



## Quality in English Language Teaching: Postulating a Prospective Quality Enhancement Model

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### Abstract

The literature review left the researchers with an unanswered query about whether teachers' years of teaching experience could act as an index for enhancing the quality of teaching learning output. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to propose a quality enhancement model for the status of private Iranian English institutions. An ex post-factorial design was employed for the study. Thus, 250 male and female EFL teachers filled a previously developed English Language Teaching Quality Indices Survey. The reliability and validity of the survey were checked by Cronbach alpha, 95, EFA and CFA. Then, the researchers calculated the means of ELTQI constructs. The aim was to pinpoint the most prominent components that impact the quality of ELT as "must" to be indices in any educational setting. Besides, the researchers utilized the index with the highest mean as well as the ones which were highly recurrent in the literature and shared relations/predictions with teachers' years of teaching experience. Then, a model was proposed by running CFA, AMOS Software. It included factors like years of teaching experience, 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, teachers' qualifications and recruitment, teaching activities and methodologies, CPD (Continuing Professional Development) and assessment procedure. The results revealed that all the predictions were supported except for 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. Also, Teachers' qualifications and recruitment gained the most importance from the teachers' point of view. As the pedagogical implication, proposing a prospective quality enhancement model can bring about clarity among different stakeholders, teachers, and learners of what is exactly expected of them.

**Keywords:** CIPP Model, Private English institutions, Prospective, Quality, Quality enhancement, SEM

## 1. Introduction

Discussions over quality have commenced with the advent of industrialization and the requirement for checking out whether the products do possess the specifications and the defined criteria or not (Sallis, 1996). But according to Wadsworth, Stephens, and Godfrey (2002), the focus at that time was mostly on products rather than checking out the quality. Therefore, by Post World War II, in 1960, a shift from statistical process control was made towards quality assurance. That is, finding the deficiencies from the very beginning instead of checking that after the products were produced. Then, as social services such as education were expanded and more and more people, organizations, and communities sought for quality as an important demand, the idea of quality was successfully led into the other centuries (Linston, 1999, as cited in Jain & Prasad, 2018).

Moving towards a more recent era, the research conducted by Behroozi and Amoozegar (2014) about the Iranian EFL students' learning outcome can be considered as one of the other reasons for doing the present study. In fact, the results revealed that after having a minimum of 7 years of studying English, most of the learners are neither able to speak fluently in English nor able to interact well with others using the English language. As a result, applying a quality teaching and quality learning approach in our educational system may compensate for the shortcomings that exist and somehow assure the teaching learning output.

Following the same notion and importance, for improving teaching learning outcome, it is vital to specify which indices affect the quality of an education system (Ye, 2000, as cited in Zhang, 2008). Such an analysis will help to implement the quality factors that impact the educational outcome in an institution and therefore promote quality in English language teaching. Besides, many studies have reached to the conclusion that improving teacher quality will definitely affect and consequently enhance students' achievement (Greenwald, Hedges, & Lain, 1996, as cited in Zhang, 2008). In addition, the researchers have opted for teachers' years of teaching experience and teachers' qualifications as two of the very main components of the present study for enhancing teaching learning quality. In fact, the reason is well supported through the related literature. That is, teachers' qualifications and teachers' experience are considered as two main components of *teacher quality* (Goldhaber, 2004; Wenglinsky, 2002).

Following the same perspective, there have been debates on whether teachers' quality (teaching experience, education level, and teachers' qualifications and recruitment) makes any significant contributions to students' learning outcomes, classroom methods and methodologies, CPD, and 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. The outcome of the conducted studies has been contradictory. Some of the studies like Hedge et al. (1994), Greenwald et al. (1996), Hanushek (1997), and Saglam and Sali (2013) have pinpointed that the aforementioned constructs do have positive impacts on each other and consequently can enhance teaching learning quality. On the other hand, some of the other researchers have highlighted the point that teachers' quality does not have any positive effects on variables, such as students' learning outcome, classroom methods and methodologies, continuing professional development, and 21<sup>st</sup> century skills or they may vary according to the context and the participants (Hanushek, 1989; Wayne & Young, 2003). These contradictory results are one of the other reasons why the researchers focused on the present study. They intended to see how the postulated model fits the context of Iran and then it will be in line with which of the aforementioned related results.

Besides, this research has highlighted the quality aspect that an educational system offers to its customers and here specifically to students. Such as the quality of teaching learning process, (Grisay & Mahlck, 1991; as cited in Jain & Prasad, 2018, p.10).

In addition, Dakar Framework (2000) has placed more focus on quality which highlights learning outcomes as the most important indices of education quality and calls for the inclusion of life skills in basic education curricula, twenty-first century skills (Barrett, Duggan, Lowe, Nickel, & Ukpo, 2006).

