English Teachers' Perception of School Climate and Effective Teaching

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Abstract
The present study investigated Iranian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers' perception of school climate and its relationship with their conception of effective teaching. A body of 147 teachers selected through purposive and snow-ball sampling strategies answered Oderand and Eisenschmidt's (2016) questionnaire about school climate and effective teaching. Data were analyzed using factor analysis, which produced three factors to explain teachers' perception of school contextual factors and three for their conception of effective teaching. The results indicated that teachers' perception of school contextual factors to some degree correlated with their approach to teaching in the classroom. The study highlights the fundamental role of school senior management in helping teachers to apply appropriate teaching approaches.

1. INTRODUCTION

the nature of educational system is experiencing a change in the 21st century. A global aim for governments and educators is to find the most effective ways of teaching in order to improve learning. The curricula are not seen as meeting the needs of students within a globalized world (Hope, 2015). Individual learners are in the center of education and their needs, abilities, skills, interests and individual characteristics are accounted for by curriculum designers and policy makers (Wenden, 2002). Students need to develop different competences and skills such as creativity, problem solving, critical thinking, and interpersonal skills in order to cope with the demands of a highly advanced society (Jerald, 2009).

In order to accommodate students' needs in education in the current century a Fundamental Reform Document of Education (FRDE) was proposed in Iran in 2011. The FRDE emphasized enhanced application of active, creative and enlightening approaches, utilization of modern educational and training equipment and technologies in conformity with the objectives of education, highlighting individual differences among students and promotion of teachers' professional training system in the Ministry of Education with an emphasis on sustainable interaction of teachers with schools and scientific–research institutes during their studies and provision of opportunities to gain useful experience from classrooms and educational spaces.

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One important skill for students in todays' advanced world is learning English language. English as an international language possesses a high status in Iranian society and plays a critical role in higher education. It is indeed viewed as a sign of educational and social achievement (Sadeghi & Richards, 2015). English is a vehicle for educational advancement (Farhady, Sajadi Hezaveh, & Hedayati, 2010) and is a gate for new knowledge and technology. The rapid changes in the Iranian society and the approach to teaching English have transformed it into a fashionable trend which has resulted in the spread of English language within the country (Davari, 2013).

Over the past years, the Ministry of education has attempted to make changes in approaches to teaching English in schools. In 2003, Iranian pre-university English syllabus underwent a reform. The principal goal was to propose a shift away from the long-established grammar-translation curriculum practice towards teaching for communicative competence. In 2007, the first Iranian national curriculum for teaching foreign languages (based on communicative approach teaching) was developed by a team working under the supervision of the Ministry of education. In 2011, the new curriculum was implemented and the books and evaluation system underwent radical changes, which came through as a result of changes in policy toward teaching English in Iran.

Application of FRDE in line with the new curriculum in English language teaching at schools requires an emphasis on individual learners' needs and interests and following learner-centered teaching. In the application of learner-centered teaching an important role is played by teachers, because teachers are ultimate agents of educational change and the classroom is the main place for innovation or an obstacle to it; accordingly, no plan for a long- lasting educational change can ignore teachers' roles (Hargeaves & Shirly, 2009). It is clear that teachers' epistemological beliefs shape their teaching practices in the classroom) Ethell, 1997; Kogan, 1992; Woolfolk Hoy, Hoy, & Davis, 2009; Rubie, Davis, Flint, & McDonald, 2012).

With the current interest in developing students' functional skills such as learning English language and applying learner- centered teaching, the educational systems at school level has been more seriously challenged. The main perspective is that teachers alter their instructional practices according to school contextual variables (Solomon, Battistich, & Hom, 1996). Schools are the main site for professional learning. Schools are the place in which teachers are provided with opportunities to cooperate with their colleagues and construct knowledge in authentic contexts (Maloney & Konza, 2011).

