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**Research Paper**

# Effects of Collaborative and Prescriptive Models of Observation on Iranian Novice *vs.* Experienced EFL Teachers' Perception of their Self-Efficacy

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**Abstract**
This study intended to compare the effects of prescriptive and collaborative models of observation on EFL teachers' perception of their self-efficacy. From among 80 participants, 40 teachers, including 20 novice and 20 experienced teachers, were randomly assigned to the collaborative observation group (experimental group) and another group of 40 teachers, which comprised of 20 novice and 20 experienced teachers, were randomly assigned to the prescriptive observation group (control group). A sequential explanatory design was employed so that both quantitative and qualitative data collection/analysis procedures could be employed. The quantitative data were collected through The Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale (OSTES) (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001), and the qualitative data were elicited through semi-structured interviews. The results of both quantitative and qualitative data revealed (i) the significant difference between prescriptive and collaborative observation in terms of teachers' perception of their self-efficacy, and that (ii) in the collaborative observation group, there was a significant difference between novice and experienced teachers' perception of their self-efficacy. The study has implications for both teachers and teacher educators, suggesting that collaborative observation could enhance EFL teacher development.

**Keywords**: *Self-efficacy, Collaborative observation, Prescriptive observation, Novice teacher, Experienced teacher*

**تأثیر مدلهای مشارکتی و تجویزی مشاهده کلاس بر درک معلّمان با تجربه و کم تجربه ایرانی از کارآمدی خود**
مطالعه حاضر با هدف مقایسه تأثیر مدلهای تجویزی و مشارکتی مشاهده کلاس بر درک معلّمان از کارآمدی خود انجام شده است. از بین 80 شرکت کننده، 40 معلم، از جمله 20 معلم کم تجربه و 20 معلم با تجربه، به طور تصادفی در گروه مشاهده مشارکتی (گروه تجربی) و یک گروه 40 نفره دیگر، که شامل 20 معلم کم تجربه و 20 معلم باتجربه بود، به طور تصادفی به گروه مشاهده تجویزی (گروه شاهد) تقسیم شدند. یک طرح توضیحی متوالی به کار گرفته شد تا از روشهای جمع آوری/تجزیه و تحلیل داده های کمی و کیفی استفاده شود. داده های کمی از طریق پرسشنامه کارآمدی معلّمان ایالت اوهایو (OSTES)، جمع آوری شد و داده های کیفی از طریق مصاحبه های نیمه ساختاریافته استخراج شد. نتایج هر دو داده کمی و کیفی نشان داد (1) تفاوت معنا داری بین مشاهده تجویزی و مشارکتی از نظر درک معلمان از کارآمدی خود، وجود داشت، و (2) در گروه مشاهده مشارکتی، تفاوت معنا داری بین درک معلّمان کم تجربه و مجرّب از کارآمدی خود، وجود داشت. این مطالعه برای معلمان و مدرسین تربیت معلم نکاتی در بر دارد و نشان می دهد که مشاهده مشارکتی کلاس، می تواند سطح دانش معلمان را افزایش دهد.

## Introduction

Teaching has usually been considered an isolated profession with little opportunity for collaboration (Pollara, 2012). Teachers often teach in closed-door classrooms oblivious of the massive amount of knowledge and experience they could get if they shared their teaching methods and strategies with the adjacent teacher (Martinez, 2011). The important matter, which has always been taken for granted, is the valuable resource teachers can be as they all possess expertise in strategies and methodologies that can be a benefit to others (Borg, 2003). However, recently a growing number of researches support the splendid role teachers can play in this procedure, giving voice to teachers' concerns (Akbari, Ghafarsamar & Tajik, 2010; Zaare, 2013).

Research on teacher education has differentiated 'teacher training' from 'teacher development' (Farrell, 2016). While the former assumes teachers as passive recipients of knowledge that can be trained for an immediate act of teaching, the latter considers them as active decision-makers who can be educated to reach a much better understanding of themselves as teachers (Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Jiang, 2017; Zhang, 2017; Zhang & Yang, 2017). A few decades ago, it was a common practice that senior teachers observed novice teachers and prescribed the featured of an ideal teacher (Chang-Kredl & Kingsley, 2014). However, the new trend has had some researchers come up with different models of coaching through which two teachers work together and develop materials, plan instruction and watch one another teaching to assess the outcome (Akbari, Behzadpoor & Dadvand, 2010).

This new trend of collaborative observation has proven to be reciprocally beneficial for both teachers, and the merit of this model over the previous traditional or prescriptive model of observation lies in its interactional nature (Martinez, 2011). While the prescriptive model is intimidating, with not much interaction and reflection, and it does not let novice teachers defy the supervisors' authority, the collaborative observation model gives them the chance to be individuals with their independent beliefs, experience, and values (Farrell, 2007; Freeman & Johnson, 1998). In collaborative observation, unlike prescriptive observation, the aim is learning and improving rather than evaluating and prescribing (Farrell, 2016). As Donnelly (2007) stated collaboration between peers can be more meaningful when the two parties have different perspectives about teaching so that they can share different strategies for dealing with problems. Nevertheless, when the notion of observation and its different models are concerned, we are skeptical whether they will be equally beneficial for both novice and experienced teachers. The constructive nature of collaborative observation triggers less stressful and more energizing professional exchange among teachers, and will develop teachers' professional skills (Motalebzadeh, Hosseinnia, & Domskey, 2017). The eventual upshot of collaborative observation is the development of teachers' self-efficacy (Choi & Lee, 2016).

