

Research paper

Strength and Strategy: The Role of Resilience in Iranian EFL Teachers' Critical Thinking and Classroom Management

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Abstract

Given the significance of teacher-related factors in teacher effectiveness and a significant gap in the literature, this study aimed to address the relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' resilience, critical thinking, and classroom management. Employing a quantitative design, 200 Iranian EFL teachers (100 males and 100 females) were selected through convenience sampling from private language institutions in Kerman, Iran. Data were collected using the Persian version of the Resilience Questionnaire, the English version of the Critical Thinking Questionnaire, and the Persian version of the Classroom Management Questionnaire. The results indicated a positive, significant relationship between EFL teachers' resilience and their critical thinking. Furthermore, a significant, positive correlation was found between teachers' resilience and classroom management. Additionally, the results demonstrated a significant, positive relationship between critical thinking and classroom management among the teachers. These findings might hold significant implications for EFL teachers, EFL teacher trainers, language institutions, and EFL learners.

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Introduction

English language teaching (ELT) is a colorful scene shaped by many contributors, with the teacher playing a fundamental role. Teachers are not merely presenters of materials; they are facilitators of learning (Ataboyev & Tursunovich, 2023). The intrinsic connection between EFL teaching and learning is undeniable, highlighting that teaching quality directly impacts learning success. However, achieving high teaching quality is not isolated from various influencing factors that warrant thorough investigation. Among these factors, the influence of the teacher stands out as an important determinant of learners' achievement which highlights the importance of exploring the aspects related to teachers, as they profoundly affect students' learning outcomes. Consequently, exploring these teacher-related factors is essential for addressing and resolving learning challenges in English language teaching. Resilience is a critical factor with profound impacts on EFL teaching, prompting recommendations from researchers to give it due attention (Derakhshan et al., 2022; Fan et al., 2021; Sahragard & Baharloo, 2009). One way to address resilience is by exploring its correlation with other essential factors, such as critical thinking and classroom management. Investigating these relationships can help resolve complexities that teachers face in critical thinking and classroom management. In fact, it can be argued that, alongside resilience, critical thinking and classroom management are areas where many teachers encounter difficulties. Examining the interrelationship among these factors can help identify solutions to these challenges and ultimately enhance the overall effectiveness of EFL teaching.

However, upon reviewing previous studies, the researchers identified a significant gap: there are no correlational studies examining the relationship among resilience, critical thinking, and classroom management specifically among Iranian EFL teachers. To bridge this gap, this investigation aims to determine whether and how these three variables are correlated in this context. The primary rationale for this study stems from discussions about the impact of EFL teacher characteristics on teaching and learning quality. As Al-Seghayer (2017) noted, improving EFL teaching quality enhances the likelihood of effective EFL learning. Without in-depth studies on teaching-related factors, achieving EFL teaching effectiveness is challenging, which in turn hampers EFL learning. Numerous studies (e.g., Dicke et al., 2015; Ghanizadeh, 2017; Kangas-Dick & O'Shaughnessy, 2020; Skinner & Beers, 2016; Vijayan et al., 2016) have indicated that certain teacher characteristics, including resilience, critical thinking, and classroom management ability are particularly influential and thus need closer investigation. Additionally, some attributes, such as resilience, are under-researched areas that require further exploration. This study aims to deepen the understanding of these key factors and their interconnections, with the ultimate goal of improving EFL teaching and learning outcomes.

Thus, this study demonstrates that EFL teaching is not solely a result of a teacher's cognitive abilities or subject matter knowledge but is also deeply rooted in affective features like resilience. The study's findings suggest that EFL teachers may benefit from focusing on enhancing their resilience, critical thinking, and classroom management skills. These three

factors significantly influence EFL teaching. Improving these areas may help teachers increase their teaching efficiency, which in turn benefits learners by enhancing their language learning.

This investigation sets out to address the following three research objectives:

1. To examine the relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' resilience and their critical thinking abilities.
2. To explore the connection between Iranian EFL teachers' resilience and their classroom management skills.
3. To analyze the link between Iranian EFL teachers' critical thinking and their classroom management practices.