The application of principles of FRDE and communicative language teaching with a focus on student needs is affected by school climate, which plays a critical role in learner success and achievement of pedagogical goals. Thus, it is critical to find out teachers' perceptions of school contextual factors and whether school climate helps them in achieving their teaching aims. In addition, utilizing learner-centered education depends on teachers' belief about appropriate ways of teaching and what they consider as fundamental components of teaching process. Exploring the relationship between teachers' perceptions of school climate and their conception of effective teaching can help in removing obstacles in teaching and attaining the goals of education in the current century.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

School climate

Although there are wide definitions of school climate and different aspects of it are emphasized, the fundamental view in all of them is the existence of positive social relationships and interpersonal interactions (Hayness, Emons, & Ben-Avie, 1997). Cohen, Macabe, Michelli, and Picherall (2009) defined it as the quality of school life which encompasses the norms, objectives, values, interpersonal relationships, learning atmosphere, and organizational structure of

school and is connected with feeling socially, emotionally, and psychologically safe. School climate is an important area of inquiry since it is associated with students' academic, social and psychological outcomes (Anderson, 1982; Koth, Bradshaw, & Leaf, 2008). Emmons, Comer and Hayques (1996) defined school climate as shared beliefs and values that shape interactions between students, teachers, and administrators. Positive school climate is identified as a fundamental aspect of successful schools (Brands, Felner, Shim, Sseitsinger, & Dumas, 2003). Schools are expected to cater for individual student's needs and their conceptual development (Coofey, 2007). Educators and researchers have acknowledged that a positive climate plays a fundamental role in high academic achievement (Thepa, Cohen, Guffey, & D'Allesandro, 2013).

Teachers' perception of school climate is related to their job satisfaction (Taylor & Tashakkori, 1995), burnout and attrition (Perie, & Baker, 1997; Grayson & Alvarez, 2008; Keiger, 2010), higher teacher commitment (Hoy, 1990), school cohesiveness and sense of trust (Bryk & Schneider, 2002), cooperation in school community (Lunenburg, 2010), and their desire to apply new academic principles and curricula (Beets, Flay, Vuckinich, Acock, Li, & Allred, 2008). A complex range of internal and external factors such as interpersonal experiences with student and school personnel shape individual and collective experiences of teachers. It is necessary that school principals and administrators support the community members' needs and views and provide a situation in which the members including teachers' work collaboratively to achieve academic objectives. Teachers should share community leadership and feel ownership of work for it (Boone, 2010). In fact, research indicates that teacher authority and their chance of being involved in decision-making process at school culminates in positive changes in their profession. Vangrieken, Meredith, Packer, and Kyndt (2017) indicated that school leadership exerts a significant effect on teacher communities.

Conception of effective teaching

Teachers' conceptions of effective teaching and the efficiency of different methods and approaches have been the subject of many research studies (Gao & Watkins, 2002; Kember, 1997; Lam & Kember, 2004; Pratt, Arseneau, & Collins, 2001; Samuelowicz & Bain, 2001). Although there are different terminologies to refer to the best way of teaching, such as 'excellent teaching' (Chen, 2007; Chen et al., 2012; Kane, Sandretto, & Heath, 2004), 'highly accomplished' (National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, Serafini, 2002), 'effective' (Aregbeyen, 2010; Arikan, Taser, & Sarac-Suzer, 2008; Ganjabi, 2011), 'better teaching' (Gore, Griffiths, & Ladwig, 2004), and 'good teaching' (Kember & Kwan, 2000; Sakurai, 2012), all of them focus on similar aspects of teaching practice. Kember (1997) in his framework for describing teacher conception identified three main factors: "teacher-centered" orientation which deals with transmitting information and structured knowledge, "student-centered" orientation which relates to facilitating knowledge and encouraging conceptual changes and "student- teacher" orientation which aims to combine the two orientations and reduce the controversies relating to them.

