Perfectionism and Professional Development: Cross-Examining Experienced and Novice EFL Practitioners

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Abstract

The role of teacher variables has become a major trend of study in the ELT literature. To this end, the focus of this descriptive study was to consider whether there is any significant relationship between novice and experienced EFL teachers' perfectionism and professional development. In doing so, 60 novice and 60 experienced EFL teachers, aged 20-50, who were graduate and/or undergraduate students of EFL related fields participated in this study. The selection was through nonrandom convenience sampling; that is, the teachers who were willing to participate in the study and were teaching at language schools which were available to the researchers were chosen. The data were collected through two questionnaires: Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale (MPS), Teaching, and Learning International Survey (TALIS). Once the researchers had both questionnaires filled by the participants, they conducted the relevant descriptive and inferential statistical analyses. The results revealed that both novice and experienced EFL teachers' perfectionism was a significant predictor of their professional development. The main imply location of this study is that teacher education centers may wish to invest upon promoting teachers' perfectionism in order to promote their professional development.

Keywords: Novice/experienced, Perfectionism, Professional development, Teacher variables

1. Introduction

The discipline and prax is of ELT has been involved with the study of various concepts and parameters pertinent to teachers throughout its history. More recently in the post method era, what is perhaps unanimously agreed upon is that the teacher should not be considered merely as a presenter of pure instructions and raw theories, rather, a facilitator and a decision-maker who should have autonomy and innovation in his/her teaching (Akbari, 2008; Bell, 2003; Kumaravadivelu, 2001; Kumaravadivelu, 2006; Prabhu, 1990). Consequently, as the teacher has a fundamental role in affecting the teaching and learning outcome alongside the learners, his/her professional development (PD) rises into prominence (Hismanoglu, 2010).

The concept of PD – like most if not all behavioral constructs – has been defined differently. For instance, Richards and Farrell (2005) state that PD is "general growth not focused on a specific job" (p. 4) while Warren-Little (1999) considered it as being synonymous with educational change. According to Vo and Nguyen (2010), teachers' PD is not an overnight achievement; this improvement includes teachers' knowledge, competence, skill, insight, belief, and many different factors and is thus a continuous progress. PD has attracted and continues to attract the attention of researchers of education and career development around the world (e.g. Berliner, 2005; Desimone, 2011; Desimone, Porter, Garet, Suk Yoon, & Birman 2002; Weston & Clay, 2018) with a few studies having been done in the ELT context (Author; Dayoub & Bashirudiin, 2012; Fatemi, Ganjali, & Kafi, 2016; Hismanoglu, 2010).

Another variable that has growingly become the subject of study in education in general and ELT, in particular, is teachers' perfectionism (Erozkan, 2016). As a personality trait, perfectionism arises from the fear of making mistakes along with having excessive standards, expectations, and a strong attempt to fix deficiencies (Evans, 2008; Mehr & Adams, 2016).

According to Flett and Hewitt (2002), since perfectionism evokes reciprocal actions and relations between cognitive, emotional, motivational, and behavioral factors, it has a complex construct; a multitude of studies have therefore been reported in the ELT literature on perfectionism (e.g. Demetriou & Wilson, 2012; Ghaemi & Damirchiloo, 2015; Pishghadam, & Akhondpoor, 2011; Shokrollahi & Baradaran, 2014; Stoeber& Otto, 2006).

In addition to PD and perfectionism, a perhaps universal construct is the novice/experienced teacher distinction which surfaced in the 1970s, a dichotomy examined in different fields ranging from physics to chess (Faez & Valeo, 2012). The mutual findings among different domains resulted in the specification of the traits of expert versus novice teachers such as the experts' patience to perceive and analyze the problem, while novices tend to give solutions from the very beginning (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 2000). This dichotomy or perhaps continuum, put more correctly, is a significant topic for research in ELT (e.g. Erkmen, 2014; Gatbonton, 2008; Kalantari & Kolahi, 2017; Mehrpour & Mirsanjari, 2016; Pilvar&Leijen, 2015; Shohani, Azizifar, & Kamalvand, 2014; Tajeddin, Alemi, & Yasaei, 2018).

