

## Relating EFL teachers' professional and institutional identity to their teaching efficacy

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The main purpose of the present study was to systematically scrutinise the possible relationship between English as a foreign language (henceforth EFL) teachers' professional and institutional identity with their teaching efficacy. In doing so, 100 EFL teachers and instructors, within the age range of 30 to 50 (mean age = 40), and teaching experience of 5 to 25 years, teaching at private language institutes and public schools in Hamedan were selected based on convenience sampling strategy. They were asked to fill in three questionnaires, namely, the Liou's *Professional Identity Questionnaire* (2008), the Azimi's *Institutional Identity Questionnaire* (2012), and the Tschannen-Moran, Hoy and Hoy's *Teachers Efficacy Scale* (1998). To test the research hypotheses of the study, two separate Pearson product-moment coefficients, and a multiple-regression were applied. The findings of the study showed a statistically significant positive association between EFL teachers' professional identity and their teaching efficacy. Furthermore, the findings also indicated that there was a significant positive association between EFL teachers' institutional identity and their teaching efficacy. Additionally, it was found that professional identity was a better predictor of EFL teachers' teaching efficacy. Considering the findings of the study, teacher trainers and administrators are thus recommended to organise some preparation conferences and hold different workshops in order to familiarise EFL teachers with both practical and theoretical bases of teachers' identity, and also improve their actual teaching efficacy.

### Introduction

The post-method period in language learning and teaching is characterised by a shift from static methodological packs for language teaching towards a concern with teachers' professional knowledge, growth, understanding, experience, students' needs, the milieu of teaching, and the administrative situations of the milieu in which instruction takes place (Richards, 2002). Many factors might affect the teaching performance of teachers and instructors, two specifically important being identity and efficacy.

As pointed out by Gohier, Chevrier and Anadon (2007), identity is considered as a self-constructed progression which is naturally improved by a large number of issues. Likewise, educator identity tries primarily to capture teachers' definition of themselves concerning their own profession (Morita, 2004). Regarding the effects of educator identity on different educational issues, like teacher promise and commitment (Day & Gu, 2007), analyses of teacher identity generate better considerations of instructional and educational practice and theories.

The concept of professional identity, as one of the main types of identity, has attracted attention in different fields, one of which is the field of teaching and teacher education. It is noteworthy that studies in the field of teaching and teacher education have mostly

concentrated on what have impact on instructor professional identity and its development and construction (e.g., Coldron & Smith, 1999; Schepens, Aelterman & Vlerick, 2009). As pointed out by Beijaard, Meijer and Verloop (2004), teachers' professional identity relates to how instructors see themselves as instructors, mainly based on their understandings of their ongoing interaction with their own educational milieu.

Another type of identity is institutional identity, which is regarded as the pertinent juncture of the notions of *social identity theory* and instructor identity (Hogg, 2006). It is worth mentioning that *social identity theory*, for example, points out that people who belong in a particular group tend to have preferences toward in-group practices and mottoes (Jaspal, 2010). Similarly, instructors' institutional identity can be defined as instructors' state of identification with the schools, universities or institutions in which they teach (Hogg, 2006). Moreover, it can be concluded that institutional identity is in fact the recognition of main *social identity theory* concepts in instructor identity. Concerning *social cognitive theory*, Brown (2000) argued that there are interactive associations of impacts among personal, behavioural, and environmental features, which can also affect instructors' institutional identity. Teachers' efficacy is recognized as one of variables that can potentially influence instructors' performances and consequently milieu and, therefore, institutional identity and in turn be affected by it (Ghafar Samar, Kiany, Akbari & Azimi, 2011).

A typical definition of instructor efficacy states, "the extent to which the teacher believes he or she has the capacity to affect student performance" (Berman, McLaughlin, Bass, Pauly & Zellman, 1977, p. 137). Teacher efficacy is defined as "the teacher's belief in his or her capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to successfully accomplishing a specific teaching task in a particular context" (Tschannen-Moran, Hoy & Hoy, 1998, p. 22). Several research studies showed that students' motivation, the learners' own levels of efficacy and their academic achievement are positively associated with the teachers' and instructors' sense of efficacy (Guskey, 1988; Moradkhani, 2009; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). According to Tschannen-Moran, Hoy and Hoy (1998), teaching efficacy includes three components: efficacy for student engagement, efficacy for instructional strategies, and efficacy for classroom management.

