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On the Effect of Personality and Efficacy on Second Language Instructors' Performance

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Abstract

In recent years, teachers' self-efficacy has demonstrated a profound influence on the daily lives of teachers and their students. However, little is known in pertinent to the relationship between teachers' personality traits and their self-efficacy. To gain more insight into this area, this study sought to explore the interface between 100 male and female EFL instructors' personality and their self-efficacy at 11 English language institutes in Bandar Abbas, Iran. In order to glean data, two instruments were applied: the NEO Five Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI-R), and Second Language Teaching Efficacy Scale (SLTES). Moreover, to see whether there was a significant relationship between the variables under study, Spearman Rank Order Correlation was applied to analyze the data. At the end, the results revealed that there is no significant relationship between EFL instructors' personality and their self-efficacy.

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1. Introduction

Collins Cobuid Dictionary defines personality as "one's whole character and nature." (Dornyei, 2005, p.11) Pervin and John (2001) also suggest that personality represents those characteristics of person that "account for consistent pattern of feeling, thinking and behaving". Mascoso and Slagado (2004) discussed negative types of personalities, which they referred to as "dark side" and examined its effect on job performance. In this study they identify those

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seven types of personalities (shyness, suspiciousness, sadness, pessimism, suffering, eccentricity, and riskiness), which negatively impacted job performance.

Likewise Pinker (1997) had tested a number of hypotheses and one of the most surprising outcomes in the history of psychology has occurred according to outcomes of his study. Therefore, there were five major ways to describe personality and which as follows:

1. Extroversion or retiring introversion;
2. Neuroticism or calm and self-satisfied (stability);
3. Agreeableness or rude and suspicious (antagonism);
4. Conscientiousness or careless (un-directedness) and
5. Openness or conforming (non-openness).

Teachers' personality can be related to a larger scale to educational outcomes. Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) asserted that teacher efficacy is "powerfully related to many meaningful educational outcomes such as teacher persistence, enthusiasm, commitment and instructional behaviour, as well as student outcomes such as achievement, motivation, and self efficacy belief" (p.783). Furthermore, discussing the significant role of school environment as an element in cultivating students' cognitive self-efficacy, Bandura (1994) maintained that " the task of creating learning environment conducive to the development of cognitive skills rests heavily on the talents and self efficacy of teachers" (p.11).

The base of self-efficacy comes from Banderas' (1977) theory, which expresses that the belief people have about their abilities in dealing with difficult situations affects their choices, wishes, degree of their attempt and flexibility in problems.

Based on the history of language teaching, it has encountered various obstacles until 1990s, a large number of textbooks dealing with language teaching methodology books such as Richard and Rogers (2001) and Larsen-Freeman (2000) depicted an ordered historical structure of how methods found their way and became dated as a reaction to changing procedures in linguistics and psychology or students' needs.

Regarding the weakness of methods, it led in a new age of teaching called post-method era in language teaching (Kumaravadivelu, 1994,2001,2003). This method refuses the inauthentic organization constructed by teachers' performance and qualification. However, it gives importance to competence and confidence on the side of practitioners' sense.

Teacher efficacy is an important factor, which affects teachers' performance in the classroom. Bandura (1977) claimed that teacher efficacy is derived from the concept of self-efficacy in personality psychology; it is teachers' judgments about their own abilities to bring about desirable classroom or learning outcomes (Tschannen-Moran, et al., 1998).

Objective of the study:

The purpose of this study is to determine if any relationships exist between teaching efficacy and personality type of EFL teachers in the context of language education in Iran. Therefore, this objective is sought in this study:

- Examining relationships between teaching efficacy and personality type of Iranian EFL teachers.

To achieve the objectives of this study, the following questions are raised:

Is there any significant relationship between teachers' personality and their self-efficacy?

Based on the above questions, the following null hypotheses are adopted:

There is no significant relationship between teachers' personality and their self-efficacy.

To make the process of the thesis clear, the steps have been explained in details which consist of participants, instruments, procedure, and design of the study, data collection and data analysis.

1.2 Participants

Participants in this study were 100 male and female teachers (23 male and 77 female) ranging in age from 25 to 40, holding B.A and M.A in TEFL and teaching EFL courses at Morvarid Jonub, Tehran Language Institute, Safir, Parsa, Mehrdad, Latidan, Dana, Aryan, Farhikhtegan, Arman and Kish Air institutes in Bandar Abbas (a city in the south of Iran). These institutes were selected because they were among the most creditable private language institutes in Bandar Abbas.

1.3 Instrumentation

In order to glean the data, two instruments were utilized: The NEO-Five Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI) and second language teaching efficacy scale (SLTES).

1.3.1 NEO-Five Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI)

The Persian adaptation of Neo Five Factor inventory (Costa and McCrae, 1999) used for measuring personality. The Neo FFI is a self-report paper and pencil questionnaire, which covers the five main domain of the Big Five Model. The five dimensions of personality, which will be measured, are: neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. The inventory consists of 240 items that are scored according to Likert-type scale of five points ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. It should be noted that the in Iran Garousi, Mehrya, and Ghazi Tabatabae (2001) examined the reliability and validity of this inventory. They estimated the reliability of this instrument 0.77 to 0.92, after administration phase and the data collection process the researcher by the use of Cronbach's Alpha found the reliability of the personality test 0.93.

