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Factors Contributing to The Effectiveness of Iranian EFL Teachers: Listening to the Voice of Public Schools students

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ABSTRACT

Since teachers are considered one of the influential elements in the teaching context whose effective practices can lead to the success of the students, many researchers have attempted to identify and extract the factors which make a teacher effective. In a similar vein, this study is an attempt to identify the factors contributing to the effectiveness of Iranian EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teachers from their students' viewpoint. To this aim, 202 public schools students (male=107, female=95) from different cities of Fars province, Iran, filled in a 50-item Likert-type questionnaire on the effective English teachers' characteristics. Data gathered through the questionnaires were subjected to factor analysis to extract the main contributing factors. Results indicated that based on these students' views, eight factors were mainly responsible for making an EFL teacher effective. A comparison of the importance attributed to each factor by the students made it clear that teachers' *Socio-affective Skills* was considered as the most important factor. Furthermore, less and more motivated students held different views regarding the importance of these factors too. Results of the study along with their implications for the theory and practice of English teaching as well as teacher training and professional development programs are also discussed.

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Students' learning can ideally be considered the ultimate goal of any type of instruction including language pedagogy and the use of any strategy or teaching behavior which contributes to this learning can be justified on this ground. This makes listening to students' beliefs about the most effective teaching strategies leading to their success in language learning a fruitful area of enquiry. A plethora of studies investigated effective teachers' characteristics from diverse perspectives; while some studied this issue from teachers' point of view (e.g., Korkmaz & Korkmaz, 2013; Sandholtz, 2011), some other examined students' perceptions (e.g., Ekin & Damar, 2013; Ghasemi & Hashemi, 2011) and still others attempted to

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compare these two groups' perspectives (e.g., Babai Shishavan & Sadeghi, 2009; Brosh, 1996; Brown, 2009; Moradi & Sabeti, 2014; Park & Lee, 2006; Ramazani, 2015). Nevertheless, no study has, to date, attempted to systematically extract the factors which contribute to effective teaching practices from Iranian EFL students' viewpoints.

Since teachers are considered cornerstones of the teaching practicum and students' success is largely dependent on their effectiveness (Campbell, Kyriakides, Muijs & Robinson, 2004; Rockoff, 2004; Siedentop & Yinger, 2006), many researchers have tried to identify the characteristics of effective teachers in general and effective language teachers in particular. Brosh (1996), for instance, defined effective language teachers as those who have sufficient knowledge of the target language, can organize, explain and elaborate, and are fair as well as available to their students. Although both students and teachers shared the same view regarding enough knowledge of the target language, they held different views on some other aspects. For example, whereas for teachers developing motivation as well as research orientation were important, for their students, teachers' fairness and their ability to make the lessons interesting were more significant. In another study, Brown (2009), attempting to compare teachers and students' perceptions of effective language teachers, conducted a study on Arizona University teachers as well as their students. He made use of a Likert-type 24-item questionnaire covering different areas of English teaching to collect the participants' ideas. Significant differences were observed in areas such as the use of the target language, error correction, and group work. That is to say, while the students believed that a grammar-based approach was more productive, their teachers tended to favor a more communicative approach in the classroom.

In the context of Iran, Ghasemi and Hashemi (2011) examined the characteristics of effective English teachers as perceived by 200 Hamedan Islamic Azad University students. To collect the necessary data, they made use of a Likert-type questionnaire consisting of 50 items. They found that students held diverse views on effective teaching. Hence, the high achieving and the low achieving students as well as the male and the female ones held diverse perspectives on this issue. However, results of their study can be called into question given that they have not made any mention of the way they have analyzed their data in this study.

More recently, Ramazani (2015) examined effective English teachers' characteristics from 121 teachers and 348 students' viewpoint in Urmia universities, Iran. Results of his study revealed a great mismatch between teachers and students' ideas. Teachers thought that English proficiency was more important; students, on the other hand, perceived pedagogical knowledge as more significant. He also reported disparities between high achieving and low achieving students' views as well as female and male students' perspectives.