Literature Review

Resilience

Various teacher characteristics significantly contribute to teaching effectiveness and thereby impact learners' success. In EFL teaching, resilience stands out as a crucial attribute. Resilience is defined as an individual's ability to confront life's obstacles and turn challenges into opportunities (Dorji & Singh, 2019). Numerous studies have highlighted resilience as a crucial factor influencing the effectiveness of English teaching and learning (Derakhshan et al., 2022; Liu & Chu, 2022; Praditsang & Hanafi, 2015; Wang et al., 2022). While resilience has always been important in EFL teaching, its significance has grown more in recent times (Dorji & Singh, 2019). Economic hardships, social pressures, family issues, demotivation, and burnout present new challenges for EFL teachers in the classroom. Moreover, frequent changes in syllabi and curricula, the rise of digital literacy, accountability to stakeholders, and evaluation complexities contribute to teachers' stress and teaching difficulties (Nagamine, 2018). These factors collectively impact teacher resilience. In such dynamic and demanding circumstances, teachers should develop resilience more than ever to effectively teach and achieve teaching effectiveness. This emphasizes the critical role of teacher resilience in EFL teaching, highlighting its importance in managing and overcoming the challenges faced in the educational context.

Several researchers (e.g., Brooks & Goldstein, 2001; Melendez & Tomlinson-Clarke, 2004) have argued that resilience enhances a wide range of skills such as intellectual abilities, cognitive skills, problem-solving skills, planning skills, reflective thinking, and moral thinking. Understanding the factors associated with resilience can therefore assist teachers in maintaining their resilience and improving the quality of their work. This focus on resilience sustainability through related factors can be instrumental in enhancing overall job performance (Xie, 2021). Enhanced resilience both benefits teachers themselves and extends to students, parents, and other stakeholders connected to these groups, whether directly or indirectly. Given these considerations, it is imperative to investigate how resilience correlates with other significant factors within the EFL teaching profession.

Critical Thinking

The next feature addressed in this study is critical thinking, a critical factor that significantly enhances the performance of EFL teachers. It involves a mode of thinking characterized by questioning, analytical reasoning, interpretation, and the evaluation of received information (Halpern, 2003; McPeck, 2016). The effect of critical thinking on EFL teaching and learning is profound, fundamentally reshaping instructional practices (Kabilan, 2014; Lin, 2018; Tosuncuoglu, 2018). Recognizing the critical importance of this skill, several programs have been developed to improve critical thinking abilities. These include the Instrumental Enrichment Program devised by Reuven Feuerstein, The Cognitive Research Trust Thinking Program, The Future Problem-Solving Program, and Tactics for Thinking, among others. These programs are designed to empower teachers and learners alike to engage critically with content and to develop effective problem-solving strategies within educational contexts.

Classroom Management

The next variable addressed in this study is classroom management which stands as a crucial aspect of EFL teachers' repertoire (Espinosa Cevallos & Soto, 2020; Habibi et al., 2018; Heidari & Parvaresh, 2021; Kazemi & Soleimani, 2016; Stronge, 2018), directly influencing the quality of EFL teaching. According to Bedir (2022), EFL classroom management involves not only teachers' classroom performance but also includes various activities such as setting teaching goals, preparing materials, engaging learners, and evaluating their progress. The effective management of a classroom is a focal point in educational contexts and remains a prevalent topic for EFL teachers. Indeed, the role teachers play in the L2 classroom and the strategies they employ to manage it, significantly impact learners' language development and task achievement (Alqahtani, 2015; Demirdag, 2015). Evaluating EFL teachers' teaching effectiveness often hinges on their ability to manage classrooms and effectively address learner behavior. Successful EFL teachers need to create a dynamic and supportive educational context that promotes L2 development (Wehby & Lane, 2019).

The Interaction among Resilience, Critical Thinking and Classroom Management

The connection between resilience, critical thinking, and classroom management creates creating effective teaching and learning environments. Resilience is crucial in determining how teachers handle the complexities of classroom dynamics (Gu & Day, 2013). Teachers who demonstrate resilience are better able to maintain emotional balance which directly influences their classroom management strategies. For example, Gu and Day (2013) discovered that teachers with strong resilience exhibited greater consistency in handling classroom disruptions while enhancing a supportive learning atmosphere. Critical thinking complements resilience since it helps reflect on practices and adapt their strategies (Prince, 2019). According to Higgins (2014), teachers who actively engage in critical thinking are better equipped to tackle diverse challenges in the classroom, such as managing student behavior or adapting the curriculum. Brookfield (2017) highlighted that critical reflection help teachers challenge their assumptions and refine their management techniques, ultimately enhancing student engagement and reducing conflict.