Due to the fact that teachers' identity and efficacy are context-specific in nature (Bandura, 1995; Brown, 2006), and pertaining to the dearth of investigation in these important areas in the context of Iran, the researcher was adequately motivated to conduct the present study in order to fill the research gap felt.

## **Review of the related literature**

### **Identity**

The concept of identity is typically regarded as a multifaceted and complex construct (Block, 2007), which has been thoroughly investigated in different disciplinary fields throughout history. Furthermore, according to Bergner and Holmes (2000), identity in broad terms is consisted of the displayed and experienced mental ideas, constructs, or

notions that are being shaped during one individual's lifespan through social relations and interactions with other individuals, along with trialing oneself with respect to the external world through actions, difficulties and blunders.

As pointed out by Hao (2011), the concept of teacher identity has aroused interest amongst investigators since the 1990s and has appeared as a distinct research area in the last two decades. Akkerman and Meijer (2011) defined teacher identity as a constant process of exchanging and interdepending various "I positions in such a way that a more or less coherent and consistent sense of self is maintained throughout various participations and self-investments in one's (working) life" (p. 315). Furthermore, according to Beijaard, Meijer and Verloop (2004), the formation of teacher identity is (a) constant, (b) comprises both individual and setting, (c) involves sub-identities which is essential to be harmonious, and finally (d) necessitates a level of agency by instructors. Teacher identity, likewise, attempts to capture instructors' definition of themselves with regard to their careers (Morita, 2004).

#### *Professional identity*

According to Beijaard, Meijer and Verloop (2004), the concept of professional identity has been recognised in the recent years as a distinct inquiry area in educational research. Moreover, as pointed out by Beijaard, Meijer and Verloop (2004), professional identity has been defined in several ways in teacher training and education. For instance, Kerby (1991) defined the concept of professional identity as a continuous process of interpreting and reinterpreting of involvements and practices. Beijaard, Meijer and Verloop (2004) proposed that professional identity typically refers to how instructors perceive themselves as instructors, based on their interpretations of their ongoing interaction and relations with their milieu. Likewise, Kelchtermans (2009) stated that teachers develop an interpretive framework throughout their profession and that this created framework is constantly formed and re-formed through interaction and contact between individual instructors and the cultural, social and organisational settings of their own working milieu.

Concerning the fundamental notions of professional identity in the realm of teaching, Henkel (2005) suggested three aspects. The first aspect is the concept of identity with regard to a person who has a distinctive history. The second aspect is related to the concept of identity concerning an individual who is primarily positioned in a selected ethical and conceptual context. The third aspect is attributed to the concept of identity with reference to someone who is basically recognised within a distinct organisation or community by the experiences which he or she has attained.

Likewise, with regard to instructors' careers, Day, Kington, Stobart and Sammons (2006) believed that instructors balance three pertinent dimensions. The first dimension is *personal* dimension which is basically associated with their personal life outside university or school. The second dimension is believed to be *professional* dimension which refers primarily to policy and social outlooks of what creates a good instructor, as well as an instructor's own teaching ideals. The third dimension is *situational* dimension which is concerned primarily with the instructor's actual working milieu (Day, Kington, Stobart & Sammons, 2006).

In summary, as pointed out by Kogan (2000), it can be concluded that the notion of professional identity, particularly in the field of instruction and teaching, is a matter of both social influences and person reflection. Consequently, concepts of professional identity of persons are formed taking into consideration not only their knowledge and their own theoretical and ethical frameworks, but also with regard to the possibility of responsibilities that instructors accept in the groups, organisations, and institutions in which they play a role.

#### *Institutional identity*

It is obvious that teachers and instructors, throughout their experiences and practices in teaching institutions, develop a sense of belonging to their own affiliated educational institutions. According to Brewer (1991), this sense of attachment that teachers grow during their careers, is the outcome of numerous influencing factors, some of which are informed by social identity theory, for example instructors' classification of themselves and others as in- and out-groups along with their inclination towards in-group relations (Brewer, 1991).