While certain scholars have elaborated PD and perfectionism conceptually and reported empirical research on them (as noted above), there seem to be no studies conducted on the relationship of the two constructs among EFL teachers. With this research gap in mind and also taking into consideration that there may be a differentiation between experienced and novice teachers with regards to their standing vis-à-vis each of the two aforementioned constructs, the present study was an attempt to investigate the relationship between novice and experienced EFL teachers' perfectionism and PD.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Professional Development

The wide scope of PD includes any kind of the development of an individual in his/her professional role and career. Narrowing down the concept to teachers' functionality, PD is the "sum total of formal and informal learning pursued and experienced by the teacher in a compelling learning environment" (Fullan, 1995, p. 265). Another such explanation is put forth by Glatthorn (1995) defining teachers' PD as "a professional growth a teacher achieves as a result of gaining increased experienced and examining his/her teaching systematically" (p. 41).

PD is an ongoing process in which the teacher tends to identify how to teach based on different situations and needs of the students (Hismanoglu, 2010) whereby teachers are helped to broaden their "understanding of teaching and of themselves as teachers" (Richards& Farrell, 2005, p. 4). Careful consideration of teachers' attributes, characteristics, beliefs, and also various features of the teacher/teaching practice appears to

be essential for a reflective review on the analysis of PD (Richards & Farrell; Sahin & Yildirim, 2016).

According to Ganser (2000), PD can occur both in formal and informal experiences of the teacher; in both settings, the following need to be examined: "the content of the experiences, the process by which the PD will occur, and the contexts in which it will take place" (Fielding&Schalock, 1985, as cited in Villegas-Reimers, 2003, p.11). PD has been approached from different angles being based on constructivism (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995), a collaborative process, (McLaughlin & Zarrow, 2001), and reflective practice (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2001).

At an empirical level, while PD has been researched into in both education and career development (as stated earlier), very few studies regarding PD in the ELT context can be cited. One such instance is a study by Fatemi et al. (2016) who demonstrated a significant relationship between English teachers' personality variables and PD. In another study, Author delineated a go-togetherness between extrovert/introvert teachers' PD and adversity quotient. Furthermore, Dayoub and Bashirudiin (2012) have explored English teachers' PD in Syria and Pakistan while Hismanoglu (2010) attempted to capture English teachers' perception of PD.

2.2. Perfectionism

Perfectionism, from a psychological point of view, is a belief in the endeavor which is required to reach perfection; subsequently, perfectionists conduct extreme attempts to achieve their standards and unrealistic goals in all of the domains that they are involved in (Hewitt & Flett, 1991). Superior performance rules are applied by perfectionists in their works thus pursuing the quality of having no defects (Flett & Hewitt, 2002). A perfectionist is someone who strives for faultlessness with unneeded high standards for performance and places unbelievable reputation on the assessment of others (Black & William, 2013).

Perfectionism is often overly accompanied with criticism and evaluation which may lead to losing the sense of personal worth or in contrast, an endeavor to grow and reach excellence (Hewitt, Flett, Turnbull-Donovan, & Mikail, 1991). According to Accordino, Accordino, and Slaney (2000), desirousness of success plus impractical and elusive objectives along with an extreme attempt to reach those wills are the main features of perfectionism.

The literature of ELT is indeed relatively replete with studies on perfectionism. As an example, Flett, Hewitt, Su, and Flett (2016) provide "a series of specific recommendations for teachers and school psychologists who must try to reduce levels of perfectionism and its impact among people trying too hard to minimize mistakes during the learning process" (p. 75). Chen, Kuo, and Kao (2016) proved that perfectionism differs significantly among students in terms of age and majors. Pishghadam and Akhondpoor (2011) showed "how perfectionistic tendencies in language learners are associated with low academic achievement and poor performance in language skills" (p. 432). To this end, Ghorbandordinejad (2014) also revealed no significant relationship between learners' perfectionism and language achievement.

