



كلية التربية

كلية معتمدة من الهيئة القومية لضمان جودة التعليم

إدارة: البحوث والنشر العلمي (المجلة العلمية)

=====

Teacher Agency for inclusive Practices, Professional Skills, and School Support among EFL Teachers: A Comparative Study

Submitted by

(1) Dr. Hanan Ahmad Abdel-Hafez Mahmoud

**Associate Professor of Curricula and Methods of Teaching English-
Faculty of Education- Assuit University**

(2) Prof. Mahmoud Mohamed Emam

**Professor of Special Education Sultan Qaboos University,
Sultanate of Oman**

﴿ المجلد السابع والثلاثون - العدد العاشر - أكتوبر ٢٠٢١ م ﴾

http://www.aun.edu.eg/faculty_education/arabic

ملخص البحث

يُعد تدريس الطلبة ذوي الإعاقة في فصول الدمج من القضايا التي تشغل صانعي ومنفذي السياسات التعليمية، لما تمثله هذه الفئة من مصدر للضغوط على المعلمين نظرا لاحتياجاتهم التعليمية المتنوعة. وتعد المتغيرات النفسية المرتبطة بأداء المعلم مثل الكفاءة الذاتية، والاتجاهات والدافعية من العوامل التي تساعد المعلم على أداء دوره على أكمل وجه. ومن ثم هدفت الدراسة الحالية إلى دراسة متغير حديث نسبيا في الأدب البحثي وهو المبادرة لدى المعلم وعلاقتها بمهاراته المهنية والدعم الذي يتلقاه في المدرسة وذلك في بيئتين عربيتين مختلفتين، هما مصر وعمان. وقد استخدمت الدراسة المنهج الوصفي الارتباطي، واشتملت عينة الدراسة على ٢٥٥ (٤٠% ذكور، ٦٠% إناث) معلما من مصر ١٣٣ (٢٦% ذكور، ٧٤% إناث) معلما من سلطنة عمان في مدارس التعليم العام الدامجة. وقد استخدمت الدراسة مقياس الكفاءة المهنية للمعلم والذي يقيس مبادأة المعلم والمهارات المهنية ومقياس دعم المعلم متعدد الأبعاد. وقد أظهرت نتائج الدراسة عدم وجود تأثير لمتغير البلد (مصر-عمان) على العلاقة بين المبادرة والمهارات المهنية للمعلم، ووجود تأثير وسيط للدعم المهني في العلاقة بين مبادأة المعلم، والمهارات المهنية. وأن متغير البلد (مصر-عمان) يدير تأثير الدعم المهني على العلاقة بين مبادأة المعلم والمهارات المهنية. وتم مناقشة النتائج وتضميناتها في ضوء الأدب النظري والسياق البيئي.

الكلمات المفتاحية:

مبادأة المعلم- ممارسات الدمج- المهارات المهنية- الدعم المدرسي- الطلبة ذوي الإعاقة - جمهورية مصر العربية- سلطنة عمان

Abstract

Teaching students with disability in inclusive classroom is one of the issues that preoccupied both policymakers and implementors due to diverse needs-related stress those students place on teachers 'shoulders. Teacher related psychological variables are amongst the factors that have an impact on his/her performance such as self-efficacy, attitudes and motivation. The current study examines one recent variable, namely teacher agency in relation to professional skills and school support. Convenience sampling was employed to recruit teachers to participate in the study in both Egypt and Oman. In Oman, 133 teachers submitted their responses (26% males, 74% females), while in Egypt 225 (40% males, 60% females) teachers responded to the survey. The researchers used Teacher Professional Competence Scale (TPCS) and The Multidimensional Teacher Support Scale. Results of the study showed that both Egypt and Oman did not moderate the association between teacher agency and professional skills, professional support mediates the association between teacher agency and professional skills, and the two countries (Egypt, Oman) moderate the mediating role of professional support on the association between teacher agency and professional skills. Implications of the study are discussed in the light of the related literature and cultural relevance.

Keywords: Teacher agency, professional skills, school support, students with disability, Oman, Egypt

Introduction:

The primary goal of teachers should be to ensure that all children can learn to their maximum potential. Teachers must become accustomed to the different teaching methods in order to deal with diversity in the classroom and the teaching method must be individualized taking into account the needs of the students. Diversity is a distinguishing feature of a classroom that results from differences in students' levels, interest, gender, abilities, social and cultural background and various difficulties and learning disabilities as ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) and Dyslexia (Carranza & Rodriguez, 2017). Teaching English as a foreign language to students with special educational needs (SEN) remains more challenging and, therefore, EFL teachers need to be well-equipped with knowledge, skills, and dispositions to be able to address such a challenging task (Carranza & Rodriguez, 2017). Dispositions include such constructs as attitudes, self-efficacy, motivation, and, more recently, agency.

Research on teacher professional development and school reform has recently given a growing attention to the role of teacher agency. Recently, there has been a focus on the development of the concept of teacher agency (Biesta, Priestley & Robinson, 2015). This focus is due to several reasons; first, perception of significant and agentic role of teachers as they carry out the task of imitating and managing change in professional development, school reform and improvement. Second, continuous change in professional and school development encourages the enlightenment of teachers' agentic role in professional development and school reform as this role relates to such major issues (Etelapleto et al., 2013; Priestly et al., 2012). Third, there is growing interest in the role of the teachers' work setting in professional development and school reform (Hoekstra et al., 2009; Meirink et al., 2010). Teachers' learning

for professional and scholastic development is embedded in their everyday work environments. Hence, recently developed insights in the agency's role in work environment can help understand the processes and outcomes of professional development (Billett, 2008; Evans, 2017). There is limited research on teacher agency for inclusive education in the Arab region (Emam, Al-Balushi, 2021). The current study, therefore, is an attempt to conduct a cross-cultural examination of teacher agency for inclusive education in two Arab countries, namely Egypt and Oman.

Theoretical Background and Review of Literature:

Teacher Agency:

The term agency is defined from different perspectives when applied to teachers, for example Hilferty (2008:167) stresses the capacity of teachers, seeing agency as the power of teachers (individually and collectively) to intentionally direct their working lives within structurally defined boundaries. Alternatively, others such as Etelapelto et al., (2013) emphasize teachers' actions and propose that agentic behavior involves taking a stand and influencing practice. Whereas, others define agency as a combination of capacities and actions. For instance, Soini et al., (2015) view agency as an ever-evolving capacity that includes active efforts to make choices and implement deliberate actions in ways that make a big difference. Educational studies, practices and strategies have always focused on the idea of teachers as active school-wide agents of change in order to improve teaching and learning (Toom et al., 2015; Datnow, 2012). Research has dealt with the idea of teacher agency to clarify teachers' active efforts in taking intended action and making decisions in order to make a significant difference (Toom et al., 2015). Biesta et al., (2015) used teacher agency to refer to the roles, functions and capacities of teachers in educational processes. Teachers are agents who can play a vital role in enhancing the quality of teaching and learning outcomes in any educational system. Thus, teacher agency is an important component of educational processes (Insulader, et al., 2019).

Teacher Agency Dr. Hanan Ahmad Abdel-Hafez Mahmoud
Dr. Mahmoud Mohamed Emam

There is a recent tendency to recognize the importance of teacher agency specially their active participation in directing and designing their teaching practices (Lipponen & Kumpulainen, 2011; Quinn & Carl, 2015). Tom et al., (2015) recognize that teachers' agency advances students' learning and facilitates their professional development. Teachers play a main role in professional development, school improvement and school reform programs, in addition to schools and classroom environments where these programs are supposed to be efficiently presented. In these situations, teacher's agency is an integral part of varied and multi-level work environments. In areas of professional development or school reform program, teachers are supposed to contribute in implementing improvements in their classrooms and school practices. In order to recognize aimed changes, both professional development and school reform programs try to make teachers engage individually or as a team in developing knowledge and skills for new work practices. Schools as workplaces provide opportunities for teachers to change their practices in specified ways. At the same time, teachers evoke how they participate in classroom and school activities supported and guided by the work environment (Billett, 2004). Tynjala (2013) stated that active participation in and enactment of these opportunities is considered essential component of teacher's change in the work environment. The relationship between the individual and the organization is a reciprocal relation as one cannot understand how teachers enact professional development and school reform without considering teachers' interaction with their work environments (Lee & Roth, 2007).

Teacher Agency and Professional Development:

The socio-cultural viewpoint about agency provides a great opportunity to recognize the role of teacher agency in professional development and school reform as association between the individual and the social context is major (Giddens, 1984). Teacher agency is recognized in socio-cultural constraints such as; nationwide and school curriculum, competent and strong relationship between colleagues and management and school predominant culture. Teacher agency is also surrounded by available resources as classroom materials, teaching methods and ICT devices. Though, such constrains and surrounders are not fully out of teachers' control. Based on teachers' interpretation of those contextual constrains and surrounders, and on their agency, teachers act the environments inside and outside the school (Biesta et al., 2015). Weick (2001) maintained that teachers' enactment relates to the role they play as school organizational members, creating the context in which they work and which consequently puts constraints and boundaries on them.