All in all, the basis of the present study was according to a research conducted by Kafi, Motallebzadeh, Khodabakhshzadeh, and Zeraatpishe (2019). The study aimed at developing, glocalizing (making a global idea localized) and validating a quality indices rubric in English language teaching. Therefore, the researchers decided to conduct the present study as a further research to cover one of the other aspects/implications of the aforementioned study. Thus, the researchers firstly analyzed the most important indices from the teachers' point of view who filled out the questionnaire, by calculating the means. Then, they opted some of the constructs of the same questionnaire which were also highly recurrent through the literature to see whether teachers' years of teaching experience can predict those specific constructs or not and whether they had any significant relations with

each other. Consequently, they proposed a quality enhancement model to improve the quality of teaching learning output in private institutions. In brief, the present study has focused on teachers' quality factors as the prominent components of quality in an educational setting to propose a prospective quality enhancement model for improving English language teaching in private institutions. Therefore, it is a model of must to be indices required for any educational setting that impacts the quality of English language teaching.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1. National and International Researches Related to Quality Indices and Quality Enhancement**

Twenty-first century is the millennium in which excellence, development, and enhancement have been always pursued by all the citizens and people. Therefore, a foreign language learning environment as one of the quality indices in education has been tackled in many research. The study conducted by Saglam and Sali (2013) aimed at finding the prominent essentials from the pre-service EFL teachers' point of view. After analyzing the data, physical aspects, social-psychological aspects, instructional approaches and methods, learner involvement, parental support and linguistic aspects were considered as the crucial factors for an EFL learning environment. Furthermore, the results revealed that language learning materials, teaching techniques, and methods were the most frequent criteria for a qualitative language learning environment.

In another study conducted by Wenglinsky (2000), various proposals have been suggested for enhancing teacher quality. These quality indices included: Giving bonuses to instructors as a result of high academic achievements on part of their learners, providing instructors with professional development programs which are highly related to academic quality indices and, "permitting pathways to licensure other than through the traditional undergraduate-level education programs based on colleges and universities" (Olson & Hoff, 1999; as cited in Wenglinsky, 2000; p. 10).

On the other hand, the qualitative research employed to find out the relation between teachers' input and learners' output has shown that there are some teaching methods that do affect the students' learning outcome. For example, paying attention to each individual learner and the idiosyncratic differences like the specific knowledge each student may

have, their background and, experiences. Moreover, constructing a collaborative teaching learning procedure in the classroom does affect the learners' learning outcome (Wenglinsky, 2000). In addition, Kanstoroom and Finn (1999) in the study of "Better Teachers, Better Schools" mentioned that just employing stricter rules on teachers' entry, less diversity in degree, and more training cannot always guarantee teacher quality. They also asserted that some other quality indices play more crucial roles in not gaining a better quality in teaching and learning output like: poor preparation, lack of subject matter knowledge, not retaining good quality teachers, shortcomings of the regulatory strategy, employing more preservice training instead of hiring smarter, more talented teachers, hiring teachers with a shaky knowledge base, discouraging the best and brightest, and few incentives for great teaching.

Akbari and Yazdanmehr (2011) conducted qualitative research in Iran to gather teachers and supervisors' ideas about the quality indices needed for teacher entry as well as teacher assessment in private Iranian EFL language institutions. Consequently, for the teacher entry application interview, some written examination, training course, and internship criteria were collected. Also, for teacher assessment, teacher's teaching skills, teacher's command of English, teacher's compliance with the syllabus, and teacher's personal affective features through various observations were emphasized as the required quality indices.

## **2.2. Theoretical Framework and Proposed Model of Study**

To estimate any significant relationship between the variables under study, years of teaching experience, 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, teachers' qualifications and recruitment, teaching activities and methodologies, the CPD and assessment procedure, a structural model was proposed. It is worth mentioning that these variables were chosen according to the frequency of their occurrence, showing their significance in gaining a qualitative teaching learning output in the review of the related literature, and the proposed interrelationships that they have had with each other as well as teachers' years of teaching experience in various contexts of study. Besides, the variables which were chosen for the model of the study were among the quality indices that the Iranian EFL teachers teaching at private English language institutions have highlighted in the interviews throughout the study conducted by Kafi et al. (2019). Based on the following review of the related literature, the following prospective model of quality enhancement was proposed.