While perfectionism has been related to neurosis and maladjustment by certain scholars under the labels of negative perfectionism or perfectionistic concerns (Stoeber& Otto, 2006), others have agreed with the assisting role it is likely to have; hence, they refer to it as perfectionistic striving or positive perfectionism (Enns & Cox, 2002; Shafran & Mansell, 2001). Accordingly, using and applying the bright aspect of perfectionism in the classroom seems to be contributory to a more effective teaching quality and PD (Stoeber, Uphill, & Hotham, 2009). Knowing how to gain such a skill may perhaps be linked to the significant difference existing between novice and experienced teachers.

2.3. Novice/Experienced Teachers

The novice/experienced teachers categorization incorporates teachers' mental processes in planning and decision-making which are seen as a link between thought and action and are heavily influenced by an information processing model of the mind in cognitive psychology (Yildizbas, 2014). As Tsui (2003) points out, novice and experienced teachers' cognitive processes in their different phase of teaching has received a lot of attention in studies which perhaps all stem in Jackson's (1968, as cited in Tsui) preactive and interactive phase of teaching; the preactive phase refers to the period in which the teacher is planning, evaluating, and selecting the materials while the interactive phase refers to the period in which the teacher has actual interaction with students, in other words, during the lesson. Furthermore, Clarkand Peterson (1986) proposed the third phase: "postactive in which teachers reflect on their teaching after a lesson and make decisions about subsequent teaching" (as cited in Tsui, p. 17). A major differentiation between novice and experienced teachers is their different approaches to the above phases.

Having a forward or backward thinking process is another distinction which shows the different directions of novice and experienced teachers: to the goal and from the goal. Hoyle and John (1995, as cited in Okas, van der Schaaf, & Krull, 2014) believe that knowledge, autonomy, and responsibility are the three pivotal points which affect the state of being a professional and accordingly, certain domains of knowledge should be viewed in the investigation of the differences between novices versus experts such as pedagogical skills, linguistic expertise, and cognitive psychology.

Another more detailed distinction in terms of their psychological or pedagogical knowledge in their process of cognition and behaving is the integration of content knowledge and problem solving, in which the content knowledge, organization of knowledge, problem perception, problem representation, problem solving strategy, self-regulation, and attitude are included (Hogan & Rabinowitz, 2009; Lee & Chin-Chung 2010).

In line with the above literature review which clearly emphasizes the paucity of empirical studies on PD and perfectionism in ELT and also the gap already noted at the end of the introduction section, the following research questions were raised:

Q_1: Is there any significant relationship between novice EFL teachers' perfectionism and PD?

Q_2: Is there any significant relationship between experienced EFL teachers' perfectionism and PD?

Q_3: Does novice EFL teachers' perfectionism significantly predict their PD?

Q_4: Does experienced EFL teachers' perfectionism significantly predict their PD?

3. Methodology

3.1. Design and Context of the Study

The design of this study was descriptive. EFL teachers' perfectionism was considered as the predictor and EFL teachers' PD as the predicted variable. The moderator variable was EFL teachers' teaching experience with the two modalities of novice and experienced. The participants' age was controlled, while their gender served as an intervening variable.

3.2. Participants

A total of 120 (30 male and 90 female) teachers were the participants of the present study who were chosen as novice and experienced (60 in each group) teachers with respect to their teaching experience. The 60 novice teachers (15 male and 45 female) had under three years of experience while the 60 experienced teachers (29 male and 31 female) enjoyed a minimum of five years of teaching; the above dichotomization was in accordance with Gatbonton (2008).

All the 120 participants were aged 20-50 and were selected through nonrandom convenience sampling; that is, the teachers who were willing to participate in the study and were teaching at language schools which were available to the researchers were chosen. They were either graduates or undergraduates of EFL related fields at Islamic Azad University at Central Tehran, who had passed at least one course in teaching methodology(the researchers made sure of this by asking every single individual agreeing to participate in the study). The participants were full-time and part-time teachers teaching English at different levels in public or private language schools.

