

Please cite this paper as follows:

Hashempour, Z., Chalak, A., & Heidari Tabrizi, H. (2024). Role of Iranian EFL Teachers' Biological Factors in Managing Learners' Misbehaviors. *International Journal of Foreign Language Teaching and Research*, 12 (48), 27-39. <http://doi.org/10.30495/IJFL.2023.707677>.

Research Paper

Role of Iranian EFL Teachers' Biological Factors in Managing Learners' Misbehaviors

Zahra Hashempour¹, Azizeh Chalak^{2*}, Hossein Heidari Tabrizi³

¹Ph.D. Candidate in TEFL, Department of English, Isfahan (Khorasgan) Branch, Islamic Azad University, Iran
educationmail71@yahoo.com

²Associate professor of TEFL, Department of English, Isfahan (Khorasgan) Branch, Islamic Azad University, Iran
azichalak@gmail.com

³Associate professor of TEFL, Department of English, Isfahan (Khorasgan) Branch, Islamic Azad University, Iran
heidaritabrizi@gmail.com

Received: August 01, 2023

Accepted: October 15, 2023

Abstract

Classroom management is a key component of teachers' professional competence in promoting learning. This study investigated teachers' classroom management strategies in responding to Iranian EFL learners' misbehaviors in terms of teachers' biological factors including age and gender. The participants of the study were 75 (41 females and 34 males) teachers at universities and language institutes in Fars Province, Iran. The study enjoyed a descriptive design using two sets of instruments encompassing a Five Likert-scale questionnaire and a semi-structured interview for collecting the data. The questionnaire determined teachers' classroom management strategies and the interview collected their opinions regarding classroom management. To analyze the data, one-way ANOVA and an independent sample t-test were run. The findings indicated that teachers' age and gender had significant effects on the types of strategies that they used when they faced misbehavior. The findings also revealed that male teachers significantly used strategies such as verbal warning, and female teachers removed the student from the class. The age groups were different in terms of using two strategies namely rewarding students with free time or activities and lower students' grades. The findings could have implications for curriculum designers, EFL teachers, and policymakers because they could enhance their skills in better management of behaviors.

Keywords: Age; EFL learners; Gender; Management strategies; Misbehavior; Teachers

نقش عوامل زیستی معلمان زبان انگلیسی ایرانی در مدیریت رفتارهای نادرست زبان آموزان
مدیریت کلاس درس جزء کلیدی شایستگی حرفه ای معلمان در ارتقای یادگیری است. این مطالعه به بررسی راهبردهای مدیریت کلاس درس معلمان در پاسخ به رفتارهای نادرست زبان آموزان ایرانی زبان انگلیسی از نظر عوامل بیولوژیکی معلمان از جمله سن و جنسیت پرداخته است. شرکت کنندگان در این پژوهش 75 نفر (41 زن و 34 مرد) معلمان دانشگاه ها و موسسات زبان استان فارس بودند. این پژوهش از نوع توصیفی با استفاده از دو مجموعه ابزار شامل پرسشنامه مقیاس پنج لیکرت و مصاحبه نیمه ساختاریافته برای جمع آوری داده ها بود. پرسشنامه راهبردهای مدیریت کلاس درس معلمان را تعیین کرد و مصاحبه نظرات آنها را در مورد مدیریت کلاس جمع آوری کرد. برای تجزیه و تحلیل داده ها از آزمون آنالیز واریانس یک طرفه و آزمون تی مستقل استفاده شد. یافته ها حاکی از آن است که سن و جنسیت معلمان بر انواع راهبردهایی که در مواجهه با رفتار نادرست به کار می بردند، تأثیر معناداری دارد. یافته ها همچنین نشان داد که معلمان مرد به طور قابل توجهی از راهبردهایی مانند هشدار شفاهی استفاده کردند و معلمان زن دانش آموز را از کلاس حذف کردند. گروه های سنی از نظر استفاده از دو راهبرد یادش دادن به دانش آموزان با اوقات فراغت یا فعالیت و نمرات پایین دانش آموزان متفاوت بودند. این یافته ها می تواند برای طراحان برنامه درسی، معلمان زبان انگلیسی و سیاست گذاران پیامدهایی داشته باشد زیرا می توانند مهارت های آنها را در مدیریت بهتر رفتارها افزایش دهند.
کلمات کلیدی: سن زبان آموزان زبان انگلیسی؛ جنسیت؛ استراتژی های مدیریت؛ بد رفتاری؛ معلمان

Introduction

Instructors have always struggled with various obstacles such as learners' misbehaviors that impede the teaching and learning processes. Both parents and teachers believe that classroom misbehaviours among learners are an inevitable issue that teachers will face during the teaching process. To create a positive classroom environment, teachers have to deal with learners' misbehaviours. Sometimes teachers spend more time which is really necessary on classroom management such as issues of order and control in the classroom (Gregg, 1995; Little, 2005).