Also, the study proposed that the more professional development, the more it paves the way to efficient classroom practices. In addition, instructors who are more knowledgeable about the area of subjects they instruct, as estimated by majoring or minoring in that subject, are also more likely to engage in effective classroom practices (Shishavan & Sadeghi, 2009). All of these notions are supported by the related qualitative literature which propose that instructors with better mastery of their subject and more in depth, dynamic professional development can instruct higher-order thinking skills much better and engage in related practices like hands-on learning (King Rice, 2003; Wenglinsky, 2000). Also, Louws, Veen, Meirink and Driel (2017) investigated the relationship between professional development and years of teaching experience. The results revealed that late-career instructors were into learning about extra-curricular tasks and innovations. And, teachers who had early or mid-careers focused more on curriculum and instruction as the main goal for their professional development. On the other hand, in various studies such as (Althumali, 2011; Iranian National Standardization Organization, 2015; School of Education, 2019), teachers' professional development has proved to have great impacts on learners' success and classroom achievement. In regard to knowing the connection between various aspects of teacher quality and their impacts on learners' performance, Wenglinsky (2000) mentioned the idea that: Teacher inputs influence professional development, professional development influences classroom practices, and classroom practices influence student achievement. Besides, through the literature, it has been discussed that there are three factors that affect students' learning and achievement: school-related factors, student-related factors, and teacher-related factors. Among all, teacher factors or teacher quality has gained the most prominent focus (Dossett & Munoz, 2003, as cited in Zhang, 2008). In fact, unqualified teachers have been the main reason for poor student achievement (Goldhaber, 2004, as cited in Zhang, 2008). In addition, there is a direct relation between the fact that high qualified teachers mostly teach higher levels of education in which high achieved students are present Greenberg et al., 2004).

Based on what was discussed up to now, the following hypothesized model of path analysis which shows the interrelationship among variables was proposed as figure one. In fact, years of teaching experience was supposed to positively predict teaching activities and methodologies, assessment procedure, continuing professional development, teacher qualifications and recruitment, and 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. Also, 21<sup>st</sup> century skills were

supposed to positively predict the assessment procedure. CPD affecting assessment procedure, teaching activities and methodologies, 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. In addition, it was predicted that teaching activities and methodologies positively affects the assessment procedure.

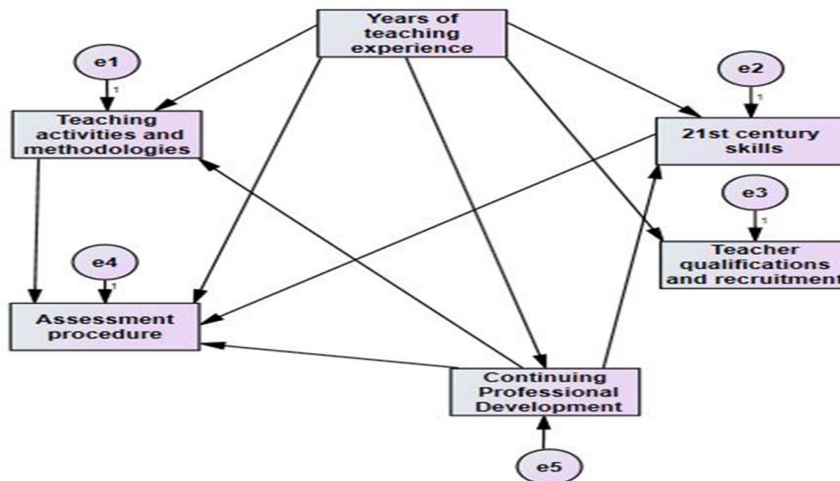


Figure 1. Hypothesized model.

### 2.3. Research Questions

For obtaining the aims of the present study, the following research questions were posed:

**Q1:** Do the obtained quality indices have the same weight and importance?

**Q2:** Does the proposed model of interrelationships among variables show enough adequacy for the context of Iran?

**Q3:** Are there any significant relationships among the components of the postulated model?

## 3. Methodology

### 3.1. Design of Study

As the primary purpose of the present study was to postulate a model for enhancing the quality of English language teaching in private institutions by utilizing some of the constructs of a previously developed questionnaire (Kafi et al., 2019) and then investigate the possible significant relations they may have with each other, ex post-factorial design was employed. This means that the present study was mainly focusing on controlling the product and not the process of the study.

### 3.2. Participants

The sample was determined based on the whole population of teachers utilizing Krejcie & Morgan's (1970) sample size table with 95% confidence. In case we consider the total number of English institutions in Mashhad, as a cluster sample, as 70 and each institution has an average number of 10 instructors, the whole population of the research had the entire number of 700 English language instructors. Thus, 250 Iranian EFL teachers took part in the study. The analysis of the results revealed that 69.6 % of the participants were male and 30.4 % were female teachers. The majority of the instructors, 84%, had 6 to 10 years of teaching experience and right after that 76% of them possessed 11 to 15 years of teaching experience. Also, 36.8 % of teachers taught at various teaching levels. Besides, most of the participants, 54.4%, had the age ranging from 31-40. Considering the educational status of the instructors, 52% were MA holders. 70.4% of the participants' major was Teaching English as a Foreign Language. Moreover, the data were collected from Khorasan Razavi, Tehran, Khorasan Shomali, Khorasan Jonobi, Golestan, Qazvin, Hamedan, Fars, Illam, Ardebil, and Khozestan provinces. Moreover, the data collection throughout the present research commenced in May 2018 and lasted up to March 2019. The participants' demographic analysis is fully elaborated on in the following table.

Table 1.

