

Original Research**Breaking Barriers: Gender, Experience, and Self-Regulated Strategies in the Practices of Iranian EFL Teachers***Esmael Ali Salimi^{*1}, Shiva Azizpour¹*¹ Department of English Language and Literature, Allameh Tabataba'i University, Tehran, Iran.

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Abstract

Teachers' lack of self-regulatory behavior might negatively affect their professional development and student performance. This mixed-methods study attempted to investigate whether there is any difference between novice and experienced teachers' perceptions and use of self-regulatory strategies in light of gender and teaching experience. In the quantitative phase, 120 EFL teachers from Iranian language schools were recruited through convenience sampling and surveyed with Teacher's Self-Regulation Questionnaire (Capa-Aydin, 2009). In the qualitative phase, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 10 teachers with varying teaching experiences, including both genders to examine their practices and perceptions toward self-regulation strategies. Then, the participants were placed into different groups based on their gender, experience, and perceptions toward self-regulation strategies. Afterward, the teachers were grouped into the novice and experienced. The researchers also conducted 10 classroom observations of five teachers through a checklist to see whether teachers applied the self-regulation characteristics in their practice. The results of the first phase indicated that there was a statistically significant difference between novice and experienced teachers in their perceptions and use of self-regulatory strategies. It is noteworthy that no difference was found between their gender and teaching experience with respect to their perception of self-regulation. Further, no interactions were found among EFL teachers' gender, experience, and use of self-regulation strategies. The analyses of the qualitative phase revealed that the participants held varying perceptions toward self-regulation strategies. The findings provide implications for EFL teachers, teacher educators, and policymakers to apply self-regulated strategies in their careers.

Keywords: Self-Regulated Learning, Self-Regulated Learning Strategy, Self-Regulation, Teacher's Perception, Teaching Experience

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1. Introduction

Recently defined by Molenaar et al. (2023) and Hiver and Dörnyei (2017), self-regulated learning is described as the learner's psychological processes that are purposively and consciously controlled, or directed for the purpose of gaining knowledge and understanding, solving problems, and developing a skill. According to Zimmerman (2002), self-regulation refers to the process by which learners personally activate and sustain cognitions and behaviors systematically oriented toward the attainment of learning goals. The roles of motivational processes such as goals, attributions, self-efficacy, outcome expectations, self-concept, self-esteem, social comparisons, emotions, values, and self-evaluations collectively are considered as self-regulation (Garcia & Pintrich, 2023; Greenberg et al., 2023; Ilishkina et al., 2022; Zimmerman, 2002). Moreover, Zimmerman (2002) defined self-regulated learning in terms of self-generated thoughts, feelings, and actions, which are systematically oriented toward attainment of students' goals. This multi-dimensional term includes various processes such as metacognition, goal setting, and self-assessment all of which have an impact on learning in various ways (Arnawa & Arafah, 2023; Zhang et al., 2023; Zimmerman, 2013). Self-regulation strategy is completely different from metacognition and self-regulation since it incorporates both of them and its focal attention is on learner monitoring (Zimmerman, 2013). By self-regulation strategy, we mean activities coordinated at gaining skills that include agency, purpose, and instrumentality self-perceptions by a learner (Sun et al., 2022; Zimmerman, 2013).

English Language teachers come from different backgrounds. Language teachers have various ideas and attitudes toward the classroom and the methods applied; therefore, they may have different views about what is helpful and what is not in the class (Magerøy, 2023; Teng, 2022). By teacher perceptions, we mean the ideologies and notions teachers have toward self-regulation. In this study, teachers' perception refers to various perspectives teachers have toward the application of self-regulated learning. Teachers' perceptions regarding teaching and learning lie on a continuum from teacher-centered activity to learner-centered activity (Bai et al., 2022; Dignath-van Ewijk & Van der Werf, 2012; Kramarski & Michalsky, 2009).

SLA researchers have frequently suggested that L2 teachers can recognize and analyze important information in their surrounding environment depending on the length of their teaching experience (Gaeta et al. 2021; Rahimi & Alavi, 2017). Thus, they can retain a

particular set of skills and strategies on how to deal with unfavorable contextual phenomena and apply them to classroom settings in the future (Rahimi & Nabilou, 2010). This is an invaluable asset that is most likely absent in novice L2 teachers. EFL literature refers to teaching experience as the number of years a teacher has been involved in language education as his or her profession. Also, how varied his or her field of teaching has been (Richards, 2008). Richards (2008) pointed out that the number of years a teacher has had professional experience in teaching English defined their teaching experience. For this study, “novice teachers” refer to newly qualified teachers who have just completed their education and started teaching. Although there is no full agreement in the literature on revealing the time novice teachers have been teaching (Farrell & Bennis, 2013), in this study, its range is between 1 to 5 years. On the other hand, those who have spent 5 to 15 years teaching are considered as “highly experienced teachers”.

Changes in the educational system require new roles adopted by teachers (Lai & Hwang, 2023; Partovi & Tafazoli, 2016). Nowadays, just knowing how to teach is not adequate for teachers; therefore, a combination of self-regulated learning strategies (SRLS) into their curricula is recommended by the researchers to help teachers get prepared for their future learning program (Bembenutty et al., 2015). Two main domains of teaching are teachers’ thoughts and actions, and the result of their actions and thoughts. Teachers’ unawareness of pedagogical knowledge of SRL might avoid developing SRLS in learners (Geduld, 2017). In other words, there is a high chance that teachers who lack self-regulatory skills will be unable to teach these strategies to their students; therefore, teaching them to the teachers is of utmost importance (Geduld, 2017; Karlen, et al., 2023; Pawlak, 2022).

Despite the growing interest of SLA researchers in examining SRL within the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Iran (e.g., Noughabi et al., 2020; Rahimpour et al., 2020; Songhori et al., 2020), exploring Iranian EFL teachers’ perceptions and practices of self-regulated strategies in terms of gender and teaching experience has largely been neglected. Although some studies have been conducted in SRL, they did not explore teachers’ perceptions and practices of self-regulated strategies. It is also noteworthy that the focal attention of the studies on SRL was to examine the students and no attention has been given to the self-regulation process in teachers’ self-regulatory strategies. Teachers are increasingly confronted with the lack of transfer from theory to practice (Korthagen, 2010; Peeters et al., 2014). Correspondingly, little is known about what drives teachers to adopt

one practice over the others. Thus, there is a need for more investigation of teachers' practices and perceptions. To address this gap in the second language acquisition (SLA) literature, this study investigated Iranian EFL teachers' perceptions and practices of self-regulated strategies considering their teaching experience and gender.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Self-Regulation

The concept of self-regulation has become widespread in the realm of education these days. Fox and Riconscente (2008) noted that self-regulation is a deliberate control of thoughts and actions. Going back to the history of self-regulation, it is worth mentioning that this concept is heavily influenced by the works of the scholars whose works were published in the 1970s. Self-regulation is one of the strategies that can enhance the procedure of learning and an umbrella term which includes: motivational, behavioral, and cognitive aspects of the learning (Newman, 2023). On the other hand, self-regulation was defined as understanding and controlling the environment in order to learn more effectively. During this procedure, the learners should set goals and determine some strategies which lead to the accomplishment of those goals, implement them, and keep track of this procedure towards the achievement of the final goals (Schunk & Greene, 2017; Schunk, 2023). The degree to which students are metacognitively, motivationally and behaviorally active participants in their learning process is defined as self-regulation (Ardiansyah et al., 2023; Zimmerman, 2013; Zimmerman, 2023). Zimmerman (2000) described self-regulation learning as student's self-generated thoughts, feelings, and actions, which are systematically oriented towards the attainment of their goals.

