

**Teachers' Perception of Classroom Management Practice: The Case of English Language Teachers in Iran**

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**Abstract**

This study set out to examine the classroom management beliefs of Iranian EFL teachers working in language institutes in Ilam, Iran. Teachers' perceptions were investigated with respect to a number of variables including teachers' gender, age, teaching experience, educational degree, and the level they taught to see how these variables lead to differences in teachers' perception. To this end, 122 EFL teachers (69 females and 53 males) participated in the study. The Attitudes and Beliefs on Classroom Control (ABCC) Inventory (Martin, Yin, & Baldwin, 1998) were adopted as the instrument in this study. Results revealed significant differences in teachers' beliefs about classroom management with respect to the variables under study. They tended to believe in imposing strong control when managing their classrooms and males showed more and females showed less interventionist attitudes when managing their instruction. Finally, these findings would contribute to the body of classroom management literature by adding the perspective from an Iranian context.

**Keywords:** classroom management, teacher perceptions, gender differences, ELT in Iran

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**1. Introduction**

Educators at all levels acknowledge that effective classroom management significantly contributes to students' learning and development (Ormrod, 2003; Vitto, 2003). However, it continues to be one of the primary areas of concern for teachers in the classroom context. In the classroom atmosphere which is a combination of interactions and relations between teacher and students, in order to achieve instructional goals teachers should be able to create and maintain an effective learning environment. Due to students' disruptive behavior, it is difficult to regain the control of the class and in some cases it requires more time than academic learning. According to Turner (1993) for teachers effective classroom management depends, firstly, on resorting order in the class and controlling students' behavior and, secondly, on the academic issues. Teachers who believe in the effect of providing a productive learning environment by effectively managing the classroom are more successful than those who focus on discipline and exercising power (Campbell, Evans, & Neill, 1991). According to Fehring (1999) teachers' classroom management practice revolves around their beliefs; in other words, their personal belief systems can determine the choice of classroom management approaches.

In order to understand teachers' classroom management beliefs and practices, understanding different conceptual views of classroom management is essential (Youssef, 2003). Classroom management has been defined in various ways and a considerable number of researchers have stated their own viewpoints regarding the concept of classroom management. Randolph and Evertson (1994), for example, proposed orchestration as the more appropriate definition. According to this view, teachers are expected to orchestrate the classroom where proactive and reactive strategies are included, the students' agenda and needs are catered for, less paperwork is required and more reflection and discussion take place. Wilson and Fehring (1995) introduced a very different use of the concept when referring to classroom management as managing "day-to-day and longer term collection of useful assessment data" (p. 109). Brophy (1988) defined classroom management as "the actions taken to create and maintain a learning environment conducive to attainment of the goals of instruction, arranging the physical environment of the classroom, establishing rules and procedures, maintaining attention to lessons and engagement in academic activities" (p. 2).

The practice of this important construct is said to be influenced by a large number of variables reported in literature among which teachers' beliefs regarding the construct stands quite out. The present study,

therefore, is an attempt to explore Iranian EFL teachers' classroom management perception in relation to a number of variables.

## **2. Literature Review**

### *2.1 Theoretical framework*

The theoretical framework underlying this study is based on the Martin and Baldwin's (1993) definition of classroom management. According to their definition classroom management is a multi-faceted construct which includes three broad dimensions, People management, Instructional management, and Behavior management. The first one, people management, includes teachers' efforts to perceive their students as persons in order to establish teacher-student relations. Secondly, instructional management refers to those actions taken by teachers to establish daily procedures, monitor students' learning, and allocate materials. Finally, the behavior management dimension pertains to what teachers do to set standards for behavior and prevent disruptive behavior.

Following this line of argument wherein teachers' classroom management approaches would be different as a function of their beliefs, Glickman and Tamashiro (1980) and Wolfgang (1995) conceptualized a framework classifying teachers' beliefs regarding classroom management on a continuum of control ranging from interventionist to non-interventionist with interactionist in between. These approaches reflect the extent to which teachers control students' behavior; the interventionist approach indicates high teacher control, the non-interventionist approach is an indicator of low levels of control, and the interactionist approach reflects moderate levels of control (Gencer & Cakiroglu, 2007; Yilmaz & Cavas, 2008).