Teachers' self-efficacy is defined as teachers' beliefs in their abilities to deal with different issues (Bandura, 1986). Though Rotter (1966) introduced the notion of self-efficacy in the literature, during the last twenty years, it has achieved a great popularity. It gains its popularity from the studies which confirm that there is a highly positive relationship between teacher self-efficacy and instructional skills (Babaei & Abednia, 2016; Choi & Lee, 2016; Mousavi, 2014; Wyatt, 2016).

Since the ultimate goal of any educational setting is to enable teachers to facilitate learning for their students, and as efficacious teachers are required for learning to be materialized, the present study aimed at examining what will happen to EFL teachers' self-efficacy when novice and experienced teachers make observations to learn rather than being observed. More precisely

stated, the research questions investigated (i) if there was a significant difference between prescriptive and collaborative observation groups in terms of Iranian EFL teachers' perception of their self-efficacy, and (ii) if there was a significant difference between novice and experienced Iranian EFL teachers in the collaborative observation group in terms of their perception of self-efficacy.

## Literature Review

Teachers have different personalities involved in the learning/teaching process; they are given the chance to be individuals with their independent beliefs, experience, and values (Farrell, 2007; Freeman & Johnson, 1998). This independent identity will be of extreme value when teacher education is considered (Kerry & Mayers, 1995). The fact that has frequently been noticed is that in many cases students' academic success is, to a large extent, related to teachers' personal traits. Self-efficacy is considered as major trait for successful teacher, and collaborative observation of peers is regarded as a means for enhancing and developing this trait (Coburn, 2003).

### Prescriptive versus Collaborative Observation

Prescriptive observation may be used to determine performance related to pay, promotion, or to investigate 'under-performance'. In this case, the opportunity to learn will be reduced, and the social relationship of power and authority will clearly have impact on the interaction (Gebhard, 1990). Here, the observer occupies the role of the expert whose comments must be accepted by the observees, even if they do not believe in them (Gosling, 2000). Traditionally, observation was merely aimed at making a judgement about the person observed. In this case, the notion of power interfered, and then the differences in power and status would result in a biased judgement. However, if the purpose of observing teaching is to promote learning about teaching, then we must remember that 'learning' cannot be abstracted from the social relations within which it occurs (Webb, 1996).

In contrast to prescriptive observation, in collaborative observation, peers work as a team, discuss and share their knowledge, upgrade their knowledge (Honigsfeld & Dove, 2010). In collaborative observation, one teacher observes another teacher. In fact, the observer is expected to provide constructive feedback, and the observed teacher is prepared to be the recipient of the suggestion (Hammersley-Fletcher & Orsmond, 2005). Collaborative observation provides chances for teachers to reflect, think critically, and gain insight in to their practice (Farrell, 2016).

### Self-efficacy

The origin of self-efficacy can be traced back to Rotter's (1966) appealing idea that some teachers got overwhelmed by the problems imposed by their students and believed that the reinforcement for their practice is out of their control, while some other teachers considered the reinforcement of their practice within their control and assumed that they could control and motivate even the most demotivated and difficult students. According to teachers' expression of their beliefs, two kinds of efficacy were introduced into literature: general teaching efficacy (GTE) and personal teaching efficacy (PTE) (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). General teaching efficacy (GTE) refers to teachers' assumption that environmental factors overwhelm any power that teachers can exert in schools, and some external factors have a very real impact on a his/her motivation and performance in school (Ashton, Olejnik, Crocker, & Mc Auliffe, 1982). On the other hand, some other teachers' beliefs indicate confidence in their abilities as teachers to overcome factors that could make learning difficult for a student. These teachers may well have experienced past success in boosting students' achievement. This type of efficacy has been

labeled personal teaching efficacy (PTE) (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001; Wolters & Dougherty, 2007).

Later on, Bandura (1977) regarded teacher efficacy as a type of self-efficacy – that is a cognitive process in which people construct beliefs about their capacity to perform at a given level of attainment. Accordingly, self-efficacy is defined as "beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments" (p. 3). Self-efficacy is a future-oriented belief about the level of competence a person expects he or she will display in a given situation (Bandura, 1996). Self-efficacy beliefs have impact on people's attempts for achieving their goals and persistence in the face of adversity, bouncing back from temporary setbacks, and exercising some control over events that affect their lives (Bandura, 1986, 1993, 1996, 1997).