2.2. Teachers' Perceptions of Self-Regulated Strategies

Teachers' perceptions of teaching are described as teachers' views, their definitions, and descriptions of how they experience the teaching process. Therefore, the use of certain teaching practices can be adopted depending on the teachers' conceptions of teaching (Oolbekkink-Marchand, 2006). Teachers play a salient role in shaping educational processes. In the new era of education, teachers are no longer seen as passive transmitters of knowledge but as active agents who play significant roles in learning (English & Kitsantas, 2013). Teachers should alter their approach toward the learners in order to make them more

responsible for their own learning. They are encouraged to stimulate self-regulation in their students, which requires them to gradually take control of their own learning process (English & Kitsantas, 2013).

The main rationale behind conducting this study was to investigate teachers' differences in the realization of self-regulatory strategies on the basis of their teaching experience. A crucial point in language teaching, as manifested by the abundance of studies, is that teachers' gender might have an impact on their teaching routine. The interaction between teachers' gender and experience and their use of self-regulation strategies is another question that this study wondered. It is worth noting that this study tried to explore the factors that influence teachers' use of self-regulatory strategies. The study tried to find whether years of teaching experience have an effect on teaching practices or not. Thus, by taking full advantage of both quantitative and qualitative research potential, this mixed-methods study attempted to investigate the relationship between teachers' perceptions and its effect on their practice. Then, the other question this study called into was the role of gender in their decision-making in the choice of self-regulatory strategies. Further, it attempted to examine gender differences. The study also tried to discover whether there is any difference between novice and experienced teachers in using these self-regulatory strategies. Furthermore, the study attempted to investigate the extent to which the variables affect the utilization of self-regulatory strategies in the classroom. More specifically, it intended to provide insights on the role of gender and teaching experience.

2.3. Teaching Experience

Experience affects the way language teachers make sense of classroom activities. According to Gatbonton (2008), "Experienced teachers are those with many years of teaching behind them, with many interpreted in various studies as at least four to five years." On the other hand, she defined novice teachers as "those who are still undergoing training, who have just completed their training, or who have just commenced teaching and still have very little experience (e.g., less than two years) behind them" (Gatbonton, 2008, p. 162). According to Gatbonton (2008), experienced and novice language teachers' methods of perceiving and making sense of classroom events have been proven to be different in numerous significant ways. The experienced teachers have a great deal of knowledge and understanding regarding classrooms, the types of circumstances, and the social interactions they encounter throughout

their teaching. They have acquired rich real-world knowledge for interpreting the intricacy of actions unfolding in their classrooms. However, novices possess incomplete, less rich knowledge and deal with classroom activities with much less interrelatedness. The present study attempted to explore the relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' perceptions and practices of self-regulated strategies in light of their gender and teaching experience. Accordingly, the following research questions were raised to guide this study. This study addressed these questions in two phases, qualitative and quantitative, as follows:

- RQ1. Is there any statistically significant difference between novice and experienced teachers in their perception and use of self-regulatory strategies?
- RQ2. Is there any statistically significant difference between male and female teachers' practices?
- RQ3. Are there any interactions between EFL teachers' gender/experience, and the use of self-regulation strategies?
- RQ4. How do EFL teachers perceive the effectiveness of self-regulation strategies?

3. Methodology

3.1. Design and Context of the Study

In an attempt to answer and come up with the research questions of the study, the researchers employed a sequential explanatory mixed methods methodology (Creswell & Clark, 2011). It is not possible to explain the complications of language studies either in qualitative or quantitative research methods alone (Creswell & Clarks, 2011). Hence, mixed methods are suggested in this case. In this study, the researchers collected quantitative data prior to the qualitative data. Because the results of the two questionnaires provide the required information for the participants' selection. The purpose of choosing a mixed-methods approach for this study was to triangulate data and find the relationship between teachers' gender and teaching experience and their perceptions and practices of self-regulation strategies using more convincing evidence and with more confidence. To this end, the quantitative data obtained from the questionnaires were mixed with the qualitative data from the interviews and observation sessions. In addition, the quantitative and qualitative data were connected in terms of mixing; that is, the results of the quantitative part were used to identify the participants for the follow-up interview (Creswell & Clark, 2011). It is worth noting that the study was conducted in the Summer of 2023 in Iran.

3.2. Participants

The participants of this study included 120 Iranian English language teachers teaching at different English language schools in Tehran, Iran. They were selected through convenience sampling from several language schools across the city. Their ages varied from 18-40, with a range of 1-15 years of teaching experience. They were categorized into two groups: experienced (more than 5 years of teaching) and novice (less than 5 years). Participants included both genders (70 females and 50 males) with different university degrees (BA, MA, Ph.D.) and fields of study (i.e., TEFL, English Language and Literature, and Translation Studies). Some, nevertheless, had degrees in majors other than English. This is the case in Iran, where everyone with enough language proficiency is allowed to teach English (Pishghadam et al., 2012). To give a vivid picture of the demographic features of the participants, gender distribution and frequencies of years of teaching experience are depicted in Table 1. Since there is no consensus on the number of years for considering a teacher as a novice or experienced (Farrell & Bennis, 2013), it is supposed that the participating teachers who had less than 5 years of experience were considered novices, and teachers with more than five years were regarded as experienced teachers. Finally, based on purposive sampling, 10 participants from among 120 who filled out the teachers' self-regulation questionnaire were chosen for a follow-up interview. More significantly, the overriding aim of sampling in qualitative inquiry is to include those target individuals who can yield various and rich information to enhance understanding of the research phenomenon. The criteria for the selection of the interviewees were their experience and willingness to cooperate. As Table 1 indicates, the number of female and male teachers is approximately equal. 42% were male and 58% were female. Their years of teaching experience in both groups were exactly the same. Meanwhile, the selection of the 10 participants for the qualitative phase using semi-structured interviews was based on the convenience sampling method and their consent to cooperate in that phase.