Undoubtedly, such facts can have negative effects on the quality and quantity outcome of educational process. As Riley et al. (2010) indicated, "many teachers may be theoretically blind when it comes to classroom management" (p. 257). Therefore, it is necessary to acknowledge different kinds of classroom misbehaviours that happen during class time and also understand effective strategies to deal with students' misbehaviours appropriately (Aliakbari et al., 2013). According to Dalgic and Bayhan (2014), misbehaviour is defined as "any kind of behaviours that violate explicit rules or implicit norms of the classroom, interferes the classroom order and interrupt the process of teaching and learning" (p. 102).

Researchers mentioned many reasons for learners' misbehaviors such as learners' frustration and tiredness at school, and the need of more attention from the teachers. Researchers claimed that a wide range of misbehaviors happen in class and many happen on daily basis. Classroom misbehaviors have increased in the computer age because teenagers are exposed to violent films, boxing, etc. (Kulinnaet al., 2006; Omoteso& Semudara, 2011). Although the usual misbehaviours are more or less minor, it does not mean that they are non-problematic. According to Stewart et al. (1998), learners exhibit various forms of misconduct that violate disciplinary rules in schools, such as battling, defacement, tardiness, stealing, and drinking on campus. So, teachers can notice many different kinds of misbehavior in the school or the classroom context.

Teachers need to have sufficient confidence and broaden their skills in order to effectively manage their classes (Cartledge& Johnson, 1996). Classroom management in the literature is considered as a "wide variety of skills and techniques that teachers use to keep students organized, orderly, focused, attentive, on task, and academically productive during a class" (Abbot, 2014, p.72).

As a result, managing classroom seems to be one of the most repeated teachers' worries, especially for beginning teachers because "the idea that the beginning teachers formed during teacher training are placed by the reality of school life where much of their energy is often used to learn how to carry on in a new school culture" (Farrell, 2006, p.212). Burden (2003) asserts that the relationship between teachers and learners is important in managing the classroom. He believes that classroom management has a significant effect on positive social interaction and active engagement in learning. In a nutshell, most of the previous conceptions of classroom management focused on the construction of a positive classroom environment in order to effective teaching and consequently learning can happen.

Despite the huge amount of investigations on classroom management from a general educational viewpoint, the specific influence of foreign language education on classroom management issues seem to be rather scarce (Macias, 2018). Foreign language teachers must be careful about the influence of specific characteristics of the foreign language such as target language use, communicative competence, and patterns of interaction on the process of classroom management. However, there has been limited research conducted on learners' misbehaviors and teachers' classroom management in foreign language classrooms. Moreover, most of the previous research studies that are related to the EFL teachers' education have focused on the issue at high school and private language institutes in Iran and across the world and established investigations on EFL learners' misbehaviors and teachers' classroom management at the university level appeared to be rather scarce.



Consequently, the objective of the current research was multifold. First, it was intended to examine whether there are any significant differences between the strategies that Iranian EFL teachers use in managing face-to-face classroom misbehaviors regarding their ages. One additional purpose was to find out if there are any significant differences between the types of strategies used by Iranian EFL teachers facing their students' misbehaviors in terms of teachers' gender.

Literature Review

In the literature, a lot of terms have been applied to describe and define problematic behaviours of learners like misconduct, disciplinary violations, misbehaviour (Finn et al., 2008; Thomson, 2009), problem behaviour, and disruptive behaviour (Dalgic & Bayhan, 2014). Disruptive behaviour is defined by Arbuckle and Little (2004) as "an activity that causes distress for teachers, interrupts the learning process and leads teachers to make continual comments to the students" (p.60) or "the myriad activities which disrupt and impede the teaching-learning process" (Thompson, 2009, p.43). Therefore, one of the most important areas in education is the classroom management (Ahmed et al., 2018) because it is the fundamental situation for creating an atmosphere that results in learning (Khan, et al., 2011).

A classroom that is constructed as an educational environment for meeting instructional goals comprises students who share common features based on their educational levels as the critical and functional school system and is a place where educational activities occur. Generally speaking, classroom management refers to strategies and actions that instructors apply to keep order and systems for classroom groups rather than penalize misbehavior, resolve misbehaviours, or get the attention of individual learners (Burden, 1999).

Classroom management is considered as a multifaceted process by Martin and Yin (1997). These aspects namely are managing instruction, managing learners, and managing behaviors. Moreover, Cevallos et al. (2020) believed that many factors such as classroom preparation, classroom organization, and instructional time management can affect classroom management. Thus, a lot of studies on different aspects of classroom management such as classroom management in foreign language settings and English teachers' management strategies in EFL and ESL contexts were conducted. Some researchers investigated differences between gender issue and classroom management and classroom management strategies and age.