One of the most important causes of some people's high self-efficacy is the education they have received, as it is presumed that teachers with high perception of self-efficacy are more likely to train students who are more successful and ambitious (Caprara, Barbaranelli, Borgogni & Steca, 2003; Schwarzer, Schmitz & Tang, 2000). They can very well encourage students to set high goals for themselves and persevere to achieve them.

There are four sources of self-efficacy beliefs, namely mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological and emotional states (Bandura, 1996, 1997). Mastery experiences, the perception that a performance has been successful, increase efficacy beliefs. Vicarious experiences are those in which the skill in question is modeled by someone else (Bandura, 1996). As long as the role model or the supervisor is praiseworthy, the person's efficacy will improve (Bandura, 1977). Social persuasion may involve the verbal positive feedback a person receives from an authority, supervisor, a colleague, media or someone in charge (Bandura, 1986). Physiological or emotional state refers to the physical presence of someone who may cause anxiety and lower the sense of efficacy (Bandura, 1996).

Bandura (1986) in his social cognitive theory proposes a different kind of competence known as 'outcome expectancy'. According to this theory, there is a distinction between human competence (*I can do the action*) and contingency (*The action will attain certain outcomes*). Though there are a lot of studies on self-efficacy there are very few studies on outcome expectancy. Skinner (1996) notes that studies rarely, if ever, assess both efficacy and response-outcome expectations, and that some high-achievers may display a great deal of skill and yet evaluate themselves negatively, because they have set personal standards that are very difficult to meet.

There have been different studies attempting to figure out what helps the development of self-efficacy in language teachers. In a study, Mousavi (2014) claimed that peer observation could bring teachers out of their isolated classrooms and involve them in a reciprocal visit to each other's classrooms and result in their development. Hendry, Bell, and Thomson (2013) noted the benefit observers could gain by observing peers even though they provided no feedback. Moradkhani, Raygan, and Moein (2017) depicted how EFL teachers' reflective practices can be regarded as an antecedent of their self-efficacy, and how lack of collegiality was the source of the lack of relationship. These findings support the previous work of Chacon (2005) that if teachers are not appropriately supported by their colleagues, their self-efficacy may suffer.

The present study departed from previous studies in the literature by comparing prescriptive and collaborative models of observation. Moreover, the role of experience in teachers' perception of their self-efficacy was examined. Additionally, while the bulk of the studies in this area have adopted either a qualitative or quantitative methodology, both qualitative

and quantitative data collection and analysis were employed so that this research reveals more reliable and dependable results.

## Method

### Design of the Study

This study aimed to investigate if prescriptive and collaborative observation had any impact on novice/experienced Iranian EFL teachers' perception of their self-efficacy. To achieve this goal, a sequential explanatory design, including quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis procedures, was used. The reason why this design was chosen lies in the fact that collecting precise quantitative data was not possible unless different methods of data collection were applied. The quantitative phase of the study is a causal-comparative one, involving the administration of The Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale (OSTES) (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). The qualitative phase included semi-structured interviews, which required novice and experienced teachers to reflect on and share their experiences with the researchers. The independent variable of the study was a categorical variable involving two levels (i.e. prescriptive and collaborative observation), and the dependent variable was teachers' perception of their self-efficacy with novice and experienced teachers as moderator variables.

### Participants

The study initiated by the participation of 80 (out of 100) Iranian male and female EFL teachers teaching in one of the largest institutes of Iran called Iran Language Institute (The ILI). The sampling procedure was convenience sampling in the first place. Then, for those who volunteered to participate in the study, purposive or criterion-based sampling was employed, according to which the researchers created a list of criteria essential to the study and sought out participants to match those criteria. These criteria included the participants' years of teaching experience and the level at which they were teaching (i.e. pre-intermediate to intermediate level). Since novice teachers were not allowed to teach at higher levels of the institute, these levels were agreed upon so that a comparison could be made between novice and experienced teachers.

According to Gatbonton (2008) and Rahimi & Zhang (2015), teachers with less than two years of experience were regarded as novice teachers, and those with more than five years of teaching experience were considered experienced. From among the 80 participants, 40 teachers, including 20 novice and 20 experienced teachers, were randomly assigned to the collaborative observation group (experimental group), and another group of 40 teachers, which comprised of 20 novice and 20 experienced teachers, were randomly assigned to the prescriptive observation group (control group).

### Instruments

#### Self-efficacy Scale

To measure EFL teacher's perception of their self-efficacy, The Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale (OSTES) (Appendix A), developed by Tschannen-Moran & Hoy (2001), was employed in this study. This scale is a 24-item questionnaire which questions three major factors: (i) efficacy for instructional strategies, (ii) efficacy for classroom management, and (iii) efficacy for student engagement, with the scores ranging between 24 and 120. The validity of the questionnaire has already been established by the originators of the questionnaire. The internal reliability of the questionnaire was also good, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.89, which was close to the reliability coefficient of .94 reported by Tschannen-Moran & Hoy (2001). The participants were required to fill in the questionnaire within 10 minutes.

