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Constructing Professional Identity of Online English Teacherpreneurs for Sustainable Innovation in the English Language Teaching Industry: A Multi-Continental Study

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Abstract:

To provide professional and business advice for pre-service and in-service English teachers aspiring to become Online English Teacherpreneurs (OET) and promote sustainable innovation in the English Language Teaching (ELT) industry, this study seeks to investigate the professional identity of Online English Teacherpreneurs residing in different continents. Drawing on theoretical understandings of the relationship between teacher and entrepreneurial identity, a qualitative study using in-depth interview methodology was undertaken among OET from five continents (Africa, Europe, South America, Asia, and North America). The results showed that their professional roles as OET in EFL contexts cut across both instructional (English language teaching, coaching, and mentoring) and non-instructional roles (instructional development, English translation, and interpretation). In addition, the component of professional contexts helps determine different types of OET practitioners, their choice of professional tool, and roles. Other significant findings include identifying precarious employment and teacher burnout as motivational factors causing many teachers to engage in this private practice. The implications of these findings for the educational policymakers and future research directions were also presented.

Keywords: sustainable innovation, professional identity, teacherpreneurship, multi-continental study, EFL teacher, entrepreneurship.

**构建在线英语教师企业家的职业身份以促进英语教学行业的可持续创新
：一项多大陆研究**

摘要:

为了向有志成为在线英语教师企业家 (OET) 的职前和在职英语教师提供专业和商业建议，并促进英语语言教学 (ELT) 行业的可持续创新，本研究旨在调查在线英语的专业身份居住在不同大陆的教师企业家。借鉴对教师与企业家身份之间关系的理论理解，在五大洲（非洲、欧洲、南美、亚洲和北美）的 OET 中进行了一项使用深度访谈方法的定性研究。结果表明，他们在英语环境中作为 OET 的专业角色跨越了教学（英语语言教学

、辅导和指导)和非教学角色(教学发展、英语翻译和口译)。此外,专业背景的组成部分有助于确定不同类型的OET从业者、他们选择的专业工具和角色。其他重要发现包括将不稳定的就业和教师倦怠确定为导致许多教师从事这种私人执业的动机因素。还介绍了这些发现对教育政策制定者和未来研究方向的影响。

关键词: 可持续创新、职业认同、教师创业、跨洲学习、英语教师、创业。

1. Introduction

The necessity to disrupt precarious employment, advance innovative pedagogical ideas, and meet Generation Z's digital learning needs has been found to promote teachers' engagement in private teaching practices (Buckley & Nzembayie, 2016; Palmer, 2017). This has led to emerging studies on teacherpreneurship (Lasekan et al., 2021; Arruti & Paños-Castro, 2020; Shelton & Archambault, 2019). This research trajectory started by defining the teacherpreneurs' roles and functions. A recent study referred to them as professionals who provide virtual private tutoring services to students, develop and sell their instructional material to other teachers on the internet (Lasekan et al., 2021). However, teachers' private practices can vary in pedagogical practices that differ from discipline to discipline. Thus, it will be interesting to identify the roles of teacherpreneurs across different academic disciplines.

Numerous public schools are organizing sponsored programs to help In-Service teachers develop, organize, and share new ideas for teaching. They provide grants that support, time, and space to teachers so that they can incubate and launch big ideas that impact their students, school, and community (Lynch, 2019). The objective is to empower teachers to leverage an entrepreneurial mindset to address challenges they observe from their valuable perspective. On the other hand, due to the increasing number of teachers engaging in private practices, several researchers believe teacherpreneurship education should be integrated into pre-service education. This has led to teacherpreneurship competency research (Lasekan et al., 2021). It is grounded on the notion that identifying practitioners' skills can help design a curriculum for teacherpreneurship education. Having identified online teaching, entrepreneurship, teacher leadership, and instructional designing skill as the core competency of online teacherpreneurship, Lasekan et al. (2021) constructed a framework to implement and assess the impact of online teacherpreneurship education. However, the drawback in this study is that competency is defined based on the scholars' perception rather than the key actors of teacherpreneurship. Thus, developing a competency model that elicits the perceptual role of teacherpreneurs engaging in private practices is vital.

The global education market was valued at US\$6.3tr in 2017 (BIS, 2013). Within this, English language teaching is predicted to be the fastest-growing market. The booming can be attributed to the need to communicate interculturally using English as the lingua franca among emerging economies opening and

integrating cross-border trade and investment (Vuong and Napier 2015). As far teacherpreneurship research is concerned, the focus is much more on K-12 teachers. While Buckley & Nzembayie (2016) investigate the motivational factors influencing their teacherpreneurial behavior, Shelton (2018) explores the practices of K-12 teachers in a virtual marketplace. Given the importance of English language teaching and its massiveness in the educational sector, it is critical to investigate the practices of online English teacherpreneurs.