Teachers' gender and age as two factors in managing learners' misbehaviors during class time play important roles in the related literature. A considerable amount of studies have been published on the effect of teachers' gender on his/her classroom management strategies. Literature obtained from studies throughout comparing teachers' classroom management strategies and educators' gender produced different results. Some studies indicated that instructors' classroom management strategies and skills have been affected by their gender (Ganji & Musaie Sejjehie, 2022; Khan et al., 2011; Martin & Yin, 1997; Martin et al., 2006).

According to Martin and Yin (1997), there is a significant difference between male and female educators in managing teaching and managing behaviors in favour of male teachers. Martin et al. (2006) believed that male and female teachers are significantly different in classroom management approaches. Females tend to be more intrusive than males. Khan et al. (2011) argued that considering classroom management strategies male educators were dominant than females. Comparing males and females, female teachers were facing more serious problems in managing their classrooms. Ganji and Musaie Sejjehie (2022) mentioned that males and females were quite different in managing misbehaviors that they faced during the class time.

On the other side of the continuum, some authors such as (Khodabandeh & Jamali, 2019; Nejati, et al., 2014; Rahimi & Asadollahi, 2012; Salvano-Padieu et al., 2009) believed that there is not any outstanding difference between male and female teachers regarding classroom management strategies. Based on Khodabandeh and Jamali (2019), both male and female

educators had similar viewpoints toward managing the classroom. Nejati, et al. (2014) also reported that male and female instructors were not different in terms of classroom management strategies. Rahimi and Asadollahi (2012) argued that teachers' gender did not have significant effects on the managing strategies that they apply in the classroom. Moreover, Salvano-Padieu et al. (2009) pointed out that considering judging behaviors, male and female teachers were not different.

Another important factor that can have an influence on teachers' classroom management and is one of the variables of the present study is the role of teachers' age in managing the classroom. Therefore, different theories exist in the literature regarding the role of the teachers' age in managing their learners' problematic behaviors during the class time. To date, several studies confirmed the relationship between age and classroom management (Khodabandeh & Jamali, 2019; Martin & Shoho, 2000). One of the Iranian studies which was conducted by Khodabandeh and Jamali (2019) highlighted the significant difference across the age groups and their attitudes towards classroom management. In addition, Martin and Shoho (2000) argued that as educators' age increases their perception of classroom management styles is also increased. While (Cooper & Yan, 2014; Ganji & Musaie Sejzehie, 2022) had different viewpoints. Cooper and Yan (2014) claimed that there were not any significant differences between age, gender, and teachers training and managing learners' misbehaviors. Ganji and Musaie Sejzehie (2022) also asserted that there is not any significant relationship between age, teaching context, teaching experience, and academic degree and teachers' classroom management behaviours.

Some possible effects of behaviour management training on teacher confidence and competence were examined by Cooper and Yan (2014). The results of their study showed that gender, age, and teachers training did not have any significant differences regarding behavioural management. Another study by Ahmed et al. (2018) investigated gender differences in teachers' classroom management and it showed that teachers' gender influenced classroom management. Aliakbari et al. (2013) also attempted to determine the secondary school teachers' perception of students' misbehaviour in terms of teachers' gender. They concluded that female instructors were more confident than males. Besides, they showed a lower level of confidence in the classes in which problematic behaviours happen than in the classes wherein learners are involved.

Although many studies on misbehaviours and classroom management have been done in Iran (Aliakbari et al., 2013; Ganji & Musaie Sejzehie, 2022; Khodabandeh & Jamali, 2019; Nejati, et al., 2014; Rahimi & Asadollahi, 2012) it has not received enough attention regarding the role of university teachers' age and gender and classroom management. Therefore, to fill the gap the study sought to answer the following specific research questions:

1. Are there any significant differences in the classroom management strategies used by Iranian EFL teachers facing their students' misbehaviours in terms of teachers' gender?
2. Are there any significant differences in the classroom management strategies used by Iranian EFL teachers facing their students' misbehaviours in terms of teachers' age?

Methodology

As mentioned above, the purpose of the current investigation was to investigate classroom management strategies used by Iranian EFL teachers' when they encounter learners' misbehaviours in the classroom. Therefore, the following sections elaborate on the design, setting, participants, instruments, data collection, and analysis procedures in detail.

Design and Context of the Study

To answer the questions addressed in this research project, a descriptive research design was employed. In doing so, a questionnaire along with a semi-structured interview was utilized to provide a detailed profile of the teachers' classroom management strategies for managing the classroom when they faced learners' misbehaviours. The study was conducted at Islamic Azad University and language institutes in Fars Province, Iran during the academic year of 2022-2023.

Participants

The population of the present research was all of the Iranian EFL teachers. The target population was only Iranian EFL teachers at Islamic Azad University and language institutes of Fars Province and the sampling procedure was convenience sampling. It should be noted that the participation was voluntary and the participants had not been forced by the researchers to participate in this project. All of them were informed of the participation, and they were aware that being a participant does not have any extra points for them because according to Mackey and Gass (2016), the invitation to participate in research must involve neither threats of harm nor offers of inappropriate rewards. They were 75 both male and female Iranian EFL university professors at Islamic Azad University and instructors in language institutes. Their ages ranged between 20 to 40.