**Interview**

After the participants in the collaborative observation group did the observations, individual semi-structured interviews (Appendix B) were conducted with 20 randomly-selected participants, including both novice and experienced teachers, in order to explore the mechanisms through which teachers' observation contributed to the development of the perception of their self-efficacy. The interview consisted of open-ended questions making it possible for the interviewees to freely explain various dimensions of their experience. Each teacher was interviewed for 10 minutes.

**Procedures**

Through the ILI telegram channel, more than 3000 ILI teachers were informed about the objectives of the study, and 180 teachers volunteered to participate. For practicality concerns, only 100 volunteers who lived in Tehran were initially selected. Eighty out of 100 participants satisfied the criteria set by the researchers for the selection of the final participants of the study. The volunteers agreed that their class would be open to their peer observers who were willing to observe their classes. One briefing session for each group and three online briefing sessions informed the teachers that the purpose of observations was just self-learning and not evaluation. The participants in the prescriptive and collaborative observation groups were initially asked to do the observations, with each participant doing four observations: novice teachers would observe two novice and two experienced teachers' classes, and experienced teachers would observe two novice and two experienced teachers' classes. The teachers were asked to just watch and try to focus on what they needed to learn. They were also asked not to give any kind of direct feedback to the observed teachers but just take notes of what they commonly did differently, reflect, and decide which kind of practice was more effective. In order for the researchers to be able to manage the observations, the teachers were required to have at least one and at most two sessions of observations in a week. The whole process of data collection was conducted by the researchers during a period of six months.

After the completion of the observations, the quantitative phase involved the administration of the OSTES (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001) to both groups. For the prescriptive observation group, there was a traditional method of observation in which both novice and experienced teachers observed novice and experienced teachers' classes and gave them some advice in a very short post-observation conference on how to improve their instructional practice. As for the qualitative phase, 20 novice and experienced teachers from the collaborative observation group were randomly selected to take part in a semi-structured interview. The data collected were analyzed by looking for words, phrases, or sentences that provided an understanding of teachers' perception of their self-efficacy.

## Results

**The Quantitative Phase**

In the quantitative phase of the study, The Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale (2001) was administered to both collaborative and prescriptive observation groups. The purpose was to figure out if the observations made by the teachers in the two groups could have any differential impact on their perception of self-efficacy. Moreover, the study aimed to investigate if the observation made by the collaborative (experimental) group had any differential impact on novice and experienced teachers' perception of self-efficacy.

**Comparison of Collaborative and Prescriptive Observation Groups**

The first research question examined if there was a significant difference between prescriptive and collaborative observation models in terms of Iranian EFL teachers' perception of their self-efficacy. As shown in Table 1, the mean score and SD of the Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale as well as those of its subscales were computed for both collaborative observation and prescriptive observation groups. Although the collaborative (experimental) group had higher means in terms of the means of the subscales and total scale of the self-efficacy questionnaire, inferential statistical analyses were conducted.

**Table 1**

*Descriptive Statistics of the OSTES for the Collaborative and Prescriptive Observation Groups*

| Group | Subscale | *N* | *M* | *SD* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Collaborative observation group | Instructional strategies | 40 | 34.50 | 2.89 |
| | Class management efficacy | 40 | 34.20 | 3.56 |
| | Student engagement efficacy | 40 | 31.30 | 2.65 |
| | Total | 40 | 100.00 | 7.76 |
| Prescriptive observation group | Instructional Strategies | 40 | 26.96 | 2.99 |
| | Class management efficacy | 40 | 26.66 | 3.83 |
| | Student engagement efficacy | 40 | 20.66 | 3.35 |
| | Total | 40 | 74.30 | 8.33 |

As the total mean score and subscales scores of the questionnaire were relevant to the same construct, each was considered as one variate, and then they were all included in one multivariate comparison to see which group has higher total scale means on the Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale (OSTES). In so doing, a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted. Three dependent variables (i.e. the 3 subscales of the questionnaire) and one independent variable (i.e. the type of observation group) were taken into consideration. As illustrated in Table 2, there is a statistically significant difference between the collaborative and prescriptive observation groups, $F$ (3, 76) = 62.01, $p$= .00; Wilk's Lambda = .23; partial eta squared = .76. Simply put, when all dependent variables are taken into account, the collaborative and prescriptive observation groups differ significantly in terms of the means of the total scale of the OSTES.

**Table 2**

*MANOVA for Comparing the Results of the Collaborative and Prescriptive Observation Groups on the OSTES*

| Effect | | Value | *F* | Hypothesis *df* | Error *df* | *Sig.* | Partial Eta Squared |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Group | Pillai's Trace | .76 | 62.01 | 3.00 | 76.00 | .00 | .76 |
| | Wilks' Lambda | .23 | 62.01 | 3.00 | 76.00 | .00 | .76 |
| | Hotelling's Trace | 3.32 | 62.01 | 3.00 | 76.00 | .00 | .76 |
| | Roy's Largest Root | 3.32 | 62.01 | 3.00 | 76.00 | .00 | .76 |

In order to check if each of the subscales has equal variances across the two groups, the Levene's test on the equality of groups' variances in terms of each dependent variable was conducted. As illustrated in Table 3, none of the values is significant ($p > .05$); hence meeting the assumption of equality of variances.