Teachers' exercise of professional agency undergoes the influence of school structures and cultures. The exercise of agency is also closely connected with personal preferences, identities and subjectivities and is affected by previous experiences and habits, future orientations and engagement with present (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998). Personal preferences, identities and subjectivities can lead individuals to exercise agency in a selective way with different involvement levels that affect what gets learned or changed through their involvement (Billet, 2004). Vahasantanen (2015) maintained that professional agency is affected by both individual and sociocultural resources. The concept of agency is based on the understanding that people do not just react to and repeat specific practices, instead, they have the ability to work independently,

Teacher Agency Dr. Hanan Ahmad Abdel-Hafez Mahmoud
Dr. Mahmoud Mohamed Emam

intentionally transforming and refining their worlds and taking control of their lives. Deriving from socio-cognitive theory which views people as agents of experiences rather than merely subject to experiences, agency can be thought of as a combination of intention and action that influences experience (Bandura, 2001). Agency constitutes and drives direction and course of action. It includes aptitudes, belief systems, self-management capabilities and the functions through which personal influence is exerted (Wilson & Deaney, 2010).

There is a robust research evidence that in order to have a complete conception of the teaching profession, there is a need to understand how teachers can and do exert their agency in their classes, schools, communities and profession. It is necessary that novice teachers' preparation programs should include explicit discussions of teacher agency as more than half of them need support since they are anticipated to quit the job in their first five years (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 2007). Emirbayer and Mische (1998) maintained that agency can result from "projective" or "practical evaluative" activities. Agency projective element refers to individuals' reshaping of current understandings and actions to establish future attainable approaches that will achieve their intended outcomes. In contrary to this, agency practical evaluative element refers to "the capacity of actors to make practical and normative judgments among alternative possible trajectories of action, in response to the emerging demands, dilemmas, and ambiguities of presently evolving situations" (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998:971). The primary aim of practical evaluative agents is to make daily decisions about suitable practice to solve immediate work dilemmas (Scott, 1994).

Schon (2018) defines teacher agency as teachers' manifestation of the capacity to act to resolve instructional problems and/or challenges. Some consider it as an intuitive quality people are born with, whereas others see it as an emergent phenomenon, a step that can be accomplished through interaction of teacher capacity and school conditions. Biesta (2014) maintained that agency refers to something teachers do, not something that they have, it is the teachers' active contribution in sharing their work and its conditions. Calvert (2016) defines teacher agency as teachers' capability to act intentionally and positively to guide or manage their professional development and make learning choices to reach their goals. Schon (2018) specified teacher qualities that establish the foundations of teacher agency such as; self-efficacy, self-confidence, self-awareness, professional competence, a need to be a change agent, and an ability to build up and preserve positive relationships mostly under difficult circumstances.

To conclude, the idea of teacher agency in relation to teacher professional development and professional skills emphasizes the teacher as an active agent, as a person who acts with free will and independence, in new and innovative ways. This entails a vision through which teachers exercise influence, choose and take positions that affect their work. Educators exercise agency for specific goals and within specific social, cultural and material circumstances which can create both opportunities and constraints (Insulader, et al., 2019). Accumulated research evidence indicates that teachers and the teaching profession are key elements to the success of education reforms. As teachers have the responsibilities of implementing school-wide curriculum and policies, their role in this capacity is necessary for reforms that achieve set objectives (Altinyelken, 2010-2013; Assie-Lumumba, 2012; Bantwini

Teacher Agency for Inclusive Education:

Teachers are able to and should play a powerful important role in fostering social inclusion, social justice, and equity for all learners (Alter, 2013). There is a rising interest among scholars in teacher agency and its significance, though theoretical and practical understanding of teacher agency is still unattainable (Li and Ruppard, 2020). Anderson (2010) and Priestley et al., (2012) maintained that teachers are deemed to be the most important agent influencing the development of educational policy, applying policy in their classrooms and forming students' learning circumstances.

There is an increasing agreement to embrace inclusive education around the world, but there is not sufficient knowledge about how to achieve deep and sustainable commitments to inclusion and equity in education (Kozleski et al., 2009). This discrepancy between high expectations of inclusive education policy and its implementation poses significant challenges to special and general education teachers who continue to face problems such as persistent staff shortages, high rotation rates, growing student diversity and high stakes test-based accountability (Kozleski et al., 2009). Waitoller and Artiles (2013) define inclusive education as a process of challenging encountered difficulties in participation and learning for all students including those with special educational needs. Recognizing the relation between teacher agency and inclusive education might help policymakers and researchers build a support system for both in-service and pre-service special education teachers. It also admits the roles of special education teachers as active decision makers and contributors to school change (Li & Ruppard, 2020). Inclusive education aims at improving access, participation and outcomes to various students excluded from formal education (Kozleski et al., 2014).

Fostering teacher agency allows teachers to practice a higher level of professional decision-making and to see agency as an essential component of teacher professionalism (Priestley et al., 2016). One of the core aspects of teacher agency for inclusive education is inclusive teacher identity that refers to teachers' professional and moral roles and motivation. Previous studies revealed that inclusive educators might generally take part in some agentic actions such as; fostering equal position in their cooperative teaching partnership, dealing with ambiguity in the role of inclusion activists, and acting like school system designers and policymakers. Studies showed also that agentic inclusive teachers constantly think about their own practices and environments to accommodate every learner and control their own actions with regard to their commitments (Lyons et al., 2016; Naraian, 2014; Naraian & Schlessinger, 2018).

Previous research indicates that agentic actions of teachers in inclusive schools are contradicted in type and degree within different contexts. For example, Themane and Thobejane (2018) reached the result that rural South African teachers' agentic orientations were not manifested in searching for resources, but in the development of professional competence. Lack of material and resources was regarded to be widespread and invaluable among rural South African teachers. In spite of difficult teaching conditions, Rural South African inclusive education teachers looked for new ways to implement inclusive education. For instance, they adopted various approaches for presenting knowledge of evaluating students' performance. Moreover, they have extensively collaborated with other teachers, assistance teachers, parents as well as neighborhood schools. In a similar vein, Naraian and Schlessinger (2018) addressed professional roles and autonomy in their discussion of collaborative teaching between general and special education teachers in the United States. They realized that when inclusive education teachers faced conflicts between their figurative identity as curriculum policymakers and their school assigned identity as policy

followers, agentic teachers practiced agency in strategic ways by building truthful relations with their peers and their students. Pantic (2017) conducted a study in primary school in Scotland to explore inclusive professional philosophy and reflexivity. Pantic concluded that agentic inclusive teachers preferred to give a high priority to students' welfare and learning needs. They also considered students' achievement as always dependent on the social contexts and home situations and are firmly convinced that social-emotional growth is necessary for academic learning. They are actively occupied with establishing relationships with students as they considered instruction a reciprocal process.

The process of inclusion is based on the assumption that classroom teachers should have certain knowledge and understanding of needs of different learners, as well as teaching techniques and curriculum strategies. Florian and Rouse (2009) claimed that "the task of initial teacher education is to prepare people to enter a profession which accepts individual and collective responsibility for improving the learning and participation of all children" (596). Studies stressed that quality of the teacher is the most significant factor that contributes to learner's achievement than other factors such as class composition, size or background. The demand for high quality teachers qualified to meet needs of all learners has arouse in order not only to give equal opportunities for all learners but also to provide education for an inclusive society (Biamba, 2016). Reynolds (2001) claimed that it is the knowledge, beliefs and values of the teacher that are brought into the creation of an effective learning environment for pupils, which makes the teacher has a critical influence in education for inclusion and development of the inclusive school. According to Cardona (2009), concentration on initial teacher education might provide best ways to create a new generation of teachers who will guarantee the successful use of inclusive policies and practices.

Research Objectives:

The present study sought to achieve the following objectives:

1. Determining the association between teacher agency and professional skills in Egypt and Oman.
2. Specifying the mediating effect of professional support on teacher agency and professional skills.
3. Determining the mediating role of country (Egypt, Oman) professional support on association between teacher agency and professional skills.

Significance of the Research:

Egypt and Oman are two Arab countries that belong to the Middle East and North African (MENA) region. Egypt is located in Africa while Oman is located in Asia. Both countries signed The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol (A/RES/61/106) in 2006. While the population in both countries varies enormously with Egypt having a big population of one hundred million compared to Oman whose population is almost four million, inclusive education practices are almost similar. Egypt was the oldest Arab country to establish special education schools for children with disabilities including children with visual impairment, children with hearing impairment and children with intellectual disability, a practice which was later borrowed by all Arab countries. With the emergence of social inclusion and inclusive education and the domination of the social model of disability supported by the rights movements, both Egypt and Oman began to provide inclusive education to a number of children with a variety of disabilities, including students with learning disability, students with visual impairment, students with hearing impairment, and students with intellectual disability. The implementation of inclusive education practices in both countries, however, is not ideal and faces several challenges (Emam, 2016; Emam & Mohamed, 2011).