#### *Demographic Information*

		Frequency	Percentage
Years of Teaching Experience	1-5	42	16.8
	6-10	84	33.6
	11-15	76	30.4
	Over 15	48	19.2
	Pre-intermediate	27	10.8
Levels	Intermediate	69	27.6
	Upper-intermediate	22	8.8
	Advanced	40	16
	All of them	92	36.8
Gender	Male	174	69.6
	Female	76	30.4
Age	20-30	72	28.8
	31-40	136	54.4
	41-50	37	14.8
	Over 50	5	2
Educational Status	BA	66	26.4
	MA	130	52
	PhD	54	21.6
	Teaching	176	70.4
Major	Translation	39	15.6
	Literature	22	8.8
	Others	13	5.2
Total Participants		250	100%



### 3.3. Instrumentation

#### 3.3.1. English Language Teaching Quality Indices Survey (ELTQIS)

ELTQIS is a researcher-made questionnaire developed by Kafi, Motallebzadeh, Khodabakhshzadeh, and Zeraatpishe (2019). In fact, the construction of this survey took place by passing various stages. Firstly, the researchers commenced a structured interview among 75 EFL instructors teaching at various private English institutions. While the data were being collected, the researchers delved into the review of the related literature to gather the quality indices proposed in previous studies, whether in Iran or other countries. This means that the developed questionnaire was a combination of the quality indices that the instructors mentioned through the interviews as well as the ones investigated through the review of the related literature, to make the inventory glocalized. Therefore, the aim of the questionnaire was to investigate teachers' ideas about the most important indices that might affect the teaching learning outcome and then provide a comprehensive quality indices rubric to enhance the quality of education at the Iranian private English institutions. As a result, the final format of the survey consisted of four broad categories, the CIPP Model, along with 13 constructs and a total item of 99. This outcome was obtained out of checking the validity of the questionnaire by seven experts in the field of TEFL and EFA, SPSS Software. Also, its reliability which was estimated by Cronbach Alpha came to be .95. In addition, the questionnaire had choices ranging from “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree”. Tables 2 and 3 respectively represent the final version of the English Language Teaching Quality Indices Survey and the reliability of the questionnaire.

Table 2.

*Final Version of English Language Teaching Quality Indices Survey*

Scale	Subscales	Number of items	CIPP Model Subscales
(ELTQIS)	English Language Learning Environment	4	Context
	Learners' Needs	4	Context
	Organizational Culture	4	Context
	Textbooks and Supplementary Materials	6	Context
	Instructional Aids and Technology	3	Context
	Institutional Rules and Regulations	3	Input
	Educational Supervisor	14	Process
	Institute Management System	11	Process
	Continuing Professional Development	5	Process
	Teaching Activities and Methodologies	6	Process
	Teachers' Qualifications and Recruitment	21	Process
	21st Century Skills	12	Process
	Assessment Procedure	6	Product

Table 3.

*Results of Cronbach Alpha Indexes After Validation*

Scale	Subscales	Number of items	Cronbach alpha
	English Language Learning Environment	4	.88
	Learners' Needs	4	.91
	Organizational Culture	4	.78
	Textbooks and Supplementary Materials	6	.89
	Instructional Aids and Technology	3	.83
(ELTQIS)	Institutional Rules and Regulations	3	.85
	Educational Supervisor	14	.92
	Institute Management System	11	.87
	Continuing Professional Development	5	.86
	Teaching Activities and Methodologies	6	.77
	Teachers' Qualifications and Recruitment	21	.80
	21st Century Skills	12	.90
	Assessment Procedure	6	.82
	Overall Scale		.95

**3.4. Data Collection Procedure**

The overall procedure for data collection took about 11 months, from May 2018 to March 2019. Considering the questionnaire construction which was done in a previous study conducted by Kafi et al. (2019), the researchers first started with the qualitative phase of the study, structured interviews. They conducted face to face interviews, sending texts or voice messages on social networking sites. The time for in-person interviews and sending voice messages were each 10 minutes. And for the texts which were sent, their lengths were up to 3 to 4 paragraphs of 6 to 7 lines. Therefore, 75 male and female Iranian EFL teachers, teaching at private institutions, were randomly interviewed. At the same time, the researchers delved into the review of the related literature to collect the quality indices that have been developed whether in Iran or in other countries as a mean for globalizing a quality indices rubric in ELT. In addition, the organization websites under which licenses for establishing institutions are issued were searched by the researchers to gain more related information (Ministry of Education, Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance and Ministry of Science, Research and Technology). The overall obtained data was analyzed and then categorized by means of the emergent themes to be able to fit into

the inventory and to be well set under each construct of the Context Input Process Product Model. Thematic analysis, deductive approach, was the procedure through which the data analysis was conducted (Boyatzis, 1998). After the questionnaire was expert-validated by seven figures in the field of TEFL, and employing EFA and CFA, the final questionnaire included four broad categories, the CIPP Model, 13 constructs and 99 items (the complete process of questionnaire construction is elaborated on in the study done by Kafi et al., 2019). By the time the questionnaire was modified the quantitative data were collected among 250 EFL male and female Iranian teachers. The survey was distributed in person, by emailing or sending online google questionnaires. In regard to the aims of the present research, the researchers analyzed the results to find the most important indices that affected the quality of English language teaching. That is, to find out whether all the quality indices had the same weight and importance from teachers' perspectives or not. Then, some of the quality indices presented in the questionnaire were chosen along with the other indices that were highly recurrent in the review of literature (as the ones affecting the quality of English language teaching) as well as being paired with teachers' years of teaching experience to postulate the model of the study. Then, according to the theoretical frameworks proposed previously in the study, a model of interrelationships was proposed and the CFA was employed through AMOS. At the end, Pearson Correlation was applied to find out whether the variables under the study had any significant relation with each other or not.