3.3. Instruments

3.3.1. Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale (MPS)

The MPS was designed by Hewitt and Flett in 1991. It is a 45-item measure of perfectionism with 15 questions determining three dimensions of perfectionism: self-oriented, other-oriented, and socially prescribed. All the 45 items are designed on a seven-point Likert-scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7) with the scores thus ranging from a minimum of 45 to a maximum of 315. The higher the score of an individual, the higher the perfectionism of that individual. The required time for the MPS to be completed is 15 minutes.

Hewitt and Flett (1991) have shown that the MPS possesses acceptable reliability and validity. They report that the test-retest reliability of the subscales was 0.88 for self-oriented, 0.85 for other-oriented, and 0.75 for socially prescribed perfectionism. The MPS has been validated through factor analysis and establishes a relation between self- and observer-ratings. The required age for filling the questionnaire is 18 and older.

3.3.2. Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS)

In order to measure the participants' PD, the researchers used the TALIS questionnaire, developed in 2013 by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) in the Netherlands for the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in Paris. More than 40 other countries have taken part in the survey. Teachers provide information about the following four categories: PD they have received, their teaching beliefs and practices, the review of teachers' work and the feedback and recognition they receive about their work, and school leadership, management, and workplace issues.

Accordingly, TALIS comprises a *Background Information* section which includes six questions with the aim of eliciting the participants' personal data and 53 four-Likert items which elicit information on the aforesaid four categories. The respondents needed 30 minutes to answer this instrument and its scores range from 53 to 212. This questionnaire was validated by OECD (2010) through a study in 12 countries with 4000 schools and more than 70,000 teachers and principals. The reliability in each country was reported as follows: Australia 0.92, Belgium 0.94, Brazil 0.86, Denmark 0.94, Hungary 0.81, Italy 0.77, Korea 0.94, Lithuania 0.82, Malaysia 0.89, Mexico 0.88, Spain 0.87, and Turkey 0.90.

3.4. Data Collection Procedure

As the first step, the researchers requested a number of university instructors to give them half an hour of one session of their classes. Then they asked those participants who had either less than three years of experience in teaching or more than five years of experience to take part in the study only if they were willing to. Subsequently, the participants were provided with a brief explanation on the purpose of study and the instructions for each step. The participants were further assured about the confidentiality of their answers.

The abovementioned procedure took about three minutes. Then the researchers explained that they were going to distribute the first questionnaire and that no question would be responded to by the researchers while filling the questionnaire. Moreover, they were told to write their email addresses on the cover page, in case they were interested to be informed about their scores later.

First, they were asked to fill in the first questionnaire (MPS) in 15 minutes. After that, the questionnaires were gathered and the second questionnaire, i.e. TALIS, was distributed, again with the time set of 30 minutes to be filled. In order to control the possible sequence effect, the questionnaires were distributed with different order from one class to another. Apart from this measure to control the sequence effect, the distribution process in all the classes was similar. Once the researchers had both questionnaires filled by 60 novice and 60 experienced EFL teachers, they conducted the data analyses comprising of descriptive and inferential statistics.

3.5. Data Analysis Procedure

The data analyses carried out comprised of both descriptive and inferential statistics. First, the mean and standard deviation of novice and experienced teachers were calculated for perfectionism and PD. Second, the reliability of the questionnaires was estimated through Cronbach's α and checking the prerequisite assumptions. After that, the Pearson product-moment was run in order to test the first two hypotheses; subsequently, a linear regression analysis was administered to test the third and fourth hypotheses.

4. Results

4.1. Descriptive Statistics

4.1.1. MPS

As indicated in Table 1, the mean and the standard deviation of the scores of the novice teachers stood at 182.22 and 35.58, respectively, while those of the experienced teachers were 200.40 and 40.68, respectively. Furthermore, the scores represented normalcy with the skewness ratio falling within ±1.96 (0.233 / 0.309 = 0.754 and -0.419 / 0.309 = -1.356). Also, the reliability of the scores in this administration was 0.91.

