

## An Exploration into Iranian Experienced EFL Teachers' Perceptions Toward a New Model of Teacher Supervision

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### Abstract

This study explored experienced EFL teachers' perceptions of a four-stage supervision model administered to develop teachers' professionalism. The study participants were from 100 experienced male and female EFL teachers with different academic degrees from different regions of Alborz Province. Through a semi-structured interview, 30 experienced teachers were randomly interviewed as population representatives, and the qualitative reports were thematically analyzed. The results represented that all the experienced teachers' professionalism was highly developed, and all of them were deeply satisfied with all the practices administered through this model. This study had some implications for policymakers, teacher supervisors, teachers, and school principals.

*Keywords:* Experienced Teachers, Four-Stages Supervision Model, Standard TPD Model, teachers' professional development (TPD)

### 1. Introduction

Supervision emerged at the beginning of the 20th century and was administered intensively in the 18th century. It is an incisive strategy vital to language teachers' professional development (Chen & Cheng, 2013), classroom management, and teaching practices (Hoque et al., 2020). Evaluative supervision, which is conducted to rate teachers based on their performance in the classroom (Amini & Gholami, 2018; Nolan & Hoover,

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2005), can improve teachers' performance or disappoint them (Danielson & McGreal, 2000). Supervisor feedback (Amini & Gholami, 2018) may threaten teachers' self-image or motivate them to perform better and cause growth in the education system (Teddlie et al., 2003) and students' achievement.

Vast human and financial resources have been expended on teacher development programs (Ghoshooni, 1995; Khany & Azimi Amoli, 2016), but appropriate results are not been met yet. As Moradi, Sepehrifar, and Parhizkar Khadive (2014) reported, language instructors were the followers of supervisors and performers of imposed prescriptions and pre-determined teaching models. In addition, Amini and Gholami (2018) claimed that supervisors apply autocratic observation and restrict the teachers without providing helpful recommendations. Hence, it is necessary to employ qualified supervisors and evaluators to improve the quality of language instruction (Mette et al., 2020), help teachers connect theory to practice (Diacopoulos & Butler, 2020), foster their growth, and enhance learners' achievement (Brandon et al., 2018) based on their needs and their parents' satisfaction (Janssens & Van Amelsvoort, 2008).

During the history of teacher supervision in Iran, many supervisors and programs did not meet the pre-determined goals and teachers' expectations. Maybe the programs were unsuitable and efficient or not fulfilled as they should. Therefore, expert and professional supervisors should administer more efficient supervision programs to solve some teachers' problems. On the other hand, as Azizpour and Gholami (2021b) stated, investigating teachers' attitudes toward teacher supervision can inform school principals, supervisors, and EFL teachers of the nature of teacher supervision and increase the benefits of supervisory practices. Considering these reports, the researcher attempted to do this research to change the procedure of teacher supervision by presenting a new model and changing the perceptions of experienced teachers toward supervision programs.

This study will address the following research question:

*What are the perceptions of Iranian experienced EFL teachers toward a new model of teacher supervision?*

## **2. Literature Review**

## 2.1. Supervision

According to Morrison (2005), supervision has four fundamental integrated functions: Management, Development, Support, and Mediation. Depending on the resource pressure and practitioners' needs and support, the delivery of each function is different in practice (Earl, Fox, Webb, & Bowyer, 2017). Supervisors can arouse reflection among teachers (Jaeger, 2013) by analyzing the beliefs of teachers, interrogating the activities of educational systems, and investigating the teaching process (Zeichner & Liston, 1987). Reaching the point that the act of teaching becomes the main source of knowledge is the goal of supervision, and improving the range of experiences and knowledge that a teacher carries in the classroom is the basic function of the supervisor that leads to improvement in learning (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 2007). Providing opportunities for implementing high-quality teacher supervision programs and enhancing teachers' professional development is the function of the education system (Arong & Ogbadu, 2010).

Esia-Donkoh and Ofosu-Dwamena (2014) investigated the perception of basic public-school teachers toward the influence of educational supervision in their professional development at Winneba, Ghana. It was found that educational supervision is 1. a positive service for their professional development, 2. useful for finding teachers' needs and accordingly organizing appropriate programs, 3. improves teachers' performance and encourages their self-reflection skills to solve their problems. The study also recommended that educational supervisors should: 1. organize frequent and effective professional development programs; 2. not be fault finders but try to find teachers' strong and weak points and help them improve through dialogue.