**Table 3**

*Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances for the Collaborative and Prescriptive Observation Groups on the Subscales of the OSTES*

| Subscale | *F* | *df1* | *df2* | *Sig.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Instructional strategies | .92 | 1 | 78 | .34 |
| Class management efficacy | .18 | 1 | 78 | .67 |
| Student engagement efficacy | 1.47 | 1 | 78 | .23 |

The results of the MANOVA test indicates a statistically significant difference between the total mean score of the collaborative and prescriptive observation groups. However, it could be investigated if the two groups differed on all of the subscales (dependent variables) or just some. Tests of between-subject effects in Table 4 show that the two groups are significantly different on all of the subscales of the OSTES ($p < .05$); hence supporting the MANOVA results. Therefore, it could be concluded that collaborative observation affects teachers' perception of their own self-efficacy more significantly compared to prescriptive observation.

**Table 4**

*Tests of Between-Subjects Effects for the Subscales of the OSTES in Collaborative and Prescriptive Observation Groups*

| Source | Dependent Variable | *df* | *F* | *Sig.* | Partial Eta Squared |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Group | Instructional strategies | 1 | 97.87 | .00 | .62 |
| | Class management efficacy | 1 | 62.06 | .00 | .51 |
| | Student engagement efficacy | 1 | 185.26 | .00 | .76 |

**Comparison of Novice and Experienced Teachers in the Collaborative Observation Group**

The second research question examined whether there was a significant difference between novice and experienced EFL teachers in the collaborative observation group in terms of their perception of self-efficacy. Table 5 shows the mean score and SD of the OSTES and its subscales for novice and experienced teachers in the collaborative observation group.

**Table 5**

*Descriptive Statistics of the OSTES for the Novice and Experienced Teachers in the Collaborative Observation Groups*

| Group | Subscale | *N* | *M* | *SD* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Experienced teachers | Instructional strategies | 40 | 29.40 | 6.28 |
| | Class management efficacy | 40 | 30.55 | 6.45 |
| | Student engagement efficacy | 40 | 25.05 | 7.06 |
| | Total | 40 | 85.00 | 18.97 |
| Novice teachers | Instructional Strategies | 40 | 32.3 | 3.25 |
| | Class management efficacy | 40 | 31.10 | 4.36 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Student engagement efficacy | 40 | 26.55 | 5.34 |
| | Total | 40 | 90.00 | 12.21 |

A MANOVA test was conducted to compare novice and experienced teachers in the collaborative observation groups on the three subscales of the OSTES. Three dependent variables (i.e. the 3 subscales of the questionnaire) and one independent variable (i.e. teachers' experience level) were taken into account. As illustrated in Table 6, there was a statistically significant difference between the two groups of teachers in terms of the means of the total scale of the OSTES, $F$ (3, 76) = 4.66, $p$= .00; Wilk's Lambda = .72; partial eta squared = .28.

**Table 6**

*MANOVA for Comparing the Results of the Novice and Experienced Teachers in the Collaborative Observation Groups on the OSTES*

| Effect | | Value | *F* | Hypothesis *df* | Error *df* | *Sig.* | Partial Eta Squared |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Experience | Pillai's Trace | .28 | 4.66 | 3.00 | 76.00 | .00 | .28 |
| | Wilks' Lambda | .72 | 4.66 | 3.00 | 76.00 | .00 | .28 |
| | Hotelling's Trace | .39 | 4.66 | 3.00 | 76.00 | .00 | .28 |
| | Roy's Largest Root | .39 | 4.66 | 3.00 | 76.00 | .00 | .28 |

In order to check if each of the subscales has equal variances across the two groups, the Levene's test was conducted. As shown in Table 7, the values for most subscales were significant ($p < .05$); hence not meeting the assumption of equality of variances. Therefore, to avoid Type I error, a stricter p value (i.e. .025 instead of .05) was considered for comparing the subscale mean scores in the tests of between-subjects effects (Table 8).

**Table 7**

*Levene's Test of Equality of Error Variances for Novice and Experienced Teachers on the Subscales of the OSTES*

| Subscale | *F* | *df1* | *df2* | *Sig.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Instructional strategies | 14.34 | 1 | 38 | .00 |
| Class management efficacy | 6.03 | 1 | 38 | .01 |
| Student engagement efficacy | 1.45 | 1 | 38 | .24 |

The results of the MANOVA test show a statistically significant difference between the total mean score of the novice and experienced observation groups (Table 6). However, it could be examined if the two groups differed on all of the subscales (dependent variables) or just some. Tests of between-subject effects in Table 8 indicate that the novice and experienced teachers in the collaborative observation model are not significantly different in terms of any of the self-efficacy subscales ($p > .025$).