At one extreme, non-interventionists allow their students to be actively involved and co-operate in classroom activities because according to Martin and Baldwin (1992) non-interventionists "presuppose the child has an inner drive that needs to find its expression in the real world" (p.5). At the opposite extreme, interventionist teachers believe that it is teachers' rewards and punishments that make students behave appropriately (Ritter & Hancock, 2007); they emphasize "what the outer environment does to the human organism to cause it to develop in its particular way" (Martin & Yin, 1997, p.5). In the middle, the interactionist suggests that students learn to behave appropriately through free interaction with people and outside world. Thus they focus on "what the individual does to modify the external environment, as well as what the environment does to shape the individual" (Martin & Yin, 1997, p.5). Martin and Baldwin (1993) reported that interactionalistic

classroom management style is the best way to build stimulating learning environment.

### *2.2 Educational and Social Context*

In Iran the most comprehensive institution responsible for the education and training of about one quarter of Iran's population is the Ministry of Education (ME). Within this educational system English as a foreign language is formally taught to Iranian students three hours a week from the first year of junior high school for three years and for four years during high school and pre-university level. According to the content of the current EFL textbooks and Ministry of Education guidelines, it seems that EFL teaching in Iran is based on the students' future need to read and sometimes translate English books, journals, and magazines and teaching methods are a combination of grammar-translation and audiolingual methods in most schools (Eslami-Rasekh & Valizadeh, 2004). This means that formal English teaching in school in Iran is not so efficient to equip students with communicative and functional abilities to be successful in the world that awaits them.

On the other hand, compared to EFL learners in other contexts, Iranian EFL students do not have much exposure to English outside the classroom. Very few English programs are broadcast on TV or radio. Nevertheless, due to the necessity of learning English there has been a rapid growth of public interest in going to private language institutes in Iran which can provide opportunities for English language learning. It is expected that EFL teachers in language institutes use English with functional ability in communicating across the language skills to develop the communicative competence of students to enable them communicate the language effectively.

However, in Iran, EFL teachers are mainly hired through two different channels, state-sponsored TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) programs and free hiring of B.A. or M.A. holders of English translation or English literature majors who may have no special training as to teaching methodologies in general and classroom management skills in particular. In addition, the number of language institutes is rapidly increasing not only because of the necessity to learn English but due to the fact that B.A. and M.A. graduates mostly have no option for job other than establishing language institutes with low quality which in turn can lead to ineffective teaching and unsuccessful learning. Having this in mind, it worth to explore where is the place of classroom management among Iranian EFL teachers and their view points as to this important construct.

### *2.3 Related Studies*

In the educational contexts, teachers' belief as to what classroom management means, how it functions, and what it aims at can influence classroom practices and students' achievement. In the past two decades Attitudes and Beliefs on Classroom Control (ABCC) Inventory (Martin et al., 1998), developed to explore teachers' classroom management perceptions, has been extensively used to explore teachers perceptions considering various factors such as gender, (Yavuz, 2009; Martin & Yin, 1997; Martin, Yin, & Baldwin, 1997; Savran & Cakiroglu, 2004) experience levels, (Ritter, 2003; Yavuz, 2009; Martin & Baldwin, 1994; Martin & Shoho, 2000; Ritter & Hancock, 2007; Martin & Baldwin, 1992, 1993) age, (Martin & Shoho, 2000) efficacy beliefs, (Gencer & Cakiroglu, 2007; Yilmaz & Cavas, 2007; Celep, 2000; Bandura, 1997) and many other variables like setting, ethnicity, educational background, training, and characteristics of the students which are just a few of the factors impacting classroom management beliefs and attitudes.

In a series of studies Martin with other researchers investigated teachers' perception of classroom management and came to interesting differing results. As one of her earliest works in this domain, Martin and Baldwin (1994) investigated the impact of teachers' experience levels on classroom management practices. They found that novice teachers were significantly more interventionist than were experienced teachers. However, a few years later in a similar study, Martin and Shoho (2000) found that experienced teachers were significantly more interventionist than were novice teachers regarding people and behavior management, but not regarding instructional management.

Martin and Yin (1997) investigated differences between the classroom management beliefs of male and female educators via the Attitudes and Beliefs on Classroom Control (ABCC) inventory and the 16 personality factor (PF) questionnaire. Results indicated that male teachers indicated interventionist style on two of the three ABCC subscales and significantly higher on dominance factor on the 16 PF. However, in a separate investigation, Martin et al. (1997) found no gender differences related to any of the classroom management orientations.

With respect to other factors, they found that teachers in alternative certification programs were more interventionist than traditionally certified teachers (Martin & Shoho, 1999); urban teachers showed interventionist orientation than rural teacher (Martin & Yin, 1999).