### **3.5. Data Analysis Procedure**

According to the theoretical frameworks proposed in the study, a model of interrelationships was proposed and CFA was employed through AMOS. Then, the Pearson Correlation was applied too to find out whether the variables under the study had any significant relation with each other or not. Also, the results were analyzed to find the most important indices that affect the quality of English language teaching by calculating the mean, standard deviation, maximum and minimum of the indices in the ELTQI Survey (Kafi et al., 2019). Besides, it is worth mentioning that for checking the normality of data distribution, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was employed.

## 4. Results

### 4.1. Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

Firstly, the prerequisites of SEM (e.g. normality, a significant relationship between variables, reliability, validity of the scales, and sample size) were analyzed. To check the normality of data distribution, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was employed. This test is used to check whether the distribution deviated from a comparable normal distribution. If the  $p$ -value is non-significant ( $p > .05$ ), we can say that the distribution of a sample is not significantly different from a normal distribution, therefore it is normal. If the  $p$ -value is significant ( $p < .05$ ) it implies that the distribution is not normal. Table 4 presents the results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test.

Table 4.

#### *Results of K-S Test*

	Value	Df	Sig.
ELTQIS	.06	250	.07

As can be seen, the obtained sig value for all variables is higher than .05. Therefore, it can safely be concluded that the data was normally distributed across all the variables.

### 4.2. Significance of Quality Indices Based on Iranian EFL Instructors' Perspectives

Table 5 illustrates descriptive statistics of the ELTQI Survey, containing the mean, standard deviation, maximum and minimum marks. The comparison of these marks is shown accordingly.

Table 5.

#### *Descriptive Statistics of English Language Teaching Quality Indices Survey*

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean per Item
English Language Learning Environment	250	10.00	20.00	17.3880	2.03322	4.34
Learners' Needs	250	12.00	20.00	17.9120	1.84115	4.47
Organizational Culture	250	10.00	20.00	15.9920	2.49013	3.99

Textbooks and Supplementary Materials	250	20.00	30.00	24.6840	2.63437	4.11
Instructional Aids and Technology	250	10.00	15.00	13.2760	1.37382	4.42
Institutional Rules and Regulations	250	10.00	15.00	13.3960	1.62287	4.46
Educational Supervisor	250	31.00	70.00	59.7240	6.66645	4.26
Institute Management System	250	35.00	55.00	48.0040	4.96129	4.36
Continuing Professional Development	250	18.00	25.00	21.3560	2.27552	4.27
Teaching Activities and Methodologies	250	20.00	30.00	25.4280	2.59069	4.23
Teachers' Qualifications and Recruitment	250	82.00	110.00	95.2600	7.77497	4.53
21st Century Skills	250	35.00	60.00	50.4720	5.64488	4.20
Assessment Procedure	250	22.00	30.00	25.5560	2.55990	4.25

As the number of items differed in the various subscales of the inventory, an average item score was computed for each sub-construct, varying from 1 to 5. The probable range of score for English Language Learning Environment, Learners' Needs, and Organizational Culture with four items was between 4 and 20, for Textbooks and Supplementary Materials, Teaching Activities and Methodologies, and Assessment Procedure with 6 items was between 6 and 30, for Instructional Aids and Technology and Institutional Rules and Regulations with three items was between 3 and 15, for Educational Supervisor with fourteen items was between 14 and 70, for Institute Management System with eleven items was between 11 and 55, for Continuing Professional Development with five items was between 5 and 25, for Teachers' Qualifications and Recruitment with twenty one items was between 21 and 105, and for 21st Century Skills with twelve items was between 12 and 60. As the table illustrates, among the thirteen indices of the inventory, Organizational Culture

(3.99) gained the lowest mean score and Teachers' Qualifications and Recruitment (4.53) had the highest mean score (Kafi et al., 2019). Figure 2 presents the difference among the subscales of the inventory.