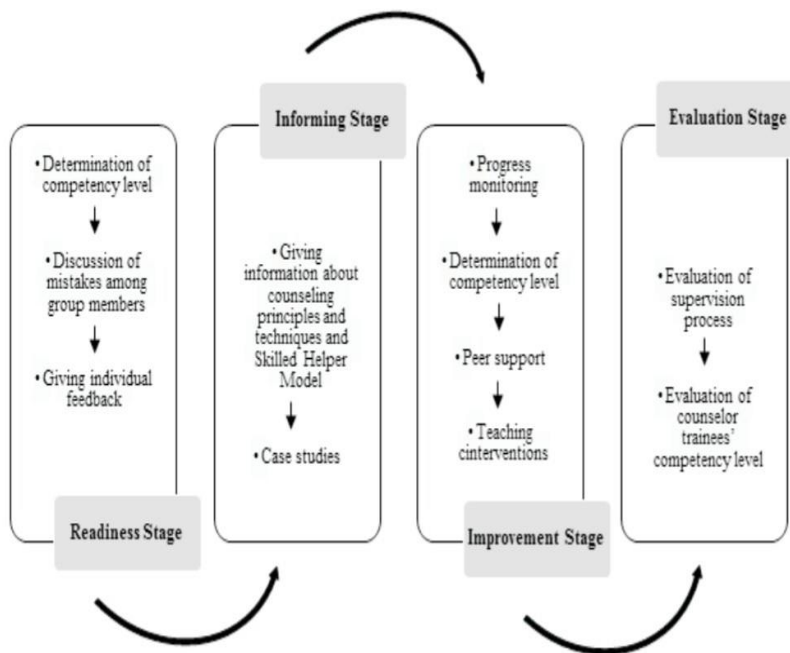
Moradi et al. (2014) explored EFL teachers' perceptions concerning being observed by a supervisor during teaching. It was found that teachers tried to please the supervisors; they were worried about their scores and consequences; sometimes they believed observation and feedback were superficial, and sometimes they felt the supervisors intentionally found weaknesses, causing trouble and damaging their confidence.

Rahmany, Hasani, and Parhoodeh (2014) explored the Iranian EFL teachers' attitudes toward supervision and also examined the relationship

between teachers' teaching experience and their attitudes toward classroom supervision. It was found that teachers with less than five years of experience were more influenced by the supervision process. They believed supervision programs were essential for their classroom improvement and teaching skills. The most pessimistic teachers had six to ten years of experience. The results of the qualitative analysis revealed that the supervision program seemed to be only paperwork for teachers with more than 16 years of experience.

Eryilmaz and Mutlu (2017) introduced a four-stage model for having more effective supervised sessions. It was revealed that the use of that model reduced the counselor trainees' mistakes and was beneficial for their counselor competencies in eight important dimensions.

Figure 1. *Four Stages Supervision Model* diagram adapted from Eryilmaz and Mutlu (2017)



Azizpour and Gholami (2021b) investigated seven teacher-supervisors' attitudes toward supervision in Iranian language schools through semi-structured interviews. The findings indicated that supervisors' workload is too demanding with many other non-supervisory responsibilities. In

addition, the supervisors were unsatisfied with some ethical contacts they encountered, such as critically commenting on their colleagues' performance and annoying other teachers. Another finding was that teacher supervisors are assigned supervisory roles without training due to their eminent teaching capabilities, merits, and experience. The results also detected that language school managers do not have any evident criteria or rubric for selecting supervisors.

Azizpour and Gholami (2021c) investigated EFL teachers' attitudes toward supervision in Iranian language schools. The findings revealed that a great number of the participants found the implemented valuable supervision for themselves and necessary for novice teachers; however, some held negative attitudes toward supervision and their supervisors' feedback. For supervision improvement, they suggested the development of transparent criteria and the discontinuation of unannounced observation.

Estaji and Ghasvand (2022) examined the perceptions of Iranian EFL teachers with different experience levels toward various supervisory practices and their contribution to teacher pedagogical growth. It was found that both novice and experienced teachers had a negative view concerning the existing supervision system in Iran, and there was not any significant difference between the novice and experienced EFL teachers' attitudes about classroom supervision. Both groups considered supervision as a bureaucratic, fault-finding, confidence-reducing practice with little to no educational value, and they believed that the quality of supervision affects its results and it is useful only for novice teachers.

## *2.2. Professional Development (PD)*

Wanzare and Da Costa (2000) state that professional development is a significant component of teacher education dealing with the improvement of teachers' classroom management skills, teachers' ability to consider students' needs in teaching and instructional methods and techniques used. Haughey, Evans, and Murphy (2001) believe that PD is an ongoing process through which teachers learn, change, and grow, and its goal is to boost the quality of education.

Khany and Azimi Amoli (2016) developed a validated scale with 102 items for examining teachers' professional development in an Iranian English-as-a-foreign-language context. The developed inventory can measure the extent of teachers' proficiency development, and its components represent multiple characteristics of professionally developed teachers. Possession of these components by teachers to an appropriate degree leads to student achievement.