Besides university contexts, some other researchers were interested in uncovering high school teachers and students' perceptions about English teachers' effectiveness. In Korea, for instance, Park and Lee (2006) administered a questionnaire to gather the participants' ideas. They found that teachers and students had different perspectives in all three sections of the questionnaire; that is, English proficiency, pedagogical knowledge, and socio-affective skills. Furthermore, while for the teachers English proficiency was the most important, the students believed that pedagogical knowledge was the main characteristic.

Even though high school teachers and students' perceptions of effective English teachers were by no means neglected in the context of Iran, no single study has been devoted to their views. To put it more clearly, even the studies conducted by Babai Shishavan and Sadeghi (2009) and Moradi and Sabeti (2014) which took students' views into consideration did not make any distinctions among diverse groups of people's ideas. That is to say, in the former study, the researchers recruited the participants from universities, high schools and language institutes whereas in the latter one, the participants were recruited from language institutes and universities if it is justified to assume that, in Iran, the majority of language institute students are simultaneously high school students too. These drawbacks cast doubts on the results

of such studies and point out the need to conduct more systematic studies on the issue especially in the context of Iran. That being so, the current study is an attempt to fill the existing lacuna in the literature by focusing on Iranian high school students' ideas about effective language teachers' qualities.

2. Method

2.1. Aim of the Study

Given the fact that learners' perceptions can greatly influence their achievement (Williams & Burden, 1997) and their 'beliefs about language learning seem to have obvious relevance to their understanding of the course expectations, their commitment to the class ...' (Horwitz, 1988 cited in Moradi & Sabeti, 2014, p. 1205), it seems quite reasonable to investigate their perceptions and beliefs in general and their beliefs about effective language teachers' characteristics in particular. Moreover, as mentioned by Oxford et al. (1991 cited in Rifkin, 2000), when learners' beliefs about language learning are different from those of their instructors, the results can be disastrous. Hence, 'in order to develop plans to overcome learners' counterproductive beliefs about foreign language learning, we must first understand exactly what those beliefs are' (Rifkin, 2000, p. 394). In response to these calls for more studies on this issue, the present study intends to seek answers to the following research questions:

1. Which factors contribute to the effectiveness of Iranian public schools EFL teachers from their students' viewpoint?
2. How important are these factors from Iranian high school students' point of view?
3. How do more motivated and less motivated students' perceptions compare in terms of the importance attributed to these factors?

2.2. Participants

A convenient sample of 202 public schools students (male = 107, female = 95) were recruited to take part in the study. They were from nine schools (one junior high school, N=18 and eight senior high schools, N=184) from different cities of Fars province, Iran, namely, Darab (three schools, 78 students), Fasa (two schools, 29 students), and Shiraz (four schools, 95 students) who were studying English as a compulsory subject. All of them spoke Persian as their mother tongue and their age ranged from 13 to 18 years old.

2.3. Instruments

Attempting to identify and extract the factors which contribute to the effectiveness of Iranian EFL teachers from their students' viewpoints, the present study made use of a 50-item Likert-type questionnaire the items of which were chosen from existing instruments on teacher effectiveness (Babai Shishavan & Sadeghi, 2009; Babai Shishavan, 2010; Brown, 2009; Moradi & Sabeti, 2014) and adapted for the purposes of the current study. The items were placed randomly in the questionnaire and the participants were asked to rate the importance of each statement as an attribute of an effective English teacher on a Likert-type scale format, ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Strongly agree was coded 5 while strongly disagree received 1. At the end of the questionnaire, the students were further asked to evaluate their own motivation for learning English by choosing one of the four alternatives provided: (1) I am not at all motivated. (2) I am a bit motivated. (3) I am almost motivated. (4) I am completely motivated. Based on their responses to this question, the students were classified into two

groups of less and more motivated learners; that is, those who had chosen (1) and (2) were considered as less motivated and the ones who had selected (3) and (4) as more motivated students. Then, the perceptions of these two groups of students regarding the characteristics of effective English teachers were compared.