Similarly, Savran and Cakiroglu (2004) utilized ABCC inventory to explore pre-service science teachers' perceptions of classroom management with regard to gender and grade level. Results revealed that pre-service science teachers showed non-interventionist orientations on the People Management subscale, whereas they had interventionist orientations on the Instructional subscale and no significant difference was revealed between pre-service science teachers' perceptions of classroom management beliefs on the two subscales of the ABCC Inventory regarding gender and grade level.

Ritter and Hancock (2007) discovered that neither source of certification nor experience level impacted teachers' classroom management orientations. However, it was revealed that teachers with traditional certification and many years of experience exert significantly less control over classroom activities and students' behaviors.

Besides, a limited number of studies have examined this construct in Iran. For instance, Aliakbari and Bozorgmanesh (2013) examined the efficacy of assertive classroom management strategies in enhancing students' performance and the extent to which these strategies are followed by Iranian teachers. They concluded that all strategies of this type of classroom management are applied with varying degrees by Iranian teachers and there was a positive relationship between teachers' assertiveness and students' performance.

In another study Rahimi and Asadollahi (2012) explored the relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' classroom management orientations and their teaching style. This study indicated that most Iranian EFL teachers were interventionist with respect to their classroom management approaches. Furthermore, it was found that teachers who were more interventionist in their classroom management used more teaching activities than those teachers with interactionalist classroom management orientation. In addition, it was revealed that classroom management orientations could predict 28% of the variance of teaching style.

Still in another study Rahimi and Hosseini (2012) investigated EFL teachers' classroom discipline strategies from the viewpoint of their students. Results indicated that Iranian EFL teachers used recognition/rewarding strategies more often to control their classes. However, aggression and punishment were the least common classroom discipline strategies. Further, this study revealed that female teachers used punishment, discussion, and aggression strategies more in comparison to male teachers. Also, public school teachers used aggression strategy more than those who worked in private schools.

Inspired by such discrepancies in the results regarding classroom management beliefs, the scarcity of scholarly research in this area in Iranian contexts, and what was stated above as to the place of classroom management training within Iranian educational system in general, this study is an attempt to examine classroom management practice among EFL teachers through their perceptions of this construct.

#### *2.4 The Rationale for the Present Study*

The focal objective of the educational process is to teach effectively and thus to enable students to learn. However, classroom procedures do not always run smoothly as a result of students' disruptive behaviors. Consequently, teaching and learning process will be impeded. According to Yavuz (2009) in certain cases it is increasingly more difficult to manage disruptive behaviors and regaining control is more time consuming than academic teaching and learning. Nonetheless, teachers are responsible for providing a positive learning environment and preventing negative behaviors. To be successful, teachers should acquire classroom management as an important skill and EFL classrooms and teachers are no exception in this regard.

In line with the instructional objectives of educational programs, comprehensive classroom management can establish a productive classroom in which optimized learning can be achieved. In other words, by increasing students' involvement and cooperation in classroom activities and saving time, classroom management can significantly facilitate learning process (Evertson & Harris, 1992; Martin & Norwich, 1991; Jones, 1995).

In order to address teachers' classroom management practices, it is needed to start from their beliefs regarding this construct because these beliefs typically guide the choice of approaches to classroom management (Agne, Greenwood, & Miller 1994; Burman, 1993). Hence, teachers' beliefs about classroom management are worth investigating because a better understanding of classroom management beliefs is essential to improve teaching practices and the potential success of educational process (Youseff, 2003).

In addition, despite the extensive research on classroom management in western countries, a limited number of attempts have been made to examine this important construct in non-western contexts especially in Iran and we still lack supporting documentation on EFL teachers' classroom management orientations, the challenges they face, styles they prefer and so forth (Rahimi & Asadollahi, 2012). Hence, the present study is an attempt to investigate EFL teachers' perceptions as to

classroom management practice. More specifically, this study seeks to answer the following questions:

- 1) What beliefs do EFL Iranian teachers hold about classroom management practice?
- 2) Is there any significant difference in teachers' perceptions of classroom management with reference to their gender, age, educational degree, teaching experience, and the level they teach?

### **3. Method**

#### *3.1 Participants*

The current study was undertaken in 22 private language institutes across the city of Ilam in the west of Iran. The institutes were selected based on credibility and feasibility criteria from among 35 main language institutes and their branches. Data were collected from both male and female EFL teachers working in these language institutes. There were 188 Approximately EFL teachers teaching in language institutes in Ilam; from among these, 122 teachers (53 males and 69 females) comprised the sample of the current study. The rationale for selecting the participants was on the basis of convenience sampling method which involves selecting those who are available to the researchers at the time.