Reviewing literature revealed that there is not any Iranian research investigating the effect of a specific model of teacher supervision on different components of EFL teachers' professional development based on a specific model of TPD and also exploring just experienced EFL teachers' perceptions toward a specific supervision model. To fill this gap, the researcher was motivated to conduct this study; maybe some of the shortcomings of teacher training programs and teacher supervision practices can be solved by administering a new model of teacher supervision and receiving the opinions and suggestions of experienced teachers.

### **3. Methodology**

#### *3.1. Participants*

The participants of this study, which is the qualitative phase of a mixed method study, were one-third (30) of the whole population (100) of experienced teachers (ExpTs henceforth) randomly participated in the study. They were male and female EFL teachers with different degrees of education, BA, MA, and Ph. D, from urban and rural regions of Alborz Province, teaching more than ten years in state junior and senior high schools.

#### *3.2. Instruments*

A semi-structured interview adapted from Moradi et al. (2014) containing six items was used in this study to elicit the participants' perceptions toward the implemented supervision programs.

#### *3.3. Procedures*

The study's procedure was based on a four-stage supervision model proposed by Eryilmaz and Mutlu (2017). They designed this model based both on Egan's (1975 as cited in Eryilmaz and Mutlu, 2017) skilled helper model and on the principles and techniques of counseling (Carkhuff, 2000; Cormier & Hackney, 2008; Egan, 1975; Ivey et al., 2010 as cited in Eryilmaz and Mutlu, 2017). This model encompasses four stages: readiness, informing, improvement, and evaluation. Supervision was administered by four experienced, knowledgeable, TEFL Ph. D holder supervisors with professional ethics and behavior, each one from one main district of Alborz Province, with the cooperation of six experienced, knowledgeable Ph. D holder teacher trainers, each one expert in some subcomponents of TPD, under the leadership of the researcher.

Stage 1 (Readiness). At the beginning of the academic year (October 2022), every supervisor registered 25 experienced volunteer teachers to participate in the study. The researcher created a virtual group, and all the participants were added. This group was created for easy access to participants, easy sharing of information and useful files after face-to-face teaching, and also virtual teaching of some sub-components like technology. After creating the virtual group, the participants were informed that their classes would be observed in the near future. Behind receiving permission on the part of school principals and teachers (a short time, about one hour before observation), the supervisors went to school for observation. At first, they had a warm dialogue with the teachers, and then they observed the teachers' classes so that they entered the classes with the teachers and left the classes with them. During class, the supervisors carefully observed everything, filled out the observation form, and had friendly communication with the teacher and the students. After observation and determination of the strengths and weaknesses of the teacher's performance, the supervisors gave feedback to the teacher so that they reported the strong points and particular abilities of the teachers to the teachers themselves and the school principals to encourage the teachers to develop them and then told the weak points mildly to the teachers confidentially and offered lucrative and constructive guidelines. If a teacher lacked the capacity to hear weak points, the supervisors kept them and added them to their collection to bring them up during the TPD

course indirectly and offer recommendations for removing or decreasing them. The teachers' virtual classes in SHAD (local application of the Education System) were also observed so that the supervisors were added to the classes by the school principals or the teachers, and they were allowed to observe the classes online or offline (after the QVID-19 pandemic, in addition to face-to-face class, every teacher has a virtual class in SHAD).

Stage 2 (Informing Stage). After pre-observations were finished by supervisors, a gathering was held, and all the participants were invited. Through the gathering, the weak points and shortcomings observed during the pre-observations were explained by one of the supervisors, and the participants' questions were answered. The attendees were informed of the existing problems and invited to attend a TPD course in the form of a series of workshops to solve the problems mentioned. They were informed of the timetable, the number of workshops, and activities and practices that would be performed there. The experienced and knowledgeable teachers who had been identified and determined through the pre-observations were also introduced through this gathering, and they were respectfully invited to share their experiences with other teachers through sample teachings.

Stage 3 (Improvement Stage). In this stage, the participants attended the workshops so that 45 two-hour workshops were pre-designed, and each week, one subcomponent of the standard TPD model was taught and practiced during three two-hour workshops. Shortcomings and weak points regarding each sub-component of the Standard TPD Model were explained, clarified, and discussed, and constructive suggestions were offered by supervisors. Needed theories and principles were also taught theoretically by teacher trainers. Subcomponents of content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge were taught by a knowledgeable TEFL Ph. D holder and teacher trainer, subcomponents of lesson management, classroom climate control, and supportive emotional skills were taught by a psychology Ph.D. holder teacher trainer, critical thinking skills, reflection, and self-evaluation were taught by a sociology Ph. D holder teacher trainer, technological knowledge and its subcomponents were taught by a TEFL Ph. D holder, teacher trainer expert in educational



technology, planning and preparation and lesson presentation were taught by a TEFL Ph. D. holder teacher trainer expert in curriculum development, and assessing students' progress was taught by a TEFL Ph. D holder teacher trainer expert in assessment and evaluation. It should be added that all the teacher trainers had experience in supervision, too. The knowledgeable, experienced, skillful, and professional teachers who had been selected and invited by the supervisors were asked to demonstrate their best teaching in front of the participants (one or two demonstrations each day). They were also asked to share their experiences with other teachers and mention the key and strong points of their practices in the classroom. After each demonstration, a critical interaction was run among participants respectfully, and during critical interactions, the supervisors managed the workshops and also recommended useful guidelines with consideration of the dignity of the demonstrators. In fact, they were playing the role of a leader, advisor, counselor, and guide during discussions and interactions. The workshops finished after the 15th week.