As pointed out by Hogg (2006), the concept of institutional identity refers to instructors' state of identification with the organisations and institutions in which they teach. According to Ghafar Samar, Kiany, Akbari and Azimi (2011), institutional identity is essentially the understanding of social identity theory concepts in instructor identity. It can be argued that the concept of institutional identity is not inclusively developed by social identity theory. There are several contextual factors which are believed to have important roles in developing the concept of institutional identity of instructors and teachers. As stated by Ghafar Samar, et al., (2011), concerning social cognitive theory, there are personal, environmental, and behavioural issues that can have significant impacts on the development of institutional identity.

According to Pajares (2002), learning and education are theoretically the interaction of people's characteristics, environmental elements, and behaviour. As discussed by Ghafar Samar, et al., (2011), instructors' identity with reference to their institution (i.e. *institutional identity*) can be added to the aforementioned argument of Pajares (2002). According to Ghafar Samar, et al., (2011), institutional identity can be addressed by questioning "who we are in an institution" (p.7). Moreover, they state that institutional identity is a flexible occurrence which arises over institutional and organisational interactions amongst affiliates to create a mutual sense of attachment to the institution or organisation, that is not the same as that with other, adjacent institutions.

#### **Efficacy**

Efficacy, one of the key intrinsic dynamics in any individual, is highly rooted in Bandura's social cognitive theory (1995; 1997). Bandura (1995) defined efficacy as "beliefs in one's capabilities to organise and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations" (p. 2). Consequently, efficacy does not regard the amount of knowledge that the individuals have, rather, it is concerned with the evaluation of how efficaciously

individuals can complete a set of tasks in connection with their actual abilities (Bandura, 1997).

Efficacy is fundamentally people's future-oriented judgment with reference to their capability and it is not about their actual level of capability. According to Woolfolk Hoy and Spero (2005), efficacy is a significant feature since individuals regularly underestimate or overestimate their actual competences, and these constant estimations might possibly have consequences for the courses of action people take to pursue their work, and are actually applied in those pursuits. Efficacy exists in numerous fields of human functioning, involving both private and professional behaviour. One of the fields which efficacy has been significantly discussed and investigated is that of educational context.

#### *Teaching efficacy*

Teaching efficacy is regarded as a concept which was developed in the framework of Bandura's (1997) social cognitive theory. Bandura (1997) considered the concept of efficacy as beliefs about one's own competences and skills to establish and perform a certain given task. Teacher efficacy has been defined and investigated in various contexts and studies. Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy and Hoy (1998) believed that instructor efficacy is the instructor's confidence in his or her capability to organise and perform courses of action essential for effectively accomplishing a specific instructional task in a specific context.

Additionally, Guskey (1988) stated that instructor's sense of efficacy is primarily in the vein of subject-expectancy impacts due to the fact that instructors who believe in their own control over learner academic achievement are more persistent, work much harder, and test new methods; consequently ensuring higher levels of learner academic achievement. Generally speaking, according to social cognitive theory of Bandura (1997), efficacy has two main components. The first component of efficacy is *efficacy expectation*. As pointed out by Bandura, the efficacy expectation is regarded as a conviction that an individual has the capability, knowledge, and abilities to effectively perform the actions or behaviour essential to produce the preferred results.

The second component of efficacy is *outcome expectancy* which primarily represents an individual's estimation of the possible impacts of accomplishing a task at the estimated level of performance (Bandura, 1997). To be precise, outcome expectancy is regarded as the belief that an assumed action or behaviour will undeniably result in estimated results. Thus it can be proposed that in order to be efficacious, the instructor must have both high outcome expectancy and high efficacy expectations. If the instructor has the high efficacy expectations and not the high outcome expectancy, it is not likely that the instructor will be an efficacious instructor even though the instructor is skillfully competent and qualified. Therefore, in an educational setting, instructor efficacy is regarded as the instructor's personal belief in capability to plan teaching and complete instructional goals. Furthermore, instructor efficacy is in effect the belief that the instructors have with regard to their capability to teach learners professionally and successfully.

Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk-Hoy (2001) highlighted that instructors' efficacy affects numerous features among which are the effort that the instructors and instructors invest in their instruction, the aims and objectives they set, and their aspiration level. Numerous research studies have indicated that learners' motivation, their academic achievement and the learners' own levels of efficacy are positively associated with the instructors' sense of efficacy (Guskey, 1988; Moradkhani, 2009; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk-Hoy, 2001).

#### *Sources of teaching efficacy*

According to Bandura (1997), instructor efficacy which is regarded as beliefs in one individual's competences to establish and implement the courses of action essential to produce given accomplishments, can be derived primarily from four sources of influence. Bandura (1997) proposed these four main sources of efficacy as: (a) *mastery experience*, (b) *vicarious experience*, (c) *verbal/social persuasion*, and finally (d) *physiological/arousal and emotional states*.

In mastery experience people evaluate their capabilities in accomplishment of tasks and activities that rest on their success or failure in task/activity-performances. Consequently, recurrent successful activities and tasks elevate and recurrent failure experiences decrease efficacy of individuals. The second source of instructor efficacy, as stated by Bandura (1997), is indirect experience, namely, vicarious experience, which is also termed social model or role-modeling. Social model is the observing and modeling of other individuals' doings and activities, particularly when one does not have a satisfactory personal experience.

Bandura (1997) proposed that the third source of instructor efficacy is verbal or social encouragement. According to Hora and Ferrare (2012), verbal or social encouragement is regarded as the active reinforcement or discouragement from other instructors about one's own abilities. Verbal or social persuasion by other instructors and managers that an instructor can teach efficaciously will improve the instructor's sense of efficacy. Moreover, as stated by Pajares (2002), it can be concluded that the most influential impact of social/verbal persuasion hinges around starting the task, endeavouring new approaches, and attempting hard to succeed. The fourth source of instructor efficacy is instructors' physiological states, including both physical and emotional states of instructors throughout performing their tasks. It is believed that positive emotional states can enhance instructors' efficacy and the negative emotional states along with tense conditions can diminish instructors' efficacy (Bandura, 1997).

### **Research questions**

The main objective of the present study was to examine the possible friendship between EFL teachers' professional, and institutional identity, with their teaching efficacy. With the purpose of fulfilling the objective of this study, the following questions were addressed, and empirically investigated. For each a null hypothesis was assumed:

1. Is there any significant relationship between EFL teachers' professional identity and teaching efficacy?
2. Is there any significant relationship between EFL teachers' institutional identity and teaching efficacy?
3. Is there any significant difference between EFL teachers' institutional and professional identity in predicting their teaching efficacy?

## Method

### Participants

One hundred (33 female and 67 male) EFL teachers teaching at different private language institutes and public schools in Hamedan city, Iran took part in this study. The participants were obtained by convenience sampling, which is regarded as a non-random sampling technique where participants are selected due to their accessibility and proximity to the researcher. The participants' ages ranged from 30-50 and their teaching experience varied from 5-25 years.

### Instruments

#### *Professional Identity Questionnaire*

In order to evaluate the participants' professional identity, the researcher administered the Persian version of the *Professional Identity Questionnaire* (Liou, 2008). This instrument has two different parts. Part A contains 8 items that focus on English teachers' professional identity, their evaluation and commitment to their career, their opinions about the social status of their profession, and their perceptions of their learners' attitudes towards their teaching. Part B contains 18 items about respondents' perspective towards general language proficiency of users in different milieus. In this study, only Part A was utilised as it deals with the EFL teachers' professional identity. Part A encompasses eight 5-point Likert scaled items, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Its administration took about 10 minutes. As pointed out by Liou (2008), the reliability of this questionnaire was estimated to be 0.88, which indicates that this questionnaire has adequate internal consistency. Using Cronbach's alpha, the reliability of this questionnaire in the present study was found to be 0.85.

#### *Institutional Identity Questionnaire*

In order to assess the EFL teachers' institutional identity, the researcher administered the Persian version of the *Institutional Identity Questionnaire* (Azimi, 2012). This questionnaire includes 34 five-point Likert scale items ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). According to Azimi (2012), this instrument was developed and designed based mainly on concepts derived from social identity literature and experts interviews. As pointed out by Azimi (2012), the items of this instrument were reviewed by experts in fields of education and identity issues in order to check the primary validity of the items. Furthermore, according to Azimi (2012), this questionnaire had a high reliability and validity rate and its appropriateness was confirmed for being applied in Iranian context. Its administration took approximately 20 minutes. Using Cronbach's alpha, the reliability of this questionnaire in the present study was estimated to be 0.81.