Table 1

Demographic Background of the Participants

No. of Participants	75 teachers
Gender	41 females and 34 males
Native Language	Persian
Major	TEFL
University and Language Institutes	Fars Province
Academic years	2022-2023

Instruments

The instruments employed to collect data were two types. During the first phase, a questionnaire adopted from Kulinna, (2008), Omoteso and Semudara, (2011), and Ozben, (2010) was used. In the second phase, a semi-structured interview was used. The following sections explain these two instruments in detail.

Questionnaires

The instrument of the first phase was a questionnaire which was written in English, derived and adopted from Kulinna, (2008), Omoteso and Semudara, (2011), and Ozben, (2010). The design of the questionnaire was close-ended questions to have more reliability. It consisted of 22 statements measuring possible strategies that the teachers and professors applied when they faced misbehaviors. It was a 5-point Likert-scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The first section of the questionnaire addressed the participants' demographic information. To ensure that the questionnaire was appropriate for the context of Iran and function well they were piloted and revalidated and their reliabilities were calculated. Thus, it was pilot-tested with twenty teachers who enjoyed similar professional features to the participants of the study. The reliability coefficient of it using Cronbach's Alpha was estimated to be high enough 0.90. Moreover, the validity of the questionnaire was checked and confirmed by two expert judges.

Interview

In addition, the second phase included an interview to deeply explore Iranian EFL teachers' classroom management strategies when they faced learners' misbehaviors and to make sure about the results which were derived from the questionnaire. It was also used to achieve reliable and valid results. The researchers performed a semi-structured interview with all of the participants. Furthermore, the interview questions were reviewed by two experts in the field of applied linguistics for validity purposes. The inter-coder reliability was calculated through Cohen's kappa. The reliability of data coding was 0.88 agreement. The justification behind the semi-structured interview was to conform to the claims of the teachers in the questionnaire and if any point was missing by them the researchers added it to the collected data. Moreover, it was semi-structured because during the interview session, the answering to one question may pose another question.

Data Collection Procedure

The data for the first phase was collected through a questionnaire. The questionnaire was used as an efficient way to collect data in terms of costs and time because it was administered at Islamic Azad Universities and language institutes of Fars Province. The questionnaire was mailed to the participants who were not available. Therefore, it was administered among the teachers and an explanation was given on how to answer the questionnaire. If the participants faced difficulty explanation was given to them by one of the researchers. There was no time constraint for the teachers to respond to the questionnaires. They reminded the participants that they should answer the questionnaire anonymously and honestly because the accuracy of the results depends on how honestly, they answer. This questionnaire was about the teachers' classroom management strategies. It took about 30minutes.

After answering the questionnaire, there was a semi-structured interview for all the participants. Because some people were not available to participate in face-to-face interview, one of the researchers called them. The interview was held via telephone conversation. Initially, the respondents of the interview were contacted to ask their permission to be interviewed that is an appointment were made with each participant to arrange on a time when the interview can take place and it arranged for a particular time. Then, to observe ethical issue, the researchers sought the participants' consent to record their voices.

To establish confidentiality the researchers promised the participants that keep all the research information shared with themselves confidential. Their voices were recorded and then transcribed. This phase took about 30 minutes as well. To provide credibility of the research when all interview data had been analyzed member checking was done. The interviewees were asked to read the transcribed documents and comment on whether or not they felt the results resonated with their experiences and if there was anything they would like to change to help us complete our analyses and develop interpretations. This statement reiterated that these were not final results, rather than there was the opportunity to influence the analysis, giving participants permission to disagree. The researchers contact detail was provided in case of queries but no one made use of it. The researcher allowed a week to return the documents.

Afterward, to enhance the reliability and validity of the data analysis of the interview transcripts two of the authors codified and categorized the data separately. The creation of the code list was inductively based on what respondents said. The researchers began by reading interviewees' transcribed responses and accumulated a code book including a list of mnemonic codes along with their definitions. The coders were co-authors and they were experts in science and education field. The coders' inter-rater reliability of the coding data was 0.88 agreement. Their remaining differences in coding were solved through discussion. The data collection lasted over a period of two months from December to February in 2022-2023.

Data Analysis Procedure

The researchers fed the data into the computer and analyzed the data by SPSS (version 27) software. For data analysis, the mean of participants' responses to the items of the questionnaires were calculated. Then, to explore the differences in classroom management strategies used by Iranian EFL teachers in terms of teachers' gender, the researchers ran an independent samples *t*-test. They run the one-way ANOVA to assess the differences in the strategies used by Iranian EFL teachers in terms of their age.