The researchers' familiarity with the context of the study led to the assumption that Iranian high school students were not proficient enough to be able to understand English sentences perfectly well which raised doubts about the use of an English questionnaire and made them translate it into the students' mother tongue (Persian). Moreover, after translating it into Persian, they asked one of their colleagues who was a native speaker of Persian and proficient enough (an advanced-level student) in English to back-translate it into English in order for them to ensure the validity of the translated version. Furthermore, the attempt to elicit students' perceptions made it vital to use a questionnaire comprehensible to low-proficient young learners making the researchers avoid using any technical jargon. They also focused mainly on the concrete practical aspects of teaching rather than the abstract theoretical ones. Additionally, the reliability of the questionnaire was estimated using Cranach alpha's formula whose index was .73 which was acceptable (DeVellis, 2003) for the purposes of the current study.

2.4. Data Collection and Analysis Procedures

The second researcher administered the questionnaire to the students and was present in the session to answer any probable questions they might have had and remove any ambiguities concerning the items of the questionnaire. After gathering the required data, the 50 items of the teacher effectiveness questionnaire were subjected to principle components analysis (PCA) with Varimax rotation extraction method using SPSS version 19. Prior to performing PCA, the suitability of the data for factor analysis was examined. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value was .641, exceeding the recommended value of 0.6 (Kaiser 1970, 1974 as cited in Pallant, 2011) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (Barlett, 1954 as cited in Pallant, 2011) reached statistical significance ($p = .000$), supporting the factorability of the correlation matrix.

3. Results and Discussions

As mentioned above, to extract the factors contributing to Iranian EFL teachers' effectiveness, it was, first, necessary to ensure and verify that factor analysis was a suitable statistical procedure for the current data set. Hence, to this aim, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (KMO) as well as the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity were checked. Table 1 presents the results of these two tests.

Table 1
KMO and Bartlett's test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy	.641
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square
	df
	Sig.
	6618.336
	1225
	.000

As revealed in the above table, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy was .641 which was above .6 and the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was highly significant since the significance level was .000 which was smaller than .001. These results helped us verify that factor analysis was appropriate for our current purposes. After ensuring the suitability of the procedure, it was necessary to determine how many factors (or components) to extract. By considering Kaiser's criterion, the researchers were only interested in components that had an eigenvalue of 1 or more. To determine how many components met

this criterion, we needed to consider the Total Variance Explained table. By looking at the Initial Eigenvalues, we found out that only the first fifteen components recorded eigenvalues above 1 (7.796 to 1.022). These fifteen components explained a total of 76.124 percent of the variance.

It is worth mentioning that using the Kaiser criterion will often result in the extraction of a large number of components. Therefore, it was also important to look at the Screeplot to examine the change or elbow in the shape of the plot (Figure 1). As shown in this figure, there was quite a clear break between the ninth and the tenth components which pointed up the fact that the first nine components explained or captured much more of the variance than the remaining components. On the basis of this plot, the researchers decided to retain or extract just nine components. Then, they considered the Component Matrix table which showed the unrotated loadings of each of the items on the nine components. Considering the fact that using the Kaiser criterion, SPSS, as the default, retains all the components with eigenvalues above 1, we looked at this table and found out that most of the items loaded quite strongly (above $-.303$) on the first nine components. This suggested that a nine-factor solution was likely to be more appropriate.