Studies of teacher conception of effective teaching lie within two main paradigms (Lopez-I~niguez & Poz, 2014). One emphasizes transmitting established knowledge and the other focuses on developing students' higher order thinking and capabilities by applying constructive views of teaching (Winne & Nesbit, 2010). A new position is recently taken by educators which emphasizes teachers' responsibility for transmitting or conveying knowledge, but also takes into account a learner's active role in learning process (Martın, Pozo, Mateos, Martın, & Perez-Echeverrıa, 2012, cited in Lopez- I~niguez & Poz, 2014). Although the transition model of teaching is the dominant approach to compulsory education in much of the world (OECD, 2009), many have criticized it for being ineffective. Developing higher order thinking skills such as problem solving, critical

thinking and creativity has instead become the essential components of the curriculum in the 21st century (Lam & Lipstone, 2001; Saavedra & Opfer, 2012). Excellent teachers put emphasis on the nature of task because it increases student engagement and helps developing higher level thinking skills and concepts (Boston & Smith, 2009). Studies show that transmission discourages students from applying deep approaches to learning (Gow & Kember, 1993) and improvement in education is achieved by teachers' changing their views of teaching and learning (Gibbs, 1995). Effective teaching is the basis for achieving a wide range of goals in society, including enhancing student achievement, improving school conditions and organizing appropriate teacher education programs (Betore & Artiga, 2004, cited in Chen, 2012).

Chen (2007) studied middle school teachers' conceptions of effective teaching on the north of China. The study confirmed that four main principles were identified as important in teachers' views: (1) caring for students, (2) guiding students' overall development, (3) connecting school knowledge to other areas, and (4) planning structured lessons.

Bear, Gaskins, Blank, and Chen (2011) studied students' perception of school climate and found five main factors as critical: 1) teacher- student relations, 2) student-student relations, 3) fairness of values, 4) liking of schools, and 5) school safety.

Tavakoli and Baniasad-Azad (2016) studied Iranian high school teachers' conceptions of effective teaching and the relationship of those conceptions to their teaching practices. The results indicated that Iranian teachers identified "focus on students" and "being exam- oriented "as main features of effective teaching.

Review of related literature indicates that in spite of the emphasis on learner-centered and communicative teaching in Iran, it is not clear how schools shape teachers' orientation to teaching task. There is lack of research on the role of school contextual factors and teachers' conception of effective teaching. Therefore, to fill this gap, the present study aims to study Iranian EFL teachers' perceptions of school climate and find its relationship with their conception of effective teaching. The research questions addressed are:

1. What are Iranian EFL teachers' perceptions of their school climate?
2. Is there any significant relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' perceptions of school climate and effective teaching?

3. METHOD

Participants

A cohort of 147 Iranian EFL teachers teaching at public school participated in this study. Their age range was 25-61 and they were chosen from two provinces: East Azerbaijan (70 %) and West Azerbaijan (30%). The experience of participants ranged from 2 to 30 years and the average year of teaching experience was 15 years. Sixty percent of the participants had a BA degree and 33% percent had a Master's degree. Ph.D. candidates accounted for 7% of population.

Design

The current study is a kind of survey study, which aims to explore Iranian EFL teachers' perception of school climate and its relationship with approaches to teaching at the classroom.

The data were collected through purposive convenience and snowball sampling strategies. We took questionnaire to schools which we had access to and sent it to telegram groups of EFL teachers. Also, we asked respondents to introduce their colleagues to us. In the process of data analysis, we conducted Factor analysis, which aims to identify underlying variables, or factors that explain the pattern of correlations within a set of observed variables. Factor analysis is often used in data

reduction to identify a small number of factors that explain most of the variance observed in a much larger number of manifest variables.

Instruments

To gather data for this survey, we used the questionnaire developed by Oder and Eisenschmidt (2016). This questionnaire deals with teachers' perceptions of school climate and effective teaching. The basis for this questionnaire is principals of OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALES) questionnaire (OECD, 2009). The questionnaire consists of 29 items; section one relates to teachers' perception of school climate involving 13 items, and section two considers teachers' conception of effective teaching and includes 16 items. The data were analyzed using SPSS Statistical Package for the Social Sciences version 24. The mean scores with standard deviation were calculated for each item and Principal Components Analysis using varimax rotation with Kaiser Normalization was used for conducting factor analysis for the two sections of questionnaire.

