

A Cross-Cultural Study of Teacher Autonomy in Curriculum Development among Iranian and Turkish EFL Teachers

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Abstract

Teacher autonomy is viewed very differently: one teacher may view autonomy as a means to gain substantial freedom from interference or supervision; another may view it as the freedom to develop collegial relationships and accomplish tasks that extend beyond the classroom; and even some others may perceive it as a means for principals to avoid their duties (Frase and Sorenson, 1992). Although the concept was viewed as a unitary one in the past, it is recently decomposed into six distinct subcomponents: autonomy over curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, professional development, student discipline, and classroom environment (LaCoe, 2008). These six subcomponents of teacher autonomy provide a solid framework to understand the complex nature of teacher autonomy in the study. However, the study aimed at examining Iranian (N=71) and Turkish (N=48) high school EFL teachers' opinions about teacher autonomy in curriculum development. The results revealed that there were slight differences between Iranian and Turkish teachers' autonomy perceptions. They also indicated there were significant differences among teachers in considering their gender, age and academic level, while no significant relationship was found for their marital status.

Keywords: Teacher Autonomy, Curriculum Development, Curriculum Evaluation, Decision Making, Problem Solving

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INTRODUCTION

For the first time, Little (1995, p. 176) defined teacher autonomy as the “teachers’ capacity to engage in self-directed teaching.” After that, scholars defined teacher autonomy from different aspects. For instance, Aoki (2000, p. 19) suggested that teacher autonomy involves “the capacity, freedom, and/or responsibility to make choices concerning one’s own teaching”. Smith (2000, p. 89) also argued that teacher autonomy refers to “the ability to develop appropriate skills, knowledge and attitudes for oneself as a teacher, in cooperation with others.” Furthermore, Benson (2000, p. 111) argued that teacher autonomy can be seen as “a right to freedom from control and/or an ability to exercise this right”. The concept of teacher autonomy, however, is generally defined as the degree to which a teacher has the desire to make curriculum decisions using his/her personal initiative and intellectual engagement, and concerns itself mainly with: (a) teacher involvement in decision making processes, (b) provision of opportunities for peer collaboration, discussion and debate of real school problems, (c) establishment of optimal level of support and allowance for teacher voice, (d) encouragement of strategy flexibility in obtaining goals, (e) reinforcement of teacher responsibility and choice in teaching/learning activities, and (f) helping teachers perceive freedom from externally imposed agendas.

Teacher professional autonomy, as a multidimensional concept, has changed considerably over the years and continues to evolve. As Frase and Sorenson (1992) argue, teacher autonomy is viewed very differently: one teacher may view autonomy as a means to gain substantial freedom from interference or supervision; another may view it as the freedom to develop collegial relationships and accomplish tasks that extend beyond the classroom; and even some others may perceive it as a means for principals to avoid their duties. Although the concept was viewed as a unitary one in the past, it has recently been decomposed into six distinct subcomponents: *autonomy over curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, professional development, student discipline, and classroom environment* (LaCoe, 2008). These six subcomponents of teacher autonomy provide a solid framework to understand the complex nature of teacher autonomy.

Studies also revealed that teacher autonomy, as a crucial factor to educational effectiveness, empowers individuals within the system to adapt teaching to the changing needs of the students and the community. For instance, Pearson and Hall (1993) found that the

degree of autonomy perceived by new teachers was an indicator of job satisfaction and a positive reaction to teaching, and teachers who had higher autonomy scores expressed a willingness to enter teaching again if faced with that decision. Moreover, Ingersoll and Alsalam (1997, p. 7) argued that increasing of teacher autonomy positively correlated with making better decisions about educational issues because top-down decision-making often fails when it lacks the support of those who are responsible for the implementation of them. Finally, perceptions of autonomy have been found to be related to various factors such as tension, frustration, anxiety, and job stress among teachers (Pearson and Hall, 1993; Natale, 1993; Davis and Wilson, 2000; Dinham and Scott, 2000; Webb, 2002; Pearson and Moomaw, 2006; Bustingorry, 2008).

While the potential role of teacher autonomy in language learning/teaching processes is enormous, it has been argued that Turkey has a centralized educational system (Ozturk, 2011; Uygun, 2008; Aksit, 2007). Yildirim (2003) analyzed the attitudes and practices of Turkish teachers with regard to their teaching programs and identified that teachers excessively relied on the curriculum and textbooks in their teaching activities because they were asked to meet fully the predetermined curriculum requirements, which means that they have little autonomy in determining the content of the teaching activities. He further added that centralized tendencies were vividly observed in many fields such as curriculum development, choice of instructional materials, teacher employment, in-service training programs etc. Moreover, Vorkink (2006) claimed that “compared with Europe and most of the world, Turkey’s public schools have the least autonomy over resources, staff deployment (at the school), textbook selection, allocation of instructional time, and selection of programs offered” (Vorkink, 2006, p. 17).