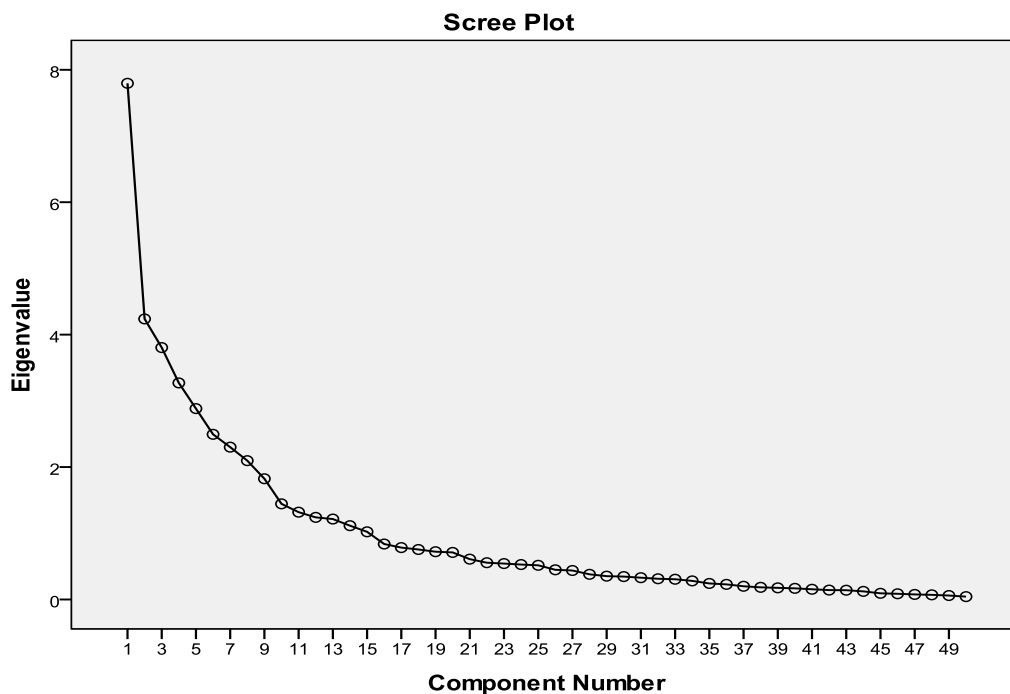


Figure 1. Screeplot

Before making a final decision concerning the number of factors, the researchers also examined the rotated fifteen-factor solution shown in the Rotated Component Matrix table. This table showed the items loading on the fifteen factors with ten factors loading above $.463$ on Component 1, five items loading on Component 2, four items on Component 3, four items on Component 4, three items on Component 5, four items on Component 7, five items on Component 9, and three on Component 13 while no items loaded on components 6, 8, 10, 11, 12, 14, and 15. Ideally, we would like three or more items loading on each component; therefore, it was concluded that this solution was not optimal making us force an eight-factor solution. Table 2 on page 65 shows the results of this latter solution.

As indicated in this table, thirteen items (i.e., items 33, 34, 42, 45, 46, 30, 43, 35, 39, 36, 29, 38, and 44) with factor loadings above $.424$ loaded on the first factor. The items concerned the way teachers treat

as well as their behavior towards their students; therefore, this factor was labeled *Socio-affective Skills*. The second factor was named *Teaching Procedures* because the items concerning how the teachers should teach English loaded on this factor (i.e., items 22, 16, 25, 12, 21, and 1). The third factor was defined by six items (i.e., 47, 26, 28, 27, 32, and 40) whose factor loadings were above .486. This factor was labeled *Understanding and Building Students' Confidence*. The next factor, factor four, was defined by seven items (i.e., items 6, 37, 15, 20, 5, 41, and 18) with factor loadings above .426. Since these items were concerned with creating a relaxed and friendly classroom environment, this factor was named *Creating a Non-threatening Classroom Atmosphere*. Factor five constituted five items (i.e., 23, 14, 13, 24, and 17) whose factor loadings were above .507 which was called *Focus on Students' Oral Proficiency*. Four items loaded on the sixth factor with factor loadings above .628 (i.e., 4, 9, 2, and 3) which was labeled *Knowledge of the Foreign Culture*. The seventh factor constituted four items (i.e., 49, 31, 50, and 48) whose factor loadings were above .434. This factor was called *Personalizing Instruction*. As for the last factor, five items (i.e., 8, 7, 11, 19, and 10) with factor loadings above .415 loaded on this factor which was named *Feedback Method*.

By taking the above findings into consideration, we can answer the first research question of this study. That is, results indicated that, from Iranian EFL students' point of view, eight factors were likely to contribute to the effectiveness of English teachers. These factors were teachers' *Socio-affective Skills*, *Teaching Procedures*, *Understanding and Building Students' Confidence*, *Creating a Non-threatening Classroom Atmosphere*, *Focus on Students' Oral Proficiency*, *Knowledge of the Foreign Culture*, *Personalizing Instruction*, and *Feedback Method*. Since, as mentioned before, no systematic study has been conducted in the context of Iran to extract the factors considered to be likely to make English teachers effective, these findings can pave the way for more studies on the issue to shed more light on the influential factors leading to EFL teachers' effectiveness as perceived by their students. After identifying these factors, to answer the second research question and find how important each factor was from the students' standpoint, the mean distribution and standard deviation of each factor were calculated and compared which appear in the next table on page 66.