Procedure

The data for present study was collected during 2016-2017 school year. In the first phase of data collection, we took the questionnaires to schools and asked teachers to complete them. It took them about ten minutes to answer the questionnaire. In second phase of data collection, we shared the questionnaire with Language Teacher Groups in telegram and asked for teachers' cooperation. About 30% of data was collected in this way. And finally using snowball sampling, we asked our participants to recruit other subjects. Some of them introduced their friends or colleagues and we sent the file via email or telegram to these teachers. We gathered about 40% of our data in this way.

Data analysis

In the process of data analysis, we conducted factor analysis in order to detect underlying variables, and to find the correlation between factors emerging from school climate and effective teaching, we applied Pearson r correlation coefficient to data.

As mentioned above, the module of school climate (module A) consisted of thirteen items. In order to reduce it to manageable factors we used rotated component analysis. The communalities of items were checked and items with low values were removed. The results of factorization indicated that seven items, which accounted for 65% of variance items produced three main factors describing teachers' perception of school climate in Iran.

The schools were characterized by supportive leadership (factor 1), which was reflected in senior managements' readiness to advocate and support teachers whenever there was a problem, teachers' active involvement in school decision-making and value attached to teachers' good work. The second factor emerging from data was related to boring and frustrating depiction of teaching experience in which the task teachers faced was routine and there was little place for innovation and variety in teaching. Second factor also indicated teachers' lack of eagerness to their job and their preference for giving up their job. The third factor accounted for cooperative climate in which there was a strong relationship among colleagues at schools. Teachers perceived their school climate as conducive for cooperative work in which teachers tried to experience mutual understanding and work. Internal consistency of factors was checked with Cronbach's alpha coefficients, which produced following results F1: inclusive leadership. $\alpha = 0.72$, F2: frustrating teaching experience $\alpha = 0.70$, F3: cooperative climate: $\alpha = 0.66$.

The factors we obtained from present data are to some extent similar to what Oder and Eisenschmidt (2016) found in their study, only one factor was different for the two studies. Their study produced three main factors related to teachers' perception of school climate in Estonia.

Inclusive leadership (factor 1), inspiring climate (factor 2) and cooperative climate (factor3) described Estonian EFL teachers' perception of school climate.

The module of effective teaching (Module B) comprises 16 items. Replicating the design of the questionnaire, we divided the items of effective teaching into two groups: (a) traditional and (b) constructivist teaching. Traditional teaching comprises four items ($\alpha = 0.62$) emphasizing teacher-centered banking approach to education. The constructivist teaching that consists of 12 items ($\alpha = 0.77$) advocates learners' active role in the classroom and learning process, discovery and inquiry approaches to teaching, and importance of group work in constructing new knowledge.

The process of item factorization for constructive approach to teaching produced three main factors. Integrative teaching involved integration of different subject areas and learners' active role in learning process (factor1). Active learning involves providing students with opportunities for constructing new knowledge and doing practical tasks. Authentic and meaningful teaching which involves using real life every day experiences in language teaching. These three factors accounted for 66% of total variance. Internal consistency of factors checked with Cronbach's alpha coefficients produced following results: Integrative teaching (F1) $\alpha = 0.70$, active learning (F2) $\alpha = 0.70$ and authentic and meaningful teaching (F3) $\alpha = 0.66$. (see Table 1). Oder and Eisenschmidt (2016) also found three main factors to account for constructive teaching: Learner independence; Active learning; Integrative practice.

4. RESULTS

Bellow we first provide descriptive statistics for Iranian EFL teachers' perceptions of school climate and their conception of effective teaching (Tables 2 and 3). Then the relationship between teachers' perception of school and effective teaching are presented. As Table 2 shows, item 1 and item 4 have the highest mean, and items 3, and 13 have the lowest mean.