Stage 4 (Evaluation Stage). The same supervisors carried out the second series of observations (post-observations) in face-to-face and virtual classes. The post-observations were administered to investigate the effect of the supervision programs, specifically the TPD course, on the different components and sub-components of professional development of all the ExpTs. If there were some deficiencies, the supervisors tried to eliminate them by providing solutions; if necessary, the classes were observed more than once to resolve the problems and reach the ideal points.

Finally, in order to elicit deep and careful information, 30 ExpTs were randomly interviewed using a semi-structured interview adapted from Moradi et al. (2014). The interview questions were open-ended, and the supervisors had an opportunity to discuss them freely with the participants. For anonymity, a code was given to each participant, for example, ExpT1 (experienced teacher 1), and they were assured that their information would remain confidential. Each interview lasted 30 to 40 minutes and was recorded with the interviewee's permission.

### *3.4. Data Analysis*

The registration of volunteer participants was started at the beginning of the academic year (October 2022). After registration, pre-observations were started by supervisors and lasted for about two and half a month; after that TPD course, including 45 two-hour sessions each week three sessions were held and ended after fifteen weeks, something about three and half a month. After the administration of the TPD course, post-observations were fulfilled and finished after about two and a half months. For analyzing the data elicited from the participants through semi-structured interviews (Moradi et al., 2014), Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase framework were followed. In step one, the recorded insightful perceptions and attitudes of participants were transcribed verbatim; they were read and re-read several times. In step two, the data was organized in a meaningful and systematic way, and then, general initial codes were found manually. In step three, the codes were organized into broader themes; in step four, the preliminary themes were reviewed, modified, and developed; in step five, the themes were refined, and some sub-themes emerged, and the relation and interaction among themes and sub-themes were analyzed, and in step six, the results of the thematic analyses were written up.

#### **4. Results and discussion**

The perceptions of about one-third (30 ExpTs) of the whole population (100 ExpTs) who were invited randomly were elicited through free discussions. The interview questions were adapted from Moradi et al. (2014) and consisted of five open-ended questions; number one elicited the teachers' opinions toward the supervision procedure in the Education System; number two elicited their perceptions toward their last observation, the quality of the feedback they had received and the effect of that feedback on their confidence level; the third question asked them about their satisfaction with the current supervision system; number four asked them what was important to be observed in their opinion, and the fifth one elicited their suggestions for supervision improvement. Finally, the participants were asked to share anything else from their experience with supervision practice.

The content of the participants' responses to interview questions was analyzed considering Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase framework. The main themes were (1) Teacher Supervision System in Iran's Education Department, (2) Effects of Teacher Supervision on Teachers' Performance, (3) Preferred Factors for Observation, (4) Different Types of Feedback, (5) Satisfaction with the New Four-stage Supervision Model, (6) Teachers' Suggestions for Developing the Teacher Supervision System, (7) Some Reported Unpleasant or Ineffectual Supervision Experiences. Most of the themes and sub-themes are hierarchically demonstrated in Table 1, and some excerpts related to each are presented as evidence. The data related to some themes and sub-themes are explained descriptively because it was not possible to explain them in the table, while some themes and sub-themes are just mentioned in Table 1.

#### *4.1. Effects of Teacher Supervision on Teachers' Performance*

It is obvious that the administration of every program in each system has some positive or negative effects on different elements of that system, and the teacher supervision program is not an exception to this rule. All the participants believed that if teacher supervision is fulfilled by a qualified supervisor, it will have positive effects on teacher performance and student learning.

##### *4.1.1. Positive Effects*

These are the positive effects mentioned by the participants: synergy, teachers' professional development, increasing self-confidence and self-esteem, integrity in education, moving toward common goals, improving the quality of teaching, reduction of weaknesses, sharing experiences, useful strategies and techniques, review or learning of applied theories, strengthening the spirit and sense of dynamism and vitality in gatherings, and increasing motivation and job satisfaction.

##### *4.1.2. Negative Effects*

These are the negative effects mentioned by the participants: stress, changing the routine nature of the classroom, the teacher's performance and also the students' performance, using as a means for bothering

teachers by managers, finding the weak points and highlighting them, seeing the observed teacher who has some weaknesses as a sinner by some supervisors, assessing the teacher by pre-designed non-standard forms, reporting the weak points to the school manager and higher authorities, reducing the observed teacher's annual assessment score as a punishment, and maybe changing the observed teacher's school to lower graded school.