As revealed in Table 3, teachers' socio-affective skills (Factor One, Mean=18.94, SD=5.50), their ability to create a non-threatening classroom atmosphere (Factor Four, Mean=15.47, SD=2.33), their teaching procedures (Factor Two, Mean=13.90, SD=4.03), focus on students' oral proficiency (Factor Five, Mean=10.90, SD=2.01), feedback method (Factor Eight, Mean=10.10, SD=2.71), understanding and building students' confidence (Factor Three, Mean=8.29, SD=1.94), knowledge of the foreign culture (Factor Six, Mean=6.68, SD=2.18), and personalizing instruction (Factor Seven, Mean=6.42, SD=1.29) were respectively considered the most to the least important factors contributing to teachers' effectiveness by the participants of the present study.

Although no study in the Iranian context has to date explored this issue in a systematic manner, the fact that the present participants regarded teachers' *Socio-affective Skills* as the most important characteristic of effective EFL teachers can convincingly corroborate the results of Babai Shishavan and Sadeghi's (2009) and Ghasemi and Hashemi's (2011) research because in their studies, the students participating in the surveys gave more weight to the characteristics relating to teachers' personality and their behavior towards their students.

Table 2
Results of factor analysis

Items	Components							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
q33	.877							
q34	.869							
q42	.779							
q45	.721							
q46	.683							
q30	.672							
q43	.643							
q35	.597							
q39	.573							
q36	.558							
q29	.508							
q38	.493							
q44	.424							
q22		.739						
q16		.711						
q25		.697						
q12		.696						
q21		.692						
q1		-.374						
q47			.684					
q26			.658					
q28			.580					
q27			.574					
q32			.527					
q40			.486					
q6				-.722				
q37				.605				
q15				-.592				
q20				-.587				
q5				-.572				
q41				.476				
q18				.426				
q23					.697			
q14					.658			
q13					.598			
q24					.542			
q17					-.507			
q4						.772		
q9						.741		
q2						.687		
q3						.628		
q49							-.619	
q31							.563	
q50							-.535	
q48							-.434	
q8								.708
q7								.561
q11								.555
q19								.472
q10								.415

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 28 iterations.

Table 3.

Mean and standard deviation of each factor

Factor	Mean	SD
One (Socio-affective Skills)	18.94	5.50
Four (Creating a Non-threatening Classroom Atmosphere)	15.47	2.33
Two (Teaching Procedures)	13.90	4.03
Five (Focus on Students' Oral Proficiency)	10.90	2.01
Eight (Feedback Method)	10.10	2.71
Three (Understanding and Building Students' Confidence)	8.29	1.94
Six (Knowledge of the Foreign Culture)	6.68	2.18
Seven (Personalizing Instruction)	6.42	1.29

N = 202

Nevertheless, the same findings are in contrast to what Ramazani found in 2015 in the context of Iran. The results of his study showed that from the students' point of view, teachers' *Socio-affective Skills* received the lowest weight indicating that for those participants, teachers' subject matter knowledge as well as their teaching methodology were considered as more significant. However, these disparities between the findings of Ramazani and the current study can be explained and justified on the grounds that he recruited the participants of his study from universities whereas the present study was mainly concerned with high school students' ideas and perceptions. Therefore, examining the same issue from two different angles, the two studies could have been envisaged to lead to diverse results. Additionally, being more mature than high school students, university students are likely to be more concerned about their teachers' subject matter knowledge as well as their teaching methodology than their *Socio-affective Skills*. High schools students, on the other hand, might be more emotionally susceptible expecting more emotional and affective support from their teachers. This divergence points to the fact that different groups of students might have diverse ideas regarding the characteristics of effective EFL teachers which highlights the importance of conducting further studies in this regard.