The education system in Egypt and Oman is centralized. Teaching English as a foreign language in both countries begins in grade one. In the past two decades, TEFL has undergone major transformation regarding new directions instructional assessment methods (Carranza & Rodrigues, 2017). Research has investigated whether children with SEN perform better in mainstream or special schools (Laurea, 2013, Dyson et al., 2004). Researchers maintained that the language learning process is difficult but it is also beneficial for students to show appreciation to different societies and cultures. It has been argued that students with special educational needs should be included in mainstream language structure because in this way students will be accepted, integrated, feel part of the classroom and will not be discriminated against. Moreover, scholars indicated that learning a foreign language develops SEN students' abilities, increases the emotional factors that would help in learning other subjects and might help students appreciate different communities and cultures in contemporary world. Dyson et al., (2004) concluded that placement of students with SEN in mainstream schools "has no major adverse consequences for the children's academic achievement, behavioral and attitudes and that there can be positive benefits particularly in relation to mainstream children's attitudes and understanding of disability" (p.28).

The inclusion of students with SEN, however, is likely to pose challenges to teachers. Teachers are exposed to high levels of stress and burnout when teaching students with SEN. On a daily basis, teachers face problems related to making decisions on whether teaching should be based on the progress of the typically developing students or students with SEN. They most often experience a dilemma of what is professional when teaching students with SEN. Additionally, teachers tend to experience the pressure of providing students with SEN full access to the curriculum (Davis & Florian, 2004). Therefore, unless teachers possess positive attitudes and high sense of self-efficacy in teaching students with

SEN, it is unlikely that they remain committed and persistent in teaching students with SEN. Teachers' dispositions are considerably significant in assisting teacher to perform their professional roles towards students with SEN. As such, teacher agency towards inclusive education has emerged as an important construct to boost inclusive education practices in schools. There is research evidence that teacher agency is associated with teachers' professional development and skills (Bandura 2018, Priestley et al. 2012, Priestley, Biesta, and Robinson 2016). There is limited research, however, on teacher agency for inclusive education in Arab countries (Emam & Al-Balushi, 2021). The current paper, therefore, is an attempt to examine teacher agency for inclusive education in two different Arab countries.

Research Hypotheses:

Based on the above review of literature the current study tested a set of **hypotheses** as follows:

1. Country (Egypt, Oman) moderates the association between teacher agency and professional skills.
2. Professional support mediates the association between teacher agency and professional skills.
3. Country (Egypt, Oman) moderates the mediating role of professional support on the association between teacher agency and professional skills.

Research Terminology:

To facilitate reading and understanding the research, the following definitions are presented:

1. **Teacher Agency:** In the present research, teacher agency refers to the actions that teachers initiate in order to work effectively with students with disabilities and is operationally defined as the teachers' self-rating score on the teacher agency subscale of the Teacher Professional Competence Scale (TPCS).

- 2. Inclusive Practices:** The present research used inclusive practices to refer to settling the learning and teaching environment to accommodate all learners including those with special educational needs who have disability receiving their education side by side with typically developing children in the classroom.
- 3. Professional Skills:** In the present research, professional skills refer to a range of skills which teachers use to enhance their teaching performance and are measured by teachers' self-rating score on the professional skills subscale of the Teacher Professional Competence Scale (TPCS).
- 4. School Support:** In the present research, school support refers to the professional support which teachers receive in school and is measured by teachers' rating score on the Multidimensional Teacher Support Scale.

Method:

Participants:

Convenience sampling was employed to recruit teachers to participate in the study in both Egypt and Oman. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, an online survey using Google Forms was designed to collect data from teachers. The survey URL was also sent to teachers through formal WhatsApp groups of teachers. In Oman, 133 teachers submitted their responses (26% males, 74% females), while in Egypt 225 (40% males, 60% females) teachers responded to the survey. All teachers worked in public mainstream schools which provide special education services to students with disability in an inclusive setting. All had a minimum of a bachelor degree in education. The participating teachers ranged in age from 26 to 46. Participants' teaching experience varied widely from less than one year (coded as 0) to more than 20 years. All participants from both countries had a minimum experience of teaching students with disability.

Instruments:

1. Teacher Professional Competence Scale:

The researchers used Teacher Professional Competence Scale (TPCS) (Mu et al. 2015) to assess teacher agency and professional skills. The TPCS is comprised of four subscales, including teacher agency, professional skills, teacher knowledge, and teacher attitude. The researchers used the first two subscales as they were related to the current study goal. The researchers translated the TPSC to Arabic using the back translation method (Sperber 2004). The Cronbach's alpha was used to test reliability of the scale, coefficient alpha for professional skills dimension was (0.716), coefficient alpha for teacher agency dimension was (0.772) and coefficient alpha for total scale was (0.739). All reliability coefficients are above (0.7) (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Construct validity was assessed by conducting Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) on (14) items of the Teacher Professional Competence Scale. The scale constructs a two-factor measurement model (see figure 1.) with eight indicators loaded on professional skills and six indicators loaded on teacher agency. The model fit reasonably well, with $\chi^2(76) = 166.58$, $\chi^2/df = 2.19$, IFI = 0.954, TLI = 0.945, CFI = 0.954, and RMSEA equal to 0.077. The values of factor loadings are considered acceptable in the range of 0.50-0.70 (Chin, 1998), Factor loadings for the model ranged from 0.687 to 0.865 and were statistically significant (see table 1.). Results from CFA are indicative of the high validity of the measurement. The discriminant validity for TPCS was evaluated using Fornell-Larcker criterion. This criterion states that the square root of the AVEs of all constructs in the model should be higher than their correlations with respective constructs.

Table 1. Confirmatory factor analysis results for Teacher Professional Competence Scale

Item	Coefficient	Standard error	z-value	p-value
Professional Skills (AVEs=0.753)				
Item 1	0.687	0.055	14.53	0.01
Item 2	0.862	0.049	20.21	0.01
Item 3	0.847	0.043	19.67	0.01
Item 4	0.855	0.047	19.95	0.01
Item 5	0.862	0.046	20.23	0.01
Item 6	0.809	0.048	18.31	0.01
Item 7	0.804	0.047	18.12	0.01
Item 8	0.789	0.048	17.63	0.01
Teacher Agency (AVEs=0.749)				
Item 9	0.745	0.047	16.14	0.01
Item 10	0.853	0.050	19.75	0.01
Item 11	0.850	0.049	19.64	0.01
Item 12	0.865	0.052	20.22	0.01
Item 13	0.749	0.049	16.27	0.01
Item 14	0.814	0.050	18.37	0.01

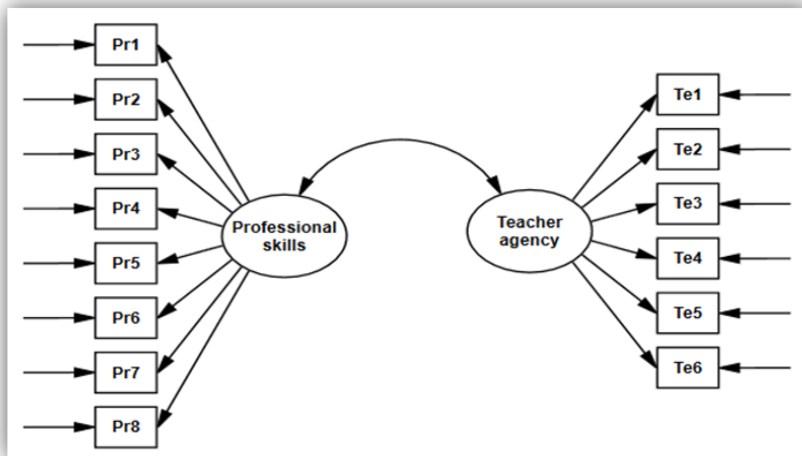


Figure 1. Two-factor measurement model of Teacher Professional Competence Scale

2. The Multidimensional Teacher Support Scale:

Professional support that teachers receive from schools was assessed by the Teacher Support Scale (TSS) (Wang et al. 2015). The researchers translated the TSS to Arabic using the back translation method (Sperber 2004). The TSS assesses the multifaceted support which teachers receive to teach students with disability, including specialist, peer, physical, cultural and institutional support. The specialist support scale has four items and explores the specialized support that is provided to students with SEN in class through special educators or learning disability teachers (e.g., Special education professionals regularly come to my class to provide service (e.g., health care and language therapy). The peer support scale has two items that describe the quality of interactions between the teacher and his/her colleagues to helps students with SEN reach their optimal learning level (e.g., Other subject teachers actively communicate with me about the conditions of students with special needs).The physical support scale includes eight items and examines the size and function of the classroom as well as assistive and material resources for teaching students with SEN in regular classrooms (e.g., The classroom has enough space for me to conduct teaching activities that address students' special needs). The cultural support scale consists of six items and is about the values and dispositions which create an environmental friendliness for teaching students with SEN in regular classroom (e.g. My class has a fair, sharing, and collaborative culture).The institutional support scale is comprised of six items which

Teacher Agency Dr. Hanan Ahmad Abdel-Hafez Mahmoud
Dr. Mahmoud Mohamed Emam

assess the support the teacher receives at the organization (e.g., My school encourages teachers to design diverse, flexible approaches to assess the performance of students with disabilities). The researchers used Cronbach's alpha to test reliability of the TSS. Coefficient alphas for Physical support, Specialist support, Peer support, Cultural support, Institutional support, and total scale score were (0.741, 0.753, 0.791, 0.733, 0.804, 0.7) respectively (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Construct validity was assessed by conducting Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) on (26) items of the multidimensional Teacher Support Scale. The scale constructs a five-factor measurement model (see figure 2.) with eight indicators loaded on Physical support, four indicators loaded on Specialist support, two indicators loaded on Peer support, six indicators loaded on Cultural support and six indicators loaded on Institutional support. The model fit reasonably well, with $\chi^2(289) = 701.94$, $\chi^2/df = 2.43$, IFI = 0.940, TLI = 0.933, CFI = 0.940, and RMSEA equal to 0.075. The values of factors loadings are considered acceptable in the range of 0.50-0.70 (Chin, 1998), Factor loadings from the model ranged from 0.765 to 0.909 and were statistically significant (see table 2.). Results from CFA are indicative of the high validity of the measurement. The discriminant validity for the TSS was evaluated using Fornell-Larcker criterion. This criterion states that the square root of the AVEs of all constructs in the model should be higher than their correlations with respective constructs.