**Table 8**

*Tests of Between-Subjects Effects for the Subscales of the OSTES in Novice and Experienced Observation Groups*

| Source | Dependent Variable | Df | F | Sig. | Partial Eta Squared |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Group | Instructional strategies | 1 | 3.47 | .07 | .08 |
| | Class management efficacy | 1 | .10 | .75 | .00 |
| | Student engagement efficacy | 1 | .57 | .45 | .01 |

## The Qualitative Phase: Teachers' Perception of Their Self-efficacy after Collaborative Observation

The experimental group were required to observe their peers' classes, and write a descriptive report of what they had seen and noticed in their peers' teaching process. At the end of the observations, 15 novice and experienced teachers in the collaborative observation group were asked to take part in semi-structured interviews to provide their perception of their own self-efficacy. Their responses were classified into four themes: (i) teachers' class management, (ii) teachers' efficacy in using new teaching techniques and strategies, (iii) teachers' efficacy in motivating and engaging students, and (iv) teachers' efficacy in applying innovation in teaching. Each theme included responses from both experienced and novice teachers.

### Teachers' Efficacy in Class Management

Class management has always been teachers' concern, no matter novice or veteran. Highly efficacious teachers result in high-achieving and well-behaved students (Raudenbush, Rowen, & Cheong, 1992; Ross, 1998). Collaborative observation could be a means toward achieving this goal.

After observing a colleague, Khosro and Ebi, as experienced teachers, appreciated simple changes in setting as useful techniques for having more efficient classes:

*"The teacher had gathered the students in the front half of the class due to the big size of the class so that he didn't have to talk loudly while presenting the lesson."*

*"In crowded classes, I am used to locating myself in the center of the class to have more control over the whole class. I justify my lack of mobility for the insufficient room to move. However, my peer changed the setting to open some space for himself to walk around and even sometimes to sit next to some students and check their performance. I figured out the importance of classroom layout."*

Novice teachers on the other hand had a lot more to say when it was about class management. Raziye and Javad expressed that, in their TTC courses, the only thing they had been taught was how to teach efficiently and in real classes they had felt so frustrated facing talkative students. Martin and Double (1998) elaborate on the significance of self-efficacy in behavior management by proposing that teachers' responses to misbehavior originates from their beliefs about their ability to deal with behavior, and also their beliefs about the reason of the misbehavior. Accordingly, Raziye and Javad had noticed how the observed teachers had faced a misbehavior without creating a crisis, while the effect was deep.

*"Her reaction to talkative students was just a serious look along with a smile, and surprisingly, it worked."*

*"Facing the late-comers, the teacher gave some sort of comments in a very low voice not to embarrass them but at the same time to show and remind them that punctuality mattered to him."*

Mandana and Reza had also noticed how high-efficacious teachers are cautious about the time of the class and make a better use of time. The following quotes show teachers' attention to all details of the classes.

*"My friend talked to her students while she was cleaning the board. That is even board-cleaning time was efficiently used."*

"*While students were on a group task, the teacher walked around the class both monitoring the task and checking the students' homework simultaneously."*

**Teachers' Efficacy in Using New Teaching Techniques and Strategies**

One of the major themes, which emerged from the interviews, was the improvement in the application of various teaching techniques and strategies.

Experienced teachers found peer observation helpful in inductive teaching and error correction strategies. The following are instances of what contribution observing peers has made.

*"I learnt how to start a warm up discussion, which can possibly lead to a perfect grammar presentation."*

"You *correct students and they keep making the same mistake. My friend showed me different strategies through which I could make a more emphatic correction, which had the students notice the error, like explaining about why that mistake is common among Iranian students."*

Some novice teachers maintained that experienced teachers with high level of efficacy are very efficient in helping low-achievers. Leila believed that her colleague had been very good at challenging students, even the smartest ones:

*"The teacher put forward many questions with intentional errors. Students would listen and find the mistake in each question. Some of these sentences were challenging even for the smartest ones."*

"One *of the advantages of visiting peers was observing the way some teachers could put theories into practice. In some classes, I could really see teachers' scaffolding. The way my peer teacher's mini-lessons helped students in their speaking task is not describable."*

**Teachers' Efficacy and Students' Engagement and Motivation**

A teacher who enjoys high efficacy can easily contribute to promote students' motivation and their sense of efficacy by enhancing their involvement in class activities and tasks (Gibson & Dembo, 1984).