Results

The first research question sought to identify if there was any significant difference in Iranian EFL teachers' classroom management strategies facing their students' misbehaviors in terms of gender. To investigate this difference, the independent samples *t*-tests were run. Table 2 summarizes the results of descriptive statistics and the independent samples *t*-tests. It is worth noting that just significant differences are reported in Table 2.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics and Independent Sample t-test of Gender Groups

	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)																																																																				
Verbal warning	M	34	3.82	.626	2.43	66.38	.017																																																																				
	F	41	3.34	1.06				Contacting the counselor or the principle	M	34	3.35	.597	3.50	65.70	.001	F	41	2.68	1.03	Remove the student from class	M	34	1.88	.977	-2.18	73	.032	F	41	2.46	1.26	Moving student from one seat to another	M	34	3.64	.917	2.61	73	.011	F	41	3.02	1.10	Catch students being good and give praise	M	34	3.73	.618	2.95	69.23	.004	F	41	3.19	.954	Use peer pressure	M	34	3.64	1.04	2.85	73	.006	F	41	2.92	1.12	Have student write or copy papers	M	34	3.00	.921	2.27	72.99	.026
Contacting the counselor or the principle	M	34	3.35	.597	3.50	65.70	.001																																																																				
	F	41	2.68	1.03				Remove the student from class	M	34	1.88	.977	-2.18	73	.032	F	41	2.46	1.26	Moving student from one seat to another	M	34	3.64	.917	2.61	73	.011	F	41	3.02	1.10	Catch students being good and give praise	M	34	3.73	.618	2.95	69.23	.004	F	41	3.19	.954	Use peer pressure	M	34	3.64	1.04	2.85	73	.006	F	41	2.92	1.12	Have student write or copy papers	M	34	3.00	.921	2.27	72.99	.026	F	41	2.46	1.12								
Remove the student from class	M	34	1.88	.977	-2.18	73	.032																																																																				
	F	41	2.46	1.26				Moving student from one seat to another	M	34	3.64	.917	2.61	73	.011	F	41	3.02	1.10	Catch students being good and give praise	M	34	3.73	.618	2.95	69.23	.004	F	41	3.19	.954	Use peer pressure	M	34	3.64	1.04	2.85	73	.006	F	41	2.92	1.12	Have student write or copy papers	M	34	3.00	.921	2.27	72.99	.026	F	41	2.46	1.12																				
Moving student from one seat to another	M	34	3.64	.917	2.61	73	.011																																																																				
	F	41	3.02	1.10				Catch students being good and give praise	M	34	3.73	.618	2.95	69.23	.004	F	41	3.19	.954	Use peer pressure	M	34	3.64	1.04	2.85	73	.006	F	41	2.92	1.12	Have student write or copy papers	M	34	3.00	.921	2.27	72.99	.026	F	41	2.46	1.12																																
Catch students being good and give praise	M	34	3.73	.618	2.95	69.23	.004																																																																				
	F	41	3.19	.954				Use peer pressure	M	34	3.64	1.04	2.85	73	.006	F	41	2.92	1.12	Have student write or copy papers	M	34	3.00	.921	2.27	72.99	.026	F	41	2.46	1.12																																												
Use peer pressure	M	34	3.64	1.04	2.85	73	.006																																																																				
	F	41	2.92	1.12				Have student write or copy papers	M	34	3.00	.921	2.27	72.99	.026	F	41	2.46	1.12																																																								
Have student write or copy papers	M	34	3.00	.921	2.27	72.99	.026																																																																				
	F	41	2.46	1.12																																																																							

According to Table 2, male teachers significantly used the following strategies more than female teachers: verbal warning, contacting the counselor or the principal, moving students from one seat to another, catching students being good and giving praise, using peer pressure, and making students write or copy papers. The results also showed that female teachers significantly used this strategy more than male teachers: removing the student from class.

In order to find out if there was any significant difference in Iranian EFL teachers' classroom management strategies facing their students' misbehaviors in terms of age, the one-way ANOVA was run. Table 3 shows the results of descriptive statistics and one-way ANOVA for the teachers' strategies which were different in terms of age.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics and One-way ANOVA of Age Groups

		N	Mean	SD	F(3,71)	Sig. (2-tailed)
Reward student with free time or activities	20-25	20	4.20	.894	4.29	.008
	26-30	18	3.55	1.09		
	31-35	26	4.07	.744		
	36-40	11	3.09	1.22		
	Total	75	3.84	1.01		
Lower student grade	20-25	20	3.00	1.16	4.15	.009
	26-30	18	2.22	.8084		
	31-35	26	2.23	1.10		
	36-40	11	1.81	.4045		
	Total	75	2.37	1.04		

As shown in Table 3, the age groups were different in terms of using two strategies: reward student with free time or activities and lower student grade. To find out where the differences among the groups occurred, the researchers ran the post hoc tests. Table 4 displays the results of the post hoc tests.