Teachers' frequencies with reference to the variables of the study are reported in Table 1. Institutes' administrators verified the truth of the information given by participant teachers as to their experience levels, educational degrees, and level at which they teach.

#### *3.2 Instrumentation*

This study utilized a survey instrument known as Attitudes and Beliefs on Classroom Control (ABCC) Inventory. ABCC was developed by Martin et al. (1998) to investigate various aspects of teachers' beliefs and attitudes regarding classroom management practice. It consists of 26 likert format items with a four-point response scale for each item (4 indicates *describes me very well*, 3 indicates *describes me usually*, 2 indicates *describes me somewhat*, and 1 indicates *describes me not at all*). Within this inventory there are three subscales based on the three dimensions of classroom management as a multi-faceted construct which are Instructional management (14 items), People management (8 items), and Behavior management (4 items). Teachers' scores on each subscale indicate their classroom management beliefs on a continuum of control ranging from interventionist to interactionalist to non-interventionist. High scores indicate a more controlling interventionist belief about each



dimension of classroom management and low scores show a less controlling non-interventionist belief.

The present study applied the translated version of the questionnaire that was developed through the process of translation and back translation. It comprises two subsections, one eliciting teachers' demog-

Table 1  
*Teachers' Characteristics According to Variables of the Study*

| <i>Variables</i>    | <i>Categoris</i> | <i>Frequency</i> | <i>Percent</i> | <i>Cumulative Percent</i> |
|---------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Age                 | 21-25            | 36               | 29.5           | 29.5                      |
|                     | 26-30            | 66               | 54.1           | 83.6                      |
|                     | 31-35            | 7                | 5.7            | 89.3                      |
|                     | 36-40            | 13               | 10.7           | 100.0                     |
| Gender              | Female           | 69               | 56.6           | 56.6                      |
|                     | Male             | 53               | 43.4           | 100.0                     |
|                     | Associate        | 2                | 1.6            | 1.6                       |
| Educational degree  | Bachelor         | 87               | 71.3           | 73.0                      |
|                     | Master           | 33               | 27.0           | 100.0                     |
| Teaching experience | 1-5              | 95               | 77.9           | 77.9                      |
|                     | 6-10             | 14               | 11.5           | 89.3                      |
|                     | 11-15            | 6                | 4.9            | 94.3                      |
|                     | 16-20            | 5                | 4.1            | 98.4                      |
|                     | 21-25            | 2                | 1.6            | 100.0                     |
| Teaching level      | Elementary       | 35               | 28.7           | 28.7                      |
|                     | Intermediate     | 68               | 55.7           | 84.4                      |
|                     | Advanced         | 19               | 15.6           | 100.0                     |

raphic information and the other one provides information as to teachers' classroom management perceptions. Reliability and validity of the translated version were verified not only in the light of experts' judgment but according to the statistical procedures employed. The reliability of the Persian version of ABCC inventory administered in this study was assessed by computing Cronbach alpha coefficients which resulted in 0.85 a value which was within the acceptable range of reliability. In addition reliability coefficients obtained for the three subscales of ABCC inventory, namely Instructional Management, People Management, and Behavior Management, were 0.82, 0.72, and 0.68 respectively. For the purpose of obtaining content validity the translated version was also examined in the light of experts' suggestions in this subject matter.

### 3.3 Procedures

This study was conducted using a survey research design. It typically took the form of a questionnaire survey (paper-and-pencil question-and-answer format) to gather data regarding the EFL teachers' beliefs about classroom management practices. According to the data obtained via the inventory, respondents' scores were calculated in order to classify their beliefs towards classroom management. Afterwards, the collected data were analyzed descriptively by calculating the frequencies, percentages, mean, and standard deviations for each dimension of classroom management and other variables of the study. Afterwards, in order to explore differences in classroom management orientations of EFL teachers in relation to the variables of the study, the statistical procedures of t-test and one-way ANOVA were utilized. Analysis of data was carried out using SPSS software, version 11.5.

## 4. Results and Discussion

In order to answer the first question of the study, the overall mean and standard deviations of classroom management as a whole and its three dimensions were calculated. These data are presented in Table 2 which shows the overall classroom management with mean score of 3.02 and standard deviations of 0.38. This means that teachers in the given sample were interventionist in their general beliefs regarding classroom management. Additionally, as shown in the table, regarding classroom management dimensions, the highest mean score was on the Instructional Management dimension ( $M=2.92$ ,  $SD=.72$ ). This is followed by the People Management dimension ( $M= 2.91$ ,  $SD=.71$ ) and Behavior management dimension ( $M= 2.74$ ,  $SD=.52$ ). The data showed that the mean scores on classroom management dimensions were closely related to each other suggesting that teachers, generally, indicted interventionist orientations towards all the three classroom management dimensions.

