In the Name of God

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An Examination of the Relationship between Teacher Efficacy and Classroom Management Styles: Differences between Novice and Experienced Teachers

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the degree of Master of Arts in English Language Teaching

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Hereby we are submitting a thesis written by.…………………………… entitled .".……………………………………………………………………" We have examined the final copy of this thesis for form and content, and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT).

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Post-graduate Council of Urmia University

Dedicated to

My mother

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Thesis Title:

An Examination of the Relationship between Teacher Efficacy and Classroom Management Styles Differences between Novice and Experienced Teachers

The present study aimed at investigating of the relationship between Iranian language teachers' efficacy and classroom management styles. In addition, the difference between novice and experienced teachers with regard to their management styles and teacher efficacy was examined. A total of 60 male and female university teachers participated in the present study. The Attitudes and Beliefs on Classroom Control Inventory (ABCC) (Martin, Yin, & Baldwin, 1998) was adopted to evaluate teachers' beliefs and perspectives towards classroom management practices. The Teacher Efficacy Scale (TES) (Woolfolk & Hoy, 1990) was utilized to collect quantitative data about instructors' level of general and personal self-efficacy. The soft copies of the questionnaires were administered to the teachers via emails. The results show that whereas the general teacher efficacy had an insignificant relationship with the management styles, the personal teacher efficacy had a significant relationship with instructional management, behavior management, and people management. There were also statistically significant differences between the subscales of management construct across the experience variable. Results also indicated differences between the novice and experienced teachers in their efficacy beliefs.

Key words: Teacher self-efficacy, classroom management, experience, novice, experienced

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER III: METHOD

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

Table of Abbreviation

Social Learning Theory (SLT)

Teacher self-efficacy (TSE)

General Teacher Efficacy (GTE)

Personal Teacher Efficacy (PTE)

Responsibility for Student Achievement (RSA)

Teacher Locus of Control (TLC)

Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale (OSTES)

Teachers' Efficacy Beliefs System-Self (TEBS-Self)

The Teacher Efficacy Scale (TES)

The Attitudes and Beliefs on Classroom Control Inventory (ABCC)

Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS)

English as a Foreign Language (EFL)

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1. Introduction

The issue of teacher quality has been considered as an imminent topic of concern for a long time for those in charge of ensuring the best for educational systems. One important attribute of effective teaching that can consistently measure teachers' future success in the classroom is teachers' beliefs in their abilities to affect student performance that has been recognized as a powerful and consistent predictor of behavior (Gibson & Dembo, 1984; Tschannen Moran, Woolfolk Hoy, & Hoy, 1998). In other words, if a teacher has credence in dealing with his/her classroom and performing purposeful lessons, s/he will be more likely to do just that. In light of this, educational institutions, in general and teacher education programs in particular, need to take into account the factors associated with enhanced levels of self-efficacy in order to produce the most competent, skilled and innovative teachers.

Recently, a considerable number of studies have been allocated to understanding the beliefs of teachers with the expectation of improving the conditions of teacher preparation and teaching performance. Studies correlate the effects of teacher self-efficacy on student outcome, teachers' competence and instructional methods, teachers' desire to try numerous materials and enthusiasm for teaching (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Ross, 1992; Woolfolk & Hoy, 1990). There has also been a growing interest in EFL context among local researchers who have contributed to the understanding of the role of self-efficacy in affecting teachers' behavior and students' outcome over the past few years (Akbari & Moradkhani, 2010; Tajeddin & Khodaverdi, 2010). Accordingly, instructional self-efficacy can influence the teacher's attempt, goals, and perseverance with learners (Ashton & Webb, 1986). Based on this approach, in order for learners to learn effectively, teachers need to have belief in their own capabilities to bring about appropriate results. If a teacher lacks instructional self-efficacy beliefs, the learners can be on the disadvantaged side. Since teachers with low levels of efficacy may not be able to plan or supply the teaching materials, their influence upon the learners' learning can become restricted (Henson, 2002). On the other side, teachers with acceptable levels of efficacy and motivation are more likely to lead to positive student learning and learner achievement (Slavin, 2006).