A considerable amount of literature has been published on professional identity. The attention this concept has received is due to its significance in helping scholars to understand how individuals experience work and self-identity as a professional (Smith, 2016). According to the author, this is beneficial to organizations and professional bodies to understand employee motivation and influence workplace values to improve induction and staff development, improving relationships with and between employees. For teacherpreneurs, investigating their personality values and conceptualizing their profession at an individual level can help construct knowledge critical for English teachers willing to engage in online English teacherpreneurship and EFL teacher educators desiring to implement such education in pre-service education.

Sustainable innovation is the process of developing and transforming ideas and concepts into useful services and products for society (TIDD et al., 1997). In other words, the concept entails using entrepreneurial skills to create new ideas, technologies, products, and services and implement new processes and social systems (Charter & Clark, 2007). A study has emphasized its application and importance in the educational sector (Silva & Sheppard, 2001). Given the growing demand for English language learning across all age groups, it is critical for producing English teachers capable of meeting these teaching demands to generate new ideas and concepts for learners across age groups, learning for different purposes. Thus, we can argue that the widespread practice of preparing pre-service EFL teachers for either primary or secondary levels of mainstream education will limit the growth of sustainable innovation in the ELT industry. Therefore, the significance of the study is to assist EFL pedagogy programs in making informed decisions about how to develop teacherpreneurial skills of their students, which is critical for sustainable innovation in the ELT industry.

Against this backdrop, this study aims to construct the professional identity of an online English Teacherpreneur by interviewing practitioners in five different continents. The investigation will help us in

promoting sustainable innovation in the ELT industry. This begins with a theoretical and conceptual framework, followed by methodology, and it will then go on to results and discussion. Finally, the conclusion gives a summary and critique of the findings.

2. Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

Identity is described as “a self-composed of the multiple roles that individuals frequently assume” (Stryker & Burke, 2000: 284). Workers’ self-image has proven invaluable for forecasting worker behavior (Burke & Reitzes, 1981). Professional Identity (PI) is a process of self-construction in a professional role, combining technical skills, capabilities, status, and roles that merge with work and life experiences to form a “coherent image of self” (Cascio & Gasker, 2001: 284). It provides the framework vital to creating and enhancing their profession’s ideas (Lightfoot & Frost, 2015). All online English teacherpreneurs are, first of all, English teachers. Their identities are shaped by their experiences as EFL teachers, which is influenced by how they understand, interpret, and negotiate their interests, values, and beliefs (Watt et al., 2019) and entrepreneurial motivation to become an online English teacherpreneur (Primantoro, 2018).

To describe the professional responsibilities of OE teacherpreneur and ‘the aims, values, beliefs, norms, interaction styles, and time horizons that are often linked with the professional role, the entrepreneurial self-identity, and English teacher identity will be merged to construct the professional identity (PI) for this study (Ashforth, 2001: 6). The structural components model needed for this PI construction will be adopted and adapted from the analysis and generalization of scientific literature (Emerson, 2010). This culminates into the six main interacting structural components of the PI proposed by Shpona et al. (2015).

The adapted components of OE teacherpreneurs’ identity were originally designed to build teachers’ identity in higher education (Jermolajeva & Bogdanova, 2017). Professional philosophy and engagement behavior both focus on one’s profession’s perception. We believe cooperation with colleagues cannot fully explain the identity of OE teacherpreneurs. It is therefore replaced with a professional association. Finally, because the teachers are entrepreneurs, their entrepreneurial motivation is incorporated to understand better the factors that motivate them to engage in private practice (Figure 1).

Professional Philosophy: The foundation of any profession is formed by a shared philosophy about what needs to be done, a shared understanding of the theoretical constructs that inform the practice of the profession, the application of the members’ accumulated knowledge to the tasks that need to be accomplished, and the practitioners’ ability to effectively link the theoretical constructs to the practice of the profession (Sandein & Barr, 2014). The

profession of a teacherpreneur is best defined as being a philosophy that is rooted in principles, ethics, goals, patterns, and beliefs.