Table 2

#### *Descriptive Statistics for Classroom Management Dimensions*

| <i>Dimensions</i>            | <i>Minimum</i> | <i>Maximum</i> | <i>Mean</i> | <i>SD</i> |
|------------------------------|----------------|----------------|-------------|-----------|
| Instructional Management     | 1.00           | 3.93           | 2.92        | .72       |
| People Management            | 1.25           | 7.38           | 2.91        | .71       |
| Behavior Management          | 1.50           | 4.00           | 2.74        | .52       |
| Overall Classroom Management | 1.00           | 4.31           | 3.02        | .38       |

To answer the second question of the current study teachers' perceptions were analyzed against a number of variables. To explore gender differences in teachers' perceptions of classroom management, both descriptive and inferential statistics were utilized. Based on Table 3, descriptive analyses indicated that there were differences in males' and females' mean scores. The mean scores suggested that males were more interventionist in their general attitudes as to classroom management. Similarly, regarding classroom management dimensions, males consistently scored higher than females on the three dimensions of this construct. That is, males were consistently more interventionist than their female counterpart as to the three dimensions of classroom management.

Table 3

*Mean Scores on ABCC Dimensions with Respect to Gender*

| Dimensions                   | Gender |      |        |      |
|------------------------------|--------|------|--------|------|
|                              | Male   |      | Female |      |
|                              | Mean   | SD   | Mean   | SD   |
| Instructional management     | 3.208  | .371 | 3.018  | .586 |
| Behavior management          | 2.858  | .486 | 2.612  | .534 |
| People management            | 3.063  | .740 | 3.038  | .433 |
| Overall classroom management | 3.110  | .324 | 2.958  | .411 |

*Note: Number of males= 53; Number of females= 69*

However, since the existence of significant differences could not be determined through simple descriptive statistics, independent samples T-Test was also run the results of which are presented in Table 4. As shown in this table the differences between males' and females' perceptions as to classroom management as a whole was statistically significant at ( $p < 0.05$ ) level,  $t(120) = -2.20$ ,  $p = 0.029$ . Findings regarding classroom management dimensions, indicated that there was significant difference in teachers' perceptions as to the Instructional Management and Behavior Management dimensions with respect to their gender,  $t(120) = -2.06$ ,  $p = .041$ ;  $t(120) = -2.62$ ,  $p = .010$ . However, no significant difference was found in the People Management dimension as a function of gender,  $t(120) = -.23$ ,  $p = .811$ .

Table 5, indicated that there was a statistically significant difference in teachers' general beliefs regarding classroom management as a whole with respect to their age,  $F[3,118] = 5.49$ ,  $p = .001$ . Regarding classroom management dimensions, the analyses revealed that there was a significant difference in teachers' perceptions as to People Management dimension across different age groups,  $F[3,118] = 8.09$ ,  $p$

= .001. However, no significant differences were found in the Instructional Management and Behavior Management dimensions as a function of age,  $F[3,118] = 1.69, p = .17$ ;  $F[3,118] = 1.11, p = .34$ .

Table 4  
*Male vs. Female Teachers on the Subscales of ABCC Inventory*

| <i>Dimensions</i>            | <i>t</i> | <i>df</i> | <i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i> | <i>Mean Difference</i> | <i>Effect Size (r)</i> |
|------------------------------|----------|-----------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Instructional Management     | -2.06    | 120       | .041                   | -.19                   | 0.18                   |
| Behavior Management          | -2.62    | 120       | .010                   | -.10                   | 0.23                   |
| People Management            | -.23     | 120       | .811                   | -.02                   | 0.02                   |
| Overall Classroom Management | -2.20    | 120       | .029                   | -.15                   | 0.19                   |

Table 5  
*One-way ANOVA Analyses on Teachers' ABCC Scores According to Age Groups*

