study demonstrate that social activity plays a central role in shaping both occupational resilience and teacher performance. Teachers who engage in professional networks and collaborative activities are better equipped to handle stress, sustain motivation, and deliver effective instruction. This positions social activity not as an optional or peripheral factor, but as a

foundational element of professional effectiveness in education.

Importantly, these results contribute to the field of communication as well as education. They show that resilience is not only psychological but also communicatively constructed: the ways teachers and administrators frame messages, build discourse around collaboration, and use rhetoric to express care and recognition significantly influence professional outcomes. Communication thus emerges as a powerful mechanism through which social activity translates into improved resilience and performance.

By integrating insights from both education and communication, this study advances the argument that teacher wellbeing and effectiveness cannot be separated from the communicative and relational practices embedded in school life. Collegial dialogue, supportive messaging, and inclusive decision-making structures provide the discursive foundation for resilient and high-performing teachers.

Conclusion

This study highlights the crucial role of social activity in strengthening resilience and performance among elementary school teachers. By emphasizing the communicative dimensions of professional life, it demonstrates that resilience is fostered through discourse, messaging, and rhetorical framing as much as through individual coping strategies. For school leaders and policymakers, the findings underline the importance of creating organizational cultures that value collaboration, communication, and belonging.

Limitations

Several limitations should be noted. First, the study was conducted in Tabriz, Iran, and the findings may not generalize to other cultural or educational contexts. Second, data were collected through self-reported surveys, which may be subject to social desirability or recall bias. Third, the study relied exclusively on quantitative methods, limiting insight into the deeper communicative processes that shape resilience.

Future Research

Future studies should adopt qualitative approaches, such as discourse analysis or narrative inquiry, to explore how communication practices and rhetorical framing influence teacher resilience. Cross-national comparisons could provide insights into cultural differences in how social activity and communication shape performance. Longitudinal designs would also be valuable for tracking how social activity and resilience develop over time, particularly in response to policy changes or systemic challenges.

Together, these directions can build on the present study by deepening understanding of the communicative foundations of resilience and advancing strategies for supporting teachers in diverse educational settings.

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