#### *4.2. Preferred factors for observation*

These are the mentioned preferred factors for observation: teacher's knowledge, method of teaching, having an annual and daily lesson plan, procedure of lesson presentation, classroom management, familiarity and ability to use technological tools for teaching and testing, formative and summative assessment, rapport and interaction between teacher and students, students' engagement, teacher's creativity, being up-to-date, students' stress-free sense in the classroom, motivating and encouraging students for learning, students' interest in the subject matter and their teacher, students' activities and behaviors, school problems and shortcomings, number of students in each class, professional behavior.

#### *4.3. Satisfaction with the New Four-stage Supervision Model*

The responses to interview question 3 revealed that all the participants were deeply satisfied with the current administered four-stage supervision model. They had some reasons for their satisfaction. Their reasons are presented through some examples extracted from the participant's responses to interview questions 2 and 3. For example, ExpT 25 declared, "The currently administered supervision covered all the possible components of the TPD program necessary for both novice and experienced teachers."

As was mentioned earlier, the TPD standard model used in the current supervision program as the theory included three main components: knowledge, skills, and TPD programs. Therefore, the researchers tried to present the sample excerpts considering the main components respectively (see Table 1).

### 4.3.1. Knowledge

The knowledge component of the standard TPD model included some subcomponents. All these sub-components were taught theoretically and practically during the administered TPD course. The satisfaction and appreciation of all the participants from the held TPD programs focusing on the knowledge sub-components, including content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and technological knowledge, are evidenced through some sample excerpts (see Table 1).

### 4.3.2. Skills

Approximately all the skills necessary for a teacher are included in the standard TPD model, and they were taught theoretically and practically during the administered TPD course or through the given feedback. The satisfaction of all the participants from the administered programs, considering all the subcomponents of skills, will be obvious through the excerpts in Table 1.

## 4.4. *Teachers' Suggestions for Developing the Teacher Supervision System*

The participants of this study knew that this program was administered with the efforts of the researcher, and most of the programs had also been fulfilled at the expense of the researcher, but the researcher spared no pains to do the best. Therefore, considering the shortcomings and some impediments that the researcher struggled with, they had some suggestions for developing the teacher supervision system (see Table 1).

Table 1. *Content analysis of the data collected from ExpTs through the interview*

Themes	Sub-themes	ExpTs' Excerpts
Teacher supervision system in Iran's Education System	Inner-school supervision system	Inner-school supervision system includes two types: supervision and leadership which is run by the principal of the school or his/her assistants, and peer supervision which is fulfilled by one colleague in the same field.  Peer supervision is useful because we can become aware of our colleague's experiences.

Themes	Sub-themes	ExpTs' Excerpts
	Outer-school supervision system	<p>The outer-school supervision system is fulfilled by a distinguished, expert, knowledgeable teacher with a bright history as a supervisor who may be a province supervisor or district supervisor, ...</p> <p>Expert supervisors can help teachers to solve their academic weaknesses.</p>
	Supervision with announcement or without announcement (different opinions)	<p>I think observation without announcement is not an ethical and professional action; the teacher should be informed at least some minutes before observation.</p> <p>When the teacher is informed of observation in advance the routine procedure of the classroom will be changed as far as the class may be changed with a subjective and equipped classroom.</p>
Different types of feedback	Positive or negative	<p>A supervisor can increase the teacher's motivation and interest in the teaching profession with a positive view, and on the contrary, with a negative view, s/he can cause frustration and discouragement of a teacher, especially a beginner teacher.</p>
	Fair or Unfair	<p>A fair supervisor sees the strengths as sees the weaknesses, and helps the teacher to develop the strong points and remove the weak points by offering guidelines.</p> <p>Fairness is one of the characteristics of a professional supervisor, ...</p>
	Verbal or Nonverbal	<p>A supervisor must fill out a predesigned form after observation and present it to the school manager and higher authorities. It is possible for the supervisor to mention the weak points verbally and confidentially and guide the teacher but fill out the form positively.</p>

Themes	Sub-themes	ExpTs' Excerpts
	Confidential or Nonconfidential	<p>A professional supervisor points out the teacher's weaknesses in confidence and offers solutions not in front of the principal and school staff.</p> <p>If a teacher's weaknesses are mentioned in front of the school principal, it will cause frustration and heartbreak for the teacher ...</p>
	Direct or Indirect	<p>It is better to consider the teacher's criticism capacity, and with a professional decision, mention some weaknesses indirectly during the discussion after observation or invite him/her to a TPD program, and notice the weak points there and provide solutions.</p>
Satisfaction with the New Four-stage Supervision Model	Knowledge	<p>Content Knowledge</p> <p>Before this course, I didn't know anything about post-method theories and I had forgotten theories of learning, even the useful methods of teaching.</p>
		<p>Pedagogical Knowledge</p> <p>I learned how to do pair work and group work practically.</p>
		<p>Technological Knowledge</p> <p>Before this course, I didn't know which applications were better for different purposes in face-to-face, virtual or online classes, and which websites are better for downloading appropriate files and introducing them to students.</p>
Skills	Planning and Preparation	<p>Throughout all the years of my teaching, I didn't know how to write a good lesson plan, I had to copy, I owe learning how to write a unified national lesson plan to this course.</p>