Table 1.

Descriptive Statistics of the Scores of the Participants on the MPS

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	
						Statistic	Std. error
Novice	60	116	260	182.22	35.576	.233	.309
Experienced	60	120	275	200.40	40.682	-.419	.309
Valid (listwise)	60						

4.1.2. TALIS

Following the MPS, the TALIS questionnaire was administered. Table 2 displays the descriptive statistics for this administration.

Table 2.

Descriptive Statistics of the Scores of the Participants on the TALIS

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	
						Statistic	Std. error
Novice	60	53	101	73.85	12.842	.284	.309
Experienced	60	64	115	91.52	14.904	-.173	.309
Valid (listwise)	60						

As is clear, the mean and the standard deviation of the scores of the novice teachers stood at 73.85 and 12.84, respectively, while those of the experienced teachers were 91.52 and 14.90, respectively. Furthermore, the scores represented normalcy with the skewness ratio falling within ±1.96 (0.284 / 0.309 = 0.919 and -0.173 / 0.309 = -0.559). The reliability of the scores of the participants in this administration was 0.88.

4.2. Testing the Null Hypotheses

4.2.1. First Null Hypothesis

To verify the first null hypothesis raised based on the first research question, i.e. there is no significant relationship between novice teachers' perfectionism and PD, the Pearson Correlation Coefficient had to be run. Prior to this of course, the assumptions for running this parametric test had to be checked, i.e. linearity, normality, and homoscedasticity of the two distributions of scores.

Table 3.

Correlation of the Novice Teachers' Scores on the MPS and TALIS

	Novice – MPS	Novice – TALIS
Novice – MPS		
Pearson Correlation	1	.385**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.002
N	60	60

Novice – TALIS		
Pearson Correlation	.385**	1
Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.
N	60	60

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

As demonstrated in Table 3, the correlation came out to be significant at the 0.01 level (r = 0.385, p = 0.002< 0.05) while R^2 (or common variance) which is the effect size for correlation came out to be 0.148. This is a small effect size (Cohen, 1992; Larson-Hall, 2010). As a result, the researchers were able to reject the first null hypothesis. In other words, *there is a significant relationship between novice teachers' perfectionism and PD*.

4.2.2. Second Null Hypothesis

To test the second null hypothesis, i.e. there is no significant relationship between experienced teachers' perfectionism and PD, again the Pearson Correlation Coefficient had to be run.

Table 4.

Correlation of the Experienced Teachers' Scores on the MPS and TALIS

	Experienced – MPS	Experienced – TALIS
Experienced – MPS		
Pearson Correlation	1	.454**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
N	60	60
Experienced – TALIS		
Pearson Correlation	.454**	1
Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
N	60	60

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

As displayed in Table 4, the correlation came out to be significant at the 0.01 level (r = 0.454, p = 0.0001< 0.05). R^2 was 0.206. This is a moderate effect size (Cohen, 1992; Larson-Hall, 2010). As a result, the researchers were able to reject the second null hypothesis. In other words, *there is a significant relationship between experienced teachers' perfectionism and PD*.

4.2.3. Third Null Hypothesis

To verify the third null hypothesis, i.e. novice teachers' perfectionism was a significant predictor of their PD, a linear regression was run (Table 5).

Table 5.

Variables of the Regression Model 2[a]

Model	Variables entered	Variables removed	Method
1	Novice – MPS[b]	---	Enter

a. Dependent variable: PD

b. All requested variables entered

Table 6 reports the results of the ANOVA ($F_{1,58} = 10.06$, $p = 0.002 < 0.05$) which proved significant.

Table 6.

Regression Output: ANOVA[a] Table

Model		Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
	Regression	1439.23	1	1439.23	10.06	.002[b]
1	Residual	8290.41	58	142.93		
	Total	9729.65	59			

a. Dependent variable: PD

b. Predictors: (constant), Novice – MPS

Table 7 shows the standardized beta coefficient (B = 0.38, $t = 3.17$, $p = 0.002 < 0.05$) revealing that the model was significant; in other words, novice teachers' perfectionism could predict significantly their PD.