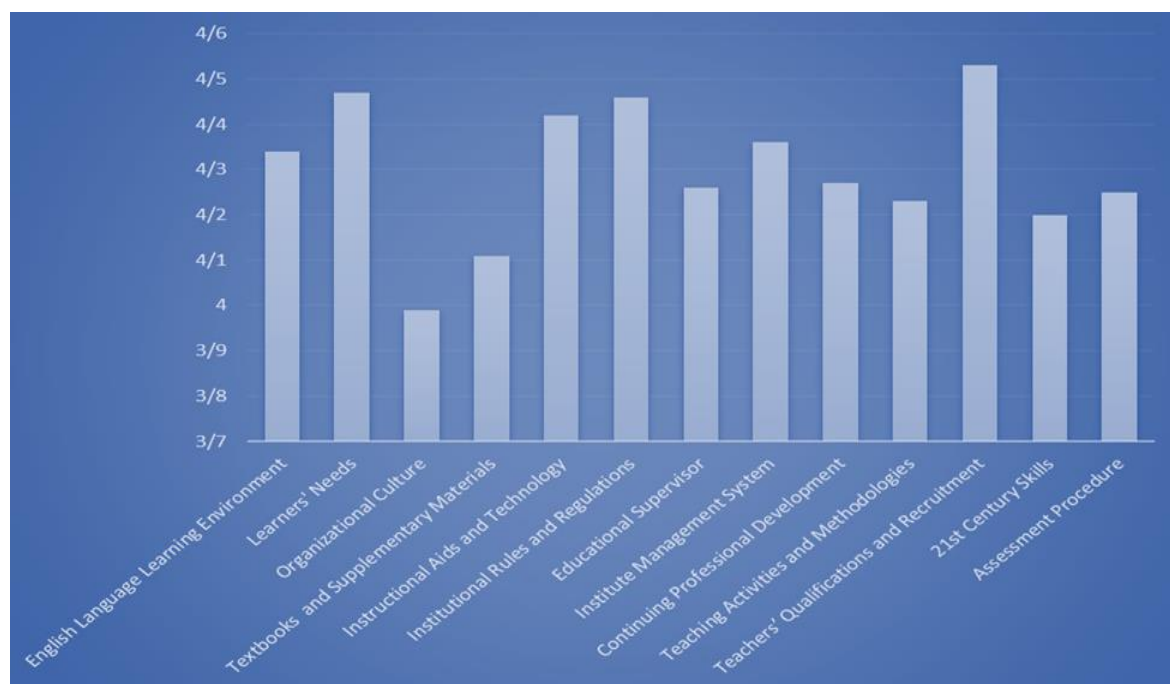


Figure 2. Difference among subscales of inventory.

#### 4.3. Adequacy of Proposed Model of Interrelationships among Variables for Context of Iran

To examine the structural relations, mentioned in the second research question, the proposed model (Figure 1) was tested using Amos 24 statistical package. Before analyzing the proposed model, the validity of the scales was checked using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). A number of fit indices were examined to evaluate the model fit for both CFA model and the proposed model: the chi-square magnitude which shouldn't be significant, Chi-square/*df* ratio which should be lower than 2 or 3, the normed fit index (NFI), the good fit index (GFI), and the comparative fit index (CFI) with the cut value greater than .90, and the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) of about .06 or .07 (Schreiber, et al., 2006). Table 6 shows Goodness of fit indices for both CFA model and the proposed model.

Table 6.

Goodness of Fit Indices

	X2/df	GFI	CFI	RMSEA
Acceptable fit	<3	>.90	>.90	<.08
CFA Model	2.30	.94	.91	.07
Proposed Model	2.74	.92	.93	.07

Goodness of Fit Indices for CFA model revealed that the ELTQIS enjoyed perfect validity with empirical data with 13 sub-constructs. As demonstrated by Table 6, the chi-square/df ratio (2/74), RMSEA (.072), GFI (.92), and CFI (.93), all the fit indices, lie within the acceptable fit thresholds. Hence, it can be concluded that the proposed model had perfectly fit with the empirical data. To check the strengths of the causal relationships among the components, the standardized estimates were examined. Figure 3 shows the model of interrelationships among variables for the context of Iran. As indicated in Figure 3, an estimate is displayed on each path. This standardized estimate is the standardized coefficient or beta coefficients ( $\beta$ ) resulting from an analysis carried out on independent variables that have been standardized. It explains the predictive power of the independent variable and the effect size. The closer the magnitude to 1.0, the higher the correlation and the greater the predictive power of the variable is.