### *Teachers' Efficacy Scale*

In order to assess the participants' teaching efficacy, the researcher administered the Persian version of *Teachers' Efficacy Scale* (Tschannen-Moran, Hoy & Hoy, 1998). This questionnaire contains two main versions, namely, *long form* that comprises of 24 questions, and *short form*, which contains 12 items. In this study the long form was administered. The items of this questionnaire are in a 9-point Likert scale format, ranging from 1 (nothing) to 9 (a great deal). Its administration took approximately 20 minutes. The long form encompasses three main subscales: (a) efficacy in student engagement (ESE: items 1, 2, 4, 6, 9, 12, 14, 22) with Cronbach's alpha coefficient reported to be 0.87, (b) efficacy in instructional strategies (EIS: items 7, 10, 11, 17, 18, 20, 23, 24) with Cronbach's alpha coefficient reported to be 0.91, and (c) efficacy in classroom management (ECM: 3, 5, 8, 13, 15, 16, 19, 21) with Cronbach's alpha coefficient reported to be 0.90. Moreover, the total reliability of the scale was estimated to be 0.94.

### **Procedure**

This investigation was conducted at different private language institutes and public schools in Hamedan city, Iran. First of all the researcher asked the EFL teachers whether they agreed to take part in the present study. Being assured of their willingness to take part in this study, the researcher gave brief details on the aim of the study and instructions on how to complete the questionnaires.

Additionally, EFL teachers were assured that their responses and information would be kept confidential. It is noteworthy that the scope of this research study took only those EFL teachers who were at least 30 years of age and at least five years of teaching experience. All the questionnaires were administered at a single session to avoid a sequence effect. The questionnaires were administered in Persian during February 2017, requiring approximately 50 minutes.

### **Data analyses**

In this study, data analyses were carried out using both descriptive and inferential statistics. First of all, mean and standard deviation of the EFL teachers were obtained for their institutional identity, professional identity, and teaching efficacy. To answer the first research question (*RQ1: Is there any statistically significant association between EFL teachers' professional identity and teaching efficacy?*) a Pearson product moment correlation was run. Concerning the second research question (*RQ2: Is there any statistically significant association between EFL teachers' institutional identity and teaching efficacy?*), another Pearson product moment correlation was run. Finally, concerning the last research question (*RQ3: Is there any statistically significant difference between EFL teachers' professional and institutional identity in predicting their teaching efficacy?*) a multiple regression was run.



## Results

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics for EFL teachers' teaching efficacy and professional identity, and Table 2 displays the results of Pearson correlation between EFL teachers' teaching efficacy and professional identity.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics for EFL teachers' teaching efficacy and professional identity

	Mean	Std. deviation	N
Teaching efficacy	81.49	15.15	100
Professional identity	29.51	4.52	100

Table 2: Relationship between EFL teachers' teaching efficacy and professional identity

		Professional identity
Teaching efficacy	Pearson correlation	.350**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	100

Based on Table 2, there is a statistically significant positive association ( $r = 0.350$ ,  $N = 100$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) between EFL teachers' teaching efficacy and professional identity. Consequently, the first null hypothesis of the study was rejected.

Regarding the second research question, Table 3 shows the descriptive statistics for EFL teachers' teaching efficacy and institutional identity, and Table 4 displays the results of Pearson correlation between EFL teachers' teaching efficacy and institutional identity.

Table 3: Descriptive statistics for EFL teachers' teaching efficacy and institutional identity

	Mean	Std. deviation	N
Teaching efficacy	81.49	15.15	100
Institutional identity	141.06	16.94	100

Table 4: The relationship between EFL teachers' teaching efficacy and institutional identity

		Institutional identity
Teaching efficacy	Pearson correlation	.245*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.014
	N	100

As can be seen in Table 4, there is a significant positive association ( $r = 0.245$ ,  $N = 100$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) between EFL teachers' teaching efficacy and institutional identity. Accordingly, the second null hypothesis of the study was rejected.