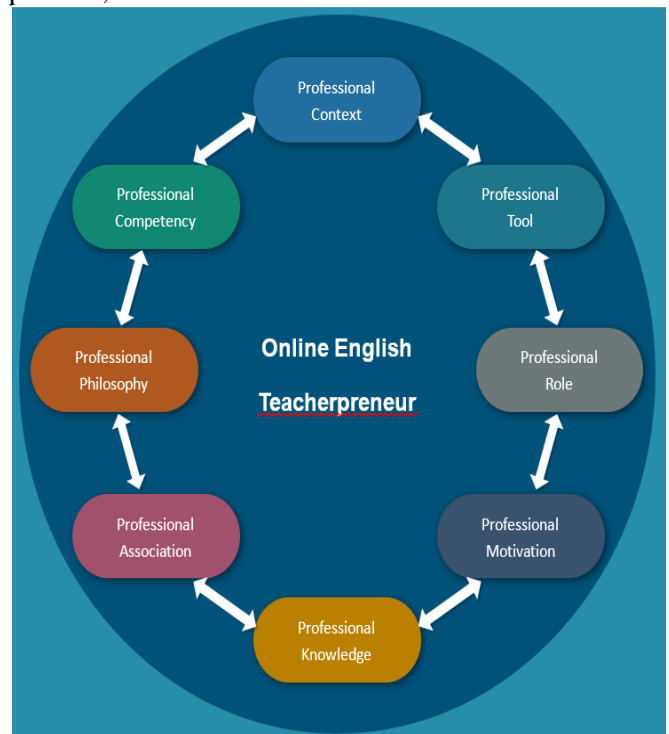


Figure 1. Professional identity components of online English teacherpreneur

Professional Knowledge (PK): Teachers’ professional knowledge is a necessary precondition for effective teaching. As a result, it is linked to the broader discussion about teachers’ competencies. Shulman (1987) divides professional knowledge into seven categories that appear to influence teachers’ classroom behavior: (1) content knowledge; (2) curricular knowledge; (3) pedagogical content knowledge; (4) general pedagogical knowledge; (5) knowledge of learners and their characteristics; (6) knowledge of educational contexts; and (7) knowledge of educational ends. The literature is silent on whether the PK of an OE teacherpreneurs is limited to their teaching skill. This study will look into PK before and after practitioners become OET.

Professional role: Role identity deals with workers’ personal assessment in terms of the label bestowed upon them (Burns and Richards, 2009) and how they discovered who they are, through the ‘worlds’ that they participate in and how they relate to others within and outside of their world” (Urrieta, 2007: 107). Teacher role identity refers to how teachers recognize their roles in their world and their beliefs, values, and assumptions about teaching and being a teacher. Teachers’ professional self-image is authenticated with the various roles they feel obligated to play (Volkman & Anderson, 1998). For the purposes of this paper, OE teacherpreneurs’ role identity refers to the set of meanings they attach to themselves concerning the various roles they play and professional activities they engage in, as well as how others perceive these roles and activities (Farrell, 2011).

Professional association: Forming a professional association can help establish and maintain the unique identity of an OE teacherpreneur by differentiating the profession from other professions and recognizing and identifying the profession's uniqueness (Darcy & Abed-Faghri, 2013). The association can also foster common professional interests, encourage professional development through research, serve as a unified voice representing the profession, provide a forum for enhancing practitioners' skills and knowledge, and improve professional performance. Finally, a professional association can serve as a platform for success in advocating for and recognizing workers' rights in the profession at their respective workplaces (Myers et al., 2002). One of the objectives of this research is to determine the existence of an OE teacherpreneur association.

Professional competency: The components of professional competencies are a composite of personal attributes (capacities, motives, personality traits, self-image, aptitudes, attitudes, values, personality, etc.). They complement and integrate themselves in conjunction with other elements related to work contexts (knowledge, abilities, skills, values, behaviors, actions, experience, etc.) (Guerrero & De Los Ríos, 2012). As for teacherpreneurship studies, Palmer (2017) identified transferable (time management, multitasking, communication, patience, organization) and technical (branding, niche, social media, email listing building, marketing) as skills that all teacherpreneurs must possess.

Professional tools: These tools are used to create content or carry out different tasks in the workplace. Educational technologies appear to be the most popular category of professional tools. These technologies are divided into two categories: social media (Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, Twitter, and WhatsApp) and mobile/computer technology. We will be dissecting the tools used by OE teacherpreneurs to carry out their work.

Professional context: This concept entails knowledge, capabilities, and expertise applied to a specific workplace, organization, or community. Becoming a professional context member is a process that necessitates an understanding of these relationships and the various ways in which they function (Project 2: analyzing professional contexts, 2021). Data from various settings will assist us in shaping the PI of OE teacherpreneurs.

Professional motivation: These professionals are business owners. Their PI's motivational component can be viewed as teacherpreneurial motivation. Self-identity guides and motivates action. According to the identity theory proposed by Stets & Burke (2000), people tend to act in compliance with their prominent self-identity to confirm and support their self-concept (Rise et al., 2010). In other words, self-identity is thought to be the most powerful predictor of entrepreneurial behavior (Rise et al., 2010). According

to Yitshaki & Kropp (2016), entrepreneurial identity consists of two or more distinct narratives reflecting proactive and reactive entrepreneurial processes (Ashe et al., 2011). Entrepreneurs have contradictory identities: sameness, being similar to others, and otherness, being distinct from others (Anderson & Warren 2011). Similarly, Shepherd & Haynie (2009) state that entrepreneurs have two contradictory needs: belonging, which is the need for inclusiveness; that is, having social identity by being a part of a specific social group, and distinctiveness, which is the need to differentiate one's self-identity.