Table 1
Gender and Teaching Experience of the Participants

Demographic variable		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	50	41.7
	Female	70	58.3
Years of teaching experience	Inexperienced (1-5)	60	50
	Experience (+6)	60	50
Total		120	100

3.3. Instruments

Due to the nature of the study, which is a sequential explanatory mixed method, and in order to provide answers to the research questions that were posed, the study benefited from four instruments. The instruments employed in this study were different according to each phase. The quantitative phase consisted of two questionnaires: the Demographic Information Questionnaire (Appendix A) and the Teacher Self-Regulation Scale (TSRS) (Appendix B). In the qualitative phase of the study, an in-depth semi-structured interview protocol (Appendix C) was conducted, and the interviews lasted for 15-30 minutes. Moreover, an observation checklist (Appendix D) was used during 10 instructional classes. It is worth noting that the interviews and the questionnaires were provided in English.

3.3.1. Demographic Information Questionnaire

In order to get a full picture of all the participants' personal information, a demographic information questionnaire was developed by the researchers to collect their demographic information. In this questionnaire, data about the teachers' gender, age, nationality, years of experience in teaching English as a foreign language in Iran, and their academic major were collected (Appendix A).

3.3.2. Teachers' Self-Regulation Scale

Teachers' Self-Regulation Scale (TSRS) was designed and validated by Capa-Aydin et al. (2009). This questionnaire investigated the teachers' practices and perceptions toward self-regulation strategies. Nine phases of self-regulation were considered in this questionnaire: goal setting, intrinsic interest, performance goal orientation, mastery goal orientation, self-instruction, emotional control, self-evaluation, self-reaction, and help-seeking. The questionnaire included 47 questions, and the items were on a 6-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 to 6: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 4 = undecided, 5 = agree, 6 = strongly disagree. Exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses yielded the above-mentioned nine factors. Capa-Aydin et al. (2009) noted that through a series of confirmatory factor analyses with different samples, this nine-factor structure was supported. TSRS, with a reliability of 0.85, demonstrated good degrees of reliability. Capa-Aydin et al. also reported impressively high levels of validity for this questionnaire (between 0.53-0.85). Moreover, the administration of the questionnaire took about 15-20 minutes.

3.3.3. Semi-Structured Interview Protocol

In order to answer the qualitative research question of the study, semi-structured interviews based on the interview protocol developed by the researchers were conducted. The initial items for the interview protocol were developed based on a thorough review of the related literature and the researchers' teaching experience and expertise. Besides, the researchers set up one group interview session with two university lecturers in order to initially try out the interview questions and revise them in light of the given comments and suggestions. Moreover, in order to validate the interview questions, two associate professors in TEFL commented on them. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 10 teachers who were willing to participate. The criterion for the selection was purposive sampling. The in-depth semi-structured interview consisted of 10 questions that were designed based on the teachers' self-regulation strategies to have a more in-depth investigation into the teachers' perceptions (Appendix C). The interview questions aimed at exploring teachers' differences in gender and teaching experience in adopting self-regulated strategies. It is worth noting that the semi-structured interviews took 20-30 minutes, and a content analysis was used for the analysis (Marton, 1990). This means that the researchers developed the interview questions and ensured their linguistic and content validity. Furthermore, the content validity was reexamined by a panel of nine language experts.

3.3.4. Observation

An observation based on the "Teacher Self-Regulation Scale" was developed by the researchers (Appendix D). In this regard, Alderson and Wall (1993) maintained that "*we would not have known that the exam had virtually no impact on methodology if we had not observed classes*" (p. 65). The developed items were the operationalization of the nine components of TSRS in the ELT curriculum. It consisted of 12 items on a four-point Likert-scale ranging from poor to outstanding, which examined the extent to which EFL teachers incorporate the items of TSRS into their instructional practices. Generally, observation allowed the researchers to investigate the teachers' behavior in natural settings with regard to the focus of the present study, namely teachers' self-regulation practices and perceptions. Since no observation checklist, in line with teachers' practices, was already available, the researchers developed a checklist. Then, some experts perused the items to ensure their validity. After obtaining the permission and consent of the teachers and head managers, the

researchers conducted classroom observations for 10 sessions. Each session took about 15-30 minutes.

3.4. Data Collection Procedure

In order to answer the research questions of the study, the data collection proceeded in two phases: qualitative and quantitative, and the study was carried out using the principles of a mixed-methods design. Thus, in the quantitative phase of the study, the reliability and validity of the items of the TSRS, adopted from Capa-Aydin et al. (2009) in the Iranian context were measured. After that, the researchers used the Demographic Information Questionnaire, which was devised specifically for the sake of the current study in order to ascertain additional data about the participants. The questionnaires were administered to the participants either through e-mail, WhatsApp, Telegram, or in hard copies. In addition, following convenience sampling, the researchers asked the respondents to send the link to the questionnaires to their colleagues after their own completion.

It is worth noting that the questionnaires were distributed through convenience sampling among 120 Iranian EFL teachers in different language schools in Tehran, Iran. The researchers also assured the participants that their identities would not be revealed, the responses were going to be used exclusively for research, and their confidentiality would be protected throughout the research project. After collecting the raw data, the participants were grouped based on gender, teaching experience, and their perceptions toward self-regulation. In this procedure, all teachers were categorized into two groups of novice teachers (those whose experience was less than 5 years) and experienced (whose experience was more than 5 years).

Following the administration of the questionnaires and before conducting the interviews, in the qualitative phase of the study, the researchers observed 5 sessions of 5 teachers using an observation scheme. This observation was done in order to check if the teachers really utilized the strategies they claimed in an interview or not. As the nature of the design of the study demanded, quantitative methods were carried out first, and then, in order to confirm the second phase, the data obtained in the first phase of the study provided a reason for the next phase, which was qualitative. Finally, the researchers conducted semi-structured interviews with the teachers to explore their practices and perceptions toward self-regulation strategies.

3.5. Data Analysis Procedure

The data analysis was carried out on the basis of the data collected from questionnaires, observations, and interviews. As for the quantitative research questions of this study, in the first phase, descriptive statistics along with two Independent-Samples t-tests were used to answer the first and second research questions, which addressed the difference between novice and experienced teachers as well as male and female teachers in their perceptions and use of self-regulatory strategies. With regard to the third research question, the results of descriptive statistics for both teachers' perceptions toward self-regulated strategies and their instructional practices were compared, and then Pearson-product correlation was applied.