|                              |                | <i>Sum of Squares</i> | <i>df</i> | <i>Mean Square</i> | <i>F</i> | <i>Sig.</i> | <i>Partial Eta Squared</i> |
|------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|-----------|--------------------|----------|-------------|----------------------------|
| Instructional Management     | Between Groups | 2.636                 | 3         | .879               | 1.699    | .171        | 0.041                      |
|                              | Within Groups  | 61.045                | 118       | .517               |          |             |                            |
|                              | Total          | 63.682                | 121       |                    |          |             |                            |
|                              |                |                       |           |                    |          |             |                            |
| Behavior Management          | Between Groups | .926                  | 3         | .309               | 1.111    | .347        | 0.027                      |
|                              | Within Groups  | 32.757                | 118       | .278               |          |             |                            |
|                              | Total          | 33.683                | 121       |                    |          |             |                            |
|                              |                |                       |           |                    |          |             |                            |
| People Management            | Between Groups | 10.602                | 3         | 3.534              | 8.098    | .001        | 0.170                      |
|                              | Within Groups  | 51.498                | 118       | .436               |          |             |                            |
|                              | Total          | 62.100                | 121       |                    |          |             |                            |
|                              |                |                       |           |                    |          |             |                            |
| Overall Classroom Management | Between Groups | 8.237                 | 3         | 2.746              | 5.493    | .001        | 0.122                      |
|                              | Within Groups  | 58.982                | 118       | .500               |          |             |                            |
|                              | Total          | 67.220                | 121       |                    |          |             |                            |
|                              |                |                       |           |                    |          |             |                            |

The next level of analysis of the data involved determining how teachers' perceptions of classroom management vary as a function of different years of experience. To this end, a series of one-way Analyses of Variance were used the results of which are presented in Table 6. The results indicate that there was a significant difference in teachers' beliefs about classroom management as whole across different levels of teaching experience  $F[4,117] = 13.72, p = .001$ . Moreover, regarding classroom management dimensions, the results showed that there were significant differences in teachers' perception as to the Instructional and People

Management dimensions,  $F[4,117] = 13.98, p = .001$ ;  $F[4,117] = 13.60, p = .001$ . However, there was no statistically significant difference in teachers' perception towards Behavior Management dimension as a function of teaching experience. ( $F[4,117] = .22, p = .92$ ).

This result supports the findings of previous research indicating that less experienced teachers were found to be more interventionist than experienced teachers (Martin and Baldwin, 1992, 1993).

Table 6

*One-way ANOVA Analyses on Teachers' ABCC Scores According to their Teaching Experience*

|                              |                | <i>Sum of Squares</i> | <i>df</i> | <i>Mean Square</i> | <i>F</i> | <i>Sig.</i> | <i>Partial Eta squared</i> |
|------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|-----------|--------------------|----------|-------------|----------------------------|
| Instructional Management     | Between Groups | 20.599                | 4         | 5.150              | 13.986   | .001        | 0.323                      |
|                              | Within Groups  | 43.082                | 117       | .368               |          |             |                            |
|                              | Total          | 63.682                | 121       |                    |          |             |                            |
| Behavior Management          | Between Groups | .261                  | 4         | .065               | .228     | .922        | 0.007                      |
|                              | Within Groups  | 33.422                | 117       | .286               |          |             |                            |
|                              | Total          | 33.683                | 121       |                    |          |             |                            |
| People Management            | Between Groups | 19.713                | 4         | 4.928              | 13.604   | .001        | 0.317                      |
|                              | Within Groups  | 42.387                | 117       | .362               |          |             |                            |
|                              | Total          | 62.100                | 121       |                    |          |             |                            |
| Overall Classroom Management | Between Groups | 21.471                | 4         | 5.368              | 13.728   | .001        | 0.319                      |
|                              | Within Groups  | 45.749                | 117       | .391               |          |             |                            |
|                              | Total          | 67.220                | 121       |                    |          |             |                            |

Also, to explore the differences between teachers' perceptions of classroom management as a function of their academic degree, a series of one-way analyses of variance were run. Table 7 displays the results of these one-way ANOVAs. The results indicated that there was a significant difference in teachers' beliefs about overall classroom management as a function of academic degree,  $F[4,117] = 20.5, p = .001$ .

Regarding classroom management dimensions, the analyses revealed that there was a statistically significant difference in teachers' beliefs as to the Instructional Management dimension,  $F[4,117] = 9.54, p$

= .001. In addition, it was revealed that in terms of teachers' educational degree there was a significant difference in teachers' beliefs as to the People Management dimension,  $F[4,117] = 4.01, p = .02$ . However, the results showed that there was no significant difference in teachers' beliefs as to the Behavior Management dimension with reference to their educational degree,  $F[4,117] = .39, p = .67$ .