One of the research objectives is to identify the motivations and factors that lead these teachers to become teacherpreneurs.

3. Method

This research utilized a phenomenological methodology by gathering data using interviews (Campbell, 2018). This methodology was developed to study participants' perceptions of their social interactions and professional environments (Crotty & Crotty, 1998). To provide a first-person experience, phenomenology requires the researcher to set aside his/her own interpretations and present the raw descriptions provided by the subjects. This is a limited approach because it seeks to separate the researcher's cultural impositions while remaining uncritical of participants' interpretations of their experiences (Crotty & Crotty, 1998). Nonetheless, because the researcher is responsible for reporting selected themes from the participants' descriptions, phenomenology exhibits some objectivity—the researcher's selection of the objects of the subjects' experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2016). As described below, the method employed focused on gathering and analyzing data and thus, limited the researchers' preconceptions.

Numerous studies have adopted a multiple continental approach to an investigation (Eisenhart & Graebner, 2007). These studies typically allow for the discovery of greater variability, the comparison of more correlations, and the development of global generalizations and a tested theory. Stake (2006) advocated studying four to ten continental cases while doing multi-continental studies because two to three cases do not exhibit enough interactivity between the programs to allow for qualitative generalizations.

3.1. Data Collection

All research ethics codes for data collection, which involve explaining the study's objective to respondents, informing them of their right to decline participation, and offering the most robust level of confidentiality, were upheld. We found all the participants on Google and LinkedIn. We sent out an invitation to teachers-turned-entrepreneurs around the world to participate in this study. Because additional analysis proved no new information, only five participants (all possessed academic degrees in English Pedagogy) were

interviewed (Creswell & Poth, 2016). Researchers' inability to manipulate the uniformity of responses provided a comprehensive understanding of the group's experiences. A semi-structured interview was conducted via Zoom, a web and video conferencing service after the participants had supplied written informed consent and completed a demographic survey. The interviews lasted about 90 minutes each. The interviews were semi-structured with references to the following questions: (1) What is the definition of Teacherpreneurship (2) What are the business products and services the participants render? (3) What is the motivation for becoming a teacherpreneur. The overarching goal was to learn about their professional practices in various contexts. The interviews were audio-recorded via the Zoom technology and later downloaded and stored securely under pseudonyms. The recordings were later transcribed verbatim by professional transcriptionists. The interviewers (authors) produced a brief reflection memo following each interview as a first impression. Table 1 lists the participants' demographic characteristics and basic work information.

Table 1 Participants' demographics

Pseudonym (Gender)	Continent	Highest academic degree	Year of becoming a teacherpreneur
Kelly	North America	Masters' degree	2016
María	South America	First degree	2005
Diana	Europe	Doctorate	2014
John	Africa	First degree	2015
Elizabeth	Asia	Masters' degree	2012

3.2. Data Analysis

The interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) cycle includes several iterative stages. The interview data were used to derive explicit and implicit themes using an emergent strategy. Care was taken to only use narratives that preserve the original text's meaning. MaxQDA 12 was employed for computer-assisted qualitative data analysis (CAQDAS). Still, the software does not aid in making choices and identifying findings; it is just a simple organizational tool. The stages of analysis included repeating the text to identify the pure perspectives of the participants, reflecting on and making memos on a line-by-line basis, if necessary, to identify essential components, mapping interrelationships and patterns, and tabulating key themes. MAXQDA 12 features a hierarchical organization of identified codes and automatically retrieves all associated data. Researchers crafted and linked reflective memos to relevant data segments. The researchers could select, search, highlight, group, and modify codes across transcripts. They could click on a specific code or set of codes and then identify memos and original data segments. The software enabled the researchers to do multiple cross-tabulations and

quantify codes and key data segments. We then discussed and selected common themes that emerged from their separate analyses.

3.3. Validity and Trustworthiness

The IPA has constructive criticisms of the process's validity (Campbell, 2018). Researchers' ability to avoid unintentionally biasing their results is of primary importance. Many measures were set up to ensure that the participants' viewpoints remained uncompromised (Creswell & Poth, 2016). In addition, the participants' views were cited, and their comments were quoted as well. The author made a rigorous audit trail of reflective memos during the data analysis to identify/circumscribe his perspectives (Creswell & Poth, 2016). Member checking was done by sharing findings, interpretations, and findings with participants via email, who suggested changes and corrections. An experienced qualitative researcher was requested to review the interview transcripts, analytical memos, and research results to verify the researchers' findings.