Table 7.

Regression Output: Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Beta			
1	(Constant)	48.55	8.12		5.97	.000
	Novice –	.13	.04	.38	3.17	.002

MPS	

a. Dependent variable: Novice – PD

Although the normality of the distributions was checked for correlation in the previous sections, the residuals table (Table 8) also verified the absence of outstanding outliers as the Cook's distance values did not exceed 1 and Mahalanobis distance values did not exceed 15.

Table 8.

Regression Output: Residuals Statistics[a]

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	64.66	84.65	73.85	4.939	60
Std. Predicted Value	-1.861	2.186	.000	1.000	60
Standard Error of Predicted Value	1.547	3.737	2.094	.623	60
Adjusted Predicted Value	65.04	86.23	73.85	4.942	60
Residual	-20.542	21.043	.000	11.854	60
Std. Residual	-1.718	1.760	.000	.991	60
Stud. Residual	-1.733	1.792	.000	1.007	60
Deleted Residual	-20.892	21.802	.004	12.241	60
Stud. Deleted Residual	-1.764	1.827	.000	1.016	60
Mahalanobis Distance	.004	4.780	.983	1.265	60
Cook's Distance	.000	.106	.016	.022	60
Centered Leverage Value	.000	.081	.017	.021	60

a. Dependent Variable: Novice – PD

Hence, the third null hypothesis of the study was also rejected. In other words, novice teachers' perfectionism could predict significantly their PD.

4.2.4. Fourth Null Hypothesis

To test the fourth null hypothesis, i.e. experienced teachers' perfectionism was a significant predictor of their PD, a linear regression was run (Table 9).

Table 9.

Variables of the Regression Model 2[a]

Model	Variables entered	Variables removed	Method
1	Experienced – MPS[b]	---	Enter

a. Dependent variable: PD

b. All requested variables entered

Table 10 reports the results of the ANOVA ($F_{1,58} = 529.10$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$) which proved significant.

Table 10.

Regression Output: ANOVA[a] Table

Model		Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
	Regression	2700.53	1	2700.53	15.05	.000[b]
1	Residual	10404.44	58	179.38		
	Total	13104.98	59			

a. Dependent variable: Experienced – PD

b. Predictors: (constant), Experienced – MPS

Table 11 portrays the standardized beta coefficient (B = 0.454, $t = 3.88$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$) revealing that experienced teachers' perfectionism could predict significantly their PD.

Table 11.

Regression Output: Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Beta			
	(Constant)	58.189	8.762		6.641	.000
1	Experienced – MPS	.166	.043	.454	3.880	.000

a. Dependent variable: Experienced – PD

Although normality of the distributions was checked for correlation in the previous sections, the residuals table (Table 12) also verified the absence of outstanding outliers as the Cook's distance values did not exceed 1 and Mahalanobis distance values did not exceed 15.

Table 12.

Regression Output: Residuals Statistics[a]

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Predicted Value	78.15	103.92	91.52	6.765	60
Std. Predicted Value	-1.976	1.834	.000	1.000	60
Standard Error of Predicted Value	1.732	3.856	2.371	.604	60
Adjusted Predicted Value	76.98	103.12	91.55	6.677	60
Residual	-22.271	27.707	.000	13.280	60
Std. Residual	-1.663	2.069	.000	.991	60
Stud. Residual	-1.687	2.093	-.001	1.008	60
Deleted Residual	-22.934	28.368	-.032	13.716	60
Stud. Deleted Residual	-1.715	2.158	-.001	1.015	60
Mahalanobis Distance	.003	3.906	.983	1.070	60
Cook's Distance	.000	.054	.016	.016	60
Centered Leverage Value	.000	.066	.017	.018	60

a. Dependent Variable: Experienced – PD

Hence, the fourth null hypothesis of the study was also rejected. In other words, experienced teachers' perfectionism could predict significantly their PD.