If this is the case with Turkish educational system, there will be no much difference with the educational system of Iran, where teachers have no flexibility to regulate the content of the programs in accordance with the student needs and classroom circumstances. It is, however, believed that taking into account Iranian and Turkish high school teachers’ sense of autonomy over curriculum processes will shed more light on the role of teacher autonomy in EFL settings, that is, the study concerns with similarities or differences between Iranian and Turkish EFL teachers’ autonomy perceptions over their teaching activities in the areas of (a) choice of appropriate teaching methods, strategies and

techniques to meet student needs, (b) evaluation of the implementation of the established curriculum (c) teacher involvement in decision making processes and (d) using personal initiative to solve work problems. Hence, the paper aims at finding answers to the following research questions:

1. In what areas (i.e. pedagogy and curriculum evaluation, decision making, and problem solving) do Iranian and Turkish high school EFL teachers' autonomy perceptions differ?
2. Is there any difference between male and female teachers' perceptions on teacher autonomy?
3. Does 'age' play any role in teacher autonomy?
4. Is there any relationship between teacher autonomy perceptions of EFL teachers and their 'marital status'?
5. Is there any relationship between teacher autonomy and the 'academic level' of EFL teachers?

METHODOLOGY

The participants were 119 high school teachers teaching English as foreign language in Iranian and Turkish state schools during the 2011-2012 academic year. The data were collected from Tabriz and Ankara cities in Iran and Turkey respectively. An 11-item questionnaire was used to measure teacher autonomy perceptions of the participants in the subscales of *Pedagogy and Curriculum Evaluation* (4 items), *Decision Making* (4 items), and *Problem Solving* (3 items), each of which uses a six-point Likert scale ranging from 'disagree very much' (1) to 'agree very much' (6). The internal consistency reliability coefficient of the questionnaire, as determined by the Cronbach's alpha value, was 0.74, which indicated an acceptable reliability index for the measure. SPSS version 17.0 for Windows was used to obtain descriptive statistics in frequencies, percentages, mean rank scores, Mann-Whitney Test, and Kruskal-Wallis Test for determining potential relationships among variables.

RESULTS

The results were offered based on the categorical variables included in the study, where the three subcomponents of teacher autonomy (i.e., pedagogy and curriculum evaluation, decision making, and problem solving) were the dependent variables and nationality, gender, age, marital status, and academic level were independent ones.

Nationality

The results, as determined by Mann-Whitney U-test, were statistically significant between Iranian (N=71; 59.7%) and Turkish (N=48; 40.3%) EFL teachers' perceptions on teacher autonomy in the subcomponents of *Pedagogy and Curriculum Evaluation* (U= 12713.00; P-value= 0.00, P< 0.05), *Decision Making* (U= 12246.500; P-value= 0.00, P< 0.05), and *Problem Solving* (U= 14207.500; P-value= 0.00, P< 0.05). See Table 1.

Table 1.
Nationality and Teacher Autonomy

Components	Group statistics				Mann-Whitney U-test			
	Nationality	N	Mean Rank	Median	U	Z	Sig. (2-tailed)	r (= Z/N ²)
1. Pedagogy and curriculum evaluation	Iranian	71	170.77	12.0000	12713.000	-4.877	0.000	0.248
	Turkish	48	227.01	14.0000				
	Total	119		13.0000				
2. Decision making	Iranian	71	168.75	13.0000	12246.500	-5.309	0.000	0.270
	Turkish	48	230.00	15.0000				
	Total	119		13.0000				
3. Problem solving	Iranian	71	177.27	10.0000	14207.500	-3.489	0.000	0.177
	Turkish	48	217.43	11.0000				
	Total	119		11.0000				

The examination of the Mean Rank (Mrk) and Median (Mdn) scores of the subscales of teacher autonomy also revealed that high scores were received by Turkish teachers in the three subcomponents of *Pedagogy and Curriculum Evaluation* (Iranian ► Mrk= 170.77; Mdn= 12.00 and Turkish ► Mrk = 227.01; Mdn= 14.00), *Decision Making* (Iranian ► Mrk= 168.75; Mdn= 13.00 and Turkish ► Mrk = 230.00; Mdn= 15.00), and *Problem Solving* (Iranian ► Mrk = 177.27; Mdn= 10.00 and Turkish ► Mrk= 217.43; Mdn= 11.00). See Table 1.

The analysis of reliability effect test, according to Cohen (1988), showed a slight significant difference for Iranian and Turkish groups in the three subcomponents of *Pedagogy and Curriculum Evaluation* (Z= -4.877; r= 0.248, r< 0.3), *Decision Making* (Z= -5.309; r= 0.270, r< 0.3), and *Problem Solving* (Z= -3.489; r= 0.177, r< 0.3). Cohen's (1988) reliability effect indexes for small, moderate, and strong relationships are r=0.1, 0.30, and 0.50 respectively. See Table 1.