Table 1: Sample Items and Factor Reliabilities (Cronbach's alpha coefficients)

	Factors	Cronbach's alpha	Sample items
School Climate	Supportive administration	a=0.72	I know that school administration is ready to help me
	Frustrating experience	a=0.70	I prefer someone else take responsibility
	Cooperative climate	a=0.66	I often cooperate with my colleagues
Effective Teaching	Integrative teaching	a=0.70	Knowledge and skills of other subjects should be integrated
	Active learning	a=0.70	Teachers should guide students to discover and construct new knowledge
	Authentic &meaningful teaching	a=0.66	Real problems and future life make a meaningful context for students' knowledge development

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for English Teachers' Receptions of School Climate

	Mean	SD	N
A 1. I often cooperate with my colleagues	4.28	.738	147
A 2. Sometimes my colleagues do not cooperate with me	3.27	.922	147
A 3. The physical environment at our school is unpleasant	3.12	1.12	147
A 4. The necessary teaching resources (course-books, additional materials, copying machine, library, media resources) are available at school	3.37	1.11	147
A 5. Teachers can greatly influence major decisions connected with school and creation of school policy	3.21	1.34	147
A 6. I prefer someone else to take responsibility	3.74	1.13	147
A 7. Teachers' work consists of routine actions	3.12	1.07	147
A 8. Teaching inspires me to be creative	4.16	.836	147
A 9. Teachers' good work is recognized at our school	3.50	1.10	147
A 10. Nobody tells me I am a good teacher	3.47	1.07	147
A 11. I know that school administration is ready to help me with problems arising in class	3.49	1.15	147
A 12. I look forward to work every day	3.62	1.07	147
A 13. My health problems could be connected with stress derived from teaching	2.99	1.18	147

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for English Teachers' Conception of Effective Teaching

	Mean	SD	N
B1 Real problems and future life make a meaningful context for students' knowledge development	4.12	.928	147
B2 Teaching should be based on questions with clear and correct answers and ideas that most of the students can grasp quickly	2.61	1.28	147
B3 How much students learn depends on their background knowledge, which is why teaching facts are so important	2.70	1.15	147
B4 Effective teachers show their students how to solve problems and tasks	4.12	.945	147
B5 My role as a teacher is to support students' problem-solving activities	4.19	.888	147
B6 Students learn best solving problems independently	3.01	1.20	147
B7 Students should be given possibilities to try out practical tasks themselves before teacher's explanation	3.83	.891	147
B8 Teachers should guide students to discover and construct new knowledge	4.12	.870	147
B9 Teachers should vary their teaching methods to achieve students' meaningful learning and understanding	4.17	.825	147
B10 Students should have possibilities for discussing new ideas and listen to their peers' opinions in small groups	4.38	.686	147
B11 Thinking and discussion are more important than curricular subject requirements	3.98	2.11	147
B12 Most student activities in class require previous knowledge and skills being used in a novel way	3.48	.878	147
B13 Knowledge and skills of other subjects should be integrated into teaching	3.42	1.04	147
B14 Students and teachers create assessment forms and criteria together	3.43	1.03	147
B15 Assessment should include practical tasks, projects and student research	3.74	J.927	147
B16 In general, effective learning requires silence in the class	3.15	1.35	147

Table 4: Correlation between Teachers' Perception of School Climate and Approaches to Teaching

		Integrative Teaching	Active Teaching	Authentic Teaching	Traditional Teaching
Supportive Administration	Pearson correlation Sig.(2tailed) N	.430 .000** 147	.055 .517 147	-.033 .693 147	-.172 .036** 147
Frustrating Teaching Experience	Pearson correlation Sig.(2tailed) N	-.147 .057 147	-.019 .823 147	-.032 .704 147	.171 038** 147
Cooperative Climate	Pearson correlation Sig.(2tailed) N	.111 .180 147	.130 .117 147	.044 598 147	.096 .245 147

** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Descriptive statistics for Iranian EFL teachers' conception of effective teaching are given in Table 3. The results show that item 10 (Students should have possibilities for discussing new ideas and listen to their peers' opinions) has the highest mean followed by item 9 and item 8. On the other hand, items 2 and 3 have the lowest mean of effective teaching.