With regard to the classroom observations, taking advantage of an observation checklist, the data were analyzed qualitatively through perusing the schemes ticked during the classes. Additionally, the frequency of teachers' practices representing their application of self-regulated strategies was reported across all the observed classes. More specifically, the patterns and themes that emerged from the questionnaire and interview responses were outlined in a table and compared to the classroom observation checklist and the notes taken by the researchers during each class. As Holliday (2010) pinpointed, qualitative data collected from classroom observations and interviews can be analyzed through holistic thematic analysis by attending to the details of what happens in the classroom. In this study, the data from classroom observations were categorized based on salient or recurring themes extracted from the 10 class observations of the teachers. The interview data were also analyzed qualitatively and through thematic analysis, which is a method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within the data. In this study, primarily, all the interviews were transcribed, summarized, categorized, and proofread by the researchers to check for any differences in the recordings and the interview transcriptions. When the transcriptions matched with the video recordings, the interview transcriptions were once again reviewed, and different and related parts of the transcriptions, according to the research questions, were coded by utilizing key words and phrases from the interview questions. This categorization process led to the exploration of the predominant patterns in the teachers' responses. It is critical to note that during the preparation of the transcriptions, the researchers employed Zimmerman's (2002) model of self-regulation strategies. Taking advantage of frequency counts and descriptive statistics, the emerging themes and patterns in the transcriptions were grouped according to their frequency of occurrence. Thus, the

themes and patterns were placed into a thematic table according to the interview questions, along with representative excerpts from each of the fifteen interviewees. Subsequently, all the themes and patterns were carefully categorized to indicate the key themes in the interview data. Afterward, the key themes were compared with those of the questionnaire data and the activities observed during classroom observations to identify the relationship between the data and the research questions and validate the findings.

4. Results

The following presents an analysis of the data collected through the questionnaires, classroom observations, and the semi-structured interviews. It also includes an analysis of the reliability of the questionnaires, descriptive statistics, checking the normality assumptions, quantitative research results, and qualitative research results.

4.1. Ensuring the Reliability and Content Validity of the Instruments

The following illustrates the results obtained from the analysis of the reliability and validity of the instruments.

4.1.1. Teachers' Self-Regulation Questionnaire

The internal consistency and reliability of the questionnaires employed in this study were investigated running Cronbach's alpha, whose results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Reliability Statistics of OPT

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.92	.85	40

The reliability of the questionnaire in this study was estimated to be .85, which is quite satisfactory.

4.1.2. Classroom Observations

To substantiate the responses conveyed by the participants in the quantitative phase (questionnaires), the researchers carried out 10 classroom observation sessions with five EFL teachers with different years of teaching experience and genders, three female and two

male teachers. It is crucial to note that to check the reliability of the classroom observations and notes, the researchers analyzed and discussed the contents and activities.

4.1.3. Interview Questions

Two associate professors of TEFL were asked to assess the interview questions' appropriateness and relevance through a brief interview in order to complete the second phase of the study and determine the interview questions' reliability. The experts' comments were assessed for agreement and consistency, which served as the yardstick for reliability. As pinpointed by Ary et al. (2010), the more consistent the responses, the higher the reliability.

4.2. Quantitative Research Results to Respond to the First Research Question

In order to answer the first research question addressing any significant difference between novice and experienced teachers in their perception and use of self-regulatory strategies, two Independent-Samples t-tests were run. Table 3 shows the scores of inexperienced teachers on teachers' perceptions of self-regulation (M=175.28, SD= 16.87), which did not significantly differ from experienced teachers (M= 179.21, SD= 15.35; $t(118) = -1.33$, $p=.184$, $p> .05$).

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics for Inexperienced and Experienced Teachers' Perceptions of Self-Regulatory Strategies

	Treatment	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Self-regulation	Inexperienced	60	175.28	16.87	2.17
	Experienced	60	179.21	15.35	1.98

A self-regulatory questionnaire was employed to determine whether the teachers are self-regulated or not.

Table 4

Statistical Descriptive Data of EFL Teachers' Self-Regulatory Trait

		Statistic	Std. Error	
Self-regulation	Mean	177.25	1.47	
	95% Confidence Interval for Mean	Lower Bound	174.32	
		Upper Bound	180.17	
	5% Trimmed Mean	177.59		
	Median	187.00		
	Variance	261.88		
	Std. Deviation	16.18		
	Minimum	152.00		
	Maximum	195.00		
	Range	43.00		
	Interquartile Range	34.00		
	Skewness	-.48	.22	
	Kurtosis	-1.53	.43	

As Table 4 shows, the minimum and maximum scores obtained on the self-regulatory questionnaire were 152.00 and 195.00, which suggests a mean of 177.25 and a median of 187.00. The obtained variance equals 261.88 with a standard error of 1.47 from the mean.

Table 5

The results of Independent Samples t-test Comparing Experienced and Inexperienced Teachers' Perceptions of Self-Regulatory Strategies

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances				t-test for Equality of Means					
F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
							Lower	Upper	
Equal variances assumed	3.37	0.6	-1.33	118	.18	-3.93	2.94	-9.76	1.89
Equal variances not assumed			-1.33	116.95	.18	-3.93	2.94	-9.76	1.89

The results of Independent-Samples t-tests checking for any significant difference between inexperienced and experienced teachers' implementation of self-regulation practices revealed that there was a statistically significant difference between the scores of

inexperienced teachers on teachers’ practices of self-regulation strategies (M= 23.26, SD= 3.57) and experienced teachers (M= 29.26, SD= 2.01; $t(28) = -5.66, p = .00, p < .05$).

Table 6
Descriptive Statistics for Experienced and Inexperienced Teachers’ Practices of Self-Regulation

	Treatment	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Self-regulation practice	Inexperienced	15	23.26	3.57	.92
	Experienced	15	29.26	2.01	.52

Table 7
The Results of Independent Samples t-test Comparing Experienced and Inexperienced Teachers’ Practices of Self-Regulation

Levene’s Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means								
F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference			
							Lower	Upper		
Equal variances assumed	.057	.81		-5.66	28	.00	-6.00	1.05	-8.17	-3.82
Equal variances not assumed				-5.66	22.09	.00	-6.00	1.05	-8.19	-3.80

4.3. Research Results to Respond to the Second Research Question

To answer the second research question addressing whether there is any statistically significant difference between male and female teachers in their perception and employment of self-regulatory strategies, two Independent-Samples t-tests were calculated.

Table 8
Descriptive Statistics for Male and Female Teachers’ Perceptions of Self-Regulation

	Treatment	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Self-regulation	Male	50	177.46	14.42	2.04
	Female	70	177.10	17.43	2.08

Table 9 shows that there was no statistically significant difference in scores for male (M=177.46, SD= 14.42) and female (177.1, SD= 17.43; $t(118) = .12, p = .90, p > .05$) teachers’ perception of self-regulation.

Table 9

The Results of Independent Samples t-test Comparing Male and Female Teachers' Perceptions of Self-regulation

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means								
									95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		Sig. (2-tailed)							Lower	Upper
F	Sig.	t	df	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference					
Equal variances assumed	12.76	.00	.12	118	.90	.36	3.00	-5.59	6.31	
Equal variances not assumed			.12	115.38	.90	.36	2.91	-5.41	6.13	

Another Independent-Samples t-test was run to compare male and female teachers' deployment of self-regulation strategies.

Table 10

Descriptive Statistics for Male and Female Teachers' Practices of Self-Regulation

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Self-regulation practice	Male	15	24.93	3.71	.95
	Female	15	27.60	4.30	1.11

Table 10 shows that the scores of male teachers on self-regulation practices (M= 24.93, SD= 3.71) did not significantly differ from female teachers (M= 27.6, SD= 4.3; t (28) = -1.81, p= .08, p> .05).