Table 4

Post-hoc Test for the Age Groups

Dependent Variable	(I) Age Level	(J) Age Level	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Reward student with free time or activities	20-25	26-30	.644	.309	.237
		31-35	.123	.283	.979
		36-40	1.10*	.357	.028
	26-30	20-25	-.644	.309	.237
		31-35	-.521	.292	.371
		36-40	.464	.364	.655
	31-35	20-25	-.123	.283	.979
		26-30	.521	.292	.371
		36-40	.986*	.342	.048
	36-40	20-25	-1.10*	.357	.028
		26-30	-.464	.364	.655
		31-35	-.986*	.342	.048
Lower student grade	20-25	26-30	.777	.321	.129
		31-35	.769	.293	.086
		36-40	1.18*	.371	.023
	26-30	20-25	-.777	.321	.129
		31-35	-.008	.303	1.00
		36-40	.404	.378	.767
	31-35	20-25	-.769	.293	.086
		26-30	.008	.303	1.00
		36-40	.412	.355	.719
	36-40	20-25	-1.18*	.371	.023
		26-30	-.404	.378	.767
		31-35	-.412	.355	.719

Table 5

Summary of Post-hoc Test for the Age Groups

Strategies	Group differences
Reward student with free time or activities	20-25 > 36-40 ($p < .05$) 31-35 > 36-40 ($p < .05$)
Lower student grade	20-25 > 36-40 ($p < .05$)

The result demonstrated that the teachers who were 20-25 years old significantly used the two following strategies more than the teachers who were 36-40 years old: rewarding student with free time or activities, and lowering students' grade. The findings also demonstrated that facing the students' misbehaviors, 31-35-year-old teachers used rewarding students with free time or activities as a strategy more than 36-40-year-old teachers.

As noted earlier, the researchers also conducted a semi-structured interview to investigate the classroom management strategies that teachers applied when they encountered learners' misbehaviors. The interview questions were designed based on the items of the questionnaire. According to the gathered data, the teacher number 14 declared that *"there is not a specific way of avoiding students' misbehaviors"*. One of the university professors, number 33 mentioned that one of her management strategies for facing learners' misbehaviors is *"I don't pay attention for the first time, for the second time, I talk to him/her"*. She also suggested that *"we should be patient"* in a specific way and believed that one of the main causes of learners' misbehavior is *"classmates' behaviors"*. For the classroom management plan, she told that, *"I become friends with my students"*. They believed that factors like gender and age can affect learners' misbehaviors.

Discussion

This study aimed to investigate the role of Iranian EFL teachers' biological factors encompassing age and gender in the strategies they used when facing their students' misbehaviors. Therefore, the first research question was to investigate if there was any significant difference in Iranian EFL teachers' classroom management strategies facing their students' misbehaviors in terms of their gender. The finding revealed that male teachers significantly used different strategies for managing their classrooms. For instance, male educators used strategies such as verbal warning, contacting the counselor or the principal, moving a student from one seat to another, catching students being good and giving praise, using peer pressure, and having students write or copy papers more than female teachers. The results also showed that female teachers significantly used the strategy of removing the student from class more than the male teachers. These results are in agreement with the results of (Ahmed et al., 2018; Ganji & Musaie Sejjehie, 2022; Khan et al., 2011; Martin & Yin, 1997; Martin et al., 2006; Otmoteso & Semudara, 2011; Ozben, 2010). Martin et al. (2006) important finding was that female teachers tend to be more intrusive than males. As seen in Khan et al., (2011) male teachers were dominant in managing the classroom. Ganji and Musaie Sejjehie (2022) claimed that different genders performed differently with regard to managing classroom. In addition, the result of this part of the present research is in line with Otmoteso and Semudara's (2011) findings which showed that there is a significant difference in the ways male and female teachers manage classroom misbehaviors in secondary school. The findings also confirmed the results of Ahmad et al. (2018). They claimed that there is a difference between male and female teachers in their using classroom management strategies. However, the findings of the current investigation do not support the previous researches (Nejati et al., 2014; Khodabandeh & Jamali, 2019; Rahimi & Asadollahi, 2012; & Salvano-Pardieu, 2009). They believed that there was not any significant difference between male and female instructors in terms of using classroom management styles, strategies, skills, and their attitudes towards classroom management.

The second question sought to determine if there was any significant difference in Iranian EFL teachers' classroom management strategies facing their students' misbehaviors in terms of age. The finding revealed that the age groups were different in terms of using two strategies namely rewarding student with free time or activities and lowering students' grades. The result demonstrated that 20-25-year-old teachers significantly used these two strategies more than 36-40-year-old teachers. The results also demonstrated that facing the students' misbehaviors, 31-35-year-old teachers used rewarding students with free time or activities as a strategy more than 36-40-year-old teachers. The results are keeping with previous Iranian study (Khodabandeh & Jamali, 2019) that indicted the significance difference across the three age groups in terms of their viewpoints towards classroom management. Moreover, Martin and Shoho (2000) argued that there was an outworting relationship between instructors' age and standpoints towards a subscale of classroom management that is people management. While the findings are in contrast with earlier findings such as (Cooper & Yan, 2014; Ganji & Musaie Sejjehie, 2022) in that gender, age, and training that they received did not have any influence on teachers' behavior and classroom management.