Table 2. Confirmatory factor analysis results for the multidimensional Teacher Support Scale

Item	Coefficient	Standard error	Z-value	p-value	Item	Coefficient	Standard error	Z-value	p-value
Institutional support (AVEs=0.873)					Cultural support (AVEs=0.870)				
In1	0.862	0.047	20.24	0.01	Cu1	0.850	0.050	19.77	0.01
In2	0.886	0.048	21.16	0.01	Cu2	0.849	0.050	19.72	0.01
In3	0.861	0.047	20.19	0.01	Cu3	0.823	0.051	18.77	0.01
In4	0.859	0.048	20.11	0.01	Cu4	0.872	0.048	20.60	0.01
In5	0.765	0.057	16.87	0.01	Cu5	0.807	0.051	18.24	0.01
In6	0.834	0.050	19.17	0.01	Cu6	0.810	0.051	18.34	0.01
Physical support (AVEs=0.878)					Peer support (AVEs=0.885)				
Ph1	0.833	0.051	19.27	0.01	Pe1	0.901	0.048	22.39	0.01
Ph2	0.882	0.052	21.11	0.01	Pe2	0.898	0.052	21.51	0.01
Ph3	0.888	0.052	21.34	0.01	Specialist support (AVEs=0.882)				
Ph4	0.905	0.052	22.03	0.01	Sp1	0.841	0.054	19.42	0.01
Ph5	0.900	0.051	21.82	0.01	Sp2	0.891	0.054	21.34	0.01
Ph6	0.850	0.049	19.89	0.01	Sp3	0.898	0.052	21.64	0.01
Ph7	0.874	0.052	20.79	0.01	Sp4	0.909	0.050	22.10	0.01
Ph8	0.868	0.055	20.56	0.01					

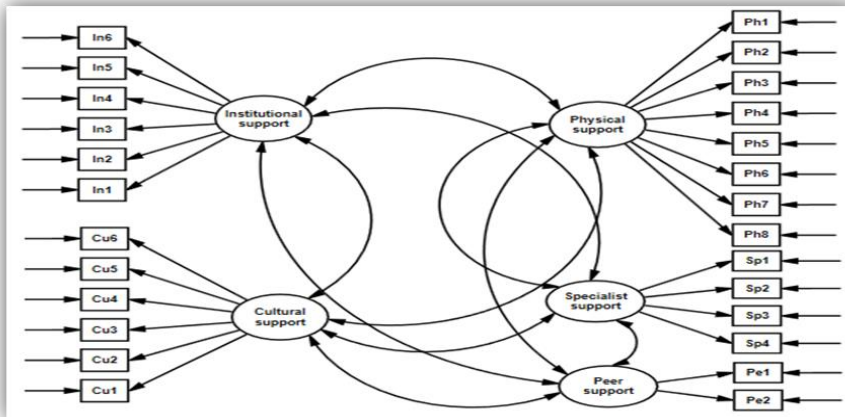


Figure 2. Five factor measurement model of the multidimensional Teacher Support Scale

Data Analyses:

SPSS 22.0 and Amos 22.0 were applied to analyze the collected data, and the specific data analysis consisted of the following steps. First, a descriptive analysis of variable scores from participants was used. Second, a Pearson correlation analysis was manipulated to test the correlations between variables, and the reliability was estimated with Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Third, the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with Maximum Likelihood Method was used to examine the construct validity of the two scales that used in the current study. A multi-group path analysis was employed to test the moderating and mediating effects. The model-data fit of the measurement and structural models was evaluated with the following five goodness-of-fit indices: χ^2 /df ratio (acceptable if < 3), comparative fit index (CFI, acceptable if $> .95$), Tucker-Lewis index (TLI, acceptable if $> .90$), root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA, acceptable if $< .08$) and standardized root-mean-square residual (SRMR, acceptable if $< .08$) (Hu & Bentler, 1999).

Results:

Descriptive statistics:

The demographic data for the study participants are presented in table 3 and shows that out of 594 respondents who were sent the online survey 356 submitted their responses. Table 4 shows descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations and Pearson correlation confidents between variables).

Table 3. Demographic data

Variable	Category	Oman (N=131)		Egypt (N=225)	
		N	Percent (%)	N	Percent (%)
Gender	Male	34	26	90	40
	Female	97	74	135	60
Years of Experience	Less than a year	17	13	12	5.3
	1 year to less than 5 years	12	9.2	43	19.1
	5 years to less than 10 years	10	7.6	65	28.9
	10 years to less than 15 years	40	30.5	39	17.3
	15 years to less than 20 years	31	23.7	36	16
	20 years or more	21	16	30	13.3
Teaching students with disabilities	Yes	86	26.3	164	72.9
	No	45	34.4	61	27.1

Table 4. Means, standard deviations and Pearson correlation coefficients between variables

Variables		Country	N	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Professional skills	Oman	131	27.63	6.80						
		Egypt	225	23.77	7.23						
2	Teacher agency	Oman	131	21.18	4.98	0.689					
		Egypt	225	17.50	5.64	0.750					
3	Physical support	Oman	131	26.53	8.49	0.507	0.610				
		Egypt	225	19.67	7.97	0.637	0.699				
4	Specialist support	Oman	131	12.13	4.48	0.218	0.485	0.719			
		Egypt	225	9.90	4.44	0.603	0.652	0.738			
5	Peer support	Oman	131	6.58	2.13	0.250	0.566	0.584	0.745		
		Egypt	225	5.24	2.28	0.662	0.691	0.701	0.729		
6	Cultural support	Oman	131	20.09	5.07	0.288	0.593	0.536	0.619	0.715	
		Egypt	225	15.81	5.99	0.678	0.699	0.702	0.794	0.752	
7	Institutional support	Oman	131	19.20	5.36	0.302	0.525	0.579	0.629	0.720	0.793
		Egypt	225	15.08	5.84	0.612	0.651	0.712	0.703	0.786	0.728

Hypothesis One: Country (Egypt, Oman) moderates the association between teacher agency and professional skills.

The researchers performed moderation analysis using SPSS-23 with Process Analysis Add-on (Hayes, 2013) by considering Country (Egypt, Oman) as moderation variable, teacher agency as independent variable and professional skills as dependent variable. Country (Egypt, Oman) variable was not found to be a significant moderator. The moderation model fit well ($F(3, 352) = 229.61, p < 0.001$) with 66.18% of the variance of professional skills explained by teacher agency, and the moderation effect wasn't significant ($F(1, 352) = 2.73, p > 0.05$). Teacher agency showed a significant effect on professional skills ($b = 0.62, p < 0.001$), the interaction between agency and Country (Egypt, Oman) wasn't significant ($b = 0.24, p > 0.05$), and Country (Egypt, Oman) did not have a significant effect ($b = -0.20, p > 0.05$).

Hypothesis two: professional support mediates the association between teacher agency and professional skills.

The researchers tested the mediation model (see figure 3) using Amos v.20. The mediation model fit well with $\chi^2(11) = 30.93, \chi^2/df = 2.82, IFI = 0.928, TLI = 0.901, CFI = 0.926$, and RMSEA equal to 0.064.

As indicated in table 5, teacher agency had a statistical effect on professional support (Physical support, Specialist support, Cultural support, Institutional support, Peer support), and Physical support, Specialist support, Cultural support, and Peer support had statistical effects on Professional skills. Institutional support had no statistical effect on Professional skills.