Table 11

The Results of Independent Samples t-test Comparing Male and Female Teachers' Practices of Self-Regulation

Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means								
									95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		Sig. (2-tailed)							Lower	Upper
F	Sig.	t	df	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference					
Equal variances assumed	.295	.591	-1.81	28	.08	-2.66	1.46	-5.67	.34	
Equal variances not assumed			-1.81	27.40	.08	-2.66	1.46	-5.67	.34	

4.4. Research Results to Respond to the Third Research Question

In order to answer the third research question addressing any significant interaction between EFL teachers' gender and their teaching experience regarding their perception of self-regulation, a two-way ANOVA was run. The results of which are presented in Table 12.

Table 12
Tests of Between-Subjects Effect

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	518.492 ^a	3	172.83	.65	.58
Gender	28.94	1	28.94	.11	.74
Experience	441.47	1	441.47	1.67	.19
gender * experience	22.24	1	22.24	.08	.77
Error	30646.00	116	264.19		
Total	3801272.00	120			
Corrected Total	31164.50	119			

R Squared = .017 (Adjusted R Squared = -.009)

As the results revealed, there was no significant interaction between EFL teachers' gender and teaching experience with respect to their perception of self-regulation [$F(1) = .08, p = .77, p > .05$].

4.5. Qualitative Research Results to Respond to the Fourth Research Question

The fourth research question dealt with how EFL teachers perceive the effectiveness of self-regulation strategies. In order to obtain a better understanding of this question, the researchers designed nine interview questions concerning the role of the teacher regarding the learners' goals, their time management, how they evaluate themselves at the end of a course, the reasons for the importance of being a successful teacher, how teachers' mistakes can help them, and how they deal with critical moments in the classroom. The most frequent answers to each question delivered by the teachers are presented in the following; a few themes were also elicited.

The content analysis of the obtained data for answering the first sub-question indicated that the teachers have different roles to play concerning the learners' goals, such as acting as a coach, facilitator, and guide. More specifically, 30% of the interviewees considered the role of the teacher to be that of a facilitator, 50% pointed to that of a guide, and 20% argued

that the teachers have to take on the role of a coach as for the goals of the learners. The following excerpts represent the most common themes posed by the teachers regarding their role in relation to the learners' goals:

The teacher should act as a guide

The teachers are expected to guide the learners in achieving their goals, if they are feasible and valuable, by constantly asking and supporting them (Teacher 10).

The teacher should act as a facilitator

The teachers need to act like facilitators to pave the way for students by being aware of their goals and needs (Teacher 3).

The teacher should act as a coach

In my view, the role of the teacher should be like that of a coach. He/she should monitor the performance of the learners and try to help them obtain what they desire (Teacher 8).

Going one step further, the researchers posed a question regarding the teachers' time management. The results of the analyses indicated that a great majority of the EFL teachers (85%) use a timetable before the class in order to manage the time of their instruction. On the other hand, 10% of the respondents argued that they teach whatever comes up and do not follow a predetermined timetable. Furthermore, some teachers maintained that they teach and manage their time according to the students' learning capacity and needs. The following excerpts represent the teachers' remarks:

Before the term starts, I make a timetable, and I follow it exactly based on what I've already planned (Teacher 2).

I continue based on the rate of students' learning. All the students should participate in the class (Teacher 10).

The next interview question asked how teachers manage their class according to the curriculum and whether it is necessary to write a lesson plan or not. The results indicated that a large number of teachers (80%) put forward that they write lesson plans. They mentioned that having a lesson plan helps them to be more organized. However, 10% of the teachers believed that it was possible not to write a lesson plan, and the rest of the teachers (10%) believed that they followed the flow of the class. This question also explored teachers' ability to manage their time. Most of the teachers reiterated that they have a timetable for their class. The following samples represent the abovementioned themes raised by the interviewees: Do you write any lesson plans based on the curriculum you want to teach?

I have plans and preparations before the class

For sure, a lesson plan would be a great framework for the tutor. Through teaching, any specific knowledge would lead the class to the approach decided by him/her and guide the students to the exact way that was designated for them. (Teacher 3)

On the other hand, some teachers (20%) argued that they don't write lesson plans prior to their class. They maintained that they could manage the class without a lesson plan. Only one teacher stated that he writes lesson plans if he wants to teach a new book or material. While most of the teachers maintained that they develop lesson plans since it provides a framework for them, other teachers contended that they just teach what comes up without written plans but with mental plans. The following sample represents the related themes raised in this question:

Writing a lesson plan is only required for a novice teacher. An experienced teacher knows how to deal with their class and manage all aspects of his/her classroom. (Teacher 5)

The next question wondered whether it was necessary to decide how they evaluated themselves at the end of instruction. As shown in Table 4.21, the teachers believed that a prior decision on assessment illuminates the goals of teaching and specifies what teachers aim to achieve and whether learners achieve the objectives or not. It was found that most of the teachers evaluate themselves by their students (75%). In fact, how much they learn is their success criterion. Further, 15% of the teachers mentioned that the student's behavior and opinion are their criteria for the teacher's evaluation. They estimate this achievement in different ways. For example, by asking them face-to-face, checking their grades, or checking the students' reactions. The results also indicate that 10% of the teachers believed that they evaluated themselves based on their own satisfaction.

Table 13

The Percentage of Teachers' Responses to the Third Interview Question

EFL teachers' most frequent answers	Percent
Based on my students exam result	75%
Students feedback and how they behave	15%
My own satisfaction	10%

More specifically, the analysis of the interviews ended with the following common themes raised by the respondents, whose excerpts are presented below:

I evaluate myself based on the student's exam result

Based on my students' understanding and performance at the end of the semester. (Teacher1)

I verbally ask the students for feedback, and their results also display their performance on the test. (Teacher 2)

I evaluate myself based on my own satisfaction

On the other hand, approximately 10% of the teachers pointed out that they only evaluate themselves based on their own satisfaction. This is evidenced below by one of the teachers.

I try my best when I'm teaching, but it is impossible to separate the results of the students from the final evaluation. I mean, if my students achieve their purposes and learn what they want, I will feel better. But I totally won't judge the result of my instruction based on my students' exam results. (Teacher 8)

The next question asked teachers how they deal with the critical and emotional moments in the class. Most of the teachers (78%) pointed out that they try to tackle the situation, solve it with their students in person, and recognize the main source of the problem. The following interview extract displays this issue.