Higher teacher efficacy is closely related to teacher's assumption of responsibility for the classroom environment. Schunk (2012) believes that teachers who believe in their efficacy can

2

create a more positive environment, give support to learners' discussions, and address their needs. Accordingly, the teachers who are efficacious are also impressive in their work whose goal is to enhance learners' development and learning. This enhancement comes as a result of appropriate teaching processes, one of which is appropriate educational classroom management approach. Therefore, classroom management is a principal component of the teachers' responsibility since a teacher who is unable to manage the classroom properly cannot lead to effective teaching process. Teaching requires the teachers to invest time and effort and to employ suitable equipment and materials, with the purpose of gaining the desired changes in the learners' behavior based on their goals, abilities, and needs. These facets lead to the construction of a classroom environment that can result in successful teaching and accomplishing the educational goals needed.

Teachers' ability in using different approaches to manage classroom is highly dependent on their beliefs in their ability. This belief is what is known as self-efficacy and can play an important role in learners' academic success. In fact, teachers' sense of efficacy has been associated with several affirmative results related to learners' academic attainment (Anthony & Kritsonis, 2007), learner motivation (Nolen, Ward, Horn, Campbel, Mahna, & Childers, 2007), classroom management (Giallo & Little, 2003), autonomy for learners' learning (Darling-Hammond, Chung, & Frelow, 2002), and job satisfaction (Carara, Barbaranelli, Steca, &Malone, 2006). From a managerial perspective, teachers' self-efficacy is related to different aspects such as classroom composure, instructional strategies, levels of creativity and risk taking behavior, teachers' evaluative feedback, and their maintenance of learners' on-task time (Gibson & Dembo, 1984).

Moreover, teachers' efficacy perceptions are closely linked to their teaching actions and practice. Teachers of higher self-efficacy beliefs are better able to apply classroom management strategies than those who have lower degrees of efficacy (Goddard, Hoy, & Woolfolk, 2004). The management strategies that these teachers often use are more structured, pre-designed, and learner friendly (Anthony & Kritsonis, 2007). Hence, teachers with high efficacy are more eager to adore their learners' performance and are more capable of dealing with challenging learners who can lead to offensive environments.

Doyle (1980) argues that a calm condition in the classroom provides a more convenient environment for conducting teaching activities. This argument has been confirmed by the meta-analysis of the factors that can influence learning in general (Freiberg & Brophy, 1999). Many changes occurred in the educational environment in recent decades which in turn have made classroom management a substantial issue to be attended by both teachers and educational authorities.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The education process cannot be assumed to be restricted to helping learners learn new practices and information in the classroom, rather it should give them the opportunity to make better use of these practices and information in their real life activities (Gado, 2008). According to Hemdan (2006), teachers are of two main roles in the classroom: educational and non-educational or managerial. A close relationship exists between these two roles as the basic skills of classroom management and the ability to bring about educational goals and behavior changes in learners are essentially related. Many scholars believe that classroom management is important to teachers and needs to be given the required attention particularly by novice teachers (Yost & Mosca, 2002).

Despite avid interest in exploring self-efficacy beliefs of school teachers over the years, there have been few comparative studies (e.g., Abu-Tineh, Khasawneh, & Khalaileh, 2011) determining the relationship between self-efficacy beliefs of language teachers and their classroom management styles. Teachers' belief in their ability to do the job can determine their future success in managing the classroom (Abu-Tineh, Khasawneh, & Khalaileh, 2011). Studies show that self-efficacy beliefs can be strongly related to teacher behavior (Hoy, 2004). If the teachers have confidence about their ability of managing a classroom, they would be more likely to perform that. The present study is, therefore, an attempt to investigate the importance of classroom management and its relationship to general and specific teacher self-efficacy.

1.3. Significance of the Study

The present study is considered as an important area of research since teacher self-efficacy has been detected as an essential element in the growth and expansion of education all over the world

(Cheung, 2008). The issue of classroom management as an ability is basically important in the Iranian context regarding the fact that most of the problems faced by Iranian teachers can be directly related to classroom management. The problem of inflexibility in school management can lead to the lack of appropriate planning towards classroom management, in turn damaging the intended goals. With respect to the direct relation of classroom management with school management, along with the social system at large, teachers are reluctant to show interest in managerial issues. Regarding these issues, the present study was conducted in an attempt to evaluate the possible relation between teachers' management styles and their individual characteristic of efficacy by controlling their teaching experience. The significance of this study is related to the fact that the teacher who spends most of his/her time in the classroom acts as an educational head and needs to have different management strategies to teach more effectively. The importance of this field is also dependent on the reality of the embarrassing nature of classroom management for teachers and educational authorities. Therefore, the present research is an attempt to fill the gaps in the field of classroom management related to Iranian university teachers' self-efficacy perceptions from a specific and general perspective. In other words, both the specific and general self-efficacy beliefs of teachers are evaluated with regard to their management styles. It would also shed light on the differences between novice and experienced teachers with regard to their self-efficacy beliefs and management strategies, the results of which can benefit teachers and program developers. In addition, the findings of the current study can provide solutions to educational challenges and problems as well as impact teachers with low self-efficacy beliefs to be proliferous in their career.