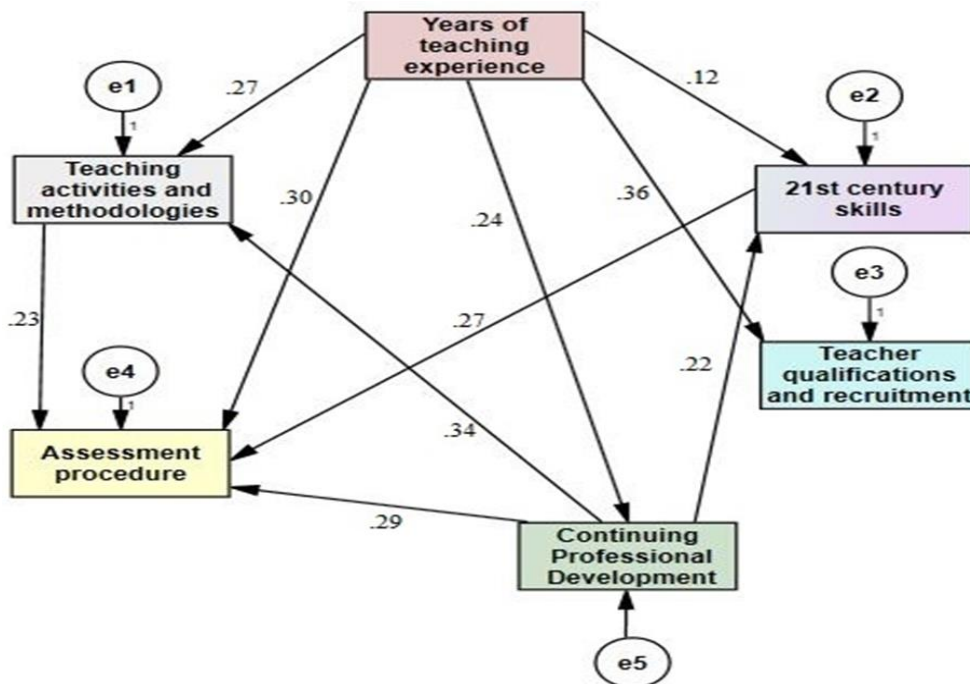


Figure 3. Model of interrelationships among variables for context of Iran.

Results of path analysis indicated that years of teaching experience positively and significantly predicts four variables: Teacher qualifications and recruitment ( $\beta = .36$ ,  $p < .05$ ), Teaching activities and methodologies ( $\beta = .27$ ,  $p < .05$ ), CPD ( $\beta = .24$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and assessment procedure ( $\beta = .30$ ,  $p < .05$ ). As the model demonstrates, there is only one non-significant path from years of teaching experience to 21st century skills ( $\beta = .12$ ,  $p > .05$ ). Moreover, the model revealed that the assessment procedure is predicted positively and significantly by 21st century skills ( $\beta = .27$ ,  $p > .05$ ). In addition, Teaching activities and methodologies predicted assessment procedure ( $\beta = .23$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Finally, it was found that continuing professional development positively and significantly predicts three variables: 21st century skills ( $\beta = .22$ ,  $p < .05$ ), Teaching activities and methodologies ( $\beta = .34$ ,  $p < .05$ ), and assessment procedure ( $\beta = .29$ ,  $p < .05$ ).

#### 4.4. Relationships among Variables of Postulated Model

The Pearson correlation was run between the variables of the hypothesized model. Table 7 shows the results of correlation.

Table 7.

##### *Results of Correlation*

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Experience	1.00					
2. Teaching activities	.35	1.00				
3. Assessment	.41	.29	1.00			
4. CPD	.33	.41	.37	1.00		
5. 21st century skills	.11	.11	.40	.25	1.00	
6. Teacher qualification	.52	.08	.13	.15	.18	1.00

Results of correlation revealed that years of teaching experience had the highest correlation with teacher qualification ( $r = .52$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and the lowest correlation with 21st century skills ( $r = .11$ ,  $p > .05$ ).

#### 5. Discussion

Regarding the first research question related to the weight and importance of the indices Teachers' Qualifications & Recruitment gained the highest importance, 4.53.



Secondly, Learners' Needs were the other index that teachers believed has great impacts on the quality of English language teaching. On the other hand, the index of Organizational Culture considered to be the least important construct, 3.99. Besides, in regard to the presented model, the second research question, all the predictions and relations were supported except for the variable named 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills. At the end, the highest correlation obtained out of the analysis of results was between years of teaching experience and teachers qualifications and recruitment, the third research question.

In regard to the first research question about the weight and importance of each of the indices according to the participants' perspectives, Teachers' Qualifications & Recruitment gained the highest importance, 4.53, the result of which is in line with the studies conducted by Shishavan and Sadeghi (2009), as well as Akbari and Yazdanmehr (2011) and Guidelines for Quality in Language Teaching (2009-2011). Secondly, Learners' Needs is the other index that teachers believed they had great impacts on the quality of English language teaching (Iranian National Standardization Organization, 2015; Guidelines for Quality in Language Teaching, 2009-2011; Saglam & Sali, 2013). On the other hand, the index of Organizational Culture considered to be the least important construct, 3.99, that affects the quality of education from teachers' point of view, an outcome which didn't share similarities with the study done by Satterlee (2010). Considering the second and the third research questions, a model was postulated which focused on the most important index of the present study as well as the indices which affected teachers' quality and therefore learning outcome. The model made predictions related to: teachers' years of teaching experience, 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, teachers qualifications and recruitment, teaching activities and methodologies, and the CPD and assessment procedure which were in line with the study done by Althumali (2011). That is, teachers should inform learners about the assessment procedures they are going to have through and at the end of the term and motivate learners for having peer- evaluation and assessing each others' work as well. This can directly support the link and influence of teachers' CPD on the specifications of their assessment and testing.