It depends on the problem. I often establish a good rapport with my students and try to ask them if there's something wrong. If there's a motivational issue, I'd need to investigate the root of the problem. (Teacher 4)

On the other hand, some teachers maintained that they don't pay attention to their students' feelings in the class. The majority of teachers argued that they consider the emotional problems aroused in their process of teaching. They maintained that establishing good rapport helped them uncover the sources of problems and alleviate them. Furthermore, they believed that injecting a bit of humor might help to ease the tension and lighten the mood. Their views are presented in the following sample statements:

I try to ease the tension and lighten the mood by injecting a bit of humor. (Teacher 5)

I try to tell a joke and take control of the class until the class is over. (Teacher 3)

One of the other factors that is always being considered is why it is important to be a successful teacher. The results reveal that more than half of the teachers (62.5%) expressed the same notion that they are the ones who are role models for their students and should not have any faults. Analyzing the other responses revealed that 28% of teachers believed that their own satisfaction in their profession and their learners' educational progress were more

important, while a minority of the teachers (9.37%) argued that they try to do their best in order to get promotion. Different teachers had different ideas, which are illustrated as follows:

Table 14

The Percentage of Teachers' Responses to the Fifth Interview Question

EFL teachers' most frequent answers	Percent
Teachers should be the role model	62.5
To satisfy myself professionally and promoting learners' education	28.12
To get promotion	9.37

The following are the most frequently raised themes, along with their sample extracts:

Teachers should serve as role models

Teachers should act as role models. I believe that a successful teacher can save many lives and direct many students toward their dreams and talents. In addition, success brings respect and fame. If teachers teach nicely, they will gain a better professional identity among their colleagues and students. (Teacher 8)

I want success for my professional satisfaction and learners' educational progress

To satisfy myself professionally. It is important to see that your efforts are fruitful and that your students' progress proves these claims. (Teacher 5)

The next question probed how teachers control and manage classroom trends. The majority of the teachers (88%) introduced some strategies to manage their classrooms. Some highlighted the importance of writing lesson plans and setting rules. The other (12%) underscored the significance of establishing a good rapport with their students. The following are the posed themes and their excerpts:

I control and manage my class by setting rules from the beginning

I set some rules and ask the students to follow them, and I also try to build a friendly relationship with the students. (Teacher 9)

I control and manage my class by establishing a good rapport with my students

To control and manage classroom trends, we can employ several methods, such as giving students a brief time to have fun and then turning the trend back to teaching and learning. (Teacher 2)

The other question asked teachers whether mistakes could help them learn or not. Most of the teachers stated that they learn from the mistakes they make in the classroom, and the mistakes teachers make are one of the sources they learn from. Meanwhile, 43% of the teachers noted that their mistakes might be helpful if they reflect on them. One of the teachers pointed out that mistakes are quite natural, and making a mistake is an inevitable part of learning. Further, 40% of the teachers demonstrated that mistakes are useful if they are analyzed after they happen. The following are the themes and excerpts revealing the abovementioned claims:

Mistakes are valuable only if teachers probe their source

I believe that mistakes in teaching and facing the consequences can help teachers learn the teaching methods better. (Teacher 4)

Good teachers learn from their mistakes

Mistakes are an integral part of the learning process, provided that they don't always go unnoticed by the person making them. (Teacher 9)

Teachers are not allowed to make mistakes

Teachers should not expose students to mistakes, and they are required to provide them with the correct input. (Teacher 10)

The last question explored how teachers perceive the effectiveness of self-regulation strategies. Different teachers had different definitions of self-regulation. There were some teachers who did not have any idea toward this concept despite being experienced enough. In fact, this question showed us the difference between teachers who are experts in their job and those who just have teaching experience and spend many years doing this career. The following statements indicate this:

Experience plays an integral role. An experienced teacher has a mental picture of do's and don'ts in a classroom. I think it will be natural after spending a certain amount of time carefully monitoring themselves. (Teacher 1)

There were some teachers who thought that they should evaluate and define their self-regulation by their students. The following extracts demonstrate this.

I understand the effectiveness of my self-regulation from the students' performances. (Teacher 3)

Some teachers assumed that self-regulation strategies provided the perfect opportunity for the teacher to establish clear schedules and a structured routine in the classroom. They

emphasized that it was vital for teachers to apply consistent meditation to their behaviors in order to create a positive environment that is 20% conducive to effective instruction.

When we talk about self-regulation, what comes to mind is the concept of autonomy. If I could perceive the question precisely, I would say that is essential for both teachers and learners to have self-regulatory strategies to be more autonomous in their path. Establishing a good feeling is also important. (Teacher 6)

5. Discussion

The results of the study revealed that there was no statistically significant difference between the scores of Iranian inexperienced and experienced EFL teachers' perceptions toward self-regulation. This finding indicates that years of teaching experience did not modify teachers' perceptions toward self-regulation. This consistency of perceptions among inexperienced and experienced teachers may stem from the premise that teachers' self-regulation perceptions may have already been constructed in alignment with those formed during their professional education, and their teaching experiences did not modify their perceptions.

In like manner, Latoya McCrea (2013) compared teachers who have taught various grade levels with 11-15 years of teaching experience to those with 6-10 years of teaching experience. The study concluded that most teachers lack familiarity with early teachers' programs that paid attention to self-regulation. Thus, the study laid the foundation for planning and developing research on teachers' perceptions. This study is in alignment with the results of the present study, which indicated that experienced and novice teachers are not different in terms of their perceptions.

The results of the current study are in contrast to some of the previous studies (e.g., Farrell & Bennis, 2013; Ghonsooly & Ghanizadeh, 2013; Lai & Hwang, 2023; Li & Walsh, 2011; Partovi & Tafazoli, 2016). For instance, in contrast to the findings of this study, Partovi and Tafazol (2016) demonstrated that EFL teachers' self-regulatory perceptions and their years of teaching experience were in direct and positive association. These researchers approved that EFL teachers' perceptions toward self-regulatory strategies had the tendency to enhance with an increase in teachers' years of teaching experience, implying that the increase in EFL teachers' teaching experience fosters their self-regulation. Further, Li and Walsh (2011) indicated that years of teaching experience strongly influenced teachers' perceptions. Moreover, Ghonsooly and Ghanizadeh (2013) found positive correlations

between EFL teachers' self-regulation and the two variables of teaching experience and age, suggesting that teachers' self-regulation tends to improve over time and with every year of teaching.

The results of the Independent Samples t-test investigating any significant difference between inexperienced and experienced EFL teachers' employment of self-regulatory strategies revealed that there was a statistically significant difference between them, and experienced teachers outperformed inexperienced teachers in the adoption of self-regulatory strategies in their instructional practices. These findings are in line with some previously conducted studies (e.g., Pintrich, 2003; Zimmerman, 2002).

In the same vein, Pintrich (2003) asserted that individuals have the capacity to learn how to regulate their cognitive activities. He believed that self-regulation is neither a personal construct with a genetic basis that is shaped early in life nor a measure of mental intelligence that is consistent after a certain point in life; rather, individuals' self-regulation evolves through experience. Similarly, Zimmerman (2002) pointed out that self-regulation is not a fixed attribute; rather it is formed and evolved through participation in situations that provide individuals with frequent opportunities to be in charge of their own learning.