1.3.2 Second Language Teaching Efficacy Scale

To assess teacher self efficacy and of the various instruments available for assessing teacher self-efficacy, the second language teaching efficacy scale (SLTES), which is developed by Akbari and Abednia (2009) used. This instrument assesses teachers' self efficacy in three areas: 1. Instructional strategies, 2. Classroom management 3. student engagement. The efficacy scored based on Likert-scale of five points ranging from a great deal to nothing. By using cronbach alpha they found that the reliability of the instrument is 0.93 and also estimated reliability for different factors are 0.89 for instructional strategies, 0.85 for classroom management, and 0.83 for student engagement. The researcher also by the use of cronbach alpha estimates the reliability of this instrument 0.95.

1.4 Design of the study

The present study has the characteristic of a descriptive study. According to this kind of research, the researcher tested the hypothesis and found out the relationship between variables, so it is a correlational, quantitative study, which could be generalizable to larger settings. (Best & Kahn, 2006).

1.5 data collection Procedure

The administration stage was done in one session. The teachers were asked to fill out the NEO-Five Factor Inventory and Second Language Teaching Efficacy Scale questionnaires. The 100 participants of the study who are institute teachers, holding B.A and M.A degree rated themselves on 5 point Likert- scale of Neo, from strongly disagree to strongly agree and on 9 point Likert- scale of SLTES from 1 to 9. The data collection process took two months then the questionnaires analysed by using SPSS software.

1.6 data analysis procedure

The data that is gathered from the two questionnaires will be analysed by utilizing Spearman rank order to determine the correlation between two main variables. Multiple regression analysis will be also used for measuring and determining which combination of independent variables best predicts or explains the variation in one dependent variable.

The descriptive statistics for the NEO-FFL variables are shown in the table 1-1. The means in the five-personality dimension show that teachers rated themselves highest in Conscientiousness (2.17), then Extraversion (2.14), openness (2.12), agreeableness (2.10) and neuroticism (1.96)

Table 1-1: Report

	Neuroticism	Extraversion	Openness	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness
Mean	1.96	2.14	2.12	2.10	2.17
N	100	100	100	100	100

The descriptive statistics for the self-report efficacy are shown in the table 1-2. The means in the three subscales indicate that participants judged themselves to be more efficacious for classroom management (6.62) than for student engagement (6.52) and instructional strategies (6.54) .In other words, they perceived themselves more efficacious and capable in managing the classroom than designing instructional strategies and engaging students in the classroom activities.

1-2 Report

	Student Engagement	Instructional Strategies	Classroom Management
Mean	6.52	6.54	6.62
Std. Deviation	17.82400	17.61925	14.22890
Minimum	20.00	24.00	22.00
Maximum	99.00	108.00	90.00
Sum	6839.00	7508.00	6327.00
% of Total N	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

The first research question, which was whether there is any significant relationship between teachers’ personality and their self-efficacy is rejected because the p-value of 0.2 is not accepted at, corrected ties of 0.05. In order to test the null hypothesis, there is no relationship between Iranian EFL instructor’s personality and their self-efficacy the Spearman rank order formula were used between total results of teachers personality and their self-efficacy. The results as presented in table below indicate that there is a significant relationship between these variables, leading to reject the null hypothesis. Table 1-3 displayed the relationship between them.

Table 1-3: Correlations

			Self-efficacy	Personality
Spearman's rho	Self-efficacy	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.232*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.020
		N	100	100
	Personality	Correlation Coefficient	.232*	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.020	.
		N	100	100

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

As table 4-13 displayed there is a significant positive relationship between the main variables. ($r=.232$, $p=.020 < 0.05$)

Based on the findings of the present study, it can be concluded that the EFL instructors in Bandar Abbas institutes

rated themselves most on conscientiousness, and they also judged themselves to be more efficacious for instructional strategies it means that they perceived themselves more efficacious and capable in designing instructional strategies.

According to (Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2000), teachers with high level of efficacy showed extra-role behaviour toward the team and the organization. Also, highly efficacious teachers show a tendency toward educational novelty and changes (Cousins and Walker, 2000). In terms of classroom management, (Woolfolk Hoy & Hoy, 1990) found that, high personal teacher efficacy correlated with more humanistic approaches toward pupil control and also the ability in developing positive relationships among students (Rich, Lev & Fisher, 1996). Teacher efficacy is also related to other educational concepts such as students' learning outcomes, for example, it is found that positive personal teacher efficacy has positive effects on students' performance on language achievement tests (Tcshannen-Moran et al. 1998). Furthermore, Ross and Causin (1993) found a positive correlation between high general teaching efficacy and students' high achievement in mathematics.

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