Table 5. Standardized direct effects of the variables in the mediation model

From	To	Standardized Estimate	Standard error	z value	p value
Teacher agency	Physical support	0.703	0.058	18.61	0.01
	Specialist support	0.622	0.033	14.96	0.01
	Cultural support	0.702	0.040	18.59	0.01
	Institutional support	0.651	0.042	16.17	0.01
	Peer support	0.681	0.016	17.51	0.01
Specialist support	Professional skills	-0.206	0.076	-4.33	0.01
Cultural support		0.269	0.061	5.33	0.01
Institutional support		0.004	0.059	0.09	N.S
Physical support		0.480	0.042	9.52	0.01
Peer support		0.141	0.157	2.84	0.01
Mediation effect of professional support					
Total indirect effect		0.206	0.029	7.10	0.01
Physical support		0.132	0.025	5.28	0.01
Specialist support		-0.083	0.031	-2.68	0.01
Peer support		0.114	0.016	7.13	0.01
Cultural support		0.032	0.015	2.13	0.05
Institutional support		0.011	0.050	0.22	N.S

Note. N.S= Not significant

Additionally, as indicated in the table 5, total professional support had a statistical mediation effect ($b=0.206$, $p<0.01$). Physical support ($b=0.132$, $p<0.01$), Specialist support ($b=-0.083$, $p<0.01$), Cultural support ($b=0.114$, $p<0.01$) and Peer support ($b=0.032$, $p<0.01$) had statistical mediation effects; Institutional support had no statistical mediation effect ($b=0.011$, $p>0.05$).

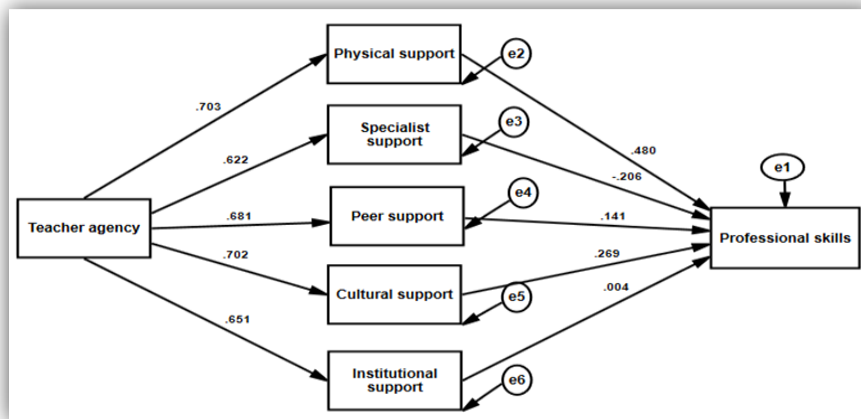


Figure 3. Standardized direct effects of the mediation model

Hypothesis three: Country (Egypt, Oman) moderates the mediating role of professional support on the association between teacher agency and professional skills.

The researchers employed a multi-group mediation analysis with Amos v.20. The Country (Egypt, Oman) variable was categorized into two groups – Egypt (1) and Oman (2). The multigroup function in AMOS was used to estimate constrained and unconstrained models. The χ^2 values and degrees of freedom of both models were compared to examine the difference between the constrained and unconstrained models. The comparison showed a significant difference (χ^2 difference = 28.31, df difference = 10, $p < 0.01$) between the constrained and unconstrained models (Hair et al., 2010), suggesting that Country (Egypt, Oman) moderated that indirect relationship between teacher agency and professional skills. The fit indices showed that the moderation model had a good fit with the data. The fit indices were χ^2 (22) = 62.09, $\chi^2/df = 2.82$, IFI = 0.914, TLI = 0.921, CFI = 0.913, and RMSEA equal to 0.079. The moderation results are presented in Table 6.

As indicated in table 6, the Mediation effect of professional support was significant for both Oman (b=0.201) and Egypt (b=0.116). Moreover, the Mediation effect of Institutional support became non-significant for both Oman (b=0.017, $p>0.05$) and Egypt (b=0.001, $p>0.05$). The Mediation effect of Peer support was significant for both Oman (b=0.076, $p<0.01$) and Egypt (b=0.058, $p<0.01$). The Mediation effect of Physical support was significant for Oman (b=0.213, $p<0.01$) and non-significant for Egypt (b=0.020, $p>0.05$). The Mediation effect of Specialist support was significant for Oman (b=-0.117, $p<0.01$) and Egypt (b=-0.065, $p<0.05$). The Mediation effect of Cultural support was non-significant for Oman (b=0.012, $p>0.05$) and significant for Egypt (b=0.102, $p<0.01$).

Table 6. Moderated mediation results

Parameter		Country	Standardized Estimate	Standard error	z value	p value	
Standardized direct effects							
From	To						
Teacher agency	Physical support	Oman	0.610	0.118	8.79	0.01	
		Egypt	0.699	0.068	14.60	0.01	
	Specialist support	Oman	0.485	0.069	6.33	0.01	
		Egypt	0.652	0.040	12.87	0.01	
	Cultural support	Oman	0.593	0.072	8.40	0.01	
		Egypt	0.699	0.051	14.64	0.01	
	Institutional support	Oman	0.525	0.080	7.05	0.01	
		Egypt	0.651	0.052	12.84	0.01	
	Peer support	Oman	0.566	0.031	7.83	0.01	
		Egypt	0.691	0.019	14.32	0.01	
	Specialist support	Professional skills	Oman	-0.359	0.120	-5.03	0.01
	Egypt		-0.044	0.095	-0.71	N.S	
Cultural support	Professional skills	Oman	0.092	0.110	1.24	N.S	
Egypt		0.352	0.073	5.50	0.01		
Institutional support	Professional skills	Oman	0.039	0.102	0.54	N.S	
		Egypt	0.027	0.072	0.43	N.S	

Teacher Agency Dr. Hanan Ahmad Abdel-Hafez Mahmoud
Dr. Mahmoud Mohamed Emam

Parameter		Country	Standardized Estimate	Standard error	z value	p value
Standardized direct effects						
	From	To				
Physical support		Oman	0.624	0.066	8.34	0.01
		Egypt	0.208	0.054	3.25	0.00
Peer support		Oman	0.034	0.260	0.46	N.S
		Egypt	0.254	0.190	4.00	0.01
Mediation effect						
Total indirect effect		Oman	0.201	0.021	9.57	0.01
		Egypt	0.116	0.017	6.82	0.01
Physical support		Oman	0.213	0.011	19.36	0.01
		Egypt	0.020	0.027	0.74	N.S
Specialist support		Oman	-0.117	0.019	-6.16	0.01
		Egypt	-0.065	0.027	-2.41	0.05
Peer support		Oman	0.076	0.018	4.22	0.01
		Egypt	0.058	0.013	4.46	0.01
Cultural support		Oman	0.012	0.018	0.67	N.S
		Egypt	0.102	0.017	6.00	0.01
Institutional support		Oman	0.017	0.013	1.31	N.S
		Egypt	0.001	0.019	0.05	N.S

Note. N.S= Not significant

Discussion and conclusion:

It is clear that foreign language teachers need to be provided with various types of professional support when dealing with learners with SEN; institutional, physical, cultural, peer, specialized training courses, conferences, specialized journals and further free of charge resources. An accumulated literature has been reviewed and relevant information gathered, evaluated and then put together to create a whole that aims at

investigating association between EFL teachers' agency for inclusive education and professional skills at Egypt and Oman. Agency develops through a complex interaction between the qualities of the teacher and the conditions of the school in which he| she works. Agency is essential when facing educational challenges. Teacher agency is not only in the hands of individual teachers, the school conditions where they work play a main role in the teachers' ability for achieving agency. Schools should give teachers a degree of autonomy and allow them to take pedagogical risks. School leadership need to encourage teachers to make judgments and control over their work. It also should take advantage of teachers' motivation. Most teachers naturally exhibit active behaviors within the parts of the curriculum that they are passionate about and are thus highly engaged in them (Priestly et al., 2015).

Students with SEN who are going to learn a foreign language need to be included in mainstream language classrooms that for the sake of making students achieve successful results, need to provide a learning environment that encourages and respects the teaching and learning; support foreign language teachers, provide special approaches to face individual differences among students to help them attain successful results. Toom et al., (2015) find teachers' agency to advance student learning and ease their own professional development. Teacher agency is needed at classroom as well as school levels (Etelapelitto et al., 2013). At classroom level, teacher agency can be geared towards bringing about a change in students' learning or in their own teaching practice through examining new things (Van der, Heijden et al., 2015). At school level, teachers might construct productive collaborations with colleagues, parents and community. Lukacs (2009) maintained that agentic teachers who manage collaborative discussions, take the indicative, take chances, reach decisions and motivate others.

Teacher Agency Dr. Hanan Ahmad Abdel-Hafez Mahmoud
Dr. Mahmoud Mohamed Emam

The results of the present study are consistent with a previous study conducted by Pokrivcakova (2015) who maintained that foreign language teachers to learners with SEN reported that everything is great in theory but very problematic in practice. Teachers expressed their disappointment caused by lack of suitable training in the field, insufficient information, lack of modified teaching materials and time stress. Moreover, teachers reported their fear that adopting teaching techniques to learners with SEN might negatively affect and limit advancement of mainstream learners. Pokrivcakova reached the conclusion that nearly all these reported that foreign language teachers were very disappointed by the current classroom situation in which more than two students require special education care. However, such teachers have never received any training for dealing with SEN learners, which caused them feel confined, unprepared and unconfident.