Themes	Sub-themes	ExpTs' Excerpts
		<p>Lesson Presentation</p> <p>Supervisors' guidelines informed me that some of the methods and strategies that I used to do in my classes were not suitable for the age of my students so I will change them to more suitable ones; I will motivate them to do more creative activities.</p>
		<p>Lesson Management</p> <p>Group work and pair work tasks and activities that were taught practically by supervisors and some expert colleagues were very useful and helpful for engaging students during class time.</p> <p>Psychologist teacher trainer taught us how to keep our spirits up and not lose hope when we face challenges.</p>
		<p>Classroom Climate Control</p> <p>The procedure of group work and pair work and selecting teacher assistants in each classroom shared by one experienced teacher can improve the engagement of students in the process of teaching and learning and develop their achievement.</p> <p>We learned how to save mutual respect through friendly relationships.</p>
		<p>Assessing Students' Progress</p> <p>The supervisors recommended that we can encourage students to assess their own progress through different tasks and they</p>



Themes	Sub-themes	ExpTs' Excerpts
		taught us how to do them practically.
	Reflection and Self-evaluation	Before this course, supervisors' suggestions weren't important to me at all, but now I have decided to pay attention to their recommendations carefully and apply them and connect the supervisors whenever I have a problem.
	Critical Thinking Skills	Through interactive reviews after each demo, all of us learned to develop our capacity for accepting supervisors' feedback and criticism.
	Supportive Emotional Skills	Supervisors' recommendations taught us how to respect our student's ideas and opinions; they taught us how to support our students' performance in the classroom.
		This teacher training course motivated us to be creative teachers and encourage our students to do creative projects.
	TPD Programs	Sharing experiences
		The supervisors' guidelines and recommendations answered a lot of my questions.
		Observation
		One day morning, the supervisor contacted me that she is coming to school to observe my class one hour later, ..., it was very professional that she informed me one hour before observation because it wasn't stressful as a surprise observation, and at the

Themes	Sub-themes	ExpTs' Excerpts
		<p>same time, I didn't have a chance to present an artificial performance, and everything was real.</p>
		<p>The supervisor entered the class with me, ..., he had a warm communication with students and me, he observed everything carefully and patiently, ..., and left the class with me, ..., I think that it wasn't a formality, and it was completely purposeful.</p>
	Feedback	<p>After observing my virtual class in SHAD, the supervisor called me, appreciated me, and mentioned my strengths, and then in a gentle but effective and friendly tone raised some objections and put forth helpful recommendation, I think, it was completely fair, and gave me a good sense that there is a supervisor who sees us and in addition, appreciates our efforts.</p> <p>..., the supervisor's behavior motivated me to participate in the TPD course, up-to-date myself, and remove my weaknesses.</p>
	Supervisors	<p>I understood from the last observation of my class that the purpose of the supervisor was not paperwork and fault finding, but helping and guiding the teacher.</p> <p>..., the supervisor's positive view and constructive</p>

Themes	Sub-themes	ExpTs' Excerpts
		interaction with me and my students changed my negative attitude toward the act of supervision.
		Teacher trainers of the current course were experienced teachers who were also university professors and Alborz province supervisors in their own field and this was a kind of creativity in supervision history.
Teachers' Suggestions for Developing the Teacher Supervision System	Continuation and repetition of the current programs	The current supervision program is a comprehensive, practical, and dynamic program. It can develop the quality of education if it continues in the future.
	The Department of Education's financial and non-financial support	Providing transportation for observing all the teachers' classes, and tracking defects, and allocating enough budget for establishing meetings, workshops, gatherings, and conferences, absolutely will develop the outcomes of supervision programs.
		Allocating a time with payment for teachers' voluntary participation in teacher training courses.
		Providing transportation and catering for volunteer teachers who come from distant regions.
	Employing competent supervisors	Supervisors should be expert, experienced, compassionate, and efficient, they should adhere to ethical principles and believe in work conscience, they should believe in their valuable mission and try to do their best to reach their goal which is developing the quality of teaching and learning.