The interplay between classroom management and resilience is a two-way relationship. Effective classroom management requires resilience to handle unexpected challenges and maintain an optimal learning environment (Elias & Schwab, 2013). Conversely, a well-managed classroom enhances a sense of accomplishment which strengthens teachers' resilience (Wubbels et al., 2014). Marzano and Marzano (2003) identified clear expectations, consistent routines, and positive teacher-student relationships as key elements of successful classroom management which can alleviate stress and bolster resilience. Critical thinking can support classroom management by equipping teachers with problem-solving skills and the ability to anticipate potential issues. As pointed out by Abrami et al. (2015) teachers who engage in critical thinking are more likely to implement evidence-based management strategies and promote student independence. Tomlinson (2014) argues that teachers who apply critical thinking are more effective in designing interventions tailored to diverse learner needs which reduces behavioral challenges and creates a positive classroom climate.

Together, resilience, critical thinking, and classroom management form a dynamic framework. Resilience empowers teachers to persist in the face of challenges, critical thinking sharpens their decision-making, and effective classroom management reinforces both qualities. This integrated approach is essential for sustainable teaching practices that benefit both teachers and students. It also highlights the importance of professional development programs that simultaneously build skills in resilience, critical thinking, and classroom management (Day & Gu, 2014).

Empirical Studies

Given the significance of resilience, critical thinking, and classroom management in language education, several researchers have investigated these areas. Kamali and Fahim (2011) explored the interplay among reading comprehension, resilience, and critical thinking among EFL learners. Their findings showed a significant correlation between resilience and their critical thinking. Additionally, resilience showed a significant correlation with reading comprehension. Yaghoubi and Habibinejad (2017) addressed the interaction between burnout and critical thinking among EFL teachers, focusing on gender differences. A negative relationship was revealed between burnout and critical thinking, with gender not playing a statistically significant role in this relationship.

Razmjoo and Ayoobiyan (2019) investigated the interplay between teachers' resilience and their classroom management self-efficacy in an EFL context. Their findings revealed a positive significant relationship between the variables. Moslemi and Habibi (2019) investigated the correlation among EFL teachers' critical thinking skills, professional identity, classroom management self-efficacy in Iran and found a strong positive correlation between teachers' classroom management self-efficacy and their critical thinking skills. Additionally, it was found that teachers' professional identity could predict both their self-efficacy in classroom management and their critical thinking abilities. Keyvanloo et al. (2023) examined how English language teachers' critical thinking, autonomy, and management experience are related. The results showed that teachers' critical thinking skills were positively related with their autonomy

in classroom management. Furthermore, teachers who exhibited stronger critical thinking were more autonomous in teaching profession.

Mallahi (2024) explored how writing ability of EFL learners, their critical thinking, academic resilience, grit are related. Significant correlations were revealed between critical thinking and academic resilience, as well as between resilience and writing ability. Zakian (2018) examined the if Iranian EFL teachers' years of teaching experience, critical thinking, and classroom management are related. The study revealed a significant positive correlation between critical thinking and effective classroom management. Navaser and Amiri (2015) examined the interplay among EFL teachers' classroom management, teaching style and critical thinking. Contrary to expectations, their study found no significant relationships among these variables. In their study on the cultural strategies employed by Iranian EFL teachers for classroom management, Jafari et al. (2023) identified a variety of techniques that teachers utilize. These include leveraging knowledge acquired through formal academic training, drawing on personal experiences, meeting the diverse needs of learners, engaging in reciprocal feedback with the class, adhering to professional ethical standards, and taking cultural factors into account. Additionally, the findings suggested that for EFL teachers, it is essential to implement cultural strategies to effectively translate theoretical classroom management knowledge into practical, actionable methods.

These studies show the crucial and complex roles of resilience, critical thinking, and classroom management in both the academic performance of EFL learners and the professional fulfillment of EFL teachers. However, despite the insights provided by these and similar studies, an evident gap remains which is a lack of correlational research investigating the interplay among resilience, critical thinking, and classroom management, particularly, regarding Iranian EFL teachers. To bridge this gap, this investigation seeks to examine and establish the nature of these relationships. It aims to investigate whether and how these three variables are correlated in the unique setting of Iranian EFL teaching.