With regard to the third research question, a multiple regression was run in order to identify whether there existed a significant difference between EFL teachers' professional

and institutional identity in predicting their teaching efficacy. Table 5 shows the results of model summary.

Table 5: Results of model summary

Model	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjust. R <sup>2</sup>	SE of estimate	Change statistics				
					R <sup>2</sup> change	F change	df1	df2	Sig. F change
1	.380[a]	.145	.127	14.158	.145	8.209	2	97	.001

[a] Predictors: (Constant), Institutional identity, Professional identity

As is evident from Table 5, approximately 14.5 percent ( $R^2=0.145$ ) of the variation in the predicted variable (i.e., EFL teachers' teaching efficacy) can be predicted by the predictor variables (i.e., teachers' professional and institutional identities). Table 6 shows the results of ANOVA. As can be seen in Table 6, the observed level of significance is smaller than the identified level of significance ( $0.001 < 0.050$ ). Coefficients are presented in Table 7.

Table 6: Results of ANOVA[a]

Model	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	3291.474	2	1645.737	8.209	.001[b]
Residual	19445.516	97	200.469		
Total	22736.990	99			

[a]. Dependent variable: Teaching efficacy

[b]. Predictors: (Constant), Institutional identity, Professional identity

Table 7: Results of coefficients[a]

Model	Unstandardised coefficients		Standardised coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity statistics	
	B	Std. error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	31.721	13.395		2.368	.020		
Professional identity	1.020	.329	.305	3.104	.003	.915	1.092
Institutional identity	.140	.088	.156	1.590	.115	.915	1.092

[a]. Dependent variable: Teaching efficacy

As shown in Table 7, professional identity with  $\beta = 0.30$  and  $t = 3.10$ , was a better predictor of EFL teachers' teaching efficacy. Thus the third hypothesis was rejected.

## Discussion

The first research question of the study attempted to systematically inspect the association between EFL teachers' teaching efficacy and professional identity. The results indicated a significant and positive association between professional identity of EFL teachers and their teaching efficacy. High levels of the educators' professional identity were associated

with high levels of teaching efficacy. Accordingly, not paying necessary consideration to EFL teachers' professional identity in foreign language milieus, in turn, might lead to EFL educators' ineffectiveness in improving their teaching efficacy, which is vital for performing well in different situations. Hence, it can be claimed that the knowledge and consciousness of educators' professional identity is crucial for attaining effective teaching.

One conceivable justification for the findings of the present study might be Tournaki and Podell's (2005) argument that educators' teaching efficacy and professional identity work together to inform educators' beliefs regarding ability to teach students from linguistically and socially different backgrounds, in particular including culturally and/or ethnically diverse students, English language students, and students living in poverty. Furthermore, this explanation can be reinforced by Day, et al.'s (2006) statement that instructors' professional identities are normally constructed not only from practical and sentimental facets of teaching and teachers' personal lives, but similarly from relations between personal participation and the social, cultural, and educational situations which are important features that build up teachers' teaching efficacy.

Additionally, Beijaard, et al., (2000) underlined the relationship between professional development and professional identity, and its implications for issues of instruction such quality. The notion of greater responsibility of the person as a teacher is confirmed and the significance of teaching efficacy and professional development is best seen through its relationship with educators' professional identity (Beijaard, et al., 2000). The findings are also in agreement with those of some studies (e.g., Settlage, Southerland, Smith & Ceglie, 2009) reporting that educators' professional identity is positively related to their efficacy. In linking educators' identity with their efficacy, Settlage, et al., (2009) argued that the educators in their study indicated professional identity of instructor as contributing to a "doubt-free" teaching self".

The systematic inspection of the association between teaching efficacy and institutional identity of EFL teachers was the concern of the second research question. A significant positive correlation between teaching efficacy and institutional identity of EFL teachers was found. Thus, it can be argued that a concentration on the improvement of EFL educators' institutional identity would be advantageous to their teaching efficacy and vice versa. Accordingly, not giving due attention to improving institutional identity in teacher training programs and foreign language teaching, in turn, may bring about educators' ineffectiveness in accomplishing excellence in teaching efficacy that is required in academic situations. One conceivable rationalisation for the findings of the second research question may be Tschannen-Moran and Hoy's (2001) statement that contextual aspects and subject matter influence educators' beliefs in their competence and judgment to effect students' performances. Moreover, as pointed out by Brillhart (2007), both educators' efficacy as well as their institutional identity critically depend on the context and subject matter.