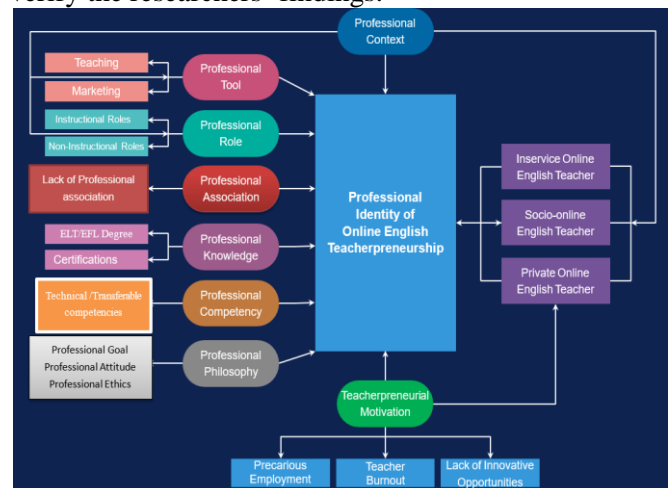


Figure 2. Summary of the respondents' accounts of their work and gives exemplary quotations about both work and professional identity

4. Results and Discussion

The results obtained from the interpretative phenomenological analysis are presented as an overview structure in Figure 2. This figure is quite revealing in several ways. First, it establishes the three groups (In-service, socio and private) of OET in the ELT industry. Also, it depicts motivational factors such as precarious employment, teacher burnout, and a lack of innovative opportunities that drive teacherpreneurial practices. Lastly, other components of their professional identity such as professional tool, association, role, knowledge competency, and philosophy were presented.

Teacherpreneurship awareness: Many teachers have long engaged in these practices. One of our participants has been involved in these practices for the past 25 years. Our findings show that prior to the emergence of the concept of teacherpreneurship in academic literature, practitioners had been adopting a variety of entrepreneurial portfolios, including ELT/ESL/EFL consultant/specialist and edupreneur. For example, one

of our interviewees learned about this concept from academic literature nearly two to four years ago. Another learned about it from a private language teaching institute that asked her to write about it as a guest blogger.

Definition of Teacherpreneurship: To construct the PI of OE teacherpreneurs, it is necessary first to define teacherpreneurship. One of the participants defined it as the ability to combine skills, passion, attitude, and experience to create something new in the English teaching industry. Another respondent sees it as the ability to combine problem-solving skills with the ability to add value to education. Some view it as a business strategy for teachers to earn extra money by seeking private clients and offering their services to them. These definitions are consistent with previous definitions provided in previous studies (Lasekan et al., 2020; Shelton, 2018). As a result, the study provides us with the opportunity to reconcile academic literature with practitioners' perspectives on the meaning of teacherpreneurship.

Professional role: Understanding the PI of practitioners requires identifying the functional roles of a teacherpreneur. Responses to questions about their services rendered to their clients show that their roles can be divided into teaching and non-teaching roles. Under a teaching role, an OE teacherpreneur does the following:

Online English teachers: These are teachers who provide students with educational services. It is dependent on the needs of their students. They teach general English and English for specific purposes and prepare students for international proficiency exams.

Online language coaching: Language coaching is a new methodology that incorporates coaching into the context of language learning. Three of our five respondents work in the field of language coaching. According to the international language coaching association (ILA, 2020), language coaches are expected to support and empower learners on their self-led journeys. According to the respondents, many English teachers have recently transitioned into English language coaching.

Mentoring: This is a popular service provided by experienced OE teacherpreneurs. This entails offering guidance and leadership to collaborators and clients who want to become OE teacherpreneurs. Mentoring services are either intended to improve their clients' pedagogical skills or to assist them in setting up and running their teacherpreneurship practice. This is in line with the teacher leadership service discussed by Lasekan et al. (2020).

The Non-teaching roles are common practices among teacherpreneurs in EFL contexts. They typically provide services, investigate an opportunity, or solve a problem that necessitates the use and knowledge of English in their contexts. To begin with, some of them are instructional material developers who sell their materials in virtual markets. One of the African

participants develops and publishes an oral English skill textbook for high school students. Another South American respondent provides Spanish-English translation and interpretation services. Some run a recruitment service for English teachers for large ELT institutes in her country.

These two functional roles are based on two business models: Business to Clients (B2C) and Business to Business (B2B) (B2B). That is, all respondents either provide their services directly to their clients (B2C) or other business organizations (B2B) (Lasekan, 2019).

Considering the role of teacherpreneur as an online teacher, teacher leader, and instructional material (Lasekan et al., 2020), this study has narrowed such role to English discipline and identified more functional roles of OE teacherpreneurs that cut across both the teaching and non-teaching role.