Conclusion and Implication

Research on learners' misbehaviors in the classroom indicated that learners' problematic behaviors in the classroom are different based on the class, lesson content, level of education, time, and features of the learners (Duke, 1984; Tsouloupas et al., 2014). Therefore, classroom management is one of the most crucial areas in education, and recent research examined and compared different types of classroom management strategies that their teachers applied as they faced misbehaviors in terms of their age and gender. The results revealed that teachers' gender affected their classroom management that is male and female teachers behaved differently in managing the students' misbehaviors. The results also indicated that teachers at different ages used different classroom management strategies to react to students' misbehaviors.

The findings can be useful for Iranian EFL teachers; especially novice teachers can apply the results in their classrooms. It gives some information about learners' misbehaviors to the teachers and they will know about these misbehaviors. Therefore, before entering the classes they can inform what types of misbehaviors may happen during the class time and plan appropriate classroom management strategies. It is also recommended for EFL teachers to consider and investigate the impacts of classroom management on learners' misbehaviors and teaching and learning. These findings should have important implications for teachers, educational policymakers, and material developers.

This project was limited in several ways. The first limitation concerns the number of participants they were convenient sample. Another limitation was the way that variables under the investigation were measured. Although they measured through descriptive approach to be precise via questionnaire and semi-structured interview an observation can be added. In future, researchers can compare the kind of misbehaviors among urban and rural students. Moreover, they can consider the effect of the educational degree of the teachers on responding to the classroom misbehaviors that is their management strategies and the researchers can compare teachers in terms of their teaching experiences.

References

Abbott, S. (2014). The glossary of education reform. Retrieved from <http://edglossary.org/hiddencurriculum>.

- Ahmed, M., Ambreen, M., & Hussain, I. (2018). Gender differentials among teachers' classroom management strategies in Pakistani context. *Journal of Education and Educational Development*, 5(2), 178-193.
- Aliakbari, M., Mirzaee, A., & TarlaniAliabadi, H. (2013). On the secondary school teachers' perceptions of students' misbehaviour: The case of Iranian male and female teachers. *International Journal of Psychology and Behavioral Research*, 2(5), 240-249.
- Arbuckle, C., & Little, E. (2004). Teachers' perceptions and management of disruptive classroom behaviour during the middle years (years five to nine). *Australian Journal of Educational and Developmental Psychology*, 4(1), 59-70.
- Burden, P., R. (1999). *Classroom management and discipline: An interactive approach to facilitate cooperation and instruction*. Wiley.
- Burden, P., R. (2003). *Classroom management: Creating a successful learning community*. Wiley Jossey-Bass Education.
- Catledge, G., & Johnson, C. T. (1996). Inclusive classrooms for student with emotional and behavioural disorder: Critical variables. *Theory and Practice*, 35(1), 51-57.
- Cevallos, L.F.E., & Soto, S.T. (2020). EFL classroom management. *MEXRESOL Journal*, 44(2), 1-11.
- Cooper, P., & Yan, Z. (2014). Some possible effects of behavior management training on teachers' confidence and competence: Evidence from a study of primary school teachers in Hong Kong. *Educational Studies*, 41(1), 156-170.
- Dalgıç, G., & Bayhan, G. (2014). A Meta-Analysis: Student Misbehaviors That Affect Classroom Management. *Cypriot Journal of Educational Sciences*, 9(2), 101-116.
- Duke, D.L. (1984). *Teacher's guide to classroom management*. Random House.
- Farrell, T. S. C. (2006). The first year of language teaching: Imposing order. *System*, 34(2), 211-221.
- Finn, J.D., Fish, R.M., & Scott, L.A. (2008). Educational sequelae of high school misbehavior. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 101(5), 259-274.
- Ganji, M., Musaie Sejjehie, F. (2022). The effects of age, gender, teaching experience, teaching context, and academic degree on Iranian English teachers' classroom management behaviours. *Issues in Language Teaching*, 11(1), 223-253.
- Gregg, J. (1995). Discipline, control, and the school mathematics tradition. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 11(6), 579-593.
- Khan, K., Khan, M. S., & Majoka, M. I. (2011). Gender differences in classroom management strategies at the secondary level. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Contemporary Research in Business*, 3(3), 580-588.
- Khodabandeh, F., & Jamali, M. (2019). Exploring the relationship between teachers' creativity, classroom management, age, and gender. *Journal of Foreign Language Teaching and Translation Studies*, 4(1), 67-88.
- Kulinna, P. H., Cothran, D., & Regualos, R. (2006). Teachers' reports of student misbehavior in physical education. *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, 77(1), 32-40.
- Kulinna, P. H. (2008). Teachers' attributions and strategies for student misbehavior. *Journal of Classroom Interaction*, 42(2), 21-30.
- Little, E. (2005). Secondary school teachers' perceptions of students' problem behaviors. *Educational Psychology*, 25(4), 369-377.
- Macías, D. F. (2018). Classroom management in foreign language education: An exploratory review. *Profile: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, 20(1), 153-166.
- Mackey, A., & Gass, S. (2016). *Second language research methodology and design* (2nd ed.). Routledge.