Despite the fact that the fields of teacher agency, inclusive education and professional skills have been well developed, the researchers found that only few regionally determined researches have been published so far. The OECD (2005) maintained that professionals working with agency project agreed that educating teachers to respond to diversity has a great impact on the development of more inclusive schools and that raising teachers' quality leads mostly to gains in school performance. Agency provides clear vision about possible ways directed towards a more equitable education system to offer a quality education for all learners.

In accordance with Clavert (2016), the researchers reached the conclusion that standards for professional learning require professional learning that is continual, permanent, connected with practice, related to school and district goals as well as collaborative. Agentic teachers are aware of their role in professional growth and make learning options to attain their goals. Similarly, Calvert (2016) has stressed that teachers need professional development that is teacher- driven and that teachers are professional with invaluable insights. It is believed that in order to adapt professional learning so that it supports teacher education, school leaders need to be attentive to the importance of teacher agency and thus highlights the significance of specialists and institutional support in the development of professional skills as the present research concluded.

Reviewing literature together with results of the present study revealed that teacher agency is necessary for professional learning as it provides school leaders and policy makers with strategies that they can adapt in their own contexts to develop greater pathways for teacher agency to enhance learning. Guskey (2002) used the term professional development to refer to processes and activities planned intentionally to enhance teachers' professional knowledge, skills and attitudes on a personal or individual level so that they might consequently improve students' learning. Teachers play a significant role in professional development, school improvement and school reform programs as they interact with programs' content and with classroom and schoolwork environments where they are supposed to be efficiently introduced. In such cases, teachers' agency is implied in various sided and multi-level work environments. Studying the central role of teacher agency in professional development and school reform requires a model that embodies such interactive and multi-level character encompassing any level of change ranging from individual to team, school and above school level (Imants & Wal, 2020).

Teacher Agency Dr. Hanan Ahmad Abdel-Hafez Mahmoud
Dr. Mahmoud Mohamed Emam

The researchers are in agreement with (Calvert:2016) who reached the result that in order to improve teachers in their professional systems, district and school leaders should; (1) consult teachers and principals seriously in all professional learning decisions, (2) reorganize the school day so that teachers have time to meet regularly and collaborate with colleagues to enhance teaching and learning, (3) involve teachers and support them in data analysis and identification of teaching and learning challenges, (4) assure that professional learning aims at continuous growth not evaluation, and (5) allow teachers to make choices with regard to their professional learning such as with whom they are going to work and on what they will focus their learning.

Results of the present research revealed also a significant effect of social and cultural support on teachers' professional skills. Different viewpoints on agency are present in education and with referring specifically to adult or workplace learning such as socio-cultural (Edwards, 2005; Etelapetto et al., 2013; Lasky, 2005) and pragmatic perspective. Recent research on socio-cultural perspective emphasizes the interrelationship between the society and the individual and agreed that time dimension is a significant aspect for investigating agency. Priestley et al., (2015) described agentic actions as a consequence of achieved agency from the past oriented towards the future and affected by cultural (ideas, values, beliefs, discourses and language), structural (relations, roles, trust) and material (resources and physical environment) aspects.

Teachers play a powerful great role in fostering societal inclusion and fairness for all learners. They are considered the most significant agent that affect the development of policy of education within classroom and creating learning conditions for students. Accordingly, teacher agency has become a focal point of international research in teaching and teacher education (Anderson, 2010; Priestley et al., 2012). In the contemporary discourse of social justice and equity, teachers' agentic role has got increasing attention. An increasing number of scholars have asked the public to recognize teaching as a highly valued profession and to see the strength of teachers in the struggle for better educational conditions and quality resources for all learners (Alter, 2013). Inclusive education teachers play a vital role in creation of equitable environments for students who have been systematically relegated to a marginal position based on ability and other social and cultural identity makers. Strengthening teacher agency not only allows teachers to exercise a higher level of professional decision making, but also to view agency as an essential component of teacher professionalism (Priestley et al., 2016). The importance of teacher agency is obvious, but how to conceptually create a teacher agency for inclusive education is a challenge.

The researchers found institutional support to have no statistical mediation effect on professional skills. Institutional support points to the extent to which a person perceives support from his\her academic institution (Whitemore, 2017; Thomas, 2014). It includes funds, opportunities, advantages and facilities that institutions transfer to students that consecutively bring about the social academic development (Stanton-Salazar, 2011). Institutional support supply teachers with resources, basic resources for knowledge and consistent academic and emotional support created to foster effective communication, social skills, effective request assistance behavior, so that they could proceed effectively and properly inside the institution (Gonzalez, 2013; Schunk & Meece, 2005).

Teacher Agency Dr. Hanan Ahmad Abdel-Hafez Mahmoud
Dr. Mahmoud Mohamed Emam

Inclusion policies in schools nowadays go beyond national boundaries, though still less is recognized about how teachers best interact to constitute an efficient inclusive environment. One of the themes that appeared significant in this context was the importance of peer- support among groups of working staff. The present study found that peer- support was considered invaluable component that enables teachers to successfully include children with SEN as well as having a statistical effect on professional skills. Results of the present study showed statistical significant effect of physical and , institutional and specialist support on professional skills. Similarly, Al-Zyoudi (2006) claimed that teachers stressed the thought of including students with SEN in mainstream schools or classrooms could be more attainable if school buildings are well prepared to meet the needs of disability students. Moreover, teachers showed positive attitudes towards teaching students with SEN if they were able to or received needed support from school administration. Awad (2016) revealed that teachers who have a school administration support displayed positive attitudes towards inclusion of students with SEN. It can be concluded that a growing attention to the role of teacher agency in research on teacher professional development and school reform has been noticed (Priestley, et al., 2015; Priestly, Edwards, Priestly & Miller, 2012). Literature revealed that the concept of teacher agency is complex and multidimensional (Archer, 2003; Etelapetto et al., 2013).

Discussion of teacher agency and work environment in the context of school reform and professional development describes characteristics for constructing a model of teacher agency in professional development and school reform. First of all, teachers and other individuals (i.e., students, school leaders, parents) are considered active participants in professional development and school reform. Second, the constant interaction between agency and structure along with constant interaction in teachers' efforts between doing and thinking about doing indicate that they are dynamic not linear. Third, in the study of teacher agency there is a necessity for focusing on two or more levels (teacher, school, district, nation) in the work context, rather than on a single one, and on the systematic interaction between these levels owing to the constant interaction between individual and context. There should be a focus on features of teachers' direct work environment whereas features of school policy, procedural decision making, overall school culture and domestic policy have a secondary role in this interaction. Fourth, the content of professional development and school reform (inclusion or exclusion) is considered as a variable entity that might change throughout the process. In reference to inclusion, professional development or school reform content is a changing entity as it is subjected to teachers' performance and consequently it differs throughout the process because of this performance. In reference to exclusion, content is viewed as an external constant feature (Iman & Wal, 2020). Recent effective discourses on global education have stressed the significant role of teachers as the most effective in –school influence on school improvement (OECD, 2005; Mckinsey & Co, 2007). There is a clear tendency in curriculum policy to explicitly build teachers as agents of change (Goodson, 2003; Niveen, 2011). Moreover, education policies have highly stressed the need for enhancing the quality of teachers through continuing professional training programs (Stoll et al., 2005; Daly et al., 2010).

Implications:

Reviewing literature together with results of the present study revealed different implications for teacher education and professional development. First, teacher education and professional development, in either general or special education, should stress enhancement of teacher identity, professional skills, inclusive professional philosophy, self-government and reflection that are outlined in the theoretical framework. There is not one constant set of fundamental elements and characteristics that constitute inclusive education professionalism. Thus, when evaluating teacher quality, teacher education programs should take the school settings into consideration. Second, EFL teacher education and professional development should train teachers to respond to and solve every day worksite problems and conflicts cleverly. Inclusive EFL teachers should recognize how to benefit from available human and material resources inside and outside schools to continuously challenge policies and working methods that threaten inclusive education. Third, conventional teacher education programs should consider and make use of students who are experienced in other professional fields through providing integrative professional learning experiences. Working with individuals with varied backgrounds might help in developing collaborative skills, progressive repertoires for resolving contradiction, and cleverness in practicing extracurricular time for learners. Finally, the education and professional development of teachers should develop their imagination and capability to envisage about alternate futures for themselves and their learners as well. Such a world of various alternative possibilities might motivate teachers to take new steps and to set new objectives for themselves and for their students too (Li, & Ruppard, 2020).

In the light of the findings and conclusions of the research, it is strongly recommended that stakeholders should raise awareness about the concept of teacher agency among educators, policy makers and all educational community. Regarding learners with SEN, there should be centers of pedagogical and psychological consultancy to be responsible for diagnosing them and working out their individual teaching plans. In addition, these centers are responsible for providing schools and teachers with methodological instructions, special instructional materials and compensation means if needed. Both instructors and school managers need also consult the special needs counseling resource centers that concentrate on finding and diagnosing learners with several disabilities. They might also assess the prediction of learners' progress and suggest the ideal form of intervention and education. Pokrivcakova, (2015:12) confirmed that "So far, no courses have been organized to train foreign language teachers how to perform foreign language teaching to learners with SEN". Due to the rarity of literature on teacher agency and its relation with inclusive classes in Egypt, the researchers reviewed as many international studies as they could, to support the findings of the present research.