Table 4 shows correlation results between school climate factors and approaches to teaching. Teachers' perception of school climate characterized as supportive administration (factor 1) has a significantly positive correlation with effective teaching characterized as integrative approach but it has a significantly negative correlation with traditional approaches to teaching. However, supportive leadership does not have a statistically significant correlation with active and authentic elements of effective teaching.

Teachers' perception of school climate as being frustrating (factor 2) has a statistically significant correlation with traditional approach to teaching. However, it does not have any significant correlation with factors of effective teaching. Teachers' perception of school climate as being a cooperative setting (factor 3) does not have statistically significant correlation with approaches to teaching.

5. DISCUSSION

The present study investigated the relationship between EFL teachers' perception of school climate and their conception of effective teaching. The results indicated that supportive administration was the first factor to describe school climate in Iran. And this highlights the critical and fundamental role of school principals in schools. As Halling (2003) notes principals are vital in school since they play managerial, political, institutional and instructional roles. Various studies have indicated direct and significant roles of managers in school success, effective teaching, and learning process and outcome (Hallinger & Heck 1998; Harris, 2009; OECD, 2001; Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008). School leaders play a critical role in ensuring success and have the responsibility to provide a safe and challenging environment in which teachers can experience collective inquiry, and make sure that the necessary resources are available for teachers.

The results of the current study indicated that supportive administration as one of the factors of teachers' perception of school climate correlated negatively with traditional teacher-oriented teaching. The result reflects the importance of senior management's support in shaping teachers' orientation to teaching task. This is partially in contrast with Oder and Eisenschmidt's (2016) finding that traditional approach to teaching did not have any correlation with any school factor.

However, Oder and Eisenschmidt (2016) also found that inclusive leadership correlated positively with learner-centered teaching. The results are also in line with the finding by Vangrieken, Meredith, Packer, and Kyndt (2017), which indicated that school leadership exerts a significant effect on teacher communities. Similarly, Allensworth, Ponisciak, and Mazzeo (2009) confirmed that the level of support provided by school management and teachers' active involvement in school decision making process affects teachers' approaches to teaching.

Whenever teachers are advocated in a school setting and the manager is ready to help them in difficult situations, they try to avoid traditional transmitted or banking approach to teaching and seek alternative approaches such as learner-centered and constructive teaching. The reason for this might be that students and teachers are accustomed to teacher-oriented classes in which students as passive agents act under the authority of the teacher. In fact, a strict discipline and an absolute teacher authority are distinguishing characteristics of Asian teaching contexts (Tan, 2006). Any switches to constructive teaching, transition in role relationships and authority sharing between teachers and students may cause controversies and crises in teaching process since neither teachers nor students are familiar with principles and rules of learner-centered education. Teachers also need more authority in order to make changes in established curriculum and syllabus for the course. Any attempt to apply constructive teaching in which students' individuality, needs and independency are emphasized would affect different aspects of teaching profession such as syllabus, classroom disciplinary climate, collaborative effort, professional development and this requires the support of senior management at school level and the government and ministry of education at higher levels.

The most widely practiced method in foreign language teaching is grammar translation method, which is relatively easy to apply, and makes few demands on teachers (Qing-xue & Jin-fang, 2007). Any shift from traditional approaches to constructive i.e. communicative approach to language teaching is new attempt, which requires highly professional teachers. However, as OCED (2009) reports most of the schools in most countries lack professional teachers. Teachers' lack of professional development and demanding pressure to develop the required skills to apply constructive teaching may be another reason for the importance of supportive administration in schools. Because teachers' self-esteem in their job is closely linked to a sense of professional efficacy (Nias, 1996), supportive administrators should help teachers improve their professional skills by providing opportunities for them to take part in teacher training courses, workshops and conferences.