It is worth mentioning that this finding contradicts the results of Park and Lee's (2006) study which investigated the characteristics of effective English teachers from high school students' perspective in Korea. While Iranian high school students in the present study perceived that EFL teachers' *Socio-affective Skills* was the most important factor contributing to the effectiveness of those teachers, Korean high school students gave the lowest weight to this factor in comparison to a teacher's pedagogical knowledge and English proficiency. This controversy might be explicable on the grounds that the two contexts were different from each other which points up the fact that the results of different studies might be context-specific meaning that those of one study in a specific context might not be generalizable to other seemingly similar contexts (two EFL contexts). This issue, in fact, merits further attention and investigation of researchers in the future studies. Nevertheless, despite this overall discrepancy, in the same manner that all the groups in Park and Lee's study believed arousing students' motivation and self-confidence are very important to teaching, the student sample in the present study, too, pointed to the role of increasing students' motivation and self-confidence as significant factors in teacher effectiveness. In a similar vein, the participants in both studies believed that listening to students' opinions can be considered a characteristic of effective English teachers.

As the last part of the study, less motivated and more motivated students' perceptions regarding effective English teachers' characteristics were compared. To save space, Table 4 presents the means and SDs of the two groups regarding the importance of each factor as an attribute of an effective English teacher.

Table 4

Mean and standard deviation of each factor for less and more motivated students

Factor	More motivated (N=168)		Less motivated (N=34)	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
One	18.26	4.23	22.32	8.94
Two	13.88	3.91	14	4.65
Three	8.41	2	7.73	1.48
Four	15.69	2.29	14.41	2.31
Five	10.89	1.78	10.97	2.93
Six	6.68	2.05	6.70	2.73
Seven	6.35	1.30	6.76	1.20
Eight	10.01	2.73	10.52	2.65

To uncover which of these differences were statistically significant, the researchers performed a series of t-tests. Since several t-tests ($N = 8$) were simultaneously run, a Bonferroni adjustment was made on the basis of which the level of significance was set at .006 meaning that p values less than this were considered statistically significant. Table 5 reveals the results of these t-tests.

Table 5

The results of t tests ($p < .006$)

Factor	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
One	-4.069*	200	.000
Two	-.149	200	.882
Three	1.861	200	.064
Four	2.965*	200	.003
Five	-.204	200	.838
Six	-.052	200	.959
Seven	-1.711	200	.089
Eight	-1.000	200	.318

A close inspection of Table 4 made it clear that among these eight factors, for more motivated students, just two factors, factors three (*Understanding and Building Students' Confidence*: More motivated: Mean=8.41, SD=2; Less motivated: Mean=7.73, SD=1.48) and four (*Creating a Non-threatening Classroom Atmosphere*: More motivated: Mean=15.69, SD=2.29; Less motivated: Mean=14.41, SD=2.31) were considered more important in comparison to their less motivated counterparts' perspective. Table 5, however, shows that the difference between these two groups regarding the third factor was not statistically significant although with respect to the fourth one, this difference was significant at .006 level ($t=2.965^*$, $p=.003$) indicating that for more motivated students, an English teacher should be able to create a non-threatening classroom environment to be considered effective. To the best of the present researchers' knowledge, however, no study has investigated the perceptions of more and less motivated students in terms of the importance of this factor as an attribute of an effective English teacher. Hence, further research is needed in the future to shed more light on the differences in perceptions of these two groups of students.

Concerning the remaining factors, as depicted in Table 4, factors one (*Socio-affective Skills*: More motivated: Mean=18.26, SD=4.23; Less motivated: Mean=22.32; SD=8.94), two (*Teaching Procedures*: More motivated: Mean=13.88, SD=3.91; Less motivated: Mean=14, SD=4.65), five (*Focus on Students' Oral Proficiency*: More motivated: Mean=10.89, SD=1.78; Less motivated: Mean=10.97, SD=2.93), six (*Knowledge of the Foreign Culture*: More motivated: Mean=6.68, SD=2.05; Less motivated: Mean=6.70, SD=2.73), seven (*Personalizing Instruction*: More motivated: Mean=6.35, SD=1.30; Less motivated: Mean=6.76, SD=1.20) and eight (*Feedback Method*: More motivated: Mean=10.01, SD=2.73; Less motivated: Mean=10.52, SD=2.65) were perceived as more important for less motivated students in comparison to their more motivated peers'