These findings suggest that years of teaching experience contribute to effective teaching delivery. It indicates that "professional development is experiential" (Mushayikwa & Lubben 2009, p. 375), and an increase in teachers' experience is conducive to progress in the professional and practical expertise to teach better. In the same line, Bartels (2005) argued that teaching experience helps teachers organize their knowledge, indicating that experienced teachers can diagnose and reflect on important elements in their situation. Experienced teachers have the opportunity to obtain up-to-date knowledge and information about contextual variables and how to connect their theoretical knowledge to class conditions. This difference between inexperienced and experienced teachers' teaching quality may originate from the assumption that teacher training programs do not supply prospective teachers with practical challenging teaching experiences in order to develop professionally competent teachers, and this leads to less qualified inexperienced teachers. In a similar vein, Randi et al. (2011) argued that in order to create opportunities for insightful instruction, teachers not only need content area knowledge but also have to monitor their beliefs, motivation, and other self-regulatory factors associated with teaching and learning.

Empirical research proves that teachers' implementation of self-regulatory behaviors positively influences their instructional practice.

On the other hand, the results of the second research question illustrated that the scores of male and female teachers' perceptions of self-regulation were not significantly different. The empirical result revealed that both groups strongly supported self-regulation instruction. Moreover, the results of an Independent-Samples t-test comparing male and female teachers' deployment of self-regulation strategies indicated that the scores of male teachers on self-regulation practices did not significantly differ from those of female teachers. This finding suggests that gender had no influence on EFL teachers' self-regulatory perception, and it was not the factor that made a difference between male and female EFL teachers in the case of self-regulatory practices.

Teachers' responses to interview questions were consistent with the results of quantitative analyses. As the content analyses of teachers' responses illustrated, some teachers adhered to self-regulatory strategies and the implementation of them in their teaching practices. For instance, some of them confessed that they did not develop any lesson plans for their pedagogical practices. They resorted to the assumption that teaching is an unpredictable journey with each unique session that cannot be anticipated. Still, other teachers argued that they develop lesson plans since they are like a framework that directs teachers and learners toward the attainment of curriculum goals.

Concerning time management, there were differences between teachers' ideas. While most of the teachers admitted that they made a timetable before course commencement since it provided a framework specifying how much time should be devoted to each activity, others indicated that they continued according to their students' learning and whatever came up during instruction. Some of the teachers believed that teaching and learning are considered reciprocal processes, and teachers also benefit from instruction. They considered teaching a sort of learning in which mistakes are an integrated element.

Teachers indicated that making mistakes and reflecting on mistakes were sources of new information for professional growth. However, some of them asserted that teachers should be equipped with sufficient practical and linguistic knowledge to be proficient enough to avoid making any mistakes. They argued that making mistakes tarnishes teachers' reputations and may lead to a breach of trust in teachers. Concerning teachers' evaluation of themselves, their responses revealed that learners' achievement and progress were their first

touchstones of the quality of their instruction. Colleague evaluation was another criterion that they mentioned in their responses. Experienced teachers emphasized that self-regulatory strategies were tried and trusted techniques that provided a clear schedule and structure for effective and successful teaching. According to them, self-regulation assists them in employing instructional activities based on learners' needs and the dynamics of the classroom.

Further, identification and verbalization of teachers' perceptions provide opportunities for teachers to reflect on their perspectives and their corresponding practices. Besides, this verbalization enables teachers to contrast their views with those of other teachers and the findings established in research education. These are echoed in the literature by some scholars (e.g., Akbari et al., 2017; Cooper, 2023; Geduld, 2017; Kohnke et al., 2021). In the same vein, Partovi and Tafazoli (2016) maintained that Iranian EFL teachers' self-regulation might increase with additional years of teaching experience. In other words, by increasing EFL teachers' teaching experience, they become more self-regulated. They also illustrated that in the process of teaching and learning English as a foreign language, self-regulation played a critical role in teaching.

6. Conclusion

The results of this study confirmed the contributing role of teaching experience in enhancing teachers' self-regulatory practices. Novice teachers have to be exposed to examples of how experts perform instructional practices and establish relationships with their learners. These findings suggest that inexperienced teachers should be provided with ample opportunities to enhance their professional skills and achieve a more proficient teaching competency. Furthermore, the findings might contribute to teachers' professional development and improvement. The results inform teachers of their drawbacks and shortcomings. Accordingly, teachers can evaluate and reflect on their practices and try to compensate for inefficiencies. In this study, the special needs of researchers, teachers, teacher trainers, syllabus designers, and material developers are taken into consideration.

The study offers several implications for different individuals, both theoretically and practically. The results of this study provided empirical findings concerning Iranian EFL teachers' perceptions and implementation of self-regulatory strategies and also empirically illuminated the influence of EFL teachers' years of teaching experience and gender on their

perceptions and adoption of self-regulation. This study sheds light on the impact of gender and teaching experience on teachers' use of strategies in the classroom. Considering the crucial role of the teacher in the educational environment, what is essential are teacher training courses to cultivate a reflective mind in the teacher and foster self-regulated teaching. Teacher education training has to provide teachers with the necessary expertise to use their experience and apply initiations suitable to the dynamics of their instructional environment. Teacher educators are expected to support language teachers through workshops and lectures to empower them to exercise practical methods to efficiently work within the constraints prescribed by outsiders. Teachers might be provided with opportunities to recognize learners' particularities and apply actions suitable for them. The results of this study demonstrated that for Iranian EFL teachers to move beyond their traditional understanding of language teaching and learning, an urgent modification of their educational programs is required. Another implication concerning teacher education programs is that not only do they need to present the current theories of teaching and learning, but they also need to render strategies that bridge the gap between theories and classroom practices. More particularly, the results can provide information for the academic language educational system in Iran, as an example of a developing country that is fundamentally teacher-centered, this study can help the implementation of theory into practice.

Traditionally, teachers' practices were mainly theory-driven, prescriptive, and top-down, with the assumption that there were the best methods that worked well in all educational contexts. Consequently, curriculum developers would be well advised to re-evaluate their traditional theory-driven instructional approaches, update the existing curricula to assure the implementation of self-regulatory strategies, and assist teachers in being accountable for their teaching to develop autonomy. Furthermore, the results provide significant information for teachers' implicit theoretical orientations and beliefs, which are influenced by official theories and policymakers. It is worth noting that Iranian EFL teachers are not sufficiently equipped with the necessary knowledge and expertise to implement self-regulation practices in their foreign language teaching practices.