Types of Online English Teacherpreneur: Prior research has established the institutionalization of teacherpreneurship (Lynch, 2019). It entails schools reducing an experienced teacher's teaching workload and providing them with financial resources to implement their idea. We refer to them as an online English teacherpreneur working on a project funded by their public school. For this research, this type of practitioner is referred to as an In-Service Online English teacherpreneur. In this study, we discovered two types of OE teacherpreneurs:

Socio-Online English teacherpreneur: Our African participant is a socio-teacherpreneur because his involvement in teacherpreneurial behavior is non-profitteering. His practice is motivated by the desire to assist the less privileged group of his society to receive high-quality English language education. During the pandemic in 2019, this participant used his personal resources to train a number of English teachers in his community on how to conduct effective online teaching. This identification corresponds to studies in general social entrepreneurship that deal with the art of running a business to make a social impact (Yitshaki & Kropp, 2016). The difference between socio-teacherpreneurs and in-service English teacherpreneurs is that the latter is given resources to fund the social impact project, whereas the former is expected to seek funding or engage in self-funding to provide quality English education the underprivileged or to solve educational issues through innovation.

Private Online English Educators: This category includes the vast majority of our respondents. They are also the established group in academic literature who are driven into private practice to supplement their income and achieve financial independence. This is the first study to identify broad categories of teacherpreneurs. This discovery has paved the way for a new line of research within the field of teacherpreneurship studies.

Professional tool: OE teacherpreneurs use two types of tools that are essential to their profession. They are

classified as social media tools and mobile/computer technology tools. Since they have to conduct their teaching in a virtual space, they require a computer and its accessory and a camera for their teaching. On the other hand, they use social media platforms or technologies such as YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook to market their service and teach their students. The digital business model that centers on gaining many followers paid by the platform's owners is driven by teacherpreneurs into social media usage (Carpenter et al., 2021). Some of our participants also use an online service intermediary platform to connect with prospective students looking for online English teachers. Finally, LinkedIn is the social media platform of choice for all participants to market their products and services, seek recommendations and referrals, and network with other professionals.

Professional Philosophy: The three constructs used to define the philosophy of OE teacherpreneurs are goals, attitudes, and ethics.

Professional goal: Understanding these participants' professional goals aids in predicting the future of this profession. A participant emphasizes the importance of personal characteristic adjustment. This entails the need to become more organized to be more effective in the profession in the future. Another respondent suggested delving into language coaching. This suggestion indicates that practitioners will continue to take on new professional roles. This evolution foreshadows the dynamism of professional identity in the coming years (Ostad et al., 2019).

Professional attitude: To understand these practitioners' attitudes, we linked their beliefs to their experience in practice over the years and their advice for upcoming OE teacherpreneurs. The majority of respondents emphasized the importance of patience in practice. As one participant put it, "profitability in education is not instantaneous." You can build an empire if you have patience." The dedication to one's work is another quality they emphasize because their profession requires them to combine and express their self-identity as both a teacher and an entrepreneur. Some respondents, for example, must develop and market their instructional materials for teaching while also being responsible for their professional development.

Professional ethics: Recognizing the significance of teachers' roles in human capital development. It is critical to establish ethics in English language education to maintain the balance between profiteering and innovating. One participant emphasizes the importance of being honest with clients about learning outcomes and using the products of other practitioners with acknowledgment. Another participant contends that a teacherpreneur should be a humanist. In other words, practitioners should be motivated by how quality education is achieved rather than monetary gain, which necessitates a high level of selflessness. Another recurring theme is that of reputation. Practitioners are reminded that their reputation is solely based on the

quality of their teaching, services, and materials for their clients.

Professional competence: The OE teacherpreneurs' competence can be divided into transferable and technical competencies. At the same time, transferable skills include creativity, time management, critical thinking, problem-solving, empathy, communication, self-regulation, passion, patience, responsibility, creativity, proactivity, curiosity, collaboration, strength, and reflexiveness. The technical skills are internet research skills, social media marketing skills, and ICT integration. All these skills are consistent with the previous study on the teacherpreneurs' competence (Palmer, 2017).

Professional or teacherpreneurial motivation: Our research discovered a variety of factors that influence many teachers to engage in this practice. Because many pre-service ELT programs prepare students to become elementary or secondary school English teachers. As a result, some EFL teachers want to challenge themselves by working independently for private institutes and themselves to innovate and explore more opportunities available in the ELT industry outside of their country's national ELT framework.