Method

Participants

The study included 200 (100 male and 100 female) EFL teachers from language institutions in Kerman, Iran. Participants were selected through convenience sampling based on their availability. Their ages ranged from 35 to 60 years and held educational backgrounds varying from B.A. to M.A. degrees in various branches of the English language field. Their teaching experience varied from 8 to 25 years.

Instruments

The required data were collected through the following tools:

Resilience Questionnaire

The Persian version of the Resilience Questionnaire, developed by Connor and Davidson (2003), was employed to examine resilience in this study. The questionnaire includes 13

statements rated on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (always true) to 5 (incompletely not true). Marashi and Naghibi (2020) reported high reliability (Cronbach's alpha = .89) and established construct validity for this scale. To enhance participant comfort and convenience, an electronic version of the questionnaire was utilized. It took approximately 6 minutes for participants to complete the questionnaire electronically.

Critical Thinking Questionnaire

This research utilized the English form of the Critical Thinking Questionnaire, designed by Mincemoyer et al. (2001) which comprises 20 statements rated on a five-point scale. According to Mincemoyer et al. (2001), the questionnaire has established reliability with a Cronbach's alpha of .72, and its construct validity was established through factor analysis. The participants spent approximately 14 minutes completing the questionnaire. To facilitate ease of access, a digital version of the questionnaire was provided.

Classroom Management Questionnaire

In this study, the Persian version of the Classroom Management Questionnaire developed by Diaz et al. (2018) was used to evaluate participants' classroom management skills. This questionnaire comprises 25 statements, with responses rated on a Likert scale from 1 (rarely) to 4 (always). Diaz et al. (2018) reported a reliability coefficient of .80 for the questionnaire, indicating strong internal consistency. They also confirmed its construct validity through factor analysis. Participants required approximately 35 minutes to complete the questionnaire. To ensure participant comfort and convenience, an electronic version of the questionnaire was administered.

Data Collection and Analysis

To achieve the study's objectives, a quantitative correlational design was employed, as it examines the relationships between two or more variables (Ary et al., 2017). The design was suitable since it did not involve manipulating variables but focused on exploring the correlations among resilience, critical thinking, and classroom management. Data were analyzed using SPSS 26, with both descriptive and inferential statistics applied. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used to evaluate the normality of the data distribution. For inferential analysis, the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to investigate the relationships between resilience, critical thinking, and classroom management variables. This approach provided a thorough examination of how these variables are interrelated among EFL teachers.

Findings

Results of Normality Test

Table 1 displays the results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, which was used to evaluate the normality of the data distribution in this study. In this analysis, each variable (resilience, critical thinking, and classroom management) was examined separately to determine if their distributions were approximately normal.

Table 1*Results of Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test*

		Resilience	Critical Thinking	Classroom Management
N		200	200	200
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	50.72	62.12	73.13
	Std. Deviation	2.52	3.38	1.25
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.17	.11	.10
	Positive	.09	.08	.11
Negative		-.10	-.13	-.14
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		1.09	.73	.85
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.17	.63	.40

Test distribution is Normal.
Calculated from data.

Table 1 displays the results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for resilience ($p = .17$), critical thinking ($p = .63$), and classroom management ($p = .40$) data. These significance levels indicate that all variables exhibit distributions that are not significantly different from normal at the 95% confidence level. Specifically, the obtained p-values (greater than the study's significance level of $p = .05$) suggest that the assumption of normality is met for resilience, critical thinking, and classroom management data. Therefore, it is concluded that the data for all variables are normally distributed, which supports the application of parametric statistical tests such as the Pearson correlation coefficient for further analysis.

Results of Descriptive Statistics

Next, descriptive statistics were computed for the data collected from all three instruments. The descriptive statistics results are provided in Table 2.

Table 2*Results of Descriptive Statistics*

	Resilience	Critical Thinking	Classroom Management
N	200	200	200
Mean	50.72	62.12	73.13
Std. Deviation	2.52	3.38	1.25
Minimum	13.00	20.00	25.00
Maximum	65.00	100.00	100.00

As seen in Table 2, the mean scores obtained are 50.72 for resilience, 62.12 for critical thinking, and 73.13 for classroom management. Additionally, the standard deviation values are 2.52 for resilience, 3.38 for critical thinking, and 1.25 for classroom management. These statistics indicate that there is variability among the participants regarding their levels of resilience, critical thinking, and classroom management abilities.