1.4. The Research Objectives

The findings of the study can have significant implications and suggestions for different purposes including teacher training courses, teachers' motivations in classroom management, program developers, classroom physical structures, teaching equipment and technical support. The present study aims to achieve the following:

1. To identify if any association exists between the management styles and self-efficacy perceptions of Iranian university teachers including both general and specific efficacy beliefs.

2. To identify the differences between novice and more experienced teachers in terms of both their efficacy beliefs and management strategies.

3. To provide suggestions based on the findings of the study to develop and improve classroom management strategies, the curriculum and the education programs in Iran.

1.5. Research Questions

The study is an attempt to find answers to the following research questions:

1. Is there any significant relationship between types of self-efficacy (i.e., general and personal self-efficacy) and classroom management styles?

2. Is there any significant difference between novice and experienced teachers with regard to their classroom management styles?

3. Is there any significant difference between novice and experienced teachers with regard to their self-efficacy beliefs?

1.6. Statement of the Hypotheses

For this study, the following hypotheses are formulated:

H_01: There is not any significant relationship between types of self-efficacy (i.e., general and personal self-efficacy) and classroom management styles.

H_02: There is not any significant difference between novice and experienced teachers with regard to their classroom management styles.

H_03: There is not any significant difference between novice and experienced teachers with regard to their self-efficacy beliefs.

1.7. Definition of the Key Terms

Below are the key terms used throughout this study:

1.7.1. Self-efficacy

Self-efficacy is the belief in one's capabilities to initiate and maintain behaviors at designated levels and is said to function as determinants of people's feelings, thoughts, behaviors, and motivation (Bandura, 1989, 1997).

1.7.1.1. General Self-efficacy

General self-efficacy is related to situations where teachers are able to change learners' behaviors in terms of bringing about a change in their learning given the learners' ability in acquiring the knowledge offered by the teacher (Bandura, 1997).

1.7.1.2. Personal Self-efficacy

Personal self-efficacy, on the contrary, refers to teachers' own evaluations of their teaching skills. Research findings (Gibson & Dembo, 1984) demonstrate that the classroom management strategies that teachers choose to use in the classroom are influenced by their personal realizations of their teaching capabilities. Teachers with high senses of personal self-efficacy can be more likely to motivate the learners and encourage them to remain on-task during the classroom time.

1.7.2. Teaching Efficacy

Efficacy in teaching has been defined as teacher's belief about his/her capabilities to bring about positive effects on student's learning- even when the students are challenging (Tschannen-Moran &Woolfolk Hoy, 2001).

1.7.3. Classroom Management

Although the concept of classroom management can have different meanings and implications, it generally refers to the rules, regulations, tasks and measures supplied by the teacher in an attempt to achieve a positive and cooperative social context in the class, which assists the educational purposes. Classroom management is defined by Evertson and Weinstein (2006) as the steps that teachers follow to establish an environment that backs and eases both the academic and social learning. According to this definition, then, classroom management has two distinct aims. It both intends to produce and maintain an ordered environment to help learners get involved with meaningful academic learning and also to boost learners' social and individual development. It should be mentioned that three aspects of classroom management including instructional management, people management, and behavior management would be investigated in the present study.

1.8.   Limitations and Delimitations

There are certain limitations in the present study that should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, the number of participants used for this study was 60 English language teachers who were selected for the study based on the use of a convenience sampling. Due to limited number of participants and the type of their involvement in this study, the findings might restrict

its generalizability. Second, this study merely investigated the relationship between self efficacy beliefs of language teachers with management styles. However, the findings might not be generalizable to teachers of other disciplines.

The study is delimited to the use of questionnaires as methods of data collection which are believed to be relevant in the study. In addition, three aspects of classroom management including instructional management, people management, and behavior management would be investigated.