ideas. Nevertheless, the difference between the means of the two groups was just statistically significant for the first factor, *Socio-affective Skills* ($t=-4.069^*$, $p=.000$). Hence, less motivated students thought that effective English teachers should be capable of creating and maintaining a positive and friendly relationship with their students which can be supported by what motivation studies have revealed. Hsu's findings (2008), for instance, showed that students' motivation for learning English was likely to be enhanced when the teacher utilized the following behaviors: smile, gesture, a relaxed body position, a variety of vocal expressions, and a monotone voice while teaching. Gu (2009) and Rashidi, Rahimi, and Alimorad (2013, 2014), too, found that students and teachers' interpersonal relationships in the immediate learning community context could be considered as an influential factor contributing to students' motivation construction which highlights the importance of teachers' *Socio-affective Skills* from less motivated students' point of view.

All in all, results of this part of the study indicated that less motivated students had many more expectations of their English teachers as compared to their more motivated counterparts. That is, while the former group attributed more importance to six factors out of eight, for the latter group, two factors were considered more significant in comparison to their peers' viewpoints. Since no study, to date, has examined this issue from such a perspective, further studies are needed to confirm or dispute this finding.

4. Conclusions

Intended to identify and extract the factors which contribute to Iranian EFL teachers' effectiveness, the present study made use of a 50-item Likert-type questionnaire which was administered to 202 students studying English as a compulsory subject at public high schools of Iran. Results of factor analysis showed that overall eight factors were responsible for making an English teacher effective from these students' viewpoint; namely, teachers' *Socio-affective Skills*, *Teaching Procedures*, *Understanding and Building Students' Confidence*, *Creating a Non-threatening Classroom Atmosphere*, *Focus on Students' Oral Proficiency*, *Knowledge of the Foreign Culture*, *Personalizing Instruction*, and *Feedback Method*. Among all these eight factors, however, all of the students believed that the first factor, *Socio-affective Skills*, was the most contributing one. However, while for more motivated students, factors three and four were considered more influential than the rest of them, less motivated students thought that the remaining six factors were more pivotal. Nevertheless, the mean differences were just significant for the first and the fourth factors. Due to the fact that no previous studies in the Iranian context have systematically investigated this issue, an urgent need is felt for more studies on the perceptions of less and more motivated students regarding the characteristics of effective English teachers.

4.1. Implications

Considering the importance of learners' perceptions in their ultimate success (Williams & Burden, 1997), the current study can have both theoretical and practical implications for language teaching researchers as well as practitioners. With respect to the present study's theoretical implications, we can make use of the results of this study to develop and formulate a working theory of curriculum design (Nation & Macalister, 2010) which encompasses the diversity of students' needs in different language teaching contexts around the world or to modify any existing theories. From the practical point of view, results of this study can inform EFL teachers of the perceptions held by their students regarding what they expect from them as effective English teachers and help them develop professionally as a practitioner. By being aware of their students' perceptions, they can develop, refine or modify their teaching behaviors, techniques, and strategies to accommodate all students' needs, wants, and preferences, thereby improving and enhancing their students' learning potential.

4.2. Limitations and Suggestions for Further Studies

Obviously, no study is perfect and each suffers from different drawbacks. Of course, this study is by no means an exception because of having a number of shortcomings and problems. The first and foremost shortcoming of the present study is the lack of random sampling procedures which limits the generalizability of its results. From a practical point of view, it was not possible for the researchers to recruit the participants randomly and therefore, they had to choose the students based on a convenient sampling procedure by selecting those students who were available to them. The second problem was the fact that the present researchers did not make any distinction between junior and senior high school students since one class was chosen from a junior high school while the rest of the participants were senior high school students.

Considering these shortcomings, future research can take special measures to alleviate some of the above-mentioned problems by, for instance, randomly choosing the participants from a population of public high school students. Moreover, further studies can be done in the future which compare the perceptions held by high school teachers and their students or public high school students and private institute language learners. Also, some studies can examine and investigate the perception-practice interface to see whether what the students or teachers perceive as the characteristics of effective English teachers are in line with what the English teachers actually do in real classroom situations. Future studies can also delve deeply into the underlying assumptions and ideologies behind teachers and students' perceptions of effective English teachers.

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