Results of the First Research Question

To address research question 1, "Is there a significant relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' resilience and their critical thinking?", a Pearson product-moment correlation test was used to investigate the relationship between the variables. The findings are shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Results of Correlation between Resilience and Critical Thinking

		Resilience	Critical Thinking
Resilience	Pearson Correlation	1	.769*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
Critical Thinking	Pearson Correlation	.769*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.041	

Table 3 illustrates a significant, strong positive correlation between teachers' resilience and their critical thinking abilities ($r = 0.76$, $p < .05$). This finding shows that resilience and critical thinking are correlated among EFL teachers.

Results of the Second Research Question

To address research question 2, "Is there a significant relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' resilience and their classroom management?", a Pearson product-moment correlation test was used and the findings are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

Results of Correlation between Resilience and Classroom Management

		Resilience	Classroom Management
Resilience	Pearson Correlation	1	.852*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
Classroom Management	Pearson Correlation	.852*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	

Table 4 demonstrates a significant and very strong positive correlation between resilience and classroom management abilities ($r = 0.85$, $p < .05$), meaning that resilience and classroom management skills are associated among EFL teachers.

Results of the Third Research Question

With regard to research question 3, "Is there a significant relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' critical thinking and their classroom management?", a Pearson product-moment correlation test was used. The results can be seen in Table 5.

Table 5*Results of Correlation between Critical Thinking and Classroom Management*

		Critical Thinking	Classroom Management
Critical Thinking	Pearson Correlation	1	.724*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
Classroom Management	Pearson Correlation	.724*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	

Table 5 reveals a significant and strong positive relationship between Iranian critical thinking and classroom management abilities ($r = 0.72$, $p < .05$). This finding shows that critical thinking is positively associated with classroom management skills among EFL teachers.

Discussion

Regarding the first research question, "Is there any significant relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' resilience and their critical thinking?", the analysis revealed a positive and significant correlation between Iranian EFL teachers' resilience and their critical thinking abilities. One possible explanation for this finding is that resilience and critical thinking may share common cognitive and emotional foundations that support and enhance each other. Teachers with high resilience are often more capable of handling stress, adapting to challenges, and maintaining an optimistic perspective. These qualities may, in turn, enable them to tackle problems with greater analytical and creative insight. Likewise, critical thinking requires the ability to evaluate situations objectively, consider various viewpoints, and make well-informed decisions. These skills can enhance emotional regulation and adaptability, which are central to resilience. This dynamic relationship suggests that by enhancing resilience in EFL teachers, their critical thinking abilities may also improve. As a result, this could lead to more effective teaching practices and stronger problem-solving skills in the classroom. This finding aligns with the results reported by Kamali and Fahim (2011), who also reported a significantly positive correlation between resilience and critical thinking. This consistency with previous research suggests that higher levels of resilience among Iranian EFL teachers are associated with stronger critical thinking skills. This relationship indicates the importance of resilience in promoting effective critical thinking abilities which are crucial for addressing challenges and enhancing teaching practices in EFL contexts (Gu & Day, 2013; Higgins, 2014; Prince, 2019).

Furthermore, this result aligns with Mallahi's (2024) study, which also found an association between critical thinking and resilience. Several researchers (e.g., Brooks & Goldstein, 2001; Melendez & Tomlinson-Clarke, 2004) argued that resilience enhances planning skills, intellectual abilities, moral thinking, cognitive skills, reflective thinking and problem-solving abilities. These enhanced skills contribute to higher levels of critical thinking among individuals who exhibit resilience. Another perspective that aids in interpreting this finding is that critical thinkers are adept at decision-making, articulating problems, employing higher-order thinking skills, and engaging in problem-solving (Day & Gu, 2014). These qualities are closely connected with a higher degree of resilience. Therefore, the positive correlation

observed between resilience and critical thinking among the participants emphasizes the mutually reinforcing nature of these traits in facilitating effective teaching practices and professional resilience in challenging educational settings.