School administrators promote teaching by not only creating organizational conditions but also by providing opportunities for planned discussion and mutual reflection. Results of the current study indicated that teachers believed a supportive administrator would inspire them to apply integrative teaching. In order to follow an integrative curriculum at school level which aims to encourage students to see the interconnectedness and interrelationship between the curriculum areas and which views students as active learners capable of interpretation and communication, there is need for a coherent and systematic plan and organization at school which brings the whole community of practice together. School administrators can help teachers follow an integrative approach by actively engaging the community to create shared responsibility for student success in different subject areas. Integration of different subject areas with an aim to enhance student motivation and creativity and empower them by providing meaningful learning requires teachers' acceptable level of knowledge in different subject areas and this surely necessitates teachers' collaborative work and their authority to be involved in school related decisions. School principals and teachers need to come to a mutual understanding that integrative teaching not only results in

increased student learning but also helps teachers grow and reflect in areas that they do not have higher expertise. Furthermore, this can be a great achievement and a long-term investment for teachers and schools.

The second factor that teachers perceived to describe school climate was frustrating and boring view of teaching which is linked to the notion of teacher burnout and attrition. Teacher attrition is a widespread problem all over the world which affects teachers' performance and their motivation to teach, and as Chan (2003) states "it might impair the quality of teaching as well as leading to job dissatisfaction, work alienation, physical and emotional ill-health and teachers leaving the profession' (p. 382). Teacher burnout can be caused by personal as well as organizational factors such as poor salary, student discipline problems, poor administrative support, poor student motivation and lack of faculty influence (De Heus & Diekstra, 1999; Ingersoll, 2001; Ingersoll & Smith, 2003; Leiter & Masalch, 2005; Sadeghi & khezrlu, 2016).

The results of the current survey indicated that EFL teachers perceived their teaching experience frustrating in spite of the supportive administration and strong collegial relationship among school members. The reason for this might be that although, senior management and cooperation among teachers are fundamental to determining the level of teacher accomplishment and job satisfaction, they are not the sole cause of it; various factors come into play. This can be related to challenges of teaching English at schools. As Loh and Liew (2016) reported English teachers are confronted with problems such as sociocultural values attached to teaching English, the tension of grading student essays, the performance pressures of high-stakes testing, and the need for culturally responsive pedagogies. Naylor and Malcomson (2001) also reported that Canadian English teachers found grading a stressful task in their occupation, and they were forced to reduce the number of their classes (cited in Loh & Liew, 2016). Another problem for teachers might be the constraints and institutional rules of teaching appropriately. Teachers' attempt to teach based on their own values and applying innovative methods is constrained by common belief in teacher-oriented pedagogies and the tension of national high-stakes examinations (Curdt-Christiansen & Silver, 2013). Teachers have to follow what is known as "'teach to the test'… with less time devoted to activities that are not part of the test" (p. 786). Education policies, which advocate communicative teaching are not consistent with the demands of national examinations (Littlewood, 2007). Teacher' abandoning of their values in teaching and not being able to apply what they believe because of external pressures and constraints within their schools is closely linked to a sense of loss and frustration on them (Hargreaves, 2003; Nias, 1996).

Feeling of frustration and exhaustion that teachers reported in their perception of school climate correlated with traditional teaching approaches. The results confirm findings of previous studies which indicated that teacher burnout can be closely linked to lower achievement levels since burnout teachers do not exert the effort once they did and try to reduce their relationship with students (Farber, 1991). When teachers are emotionally exhausted for any reason they opt for traditional and less effective teaching approaches because they feel that they cannot accomplish their goals. This will have a severe effect on learning outcome in language classes. Applying learner-centered approaches such as communicative language teaching requires teacher creativity, flexibility, professional development,collaboration and communication skills all of which require teacher motivation and patience which burnout teachers do not demonstrate in their work.