References:

- Alter, T. (2013). It felt like community: Social movement unionism and the Chicago teachers union strike. *Labor*, 10 (3), 11–25. <https://doi.org/10.1215/15476715-2149461>
- Altinyelken, H. K. (2010). *Changing pedagogy: A comparative analysis of reform efforts in Uganda and Turkey*. Amsterdam: Universiteit Van Amsterdam.
- American Psychiatric Association, (2013). *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*. Available online at: <http://www.unicaen.recherche> accessed: 22/03/10.
- Anderson, L. (2010). Embedded, emboldened, and (net)working for change: Support-seeking and teacher agency in urban, high-needs schools. *Harvard Educational Review*, 80 (4), 541–573. <https://doi.org/10.17763/haer.80.4.f2v8251444581105>.
- Archer, M. S. (2003). *Structure, agency and the internal conversation*. Cambridge University Press.
- Assie- Lumumba, N. T. (2012). Cultural foundations of the idea and practice of the teaching profession in Africa: Indigenous roots, colonial intrusion, and post- colonial reality. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 44 (2), 21-36. <http://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-5812.2011.00793.x>. *Association of Special Education*, 10 (1), 33-41
- Bailleul, P., Bataille, A., Langlois, C., Lanoe, P. and Mazereau, P. (2008). *Disabled pupils' integration to inclusive schooling: current situation and new teacher training needs. Shedding light on the European situation* (Research Report).

- Bandura, A. (2001) Social cognitive theory: An agentic perspective. Annual Review of Psychology, 52 (1), 1-26
- Bandura, A. (2018). Toward a psychology of human agency: Pathways and reflections. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 13(2), 130-136.
- Bantwini, D, (2010). How teachers perceive the new curriculum reform: lessons from a school district in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. International Journal of Educational Development, 30(1), 83-90.
- Biamba, C. (2016). Inclusion and Classroom Practices in a Swedish School: A Case Study of a School in Stockholm. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 7(3), 119-124.
- Biesta, G., & Tedder, M. (2007). Agency and learning in the life course: towards an ecological perspective. Studies in the Education of Adults, 39 (2), 132-149.
- Biesta, G., Priestley, M., & Robinson, S. (2015). The role of beliefs in teacher agency. Teachers and Teaching, 21(6), 624-640. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13540602.2015.1044325>.
- Billet, S. (2008). Learning throughout working the relational interdependence between personal and social agency. British Journal of Educational Studies, 56 (1), 39-58.
- Billett, S. (2004). Workplace participatory practices: Conceptualizing workplaces as learning environments. Journal of Workplace Learning, 16 (6), 312-324.
- Billett, S. R. (2011). *Subjectivity, self and personal agency in learning through and for work*. In M. M. Cairns, L. K. Evans, & B. O'Connor (Eds.), *The sage handbook for workplace learning* (pp. 60e72). UK: Sage Publications.

Teacher Agency Dr. Hanan Ahmad Abdel-Hafez Mahmoud
Dr. Mahmoud Mohamed Emam

- Borman, G. Hewes, G., Overman, L., & Brown, S. (2003). Comprehensive school reform and achievement. A meta-analysis. Review of Educational Studies, 73 (2), 125-230.
- Calvert, L. (2016). *Moving from Compliance to Agency. What teachers need to make professional learning work*. Oxford, OH: Learning Forward & NCTAF
- Cardona, C. M. (2009) Teacher education students' beliefs of inclusion and perceived competence to teach students with disabilities in Spain. International Journal of Special Education, 10(1), 33-41.
- Carranza, T. R. & Rodriguez, L. M. (2017). Teaching English to Students with special Needs: a Case of Study in a High School of Vila (Spain). Verbeia, Journal of English and Spanish Studies, III (2), 88-115.
- Carroll, A., Forlin, C. and Jobling, A. (2003) The impact of teacher training in special education on the attitudes of Australian pre-service general educators towards people with disabilities. Teacher Education Quarterly, 30 (3), 65-79
- Cave, T., Ludwar, J., & Williams, W. (2005). *Brain-based Learning*, Government of Alberta.
- Chin, W. W. 1998. Issues and Opinion on Structural Equation Modeling. MIS Quarterly Vol. 22 (1), pp. 7-16.
- Coburn, C. E. (2006). Framing the Problem of Reading Instruction: Using Frame Analysis to Uncover the Micro processes of Policy Implementation. American Educational Research Journal. 43 (3), 79-343

- Datnow, A.. 2012. Teacher Agency in Educational Reform: Lessons from Social Networks Research). American Journal of Education, 119 (1), 193-201.
- Davis, P., & Florian, L. (2004). Teaching Strategies and Approaches for Pupils with Special Educational Needs: A Scoping Study, Queen's Printer, Research Report, (516).
- Department for education and skills (2001). "Special Education Needs – Code of Practice".
- Department of Education (2006). "Guidance for Schools – Recording Children with Special Educational Needs".
- DiMaggio, P. (1988). *Interest and Agency in Institutional Theory*. Pp. 3–21 in *Institutional Patterns and Organizations*, edited by Lynn Zucker. Cam-bridge, MA: Ballinger
- Dyson, A., Howes, A., & Roberts, B. (2004). A systematic review of the effectiveness of school-level actions for promoting participation by all students, Cambridge Journal of Education, 34 (2), 143-155.
- Ehrman, M., Leaver, B., & Oxford, R. (2003). A brief overview of individual differences in second language learning. System, (31), 313–330.
- Emam, M. M., & Mohamed, A. H. H. (2011). Preschool and primary school teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education in Egypt: The role of experience and self-efficacy. Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, 29, 976-985.

Teacher Agency Dr. Hanan Ahmad Abdel-Hafez Mahmoud
Dr. Mahmoud Mohamed Emam

- Emam, M., & Al-Bulushi, A. (Forthcoming). Teachers' Preparedness for Inclusive Education in Oman: Exploring the Role of Teachers' Agency for Inclusive Practices and Professional Skills. In Bakali, N., & Memon, N. (Eds), Teacher training and education in the GCC: Unpacking the complexities and challenges of internationalizing education. Lanham: Lexington Books.
- Emirbayer, M., & Mische, A. (1998). What is agency? American Journal of Sociology, 103 (4), 962-1023.
- Eteläpelto, A., Vähäsantanen, K., Hökkä, P., & Paloniemi, S. (2013). What is agency? Conceptualizing professional agency at work. Educational Research Review, 10, 45–65.
- Evans, K. (2017). Bounded agency in professional lives. In M. Goller & S. Paloniemi (Eds.), *Agency at work: An agentic perspective on professional learning and development* (pp. 17–36). Cham: Springer.
- Florian, L. (2009). Preparing teachers to work in 'schools for all. Teaching and Teacher Education, 25(4), 533-534
- Florian, L., & Hegarty, J. (2004). *ICT and Special Educational Needs: A tool for inclusion*. Buckingham. Open University Press.
- Gardner, H. (1991). *The unschooled mind: how children think and how schools should teach*. New York Basic Books Inc
- Giddens, A. (1984). *The constitution of society: Outline of the theory of structuration*. Polity Press
- Griffiths, C. (2012). *Lessons from Good Language Learners*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Guskey, T. (2002). Professional development and teacher change. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, 8 (3), 381-391.
- Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., & Anderson, R. E. (2010). *Multivariate Data Analysis: A Global Perspective, 7th Edition*. New Jersey: Pearson Educational Inc.
- Harmer, J., (2005). *The Practice of English Language Teaching*, (3rd ed.) (p.85). Essex: Longman
- Hatcher, L. (1994), *A Step-by-Step Approach to Using the SAS System for Factor Analysis and Structural Equation Modeling*, SAS Institute Inc., Cary, NC.
- Hayes, A. F. (2013). Introduction to mediation, moderation, and conditional process analysis: Methodology in the Social Sciences. *Kindle Edition*, 193.
- Hilferty, F. (2008). Theorising teacher professionalism as an enacted discourse of power, *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 29 (2), 161-173.
- Hoekstra, A., Korthagen, F., Brekelmans, M., Beijaard, D., & Imants, J. (2009). Experienced teachers' informal workplace learning and perceptions of workplace conditions. *Journal of Workplace Learning*, 21(4), 276-298.
- Honig, Meredith I. and Thomas C. Hatch. 2004. Crafting Coherence: How Schools Strategically Manage Multiple, External Demands. *Educational Researcher*. 33 (8): 16-30.
- Hu, L. T., & Bentler, P. M. (1999). Cutoff criteria for fit indexes in covariance structure analysis: Conventional criteria versus new alternatives. *Structural equation modeling: A Multidisciplinary Journal*, 6(1), 1-55.