In addressing the second research question, "Is there any significant relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' resilience and their classroom management?", a significant, positive correlation was identified between Iranian EFL teachers' classroom management abilities and their resilience. This can be explained through several interconnected factors. Resilient teachers possess well-developed emotional regulation skills which help them stay calm and composed when faced with challenges in the classroom. This emotional stability enables them to maintain a positive learning environment and apply strategies that promote order and engagement.

Additionally, resilience boosts teachers' adaptability and allows them to modify their management techniques to meet the diverse needs of their students and respond to changing classroom dynamics. Effective stress management is another key element, as resilient teachers are better equipped to handle the pressures of teaching. This is especially relevant in EFL settings, where language barriers and cultural differences may complicate classroom interactions. Teachers who manage stress well can maintain a steady and authoritative presence that supports successful classroom control.

Resilience also enhances problem-solving abilities and enables teachers to identify and then tackle the underlying causes of issues like student disengagement or behavioral challenges. Moreover, resilient teachers tend to maintain a positive outlook, creating a supportive and encouraging classroom atmosphere. This positivity can inspire students to respect and cooperate with their teacher, further strengthening classroom management. Another factor is the professional dedication often associated with resilience. Highly resilient teachers are more likely to invest time and effort in developing effective management practices, such as setting clear expectations and establishing consistent routines. They also typically excel in interpersonal skills, building strong, trusting relationships with their students. These connections, based on mutual respect and understanding, help minimize behavioral problems and enhance a more cohesive classroom environment. Last but not least, resilient teachers act as role models, demonstrating perseverance and constructive ways to cope with challenges. This behavior encourages students to adopt similar positive habits that can contribute to better classroom dynamics.

This finding mirrors the results from Razmjoo and Ayoobiyan's (2019) research, which similarly found a significant relationship between EFL teachers' resilience and classroom management. To explain this finding, Bandura (1997) and Day and Gu (2010) proposed that effective classroom management enhances teachers' self-efficacy, leading to increased efforts and investment in teaching practices. This, in turn, contributes to the development and enhancement of teachers' resilience. Furthermore, Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2007) noted that resilient teachers engage in reflective practices that facilitate the identification and implementation of effective strategies for classroom management. Thus, the significant

correlation observed between resilience and classroom management among Iranian EFL teachers highlights how resilience contributes to effective classroom management practices. In other words, teachers with higher degrees of resilience are likely to be more confident in managing their classrooms and are better equipped to handle challenges, ultimately improving their overall teaching effectiveness (Elias & Schwab, 2013; Gu & Day, 2013).

Regarding the last research objective, "exploring the relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' critical thinking and their classroom management?", the findings indicate a significantly positive relationship between teachers' classroom management skills and their critical thinking. This relationship can be attributed to several key factors. Critical thinking enables teachers to approach classroom challenges with a problem-solving mindset that helps them to analyze situations objectively and develop effective strategies to maintain order as well as engagement. This analytical ability helps them identify the root causes of issues, such as student disengagement or behavioral disruptions, and address these challenges with targeted solutions rather than reactive measures. Additionally, critical thinking improves adaptability. Teachers who think critically are better equipped to adapt their management approaches to the unique needs of their students and the dynamic nature of classroom environments. They can evaluate the effectiveness of their strategies and make adjustments when necessary to ensure that their methods remain relevant and impactful.

Another reason lies in the decision-making skills inherent in critical thinking. Teachers who possess strong critical thinking abilities are adept at making thoughtful, timely decisions under pressure. This decisiveness is essential in managing classroom dynamics effectively, whether it involves resolving conflicts, redirecting off-task behavior, or maintaining a balanced pace during lessons. Moreover, critical thinking contributes to enhanced communication skills. Teachers with this ability can articulate instructions and expectations clearly and provide constructive feedback that resonates with their students. This clarity is likely to improve mutual understanding and reduces the likelihood of misunderstandings or misbehavior. Furthermore, critical thinkers often demonstrate self-reflection which enables them to evaluate their own teaching practices and management techniques. When teachers identify areas for improvement and implement changes, they create a more structured and positive classes.