After adding the participants' negative ('disagree very much', 'disagree moderately', and 'disagree slightly') and positive ('agree

very much', 'agree moderately', and 'agree slightly') choices together, the results of percentage analyses also confirmed that the positively-intended scores of Turkish teachers were greater than that of Iranian ones in all items of the three subcomponents of *Pedagogy and Curriculum Evaluation* (Iran/Turkey► items: 1=26.5/30.8%; 2=51.7/71.2%; 3=31.7/62.8%; 4=21.7/26.3%), *Decision Making* (Iran/Turkey► items: 5=43.0/60.9%; 6=21.7/39.7%; 7=47.0/62.8%; 8=50.9/62.8%), and *Problem Solving* (Iran/Turkey► items: 9=53.9/64.7%; 10=60.0/67.9%; 11=28.3/39.7%), which means that Turkish EFL teachers' perceptions on teacher autonomy is greater than that of Iranian ones in the three subcomponents. See Table 2.

Table 2.*Percentage of Teacher Autonomy perceptions of Iranian and Turkish Teachers*

Subscales	Items	Disagree any way		Agree any way	
		Iran %	Turkey %	Iran %	Turkey %
Pedagogy and curriculum evaluation	1. My performance at work is limited by the established curriculum.*	26.5	30.8	73.5	69.2
	2. I am free to choose appropriate teaching methods and strategies to meet student needs. **	48.3	28.8	51.7	71.2
	3. I am not allowed to fit the content to students' interests and needs.*	31.7	62.8	68.3	37.2
	4. The current educational rules and procedures make doing a good job difficult.*	21.7	26.3	78.3	73.7
Decision making	5. I feel my administration allows for teacher voice and provides considerable support. **	57.0	39.1	43.0	60.9
	6. I feel I have no influence over instructional decisions made by my administration.*	21.7	39.7	78.3	60.3
	7. I feel free to make decisions regarding my professional practice and act on them. **	53.0	37.2	47.0	62.8
	8. I feel I have influence on what goes on in my work. **	49.1	37.2	50.9	62.8
Solving Problems	9. I have considerable freedom to use my personal initiative or judgment in solving work problems. **	46.1	35.3	53.9	64.7
	10. I feel I have control over how to solve my work problems. **	40.0	32.1	60.0	67.9
	11. My opinion is not asked in my administration when a problem comes up in my work. *	28.3	39.7	71.7	60.3

* indicates negative worded items

** indicates positive worded items

Gender

There was statistically a significant difference, as determined by Mann-Whitney U-test, between Male (N=54; 45.4%) and Female (N=65; 54.6%) EFL teachers' perceptions on teacher autonomy in the subscales of *Decision Making* (U= 14552.000; P-value= 0.00, P< 0.05) and *Problem Solving* (U= 16042.500; P-value= 0.025, P< 0.05). However, no significant difference was observed between the groups in the subscale of *Pedagogy and Curriculum Evaluation* (U= 16368.000; P-value= 0.052, P> 0.05). See Table 3.

Moreover, the results of Mean Rank and Median analyses for the groups showed that female teachers received higher scores in the all subscales of *Pedagogy and Curriculum Evaluation* (Male▶ Mr=181.50; Mdn=13.00 and Female▶ Mrk=203.56; Mdn=13.00), *Decision Making* (Male▶ Mrk=171.18; Mdn=13.00 and Female▶ Mrk = 212.20; Mdn=14.00), and *Problem Solving* (Male ▶Mrk =179.65; Mdn=10.00 and Female▶ Mr=205.11; Mdn=11.00). See Table 3.

Cohen's (1988) reliability effect test revealed a slight significant difference for male and female groups in the subcomponents of *Decision Making* (Z= -3.609; r= 0.183, r< 0.3) and *Problem Solving* (Z= -2.245; r= 0.114, r< 0.3). See Table 3.

Table 3.
Gender and Teacher Autonomy

Components	Group statistics				Mann-Whitney U-test			
	Gender	N	Mean Rank	Median	U	Z	Sig. (2-tailed)	r (= Z/N ²)
1. Pedagogy and curriculum evaluation	Male	54	181.50	13.0000				
	Female	65	203.56	13.0000				
	Total	119		13.0000	16368.00	-1.942	.052	-
2. Decision making	Male	54	171.18	13.0000				
	Female	65	212.20	14.0000				
	Total	119		13.0000	14552.00	-3.609	0.000	0.183
3. Problem solving	Male	54	179.65	10.0000				
	Female	65	205.11	11.0000				
	Total	119		11.0000	16042.50	-2.245	.025	0.114