- Martin, N.K., & Yin, Z. (1997). *Attitudes and beliefs regarding classroom management style: Differences between male and female teachers*. Austin, TX. (ERIC Documentation Reproduction Service No. ED 404 738). Retrieved June 2, 2023, from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED404738.pdf>
- Martin, N.K. & Shoho, A.R. (2000). *Teacher experience, training, and age: The influence of teacher characteristics on classroom management style* [Paper presentation]. Annual conference of the Southwest Educational Research Association, Dallas, TX.
- Martin, N., Yin, Z. & Mayall, H. (2006). *Classroom management training, teaching experience, and gender: Do these variables impact teachers' attitudes and beliefs towards classroom management style?* [Paper presentation]. Annual conference of the Southwest Educational Research Association, Austin, TX.
- Nejati, R., Hassani, M. T. & Sahrapour, H. (2014). The relationship between gender and student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management of Iranian EFL teachers. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 4(6), 1219-1226
- Omoteso, B., A., & Semudara, A. (2011). The relationship between teachers' effectiveness and management of classroom misbehaviours in secondary schools. *Psychology*, 2(9), 902-908.
- Ozben, S. (2010). Teachers' strategies to cope with student misbehavior. *Science Direct*, 2, 587-594.
- Rahimi, M., & Asadollahi, F. (2012). EFL teachers' classroom management orientations: investigating the role of individual differences and contextual variables. *Procedia-Social and behavioral sciences*, 31, 43-48.
- Riley, P., Lewis, R., & Brew, Ch. (2010). Why did you do that? Teachers explain the use of legal aggression in the classroom. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 26(4), 957- 964.
- Salvano-Pardieu, V., Fontaine, R., Bouazzaoui, B. & Florer, F. (2009). Teachers sanction in the classroom: Effect of age, experience, gender, and academic context. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 25, 1-11. DOI: 10.1016/j.tate.2008.06.006
- Stewart, S.M., Bond, M.H., McBride-Chang, C., Fielding, R., Deeds, O., & Westrick, J. (1988). Parents and adolescent contributors to teenage misconduct in Western and Asian high school students in Hong Kong. *International Journal of Behavioural Development*, 22(4), 847-869.
- Thomson, B. (2009). Disruptive behaviors in Barbarian classrooms: Implications for universal secondary education in the Caribbean. *Journal of Eastern Caribbean Studies*, 34(3), 39-58.
- Tsouloupas, C.N., Carson, R.L., & Matthews, R.A. (2014). Personal and school cultural factors associated with the perceptions of teachers' efficacy in handling student misbehavior. *Psychology in the Schools*, 51(2), 164-180.

Biodata

Zahra Hashempour is a PhD. Candidate in TEFL at the English Department of Islamic Azad University, Isfahan Branch, Isfahan, Iran. She has 10 years of experience in teaching English at undergraduate programs. She has presented and published several papers at different conferences and journals both at international and national levels. Her research interest includes discourse analysis, sociolinguistics, intercultural communication, curriculum and material development, and integration of technology in teaching.

Email: educationmail71@yahoo.com

Azizeh Chalak is an associate professor of TEFL at the English Department of Islamic Azad University, Isfahan Branch, Isfahan, Iran. She has more than 20 years of experience in teaching English at graduate and undergraduate programs. She is the editor-in-chief of *Research in English Language Pedagogy (RELP)* published at IAU, Isfahan Branch. She has presented and published many papers at different conferences and journals both at international and national levels and has been the reviewer of different journals or research projects. Her research interests include discourse analysis, sociolinguistics, intercultural communication, e-mail communications, and the integration of technology in teaching.

Email: azichalak@gmail.com

Hossein Heidari Tabrizi is an associate professor of TEFL at the English Department of Islamic Azad University, Isfahan Branch, Isfahan, Iran. He has been teaching different courses at Ph.D., MA, and BA levels in TEFL, Translation Studies, and General Linguistics since 1994. He has presented and published various papers at different conferences and journals both at international and national levels and has been the reviewer of different journals or research projects. He is the founder of *Research in English Language Pedagogy (RELP)* published at IAU, Isfahan Branch, and was selected as the top researcher of the English Department in 2016. His research interests include Language Assessment and Testing, Translation Studies, Discourse Analysis, and Sociolinguistics.

Email: heidaritabrizi@gmail.com



© 2024 by the authors. Licensee International Journal of Foreign Language Teaching and Research, Najafabad Iran, Iran. This article is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International (CC BY NC 4.0 license). (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>).