This outcome is in line with the findings of Ghafar Samar, et al., (2011) who reported that teaching efficacy and institutional identity of EFL teachers are significantly related. In addition, it is believed that teachers' professional identity and institutional identity go

along together and are boosted and developed by educators' undergoing the procedures of teaching and professional involvement (Krogan, 2000). Consequently, to summarise this part, the current study as inspected by the second question found that teaching efficacy and institutional identity of EFL teachers are positively correlated.

The last research question intended to identify whether there existed a significant difference between institutional and professional identity in predicting EFL teachers' teaching efficacy. It was concluded that professional identity was a better predictor of teachers' teaching efficacy. Thus, it can be stated that if we want to enhance EFL teachers' teaching efficacy, their professional identity should be improved as well. In other words, one way to develop the EFL instructors' teaching efficacy is the enhancement of their professional identity. According to the findings, it can be argued that teachers' identity on the whole and their professional identity in particular should be given due attention in teaching training programs.

## **Conclusion and implications**

To sum up, this study examined the association between EFL teachers' professional and institutional identity with their teaching efficacy. The findings of the current study revealed that there was a significant and positive relationship between EFL teachers' teaching efficacy and professional identity. In addition, the results indicated that EFL teachers' teaching efficacy and institutional identity were significantly positively related. Additionally, this study indicated that EFL teachers' professional identity was a better predictor of their teaching efficacy. Moreover, it is important to know that the mean score found for Iranian EFL teachers' efficacy in the present study was much lower than those reported by other research studies (e.g., Page, Pendergraft & Wilson, 2014), which is quite disappointing. Thus, it is recommended that different sources of teacher efficacy should be paid greater attention in order to promote Iranian EFL teachers' levels of teaching efficacy. However, the mean scores found for Iranian EFL teachers' professional and institutional identity were quite similar or even higher than those reported by other investigations (e.g., Pilz, 2017), which is encouraging. The significance of the findings with regard to the relationships between the above-mentioned variables lies not only in their contribution to the literature but also in their prominent educational implications for teaching and curriculum development. Consequently, based on the outcomes of the current study, a number of implications are recommended.

The first implication of the present study could be directed primarily to educators and administrators in EFL teacher and instructor development centres, in order to give more consideration to instructors' identity (i.e., professional and institutional identities), and their efficacy (i.e., teaching efficacy) and incorporate these constructs into curriculum to equip and provide those pre-service educators with higher teachers' sense of teaching efficacy, and also better understanding of institutional and professional identities. Besides, the results of the current study might imply that EFL teachers should try to detect the potential sources of their teaching efficacy, professional identity and institutional identity and present some practical strategies which are likely to enhance the degree of their

understanding of these variables. Furthermore, findings of the present study can help teacher educators and curriculum developers grasp a better picture of EFL teacher characteristics (i.e., institutional and professional identity) and its relationship with educational efficacy (i.e., teaching efficacy).

Additionally, this study provides some suggestions for further research. First and foremost, as pointed out by Hall (1968), identity in general is regarded as a concept which is open to interpretation, therefore it is not really fair to measure identity through a questionnaire alone. A key idea for further research is to scrutinise EFL teachers' professional and institutional identity using more open-form instruments (e.g, reflective journals and interviews). In the studies reviewed, the concepts of institutional and professional identity were defined contrariwise or typically not defined at all. In future research on teachers' institutional and professional identities, more consideration needs to be paid to the association between relevant notions such as *identity* and *self*, the role of the setting and context in professional and institutional identity formation, and research perspectives other than the cognitive one. Finally, the present investigation, as an interdisciplinary effort to associate instructor education with social psychology, has focused mainly on just one facet of instructors' features, efficacy. Therefore, further research can be done in order to address other professional characteristics of instructors and their associations with their institutional and professional identity.

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