Table 7  
*One-way ANOVA Analyses on Teachers' ABCC Scores According to their Educational Degree*

|                              |                | <i>Sum of Squares</i> | <i>df</i> | <i>Mean Square</i> | <i>F</i> | <i>sig.</i> | <i>Partial Eta squared</i> |
|------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|-----------|--------------------|----------|-------------|----------------------------|
| Instructional Management     | Between Groups | 8.80                  | 2         | 4.403              | 9.547    | .001        | 0.138                      |
|                              | Within Groups  | 54.876                | 119       | .461               |          |             |                            |
|                              | Total          | 63.682                | 121       |                    |          |             |                            |
|                              |                |                       |           |                    |          |             |                            |
| Behavior Management          | Between Groups | .224                  | 2         | .112               | .398     | .673        | 0.006                      |
|                              | Within Groups  | 33.459                | 119       | .281               |          |             |                            |
|                              | Total          | 33.683                | 121       |                    |          |             |                            |
|                              |                |                       |           |                    |          |             |                            |
| People Management            | Between Groups | 3.925                 | 2         | 1.963              | 4.014    | .021        | 0.063                      |
|                              | Within Groups  | 58.175                | 119       | .489               |          |             |                            |
|                              | Total          | 62.100                | 121       |                    |          |             |                            |
|                              |                |                       |           |                    |          |             |                            |
| Overall Classroom Management | Between Groups | 17.230                | 2         | 8.615              | 20.50    | .001        | 0.256                      |
|                              | Within Groups  | 49.990                | 119       | .420               | 8        |             |                            |
|                              | Total          | 67.220                | 121       |                    |          |             |                            |
|                              |                |                       |           |                    |          |             |                            |

One-way ANOVA was also utilized to probe the likely differences between teachers' perceptions of classroom management in relation to their teaching level. Table 8 represents the results of one-way ANOVAs run for this purpose. Data presented in this table showed that there was a significant difference in teachers' general orientations towards classroom management as a whole with respect to their teaching level,  $F[4,117] = 3.29, p = .008$ .

Regarding classroom management dimensions, data revealed that there were statistically significant differences in teachers' beliefs regarding the Instructional and People Management dimensions with

reference to their students' level at the ( $p < 0.05$ ) level,  $F[4,117] = 3.15$ ,  $p = .01$ ;  $F[4,117] = 2.82$ ,  $p = .01$ . However, the comparisons in the Behavior Management dimension revealed no statistically significant differences in teachers' perceptions across teaching levels,  $F[4,117] = 1.32$ ,  $p = .25$ .

Table 8

*One-way ANOVA Analyses on Teachers' ABCC Scores According to Students' Level*

|                              |                | <i>Sum of Squares</i> | <i>df</i> | <i>Mean Square</i> | <i>F</i> | <i>Sig.</i> | <i>Partial Eta squared</i> |
|------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|-----------|--------------------|----------|-------------|----------------------------|
| Instructional Management     | Between Groups | 7.617                 | 5         | 1.523              | .152     | .011        | 0.119                      |
|                              | Within Groups  | 56.064                | 116       | .483               |          |             |                            |
|                              | Total          | 63.682                | 121       |                    |          |             |                            |
| Behavior Management          | Between Groups | 1.818                 | 5         | .364               | .324     | .259        | 0.053                      |
|                              | Within Groups  | 31.865                | 116       | .275               |          |             |                            |
|                              | Total          | 33.683                | 121       |                    |          |             |                            |
| People Management            | Between Groups | 6.731                 | 5         | 1.346              | .820     | .019        | 0.108                      |
|                              | Within Groups  | 55.369                | 116       | .477               |          |             |                            |
|                              | Total          | 62.100                | 121       |                    |          |             |                            |
| Overall Classroom Management | Between Groups | 8.363                 | 5         | 1.673              | .297     | .008        | 0.124                      |
|                              | Within Groups  | 58.857                | 116       | .507               |          |             |                            |
|                              | Total          | 67.220                | 121       |                    |          |             |                            |

## 5. Conclusion and Implications

Overall, according to findings of this study, it can be concluded that EFL teachers in the given sample to a large extent held interventionist orientations towards classroom management as a whole and its three dimensions: Instructional Management, People Management, and Behavior Management. In other words, teachers studied tended to believe in imposing strong control when managing their classrooms. This can be regarded as a weakness in EFL teachers' performance sample since interventionist orientation is an orientation to classroom management fed by traditional types of educational beliefs.

Moreover, it can be concluded that all variables in this study can be regarded as influential factors in teachers' classroom management practice in the context under investigation. That is, there were statistically significant differences in teachers' perceptions as to

classroom management with respect to all variables of the study. Specifically, as a result of this study, it was revealed that there were differences between males' and females' perceptions. Here specifically males showed more and females showed less interventionist attitudes when managing their instruction.