The third factor which teachers perceived to describe school climate was cooperation and strong collegial relationship among teachers. Teachers reported that they attempted to work cooperatively with their colleagues. School- based teacher collaboration stirs up greater improvements in teaching and learning and brings about changes in teachers' ideology and their approaches to

teaching (Clement & Vandenberghe, 2000; Fernandez & Yoshida, 2004). A positive school climate characterized by strong collaborative communities plays a critical role in teachers' performance (Talbert & Milbrey, 2002). It also provides possibilities for new models of professional development based on shared reflection in the workplace (Lieberman, 1996).

An unexpected result that we obtained was that teachers' perception of school climate, as a cooperative site did not correlate with any of components of constructive teaching. This is in contrast with results obtained by Oder and Eisenschmidt (2016). In their study cooperative school climate correlated with effective teaching. The results of the study might confirm Huberman's position that teachers seek isolation after tenure and that school community and collaboration might not lead to lasting instructional changes (1993). He argued against benefits of collaboration among colleagues and believed that school bureaucratic mandates which aim to improve collaboration at school undermines rather support teachers' instruction and effectiveness (Talbert & Milbrey, 2002).

One reason for the result we obtained might be difficulties involved in managing classroom events. Maybe the realities of classroom or the facilities do not allow for utilization of learner-centered approaches in spite of shared understanding and cooperation among teachers. Another reason might be that teachers overestimated cooperation with their colleagues and it is not clear what their cooperative work involves.

6. CONCLUSION

The results of the current study accentuate the importance of school senior management in paving the way for EFL teachers' effective teaching in the classroom. Teachers need leadership support in order to move from traditional to constructive teaching approaches and this is linked to different aspects of leadership role in schools. A good and well- supported leadership in schools can create a sense of ownership and purpose in teachers' approach to their work. Improving teachers' professional autonomy makes teaching an attractive profession and improves the quality of the classroom teaching practice (OCED, 2001). A very important implication of this study relates to the need for improving school leadership as major school reform agenda. School improvement movements in the past 20 years have put a great emphasis on the role of school managers. Government and policy makers should seek, formulate and implement school leadership policies and programs in order to improve education within the country since efficient education system is critical to country's advancement. School managers' roles, competencies and responsibilities should be redefined and broadened.

The results of this study partially reveals that changes in approaches and textbooks cannot guarantee effective approaches by teachers; still teachers find their task as a routine and boring and this severely affects student outcome and can lead to students' reduced motivation. OCED (2001) reports that in 20 out of 28 countries, more than one in four 15-year- old students view school as a place that they would not like to go and in almost half the countries students find school boring and frustrating. Due to the critical role played by teachers, it is vital for teachers to regain their energy, motivation and do their job eagerly. Identifying teachers' needs and providing effective support at school and classroom level can contribute to enhanced motivation. In order to make changes the government, policy makers and school managers should bring variety to school activities and provide teachers with a chance to experience innovative and creative teaching process. This can be achievable by decreasing the number of students in classrooms, bringing technology into classrooms and providing more opportunities for teachers to take part in conferences, workshops and other professional development activities. Involving teachers in different work-related practical projects could also change their prospective.

The present study has some limitations. First, there is a need for exploratory qualitative study on EFL teacher's perception of school climate and effective teaching. Applying mixed methods could give a clearer picture of EFL teachers' views, skills, preferences and obstacles in their teaching approaches. Second, the data for the present study was collected from public schools without considering economic and social issues. Involving private school teachers' perceptions can give illuminating insights since the culture, social class, facilities, and education policies are totally different in these two types of schools.

Teachers' perception of school climate can be affected by their emotions, personal and professional identities. Future research can delve into the issue by considering interconnection between social, cultural and political complexities of schools, teachers' professional identity and their teaching practices. Future research can also be replicated using school senior managements' perceptions of school contextual factors and finding the extent to which their authority and instructional policies can help improve the quality of language teaching at schools.

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