5. Discussion

The results of this study revealed that both novice and experienced EFL teachers' perfectionism is a significant predictor of their PD. Interestingly, a teacher's years of work and experience does not have a role in the above equation. One possible justification for the findings of the present study might be the fact that "perfectionism can help one become a competent and able person" (Hamachek, 1978, p. 33). Accordingly, perfectionism can be regarded as one of the main objectives of teachers' PD since the latter has been defined as

"a process by which teachers acquire and develop critically the knowledge, skills, and emotional intelligence essential to good professional thinking, planning, and practice with children, young people, and colleagues throughout each phase of their teaching lives" (Day, 1999, p. 27).

Furthermore, as pointed out by Stoeber and Rennert (2008), individuals' perfectionistic strivings could help them to vigorously pass though the challenges of their PD and as Stoeber, Uphill, and Hotham (2009) maintained, there was an association between positive perfectionism or striving and outcome and that individuals with a high level of perfectionism had better performance in general.

Another possible explanation for the findings of the present study might be the fact that adaptive perfectionism is an individual's positive attitude based on the high goals set for themselves, which engage in problems and uses healthy ways of distractions (Change, 2006). The individual who reaches his/her goal with high levels of self-efficacy and low levels of anxiety is desirable. Moreover, from a psychological point of view, PD reduces individuals' burnout and anxiety by increasing their sense of career belonging and improving staff's morale (Walling & Lewis, 2000), all of which are the fruits of striving or positive perfectionism.

Likewise, as pointed out by Parker and Adkins (1995), an individual's attempts at perfection are in line with self-actualization. PD can be seen as an aspect that leads to self-actualization since it is described as a continuing process of a teacher who is learning both as an individual and as a member of an academic society.

6. Conclusion

Based on the findings of this research, perfectionism significantly interacts with PD among novice and experienced EFL teachers. There are numerous tools available for EFL teachers to improve their PD; however, to be more knowledgeable, EFL teachers are encouraged to study the features of perfectionism with different dimensions (i.e. negative/positive, adaptive/maladaptive) and also the techniques available for promoting their PD with different levels of perfectionism. Moreover, both novice and experienced EFL teachers are recommended to improve their striving and positive perfectionism by taking part in different available PD activities and programs.

The findings of this study which underline the congruence of EFL teachers' perfectionism and PD further highlight the notion underlying the post method conceptualization, i.e. "Teachers are one of the most influential elements for the success of any educational system as they can construct learning environments that promote students' progress" (Author). This is the case as teachers have the potential to develop a strong sense of personal competence. To this end, investments in teacher education/empowerment programs which enable teachers to enhance their necessary features (such as perfectionism and PD) need to be continuously consolidated and facilitated as an inevitable prerequisite to improving the quality of ELT programs.

In light of the findings of the present study, teacher education institutions and practitioners are recommended to pay great consideration to both novice and experienced EFL teachers' perfectionism and PD and also provide different research-based programs and activities to help them update their own pedagogical knowledge and skills that might, therefore, bring about better language learning by their students.

With respect to the findings of this research, it may be imperative to consider incorporating techniques of enhancing perfectionism and PD in the curriculum of teacher training courses and also in-service programs. Accordingly, a thorough revisiting of the above curriculum would be part of the agenda in order to develop a syllabus which encourages and boosts the two constructs..

Further studies can be conducted in line with this study to learn more about the relationship between PD and perfectionism. To begin with, the present research included EFL teachers from public schools and private language schools only. Consequently, further research is deemed essential to be done on EFL university teachers and pinpoint whether such studies possibly yield similar results. Secondly, the researchers did not have the luxury of random sampling of the participants to guarantee generalizability of the findings; hence, other studies employing such sampling are recommended.

In addition, the participants in this group comprised a diverse age range of 20-50 years. To this end, other studies can focus on teachers within less diverse age groups to examine the relationship between novice and experienced EFL teachers' perfectionism and PD.

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