The desire to supplement their income is another motivational factor. Many teachers believe that the monetary value of their job as EFL teachers can only be measured in this private practice. This factor is also influenced by the growth of the gig economy. Because many governments are adopting this type of economy, there are more temporary jobs than permanent jobs. This is exacerbating teacher job insecurity in the educational system. To avoid this sense of job insecurity, many teachers opt for teacherpreneurship as a way to control and determine their earnings. Finally, more experienced teachers are leaving due to burnout. Teacher burnout is a chronic stress condition that causes physical and emotional exhaustion, cynicism, detachment, and feelings of ineffectiveness and lack of accomplishment (Bourg, 2013). All our participants argue that teachers are not given a well-deserved break from their monotonous professional routine. As a result, their stress level is increasing. Due to exhaustion, one of our North American participants dropped out of mainstream education. She published a book on how and why teachers should prioritize their mental health during their teacherpreneurship journey. This is an act of utilizing one's experience and story in mainstream education to provide resources that benefit teachers' education and mental health.

Aside from fatigue, all of these motivators have been documented in teacherpreneurial studies (Lasekan et al., 2021; Shelton, 2018). This idea is also supported by research on entrepreneurial identities. While becoming a teacherpreneur to innovate and explore different branches of the ELT industry is a proactive process, becoming a teacherpreneur due to fatigue and the effects of the gig economy is a reactive process (Ashe et al., 2011).

Professional Contexts: Understanding professional contexts enables future teacherpreneurs to make informed decisions in various settings. This understanding also allows applying curriculum knowledge, ethical considerations, and specialized knowledge in a working environment. Some of the participants discuss the difficulties they face in their respective continents. In North America, the practice is regarded unprofitable. According to one practitioner offering mentoring service, other teachers are unwilling to pay for services and resources. One possible explanation is that teachers always see one another as collaborators and are always in solidarity with one another (Carpenter et al., 2020). As a result, they are unwilling to support any type of profit-making among themselves.

Concerning practices in native English-speaking countries, EFL and ESL, EFL teacherpreneurs are more likely to engage in non-teaching roles of teacherpreneurship than those in ESL or native English speaking countries. According to one participant in South America, they tend to provide English language services wherever their knowledge or proficiency is needed. Because the demand for EFL teachers extends beyond language instruction, that explains why some of them engage in English translation and interpretation services, unlike in North America. Professional contexts can also play a role in determining the type of OE teacherpreneur. For example, a country's economic strength and purchasing power determine if the citizenry can pay for quality education. In other words, there is a tendency to have more socio-teacherpreneur in a society with low quality of education. That explains why our African participants established a Non-Governmental Organization and raised funds to improve the quality of English language education by offering free online English language teaching and mentoring services to other teachers. His professional philosophy reflects the popular belief of his society. For instance, he believes that the calling of a teacher is not for profiteering. Instead, it is to benefit humanity.

In contrast to developed countries with high purchasing power to pay for high-quality education, we can argue that there is a tendency to have more private OE teacherpreneurs. Finally, the professional context can influence the professional tool used for marketing. Our European participants emphasized the distinction between factors that influence tools for marketing services. Advertising is more of a word-of-mouth culture in one part of Europe. In other words, products and services are more about networking, testimonial, and referral. As a result, teacherpreneurs in that context are more likely to use LinkedIn for marketing. However, in other parts of Europe, Facebook and Google ads have proven to be more effective for teacherpreneurs. Finally, the factor of a professional context influences the choice of a professional role. A participant from Europe decides to carve out a mentoring service niche for herself by assisting other

teachers in establishing and managing an English language coaching business. The decision is based on the fact that mentoring is more profitable than providing ELT services because her city's living expenses are high. In sum, teacherpreneurship is an emerging concept in South America. It is considered a personal initiative in Africa while it is a competitive market in Europe and Asia.

Professional association: All respondents confirmed the absence of professional bodies for OE teacherpreneurs. However, it is important to note that they are members of many associations connected to their sub-professional duties. For example, every respondent is a member of either the English language teaching or English language coaching associations. As a result, no unified OE teacherpreneur professional body regulates individuals who engage in this practice or provide and maintain the profession's standard of quality service and ethical guidelines. Furthermore, having a professional association will aid in providing a more shared understanding of professionals' experiences and has the potential to shape induction and professional development that will benefit all practitioners (Darcy & Abed-Faghri, 2013).

Moreover, during this pandemic, the online English teacherpreneurship industry is booming. According to several participants, clients register to learn English in large numbers. The pandemic has demonstrated the value and effectiveness of studying and teaching English. One probable explanation is that many English learners feel obligated to study a foreign language because many cities worldwide are in quarantine. As many scholars have declared, even after this present pandemic, online learning will continue to gain popularity in our educational system (Ewing, 2021). It is an indication that more teachers will engage in teacherpreneurship.