These findings concur with the findings of previous research regarding gender differences. For example, Martin et al. (1997) in their study found that male teachers were more interventionist on two of the three ABCC subscales (Instructional and Behavior Management). However, there are also research results which don't support these findings (Savran & Cakiroglu, 2004; Savran & Cakiroglu, 2003; Yavuz, 2009). These research studies found no significant differences in classroom management perceptions with respect to gender. This finding; that is, the dominance of interventionist attitudes to a large extent among male teachers, stands to reason. One possible reason for this model of control among male teachers can be related to their social role as man. Given the difference in literature, males are said to be more controlling, authoritative, assertive, and aggressive than females (Savran & Cakiroglu, 2004).

Findings of differing perceptions with reference to participants' age are also worth notice. These findings showed significant differences in perceptions of younger and older teachers. The fact that younger teachers showed more interventionist attitudes than their older counterparts is a striking finding suggesting that teachers' age can be an indicator criterion for their classroom management practice. This particular finding indicated that younger teachers need more training as to effective classroom management. Further, this finding can be explained in the light of another variable, teachers' experience, which covariates with teachers' age; normally younger teachers haven't gained experience as much as older teachers.

Similarly, less experienced teachers should be provided with more effective classroom management knowledge since there were significant differences between the perceptions of less experienced and more experienced teachers. In other words, less experienced teachers showed more interventionist orientations towards classroom management implying that they favor high levels of control in their classroom management practice. Normally older teachers are considered to have more experience. This result supports the findings of previous research indicating that less experienced teachers were found to be more interventionist than experienced teachers (Martin & Baldwin, 1992, 1993).



Another interesting point in the findings of this study is related to participants' educational degree. Teachers with different educational degree showed different attitudes towards classroom management. More specifically teachers with lower educational degrees showed more interventionist orientations compared with those having higher educational degrees. Further, obtained data indicated significant differences in the perceptions of teachers teaching at different levels. In point of fact, the level of control was shown to be higher among teachers dealing with lower-level students. Thus, it was made clear that teachers teaching at lower levels were more interventionist. There are research results that don't support this finding; for instance, Martin and Baldwin (1996) found that elementary teachers scored less interventionist towards class room management than teachers at secondary levels.

Generally speaking, the predominant interventionist attitudes among EFL teachers can be regarded as a weakness which may result from a lack of training among teachers in the context under investigation. Thus, administrators should take measures to enhance teachers' knowledge as to more effective up-to-date classroom management practices.

Findings of this investigation would generally be important for educational programs, administrators, researchers, teachers and educators at all levels. Particularly, this study provides in-depth insights into the underlying dimensions of classroom management and the three orientations towards this construct. According to these findings, teachers should know that besides teaching activities which pertain to Instructional management there exist two other equally important dimensions known as People Management and Behavior Management. Moreover, findings of this study may have implications for administrators and teacher education programs. Since all teachers should have a knowledge base about classroom management, besides their speciality, it is recommended to educational decision makers to provide in-service and pre-service teachers with classroom management training.

In addition, this study provided an understanding of differing beliefs based on gender, age, teaching experience, educational degree, and the students' level. In other words, the obtained results may provide administrators with an insight into the factors that may or may not influence the practice of classroom management. Administrators and educational decision makers can put these implications into practice when adopting educational reforms. Finally, findings of this study can contribute to the body of classroom management literature by adding the perspective from an Iranian context.

However, like many other studies some limitations are inherent in this study. First of all, it is not free from generalizability problems since it was conducted in private language institutes across the city of Ilam with a limited number of participants. Furthermore, respondents were not a random sample consequently the results may differ in some way from what would have been gathered from a purely random sample. In addition, the data for this study came from a single source (i.e. a questionnaire) and other aspects like students' perceptions of their teachers' classroom management beliefs, specifying the best strategy for classroom management and the influence of many other factors on classroom management beliefs and practice were not considered in this study.

Considering the limitations of the current research future studies is warranted at a national scale with a large number of participants. Another call for research is in the area of using other types of qualitative research and survey research like actual observations of teacher practices or interviews to gain more information about teacher perceptions and their rationale for the use of certain classroom management techniques. Further research can be conducted to explore classroom management beliefs of teachers working in public schools at elementary, junior, and senior public high schools. Also, future research is needed to explore teachers' classroom management beliefs with reference to students' age and gender to find possible differences in teachers' classroom management beliefs when managing male and female students from different age groups. Further research may also include investigating this construct with respect to other factors like students' characteristics, setting, training, ethnicity, teachers' personality and characteristics, leadership style of schools' administrators, and so forth. Much more research should be conducted to explore the effects of classroom management on instructional effectiveness by considering learning outcomes.

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