All through the interviews, experienced teachers seemed so reluctant to admit that collaborative observations had made a better teacher out of them. Nevertheless, they could not deny that some of the observed strategies had triggered their reflection. Sarah and Mitra admitted that observing peers had made them reflect on their own practice:

*"In my classes, the evaluation time seems to be the dead part of the class because I call one student to the front of the class and ask her questions, hoping the others would listen, while they are mostly daydreaming or talking to others. However, Mahsa involved many students in peer correction. This was a challenge for most students."*

*"The teacher I observed was teaching a passage. While paraphrasing each paragraph, she related the text to students' real life and involved even the most demotivated ones by raising some thought-provoking questions."*

One of the major challenges of all teachers in most language classes is the presence of trouble-makers. The difference between teachers with high or low sense of efficacy lies in their attitude toward these students. While low-efficacious teachers blame the outside factors and do not assume responsibility toward them, teachers with high sense of efficacy persist, and instead of criticizing students' incorrect answer or behavior, they guide students (Gibson & Dembo, 1984). Esmat and Roxana, as two novice teachers, talk about their experience in this regard:

*"Reza used students' names in his examples, especially those who were not listening; this attracted their attention."*

*"In my discussion classes, I raised a question and some students participated in the discussion, and some others were usually passive. My friend, however, wrote the discussion questions on the board and gave them a few minutes to discuss them in pairs before checking the whole class. Now, that I try it in my own classes, I see how reticent students find the courage to take part."*

**Teachers' Efficacy in Applying Innovation in Teaching**

Guskey (1988) refers to high-efficacy teachers as those who are willing to introduce innovations in their teaching practice. Collaborative observation could help high-efficacy teachers to plan and deliver lessons in a more appealing and more innovative way than low-efficacy teachers.

High-efficacy teachers tend to apply didactic innovations in the classroom, encourage students' autonomy, reduce custodial control (Guskey, 1988), and keep students on tasks (Podell & soodak, 1993). Surprisingly, none of the experienced teachers provided an example of witnessing an innovative strategy in their peers' classes. In this regard, Sarah just expressed that:

*"Teachers' behaviors, tone of voice and even the way of looking at students vary greatly. Even within an individual teacher, reactions may change from time to time. Therefore, teaching is a job integrated with innovations that are mostly due to individual differences, and it is not learnable."*

Unlike experienced teachers, novice teachers dramatically noticed some innovative techniques. Roshan wondered how boring listening tasks could be so fin in another teacher's class so fun in her peer's class, while Maryam was impressed by her friends' grammar presentation.

*"I did not know how to use listening tasks to teach new structures. Afsaneh wrote the target structure on the board with a few blanks and had students fill in the blanks. It was both interesting and challenging."*

*"*Teaching *grammar, Mahsa made up an interesting story, which attracted all students' attention, and meanwhile, she presented a grammatical point. The students were so involved in the story that they hardly noticed they were being taught the grammatical point.*"

## Discussion

The present study examined and revealed that (i) there was a significant difference between the impact of prescriptive and collaborative observation models on teachers' perception of their self-efficacy, and that (ii) in the collaborative observation group, there was a significant difference between novice and experienced teachers' perception of their self-efficacy.

As for the quantitative phase, the findings of the first research question gleaned through the Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale (OSTES) showed that collaborative observation, compared to prescriptive observation, led to a significant change in teachers' perception of self-efficacy. The findings revealed that collaborative observation resulted in better perception of *self-efficacy for the application of instructional strategies*, which involves the use of a variety of assessment strategies, teachers' ability to impart language knowledge, and provision of alternative explanations and examples. The results are further proof on Borg's (2003) idea that collaborative observation helps teachers make better adjustments regarding lessons and level of students. Furthermore, the findings provide good evidence for how teachers establish their own values and beliefs regarding discipline and right behavior. The teachers expressed a great improvement in their *self-efficacy for class management*, that is, controlling disruptive behaviors in class and setting rules and having students follow the rules. By the end of the peer observation program, teachers reported to find themselves more capable of making their expectations clear, establishing routines, and keeping activities run smoothly. Nevertheless, teachers' *efficacy for students' engagement* did not improve as well as their efficacy for the application of instructional strategies and for class management. The findings also highlight that collaborative observation is highly effective so that teachers feel more capable to have students do their school work, to encourage students value learning, and to motivate them even when they are about to fail. Teachers were totally aware that they could become better teachers if they made a better understanding of themselves and their deep influence (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Overall, the findings confirmed that collaborative observation significantly improved the teachers' self-efficacy. These findings are consistent with the extensive literature on the effect of collaborative observation among peers, which helps teachers achieve new insights, and gain autonomy in their practice (Bowman & Cormick, 2000; Chacon, 2005; Goker, 2006; Mousavi, 2014). Interestingly enough, the difference between prescriptive and collaborative observation was evident in all subscales of the OSTES, confirming that observing peers improved teachers' use of i*nstructional strategies, classroom management*, and *student engagement*. The significant difference between the two groups suggests how wide the scope of the differences between the two models of observation could be.

Regarding the second research question, which addressed the impact of collaborative observation on experienced and novice teachers' perception of their self-efficacy, the results indicate that, though novice teachers' perception of self-efficacy had undergone more improvement, the difference was not that significant. This finding is in line with Bandura (1997). The sense of self-efficacy in experienced teachers is stable, and they are not willing to apply the knowledge or skills they learn in workshops or peer observation programs. Thus, to make sure that the findings of the quantitative phase were right, the qualitative phase was conducted to further supplement the quantitative data collected through the questionnaire.