This result aligns with previous studies such as Moslemi and Habibi (2019), who found a meaningful interrelation between critical thinking skills and classroom management self-efficacy among EFL teachers in Iran. Similarly, Keyvanloo et al. (2023) explored the interplay between EFL teachers' critical thinking and management experience, revealing a significant correlation between these variables. To explain this finding, when teachers involve in critical thinking, they are more likely to identify effective classroom management techniques through analytical reasoning and problem-solving (Abrami et al., 2015). Additionally, critical thinking improves teachers' self-efficacy in the classroom, as proposed by Bandura (1997), leading to greater confidence and competence in managing classroom dynamics. Moreover, critical reflection encourages teachers to consider alternative perspectives and learn from colleagues, thereby enriching their repertoire of classroom management strategies. Overall, the positive

correlation observed between Iranian EFL teachers' classroom management and critical thinking shows the impact of critical thinking skills in enhancing teachers' ability to effectively manage their classrooms. Therefore, teachers with strong critical thinking abilities are better prepared to handle challenges, apply innovative teaching strategies, and create effective learning contexts for their learners (Tomlinson, 2014).

In summary, the findings of this investigation confirm a significant relationship among EFL teachers' resilience, critical thinking, and classroom management. This emphasizes the dynamic interaction between these teacher characteristics rather than viewing them as isolated factors. According to this perspective, teachers benefit from enhancing their positive psychological traits to improve their overall teaching effectiveness. In other words, nurturing resilience helps teachers' better handle setbacks in their professional roles, which in turn supports their skills to think critically about teaching practices and effectively manage classroom dynamics. Critical thinking skills empower teachers to innovate and adapt their instructional strategies, contributing further to their classroom management efficacy. Ultimately, the integration of these qualities promotes a cohesive and effective teaching approach that enhances learning outcomes for EFL learners. Therefore, EFL teachers are encouraged to develop and strengthen these interconnected traits, recognizing their collective impact on professional growth and educational outcomes in the EFL context.

Conclusion

This investigation focused on three critical factors regarding EFL teachers, namely resilience, critical thinking, and classroom management. The findings showed that these teacher-related characteristics are interconnected rather than independent entities. Specifically, the study concludes that resilient teachers demonstrate higher levels of critical thinking skills, benefiting from increased capacity for critical analysis (Beltman et al., 2011). Furthermore, the results indicate that resilient teachers exhibit enhanced classroom management abilities, leveraging their heightened self-efficacy in effectively managing classroom dynamics (Jennings et al., 2013). Therefore, efforts to bolster resilience among teachers can lead to substantial improvements in their classroom management skills. Resilience emerges as a potent factor capable of significantly enhancing classroom management practices.

Regarding the results of the last research question, it is evident that teachers with strong critical thinking skills are more adept at managing their classrooms efficiently. This correlation indicates that critical thinking acts as a catalyst for enhancing classroom management proficiency (Stronge, 2018). Therefore, teachers who actively engage in critical thinking practices are likely to achieve better outcomes in managing their classrooms effectively. To conclude, the study confirms significant interrelationships among resilience, critical thinking, and classroom management in EFL teaching. This interconnectedness implies that changes in one of these factors can lead to changes in the others. Teachers are advised to recognize and leverage these connections to improve job satisfaction, professional growth, and overall teaching effectiveness in their educational practices.

From a practical standpoint, EFL teachers can leverage the insights gained from this study to enhance their professional capabilities across resilience, critical thinking, and classroom management. Strengthening these three interconnected factors can mutually reinforce each other and significantly improve teaching effectiveness. Teachers are recommended to proactively seek techniques that develop these skills, considering their roles in effective classroom practice. Teaching effectiveness is not solely determined by cognitive abilities but also by emotional factors. Teachers who enhance their emotional resilience can handle difficulties better and maintain a constructive educational environment conducive to learning. This holistic approach emphasizes the interdependence of various teacher characteristics on teaching quality, which EFL learners can become more aware of. Understanding these dynamics helps learners appreciate how their teachers' skills in resilience, critical thinking, and classroom management collectively enhance their educational experience and outcomes.

Incorporating these findings into teacher training programs is crucial. Teacher trainers should emphasize the interconnectedness of these teacher-related factors and provide training that enhances student teachers' resilience, critical thinking, and classroom management skills. Integrating these aspects into training curricula helps trainers better prepare future teachers to excel in their professional roles. Furthermore, policy makers play a role in supporting teacher development. They should implement policies and initiatives aimed at improving teachers' psychological well-being, thereby improving resilience, critical thinking, and effective classroom management. These efforts not only benefit teachers directly but also contribute to enhanced educational environments and outcomes for EFL students.

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