Furthermore, the role of the gig economy, which is gaining momentum in most countries, is a significant factor that will inspire more teachers to engage in private practices (Curran, 2020). Since the workforce is becoming more temporal and mobile, work may now be done remotely using digital platforms (Attaran et al., 2019). As a result, jobs and places are becoming increasingly dissociated. Due to the digitalization of many economies, more teacherpreneurs will be able to work anywhere in the world. Furthermore, OE teacherpreneurs are seen as heroes during this current pandemic. One of our participants in Africa that have embraced online teaching over the years has been at the forefront of helping fellow teachers to switch to online mode by empowering them on how to provide an effective online teaching environment in their respective classrooms.

Furthermore, all participants agree on the importance of incorporating online English teacherpreneurship education into pre-service education. They see benefits to preparing future teachers for opportunities in mainstream ELT education

and industry in general. This finding is consistent with the call of Lasekan et al. (2021) for future teachers to be equipped with online teaching, instructional design, teacher leadership, and entrepreneurship skills at the university level to meet the demand for 21st century English language learning. This research has shed more light on the skills required to become an effective OE teacherpreneur. As a result, the findings can be used to create an online teacherpreneurship education suitable for various contexts.

In addition, the gradual acceptance and adoption of language coaching are important to OE teacherpreneurs' professional roles. More empirical research on the effectiveness of language coaching on learning is required. If the findings are positive, they should be used to justify its incorporation into OE Teacherpreneurship education.

Finally, teacherpreneurs are professionals who engage in productive entrepreneurship that adds value to education (Baumol, 1996). As a result, it is critical that they receive support from the government and education policymakers. OE teacherpreneur education should be integrated into the curriculum for pre-service education program directors. School administrators should encourage OE teacherpreneurship scholarships or fellowships by reducing their workload and providing funds for them to innovate or develop ideas that will add value to their discipline. Socio- OE teacherpreneurs should be given special funds by the government or philanthropists to start and run their non-profit practices.

The current findings are significant in demonstrating the importance of sustainable innovation in the ELT industry. This entails identifying how OE teacherpreneurs develop and implement ideas that address industry-related issues. Our African participant used edutainment to foster language learning by combining essay writing, grammar, and phonology with popular dance steps and rap music. The positive impact of this approach on learning has earned him an award that ranks him as one of the world's top educators. Also, our European respondents develop an informative platform to help other teachers to start and manage their private practice. This storytelling approach has increased professionalism among practitioners and aided many aspiring OE teacherpreneurs in establishing their own private practice. This technique can be used to enhance professional development among mainstream English teachers to construct a suitable identity vital for their teaching practice. The increasing acceptance of language coaching as a concept can be attributed to the increasing number of OE teacherpreneurs adopting this approach. This is evidenced in how it is highly emphasized by many participants adopting this concept in their respective classrooms. Though the effectiveness of guiding students to discover how to master a foreign language rather than the current teaching approach has yet to be proven, a positive empirical finding on its effectiveness will solve critical pedagogical issues in mainstream

education. Finally, the Canadian respondent is using her teacherpreneurial skills to address the issue of teacher burnout.

To summarize, more sustainable innovation can be generated when teachers are encouraged to pursue teacherpreneurship to develop ideas, concepts, services, and products that will address educational sector challenges and advance the quality of teaching practice in mainstream and non-mainstream education. These findings further support the idea of promoting sustainable innovation in the educational sector (Silva & Sheppard, 2001).

5. Conclusion

The main findings of this study refer to the component of OETs professional role extending beyond teaching. Some practitioners in the EFL context can engage in non-teaching roles that require the knowledge of English. In addition, we identify the determinant effect of professional context on the type of OE Teacherpreneur, their choice of a professional tool, and their role. Moreover, different motivational factors such as precarious employment, desire to innovate, and teacher burnout drive more teachers into private practices. However, there is no existence of a membership-based professional body for the profession, which contrasts with the professional identity study conducted by Smith (2016). This research is the first study investigating OE teacherpreneurship. In other words, the research extends our knowledge of professional identities studies. The major limitation of this study is the relatively small number of participants. Thus, further investigation into OE teacherpreneurship by adopting a mixed-method approach is strongly recommended. The findings of this study have several important implications for numerous stakeholders. For the pre-service EFL education, this study can be used to develop online English teacherpreneurship education for the initial-training program. This will help them to disrupt precarious employment after graduation. For the policymakers in education, more in-service teacherpreneurship programs should be promoted in public schools to develop their innovative personal idea by reducing their workload. This approach will also help them to fight against teacher burnout. Finally, for future OE teacherpreneurs, this study can guide how to start and succeed in private practices.

Authors' Contributions

The authors were involved in conducting research, collecting and analyzing data, creating and reviewing articles under the obligations of research group members.

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