Following the qualitative phase of the study, the results of the interviews confirmed many of the findings in the literature. Through collaborative observation, teachers improved their *self-efficacy in using techniques and strategies*, which could help them realize how frustrating problems were easily coped with in their colleagues' classes (Rotter, 1966). The teachers' ideas about collaborative observations suggest that students' failure, though mostly under the influence of outside factors, can be handled. Much like what Gibson and Dembo (1984) state, the overall results of the interviews indicated that teachers with high *self-efficacy for student engagement* tried to introduce innovative techniques into their classroom, keep students on tasks through fun activities, and help the ones about to fail, survive. Novice observers had very well noticed how doing some boring listening activities or learning some grammatical points could change to an interesting part of the class when taught by a skillful teacher who uses interesting and innovative techniques. Through collaborative observation, teachers found out that their *self-efficacy for class management* could easily be enhanced by a simple change in the setting of the classroom, which brought all students closer to the teacher and hindered trouble-makers from trouble-making activities in the classroom.

## Conclusions

As for the difference between novice and experienced teachers' perception of their self-efficacy, it seemed that in contrast to experienced teachers, novice teachers were more willing to embrace what peer observation had to offer them. They consistently expressed how impressed they were when they saw experienced teachers' mastery over classes and teaching materials. It seemed as if novice teachers had a 'malleable efficacy' (Bandura, 1993), and they needed more help through collaborative observation. The excerpts from the interviews also showed that novice teachers who were more efficacious tended to be more optimistic toward their future job and consequently more willing to get better and better at what they do. This could be due to the fact that novice teachers, who are at the beginning of the route, are more open to learn and enhance their self-efficacy. In sharp contrast, the experienced teachers' attitude, as evinced in the interviews, more or less suggested that they assumed they had already learnt what they needed to, and applying any new task and strategy was so difficult for them, since they were afraid of any kind of change. The finding about novice teachers reinforces what Burley et al. (1991), Gist and Mitchell (1992), and Hall et al. (1992) mention, and at the same time confirms Ohmart's (1992) and Pajares's (1992) claim that experienced teachers are resistant to change.

Regarding the limitations of the study, the first limitation could be the purposive sampling procedure employed in the study, which could more or less jeopardize the generalizability of the results. The second limitation of the study is related to the short time dedicated to observations, which could have more reliable outcome if it were done for a longer period. Thirdly, the number of themes emerging from the interviews was somehow limited due to the shortness of the remarks made by the participants in the study. The final limitation of the study is related to the interpretation of the results. As a major limitation of the study, whatever is stated regarding the impact of collaborative observation on teachers' perception of self-efficacy is relative, since there are no criteria to measure if their perceptions are true or not. Many low-efficacy teachers had this perception of themselves just because their standards were higher than others, though not actually because of their low self-efficacy.

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**Appendices**

**Appendix A:** The Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale (OSTES) (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001)

| | Nothing | Very little | Some influence | Quite a bit | A great deal |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. To what extent can you use a variety of assessment strategy? | | | | | |
| 2. To what extent can you provide an alternative explanation for example when students are confused? | | | | | |
| 3. To what extent can you craft good questions for your students? | | | | | |
| 4. How well can you implement alternative strategies in your classroom? | | | | | |
| 5. How well can you respond to difficult questions from your students? | | | | | |
| 6. How much can you do to adjust your lessons to the proper level for individual students? | | | | | |
| 7. To what extent can you gauge student comprehension of what you have taught? | | | | | |
| 8. How well can you provide appropriate challenges for very capable students? | | | | | |
| 9. How much can you do to control disruptive behavior in your classroom? | | | | | |
| 10. How much can you do to get children to follow classroom rules? | | | | | |
| 11. How much can you do to calm a student who is disruptive or noisy? | | | | | |
| 12. How well can you establish a classroom management system with each group of students? | | | | | |
| 13. How well can you keep a few problem students from running an entire lesson? | | | | | |
| 14. How well can you respond to defiant students? | | | | | |
| 15. To what extent can you make your expectations clear about a student behavior? | | | | | |
| 16. How well can you establish routines to keep activities running smoothly? | | | | | |
| 17. How much can you do to help your students value learning? | | | | | |
| 18. How much can you do to motivate students who show low interest in schoolwork? | | | | | |
| 19. How much can you assist families in helping their children do well in school? | | | | | |
| 20. How much can you do to improve the understanding of a student who is failing? | | | | | |
| 21. How much can you do to help your students think | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| critically? | | | | | |
| 22. How much can you do to foster students' creativity? | | | | | |
| 23. How much can you do to get students to believe they can do well in school work? | | | | | |
| 24. How much can you do to get through to the most difficult students? | | | | | |

**Appendix B: Interview Questions**

1. What were your initial thoughts and reactions to the idea of class observation?
2. Please, describe the experience of observing colleagues' classes.
3. What was going through your mind during the time the lesson was being taught?
4. Do you notice anything different after observing your colleagues?
5. Were your initial thoughts and reactions to the idea of observation different?
6. In what ways could collaborative observation be more beneficial?