Besides, as mentioned in the same study, the more qualified and professionally developed teachers are, the more care they put into their teaching, assessing and attention towards learners' learning process (Althumali, 2011). Moreover, what is greatly significant here is that as 80.8 % of the participants of this study had up to fifteen years of teaching

experience, it again well supports all the results of the present study. This is due to the reason that the related literature has proved the fact that teachers with up to 15 years of teaching experience care more about how to assess their students, how to plan, how to manage learning, and how to manage their own proficiency (Hedge et al., 1994; & Greenwald et al., 1996). In fact, this result supports the relation between teachers' years of teaching experience, assessment procedure as well as the CPD. In addition, the outcome of the study conducted by Louws, Veen, Meirink, Driel (2017) highlighted that there exists correlations between teachers' years of teaching experience and their CPD.

In regard to the hypothesized path drawn between teaching activities and methodologies and years of teaching experience, the point has become apparent that experienced teachers pay attention towards what kind of activities and methodologies to use to have quality teaching learning outcome, a recurrent construct in a study done by Saglam and Sali (2013). These aforementioned results can be a reason of why years of teaching experience couldn't be considered as a point to affect 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. And therefore they did not possess any significant relations. That is, in the study done by Saglam and Sali (2013) the huge emphasis that teachers put on teaching activities and methodologies proved the fact that they were more likely to be in favor of teacher-centered modes of instruction and not paying attention to learners' involvement in classroom interactions in the process of teaching and learning. Consequently, skills such as cooperation, critical thinking, and developing social skills could be among the abilities that students will fail to have. Besides, 21<sup>st</sup> century skills not being predicted by teachers' years of teaching experience were not in line with the study done by King Rice (2003) which pinpointed that experienced teachers exhibit their effectiveness by focusing more on learning by doing. The difference could be because the aforementioned result is mostly related to teachers' with the first years of teaching experience. This is the point which is the opposite of the participants of the present research (80.8 % of the participants of the present study had fifteen or less than fifteen years of teaching experience). Moreover, considering the relationships and impacts of teachers' years of teaching experience on CPD and CPD effects on 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, assessment procedures and teaching activities and methodologies, results can be well supported by Wenglinsky (2000).

As the last discussion, the highest correlation obtained out of the analysis of results was between years of teaching experience and teachers' qualifications and recruitment

which again double checked and proved the result obtained out of the study conducted by Kafi, Motallebzadeh, Khodabakhshzadeh & Zeraat pishe (2019). That is, within the same study, teachers' qualifications and recruitment gained the highest important index from teachers' perspectives to affect the quality of teaching learning output.

## **6. Conclusion**

As the present study aimed at continuing and therefore adding a new research result to the study conducted by Kafi et al. (2019), a prospective model of quality enhancement was proposed with the focus on teachers' years of teaching experience. The results of the study revealed that Teachers' Qualifications & Recruitment and Learners' Needs were the highest indices respectively that the teachers believed had great impacts on the quality of English language teaching . On the other hand, the index of Organizational Culture considered to be the least important construct that affects the quality of education. In addition, except for 21<sup>st</sup> century skills which wasn't supported by years of teaching experience all the other constructs were well predicted and supported in the proposed model. It is worth mentioning that one of the constructs of the present model was chosen according to an index which has obtained the highest importance, teachers' qualifications & recruitment in the study conducted by Kafi et al. (2019).

In regard to the last research question, teachers' years of teaching experience and teachers' qualifications and recruitment obtained the highest significant correlation. This was in line with the result obtained out of the study conducted by Kafi, Motallebzadeh, Khodabakhshzadeh and Zeraat pishe (2019).

In regard to the pedagogical implications, Ewell (2008) mentioned very close similarities with the pedagogical benefits of the present research. That is, proposing a prospective quality enhancement model (as cited in Tam, 2014, p. 163) "can help communicate clearly between various stakeholders the kind of learning expected at the end of a learning program or course. Students will know what is expected of them; the same as teachers about the level and standards at which they need to teach the intended outcomes. This is particularly important when there is team teaching which involves diverse teaching staffs across departments and schools. At the institutional level, requirements and standards of a certain program or credential can be articulated in the form of a qualifications framework for benchmarking with similar credentials offered by other institutions".

As some suggestions for further research, studies can be conducted to measure the impact or the relationship between teachers' years of teaching experience and other quality indices in English language teaching at institutions. Also, comparative studies can be conducted among Iranian EFL teachers' years of teaching experience at private institutions and the ones at schools or universities to see whether the results come to be different or not. Besides, a prominent study can be developed to see the correlation of each specific year of teaching experience with the quality indices. For example, which quality indices correlate highly with teachers having 5 years of teaching experience. Also, the same model of the present study can be proposed with teachers' degrees to see whether they can predict each other or not.

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