Themes	Sub-themes	ExpTs' Excerpts
	Substitutions for supervisor supervision	<p>Peer supervision is a good substitution for supervisor supervision because its stress is less than supervisor supervision and therefore it may be more effective.</p> <p>Lesson research is a kind of effective supervision that can be a good substitution for supervisor supervision, and decreases the load of work on the supervisor, and it is better to do it with the cooperation and guidance of the supervisor.</p>
	Clarification	<p>The supervision system should be transparent, ..., and teachers should become aware of the necessity of the existence of supervision programs.</p>
Some reported unpleasant or ineffectual supervision experiences	At the beginning years of my teaching, one day a supervisor came to my class, observed the class for just about five minutes, filled out a form, and left the class without any feedback.	<p>Previous teacher training courses weren't very profitable; they were just focused on the methods of teaching the newly published textbooks or they were unrelated to TEFL, we didn't have such a comprehensive, practical, scientific, helpful, and highly disciplined course.</p>

As the results indicated, following the recommendations of Azizpour and Gholami (2021c), Chen and Cheng (2013), Janssens and Van Amelsvoort (2008), and Moradi et al. (2014), the supervisors after observing the classes, consultation with teachers and collecting a corpus of shortcomings, weaknesses, and needs of teachers and students, administered a comprehensive teacher training course that highly improved the participants' professionalism, the quality of their instruction (Danielson & McGreal, 2000), and their students' learning (Ebmeier, 2003; Ellett & Teddlie, 2003; Ovando, 2001). Also, following the suggestion of Azizpour and Gholami (2021c), the statements of the participants showed that giving feedback and presenting recommendations in the current supervision program improved the ExpTs' self-confidence and motivation to remove weaknesses.

In contrast to the claims of some studies such as Azizpour and Gholami (2021c), Amini and Gholami (2018), Horn (2010), Moradi et al.(2014), Nolan & Hoover (2005), and Pawlas and Oliva (2007), the results showed that the procedure of the current supervision programs and the behavior of supervisors did not increase the teachers' anxiety, did not damage their self-confidence and motivation, was not bureaucratic, autocratic or paperwork, instead considering the recommendations of Azizpour and Gholami (2021b) and Moradi et al. (2014), it was helpful, humanitarian, constructive, encouraging, and problem-solving with mutual respect and rapport. Contrary to the claims of Azizpour and Gholami (2021c) and Moradi et al. (2014), the comments and guidelines of the supervisors were not imposed on the teachers, and their feedback was not superficial or unsatisfactory, but all the programs were voluntary and for the development of teachers' professional growth and students' achievement. In response to the claim of Azizpour and Gholami (2021b), the four hired supervisors of the current study were knowledgeable, Ph. D. holders, TEFL teachers with more than five-year experience in supervision, they were expert and skillful, and considering the recommendations of Esia-Donkoh and Ofosu-Dwamena (2014), as the reports of the participants revealed the supervisors were not fault finders, they were trustful, committed, empathetic, with professional behavior and flexibility, and they tried to find shortcomings, and remove them through constructive and friendly dialogue, and implementing useful TPD programs.

As it is inferred from the results, weakening the claim of Azizpour and Gholami (2021b, 2021c), all the teacher supervisors in the Department of Education have some checklists for different purposes, such as observation, inspection, and evaluation of final exam questions, but they have some shortcomings and deficiencies that must be removed. It is also worth noting that the supervisors of this study had a comprehensive 75-item observation form adapted from the standard TPD model of Khani and Azimi Amoli (2016), which is recommended to be revised by eliminating some unnecessary items and used for future observations. Considering the suggestion of Azizpour and Gholami (2021c), all the observations were administered with the announcement but less than one hour before observation in order to lower the teacher's stress and, at the

same time, limit the opportunity for artificial performance in the classroom.

It seems there are so many differences between the findings of the previous studies and the current study. It should be noted that the previous studies were almost based on the common supervision practices in the Education System, which is real to some extent, but what was done in this study was private work that the researcher has done efficiently with the access she had (as an experienced teacher with 27 years teaching experience and five years teacher supervision experience) in the Educational Groups of Alborz province with much effort and mostly at her own expense, and it is completely different from the real teacher supervision in the Education System.

What is called teacher supervision in the Education System is not principled supervision, but based on the findings of some previous studies (Estaji & Ghiasvand, 2022; Rahmany et al., 2014), it is almost a formality and paperwork. A supervisor may have the opportunity to go to schools for observation or inspection just once or twice during the academic year with a government vehicle. Due to the lack of time, s/he is forced to limit the classroom observation to a few minutes or skip the observation altogether and persuade himself/herself to a superficial inspection of the colleague's notebooks and sample lesson plans as Azizpour and Gholami (2021c) and Moradi et al. (2014) reported while in this study, the supervisor was present in the class the entire time of the classroom and evaluated the teacher's performance from all angles based on each item of the TPD standard model. After the class was over, s/he patiently talked with the teacher and provided appropriate feedback. In the Iranian Education System, extensive TPD course with valuable content, with pre-determined planning and schedule, and taking into account all the needs of a professional teacher and using knowledgeable and professional teacher supervisors and teacher trainers has not been administrated to now while this happened for the first time in this study, it was planned in advance on each item of the Standard TPD Model, and the training was carried out in a very precise and professional manner. In the real teacher supervision system, the government facilities to follow up the problems and fix the shortcomings of the teachers' performance are very weak,

while in this study and based on the new model, after the necessary training and providing practical and appropriate solutions, the classes of the participants were observed again, and observing the progress, the remaining deficiencies were resolved by providing appropriate recommendations and followed up if needed.