Teacher Agency Dr. Hanan Ahmad Abdel-Hafez Mahmoud
Dr. Mahmoud Mohamed Emam

- Insulader, E, Brehmer, D, & Ryve, A. (2019). Teacher agency in professional development programmes – A case study of professional development material and collegial discussion. Learning, Culture and Social Interaction, 23, December, 100330
- Kennelly, B, etal., (2014). “Modeling the Preferences of Students for Alternative Assignment Designs Using the Discrete Choice Experiment”. Practical Assessment, Research and Evaluation.19 (16), 1-13.
- Kozleski, E. B., Artiles, A. J., & Waitoller, F. R. (2014). *Equity in inclusive education: A cultural historical comparative perspective*. In L. Florian (Ed.), *The SAGE handbook of special education: Two volume set* (2nd ed., (1), 231–250). SAGE. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446282236.n16>
- Kozleski, E. B., Artiles, A. J., Fletcher, T., & Engelbrecht, P. (2009). Understanding the dialectics of the local and the global in education for all: A comparative case study. International Critical Childhood Policy Studies Journal, 2(1), 15–29.
- Laurea, T. D. (2013). *Students with Special Educational Needs and Foreign Language Instruction*. Master Thesis. Università degli Studi di Padova.
- Law of national Education (2011). (1) Article 12 paragraph 1-7, p. 6-7
- Lee, Y. J., & Roth, W. M. (2007). The individual I collective dialectic in the learning organization. The Learning Organization, 14(2), 92–107.

- Leithwood, K. & Doris J. (2006). Transformational Leadership for Large-scale School Reform: Effects on Students, Teachers and their Classroom Practice. *School:Effects on Students, Teachers and Their Classroom. Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 17(2) 201-227.
- Li, L. & Rupp, A., (2020). Conceptualizing Teacher Agency for Inclusive Education: A Systematic and International Review. *Teacher Education and Special Education*, 44 (1) 42 -59
- Lipponen, L., & Kumpulainen, K. (2011). Acting as accountable authors: creating interactional spaces for agency work in teacher education. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 27(5), 812-819
- Lyon, G. R. (1996). Learning Disabilities, in *The Future of Children-Special Education for Students with Disabilities*, 6 (1). 1-8
- Lyons, W. E., Thompson, S. A., & Timmons, V. (2016). We are inclusive. We are a team. Let's just do it: Commitment, collective efficacy, and agency in four inclusive schools. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 20 (8), 889-907. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2015.1122841>
- McEachern, K., (2008). *Provision Of Modern Foreign Languages For Lower Achievers And Pupils With Special Educational Needs In Secondary Schools In England, Scotland And The Czech Republic*, Glasgow: Faculty of Education.
- McKeown, S. (2004). *Meeting SEN in the Curriculum: Modern Foreign Languages*, London: David Fulton Publishers

Teacher Agency Dr. Hanan Ahmad Abdel-Hafez Mahmoud
Dr. Mahmoud Mohamed Emam

- Meirink, J., Imants, J., Meijer, P., & Verloop, N. (2010). Teacher learning and collaboration in innovative teams. Cambridge Journal of Education, 40 (2), 161–181.
- Mohamed Emam, M. (2016). Management of inclusive education in Oman: A framework for Action. Support for Learning, 31(4), 296-312.
- Munn, P., Lloyd, G., & Cullen, M. A. (2000). *Alternatives to Exclusion From School*, London: Sage Publication
- Nagmeh-Abbaspour & Sabokrouh (2020). Training and Teaching The Interaction of Meaning in English Classes as Foreign Languages to Students with Special Needs: a Review Study. Journal of Critical Reviews, 7(9).
- Naraian, S. (2014). Agency in real time? Situating teachers' efforts toward inclusion in the context of local and enduring struggles. Teachers College Record, 116 (6), 1–38.
- Naraian, S., & Schlessinger, S. (2018). Becoming an inclusive educator: Agentive maneuverings in collaboratively taught classrooms. Teaching and Teacher Education, 71, 179–189. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2017.12.012>
- NASUWT (2008). *Special Education Needs ad Inclusion: Reflection and Renew*, a Birmingham: Clarke print Ltd
- National commission for teaching and America's Future (2007). *Policy Brief: The high Coast of Teacher Turnover*.
- Nunnally, J. C., & Bernstein, I. H. (1994). *Psychometric theory* (3rd ed.). McGraw-Hill.

- OECD, (2012). *Equity and Quality in Education, Supporting Disadvantaged Students and Schools*. Paris: OECD.
- Pantić, N. (2017). An exploratory study of teacher agency for social justice. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 66, 219–230. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2017.04.008>.
- Peterson, J. M., & Hittie M. M. (2010). *Inclusive Teaching: The Journey Towards Effective Schools for All Learners*, New York: Pearson.
- Priestley, M., Biesta, G., & Robinson, S. (2016). *Teacher agency: An ecological approach*. Bloomsbury Academic.
- Priestley, M., Edwards, R., Priestley, A., & Miller, K. (2012). Teacher agency in curriculum making: Agents of change and spaces for maneuver. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 42(2),191–214. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-873X.2012.00588.x>
- Quinn, R. & Carl, N. M. (2015) Teacher activist organizations and the development of professional agency, *Teachers and Teaching*, 21(6), 745–758.
- Raffo, C., & Gunter, H. (2008). Leading schools to promote social inclusion: developing a conceptual framework for analyzing research, policy and practice. *Journal of Education Policy*, 23 (4), 397-414.
- Reynolds, M. (2001). Education for inclusion, teacher education and the teacher training agency standards. *Journal of In-Service Education*, 27(3), 465-476.
- Robinson, S.. (2012). Constructing Teacher Agency in Response to the Constraints of Education Policy Adoption and Adaptation. *Curriculum Journal*, 45(1): 231-232

Teacher Agency Dr. Hanan Ahmad Abdel-Hafez Mahmoud
Dr. Mahmoud Mohamed Emam

Sanders, W. and Horn, S. (1998) Research findings from the Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS) database: Implications for educational evaluation and .research_ Journal of Personnel Evaluation in Education, 12(3), 247-256

Schon, B. (2018). *Teacher Agency and its role in raising achievement. .What is it and can it be coached?* Principal Johnsonville School Wellington

Scott, W. Richard. (1994). *Institutions and Organizations: Toward a Theoretical Synthesis*.55–80 in Institutional Environments and Organizations edited by John W. Meyer and W. Richard Scott. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

SEED (2003). Moving Forward! Additional Support for Learning. Edinburgh: Scottish Executive Education Department. Online: <http://Scotland.gov.uk/publications/2003101/16161/16483> (accessed 20.11.12).

Selznick, Philip. (1996). Institutionalism ‘Old’ and ‘New’_. Administrative Science Quarterly, 41(2), 270-277

Shipton, I., Mackenzie, A. S., Shipton, J., & Council B. (2006).The Child as a Learner.

Soini, T., Pietarinen, J., Toom, A. & Pyhalto, K. (2015). What contributes to first-year student teachers’ sense of professional agency in the classroom? Teachers and Teaching, 21(6), 641-659.

- Spillane, James P., Brian J. Reiser, and Todd Reimer 2002. Policy Implementation and Cognition: Reframing and Refocusing Implementation Research . Review of Educational Research. 72(3): 387-431.
- Themane, M., & Thobejane, H. R. (2018). Teachers as change agents in making teaching inclusive in some selected rural schools of Limpopo province, South Africa: Implications for teacher education. International Journal of Inclusive Education, 23(4), 369–383. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2018.1434690>
- Toom, A., Pylhalto, O'Connell Rust, F. (2015). Teachers a professional agency in contradictory times. Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice, 21(6), 615-623.
- Tynjälä, P. (2013). Toward a 3-P model of workplace learning: A literature review. Vocations and Learning, 6, 11–36.
- UNESCO- International Bureau of Education (2009). *Inclusive Education, The way of the future, International Conference on Education, 28th Session, Geneva 25-28 November 2008, Paris.*
- UNESCO-IBE (2008) *Conclusions and recommendations of the 48th session of the International Conference on Education.* Geneva, Switzerland. UNESCO IBE.ED/BIE CONFINTED 48/5
- Vähäsantanen, K. (2015). Professional agency in the stream of change: Understanding educational change and teachers' professional identities. Teaching and Teacher Education, 47, 1–12.

Teacher Agency Dr. Hanan Ahmad Abdel-Hafez Mahmoud
Dr. Mahmoud Mohamed Emam

- Vähäsantanen, K., & Eteläpelto, A. (2011). Vocational teachers' pathways in the course of a curriculum reform. Journal of Curriculum Studies, 43(3), 291–312.
- Volpe, R, DuPaul, G, Jitendra A, Tresco, K. (2009). Consultation-based academic interventions for children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder: Effects on reading and mathematics outcomes at 1-year follow-up. School Psychology Review, 38(1), 5– 13.
- Waitoller, F. R. & Artiles, A. J. (2013). A decade of professional development research for inclusive education: A critical review and notes for a research program. Review of Educational Research, 83(3), 319-356.
- Weick, K. (1976). Education Organizations as Loosely Coupled Systems. Administrative Science Quarterly. 21(1), 1-19.
- Weick, K. (2001). *Making sense of the organization*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Wilson, E. & Deaney, R. (2010) Changing career and changing identity: How do teacher career changers exercise agency in identity construction? Social Psychology of Education, 13(2),169–183.
- Zucker, Lynn G. (1987). Institutional Theories of Organization. Annual Review of Sociology. 13:443-464