The results of the study are of immense benefit to different stakeholders, including teachers and teacher educators who develop teacher professional training programs, and especially, the results of the present study can have precious pedagogical implications for

policymakers. Further, most of the novice Iranian teachers have difficulties dealing with problems they encounter in the classroom because of the traditional methods they are being taught in the teacher training courses. Moreover, by understanding the teacher's role in bringing about changes in the learning and teaching context, the instructors can make progress toward reaching their ultimate capabilities. As found in this study, self-regulatory strategies challenged teachers especially when they had long been accustomed to a transmission approach to teaching and valued the views of theoreticians more than their own. Hence, to alleviate this problem, teachers should be reflective and try to implement teaching techniques and activities that best suit learners and their needs. Besides, investigating Iranian EFL teachers' self-regulation perceptions and practices in foreign language curricula can provide the opportunity for the teachers' professional development education based on their existing perceptions and teaching activities. Also, the results might assist language school managers and supervisors in developing their teachers' language teaching outcomes. For this goal to be accomplished, they may wish to include more workshops and training courses in which they explain self-regulatory strategies and select their teacher candidates meticulously. Finally, as indicated by providing training courses in practice, self-regulatory strategies can facilitate selecting successful teachers in difficult situations. As a result, the findings of this study would be beneficial for language school managers to select and employ English teachers who are more likely to be successful in their profession by using the teacher's self-regulation questionnaire. Practically, the results of the study have implications for teacher educators, who are expected to support language teachers in developing their voice in teaching.

The present study reached a number of helpful and interesting findings considering novice and experienced EFL teachers' perceptions and practices with regard to self-regulated strategies within the educational context of Iran. Yet, there are additional avenues for future researchers to explore this area. They can investigate: (a) personal factors like major, educational status, and university degrees, as well as contextual factors like school culture, school administration, and accessible resources that may influence teacher self-regulation. Moreover, it would be interesting to examine these variables in other disciplines; (b) teachers' self-regulation longitudinally to see whether modifications occur throughout the teaching career and how these modifications are mediated; (c) the impact of conducting training courses that can promote teachers' self-regulation and provide them with the

required expertise to implement them in classrooms. Other types of learning experiences and settings that may improve teachers' self-regulation need to be investigated. Moreover, more studies need to be done in order to explore how self-regulation can be developed among pre-service EFL teachers as well as how it can be improved in courses other than EFL curriculum; (d) the possible effects of administering a pre-test and a post-test design in this area and examine the causal relationship between teachers' self-regulation and learners' improvement and show its value in students' progress; and (e) the possible relationships between teachers' self-regulation and other variables such as learners' self-regulation and achievement.

This study faced certain limitations and delimitations, which need to be taken into account in interpreting the findings. The first limitations of this study lied in the generalizability scope of the study due to its sole focus on Iranian EFL teachers, which made its generalizability limited only to the EFL contexts. Furthermore, classroom observations conducted by the researchers might have changed teachers' behaviors and performances in the classroom (known as the observer's paradox). Additionally, in using semi-structured interviews, it is possible that the participants found it difficult to express what exactly they meant, since words cannot always justify what people think, and this can raise the chance of error over which we have no control. The last limitation was that the researchers had no control over the age, gender, socio-economic status, and educational background of the participants. Considering the delimitations of the study, the researchers only investigated teachers' perceptions of self-regulated strategies, and other stakeholders' viewpoints were excluded from the study. Moreover, among many teacher mediating variables, this study focused on teachers' gender and experience, and other characteristics that may affect their performance, like self-efficacy, ethnicity, and self-confidence, were not explored. Ultimately, it is essential to note that the data of the study were collected from some specific districts of Tehran, and other cities were not investigated to have a better insight into EFL teachers' perceptions with respect to the uses and values of self-regulated strategies in the educational context of Iran.

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24. Before instruction, I decide on how to assess my students.	1	2	3	4	5
25. During instruction, I adapt my instructional strategies based on students' needs.	1	2	3	4	5
26. I discuss my positive and negative experiences with my colleagues after instruction.	1	2	3	4	5
27. While preparing classes, I take available resources into consideration.	1	2	3	4	5
28. I use student feedback to improve my instruction.	1	2	3	4	5
29. While I am preparing classes, I take students' needs into account.	1	2	3	4	5
30. When I encounter a problem, I take a deep breath.	1	2	3	4	5
31. While evaluating myself at the end of instruction, I compare my performance against previous years.	1	2	3	4	5
32. I do not panic when a problem occurs during instruction.	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Part II</i>					
33. Why is it important to be a successful teacher?	1	2	3	4	5
34. To get promotion	1	2	3	4	5
35. To improve student learning	1	2	3	4	5
36. To satisfy myself professionally	1	2	3	4	5
37. To get appreciation from parents	1	2	3	4	5
38. To be loved by my students	1	2	3	4	5
39. To strengthen my authority	1	2	3	4	5
40. To develop myself	1	2	3	4	5
41. To please school principals	1	2	3	4	5
42. To better prepare my students for life	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Part III</i>					
43. I like teaching	1	2	3	4	5
44. It makes me happy to see my students learn	1	2	3	4	5
45. I am proud of working as a teacher	1	2	3	4	5
46. I have been interested in teaching profession since my childhood	1	2	3	4	5
47. I attend classes enthusiastically	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix C: Interview Protocol

1. How long have you been teaching English as an EFL teacher?
2. What do you think is the role of the EFL teachers regarding the learners' goals? How should the teachers act in this respect?
3. Do you think that mistakes can help teachers develop?
4. Should the teachers decide on how to assess and evaluate students before instruction?
5. How do you evaluate yourself at the end of instruction?
6. Why is it important to be a successful teacher?

7. Do you write any lesson plans based on the curriculum you want to teach?
8. How do you manage your time according to the curriculum of your class?
9. How do you react to the emotional problems you face in the classroom?
10. Would you ask your colleagues to help you deal with critical moments in the classroom?

Appendix D: Teachers' Self-Regulated Strategies Observation Checklist

(*Questions are designed based on the items of the TSRS questionnaire.)

1. Does the teacher manage time effectively?
Poor Fair Good Outstanding
2. Does the teacher stay calm when faced with a problem?
Poor Fair Good Outstanding
3. Does the teacher adopt an instructional strategy appropriate to the topic?
Poor Fair Good Outstanding
4. Does the teacher utilize alternative strategies if the strategies do not work?
Poor Fair Good Outstanding
5. Are the students' characteristics (e.g., prior knowledge, developmental level) taken into consideration while teaching them?
Poor Fair Good Outstanding
6. Does the teacher ask for help from his/her colleagues when encountering problems?
Poor Fair Good Outstanding
7. Does the teacher pay attention to students' facial expressions during instruction?
Poor Fair Good Outstanding
8. At the end of instruction, does the teacher check students' learning?
Poor Fair Good Outstanding
9. During instruction, does the teacher adapt his/her instructional strategies based on the students' needs?
Poor Fair Good Outstanding
10. Does the teacher discuss his/her positive and negative experiences with colleagues after instruction?
Poor Fair Good Outstanding
11. While teaching, does the teacher use available resources?
Poor Fair Good Outstanding
12. Does the teacher pay attention to students' feedback?
Poor Fair Good Outstanding