The purpose of conducting this study was to demonstrate an effective and successful supervision model. It is hoped that this supervision model will be used in the Education System after the economic problems are resolved, and we will witness the professional growth of teachers, the remarkable success of students, and ultimately, improvement in the quality of the educational system.

## **5. Conclusion**

The findings of the study revealed that all the participants were generally deeply satisfied with the currently implemented supervision model and had a positive attitude toward each practice based on different components or sub-components of the standard TPD model. All the participants deeply appreciated for the punctilious, precise, detailed, and careful procedures, the content of the teacher training course, and the ethical and professional behavior of supervisors and teacher trainers. As the TPD model used in this study is a broad model that includes seven sub-components with 29 items for the knowledge component and eight sub-components with 68 items for skills, it takes into account almost all the needs of a teacher, and it can be interpreted from the participants' perceptions that it highly developed the ExpTs' professionalism.

In comparison to NovTs (novice teachers), the ExpTs had good experiences in classroom management, dealing with different students, familiarity with directions, frameworks, and criteria of formative and summative assessments, and also, after COVID-19, they gained some experience regarding teaching and assessment through SHAD and other local applications and online assessment, but they had forgotten or did not learn useful theories of learning, theories of post-method and methods of teaching, and they were at a lower level in general English.

In addition, sample teachings presented by capable teachers and followed by interactive criticisms, psychological techniques practically

trained by the psychologist, different critical thinking skills taught by the sociologist, writing a national lesson plan taught by the TEFL teacher trainer, and supervisors' guidelines and hints were other prominent parts of the current TPD course which were highly received by the teachers.

The findings of this study have some pedagogical implications. The experienced Iranian teachers severely need the implementation of the TPD courses because of their fatigue, depression, and despair caused by the deficiencies that their origin is mostly economic. Through TPD courses, their knowledge is recalled and reviewed, and they learn new concepts, theories, strategies, and effective professional techniques. In-person gatherings and workshops make them happy and dynamic and cause vitality. Observing the class of teachers by a well-mannered, knowledgeable, and professional supervisor increases teachers' self-confidence about the correctness of their performance in the classroom, and providing appropriate and decent feedback will eliminate their shortcomings and disadvantages. The warm and friendly feedback of the supervisor not only does not cause stress but also makes it easy for teachers to ask their questions and ambiguities from the supervisor and resolve their teaching defects. In the end, the teachers' scientific and spiritual development will increase the students' achievement and thus will improve the quality of the educational system.

This study also has some implications for policymakers, teacher supervisors, school principals, and teachers. Policymakers should allocate more budget to supervision programs, specifically observation and teacher training courses, increase the working hours of supervisors to concentrate more on supervision programs, employ a group of professional pre-trained supervisors for each subject, the most experienced as the head member and others as the group members, increase the executive power and authority of supervisors to be able to give cash and non-cash privileges to active teachers and attract them to different programs and improve competition among them, allocate fees, transportation, and catering to teacher trainers and also participants of professional development courses out of duty hours, and repeat the current administered supervision model in future years by supporting the supervisors. Further, teacher supervisors should observe the classes



patiently, not be disappointed and unmotivated because positive actions can be taken despite all the shortcomings, have a deep sense of responsibility, and compassionately seek to solve the teachers' problems and meet their needs, concentrate on supervision programs, and answer the teachers' questions, because supervisors are the communication channel between the teachers and the Department of Education. On the other hand, teachers should welcome the supervisors to observe their classrooms and cooperate with them, be open to supervisors' comments, show respect for their feedback, improve their capacity for criticism, and hearing weak points, listen to the supervisors' recommendations, and make autonomous decisions by considering the school and class conditions, and finally, school principals should cooperate with supervisors, and present the realities to them, not hide anything from their view, not consider teacher supervision as a means to trouble the teacher and to expel him/her from the school, but consider it as a means to improve the quality of the teacher's professionalism.

As a new model of supervision in the Department of Education, this study suffered some limitations. First, the participants of this study included both genders with different ages and different academic degrees, which may have affected the results. Second, the population of the study was just 100 EFL ExpTs from Alborz Province. Third, this study was administered at the expense and efforts of the researcher. Therefore, replication of the study with the participation of all the Iranian EFL teachers and controlling gender, age, and degree of education may yield different results. Further, replication of this study with financial and non-financial support on the part of the Department of Education may also entail different results.

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