Age

The results of analyses for the age groups of '25 and below' (N=4; 3.4%), '26 to 30' (N=13; 10.9%), '31 to 35' (N=20; 16.8%), '36 to 40' (N=36; 30.3%), '41 to 45' (N=34; 28.6%), and '46 and above' (N=12; 10.1%), as determined by Kruskal-Wallis Test, showed a statistically significant relationship between the age groups and the

subcomponent of *Decision Making* ($\chi^2 (5, 386) = 11.850$; P-value = 0.037; $P < 0.05$). However, no significant difference was statistically observed between the age groups and the subcomponents of *Pedagogy and Curriculum Evaluation* ($\chi^2 (5, 386) = 7.110$; P-value = 0.213; $P > 0.05$) and *Problem Solving* ($\chi^2 (5, 386) = 7.516$; P-value = 0.185; $P > 0.05$). See Table 4.

Additionally, the results of Mean Ranks and Median analyses showed that the highest scores were received by the age group of '46 and above' in the subscales of *Pedagogy and Curriculum Evaluation* (46 and above ► Mrk=229.14; Mdn= 14.00) and *Problem Solving* (46 and above ► Mrk=218.11; Mdn= 11.00) and by the age group of '26 to 30' in *Decision Making* subscale (26 to 30 ► Mrk = 226.23; Mdn= 15.00). See Table 4.

Table 4.
Age and Teacher Autonomy

Components	Group statistics				Kruskal-Wallis Test		
	Age	N	Mean Rank	Median	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
1. Pedagogy and curriculum evaluation	25 and below	4	177.18	13.00	7.110	5	0.213
	26 to 30	13	188.11	13.00			
	31 to 35	20	195.69	13.00			
	36 to 40	36	178.04	13.00			
	41 to 45	34	199.79	13.00			
	46 and above	12	229.14	14.00			
	Total	119		13.00			
2. Decision making	25 and below	4	178.04	13.00	11.850	5	0.037
	26 to 30	13	226.23	15.00			
	31 to 35	20	193.83	14.00			
	36 to 40	36	171.92	13.00			
	41 to 45	34	192.87	13.00			
	46 and above	12	226.11	14.50			
	Total	119		13.00			
3. Problem solving	25 and below	4	127.96	9.00	7.516	5	0.185
	26 to 30	13	204.39	11.00			
	31 to 35	20	191.14	10.00			
	36 to 40	36	188.93	11.00			
	41 to 45	34	194.77	11.00			
	46 and above	12	218.11	11.00			
	Total	119		11.00			

Marital Status

There were statistically no significant differences between the participants' marital status of single (N=19; 16%), married (N=94; 79%), and divorced (N=6; 5%) and the three subcomponents of *Pedagogy and Curriculum Evaluation* ($X^2 (2, 386) = 2.094$; P-value=

0.351, $P > 0.05$), *Decision Making* ($X^2(2, 386) = 0.263$; $P\text{-value} = 0.877$, $P > 0.05$), and *Problem Solving* ($X^2(2, 386) = 0.971$; $P\text{-value} = 0.615$, $P > 0.05$), as determined by Kruskal-Wallis Test. See Table 5.

Although marital status variable was not statistically significant with any subcomponents of teacher autonomy, a close scrutiny of Mean Rank scores for the groups revealed that high scores were received by the divorced group in the all three subcomponents, while low scores were received by the married participants in the subcomponents of *Pedagogy and Curriculum Evaluation* (Single ► Mrk=198.56; Married ► Mrk=190.33; Divorced ► Mrk=226.08) and *Decision Making* (Single ► Mrk= 195.86; Married ► Mrk=192.29; Divorced ► Mrk=204.60), and by the single participants in the subcomponent of *Problem Solving* (Single ► Mrk=181.52; Married ► Mrk= 195.27; Divorced ► Mrk=203.78). See Table 5.

Table 5.
Marital Status and Teacher Autonomy

Components	Group statistics				Kruskal-Wallis Test		
	Nationality	N	Mean Rank	Median	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
1. Pedagogy and curriculum evaluation	Single	19	198.56	13.0000	2.094	2	0.351
	Married	94	190.33	13.0000			
	Divorced	6	226.08	14.0000			
	Total	119		13.0000			
2. Decision making	Single	19	195.86	14.0000	0.263	2	0.877
	Married	94	192.29	13.0000			
	Divorced	6	204.60	13.0000			
	Total	119		13.0000			
3. Problem solving	Single	19	181.52	10.0000	0.971	2	0.615
	Married	94	195.27	11.0000			
	Divorced	6	203.78	10.5000			
	Total	119		11.0000			

Academic Level

The results of analyses for academic levels of Bachelor's Degree (N=79; 66.4%) and Master's Degree (N=40; 33.6%), as determined by Mann-Whitney U-test, were statistically significant in the subcomponent of *Decision Making* (U= 13512.500; $P\text{-value} = 0.002$, $P < 0.05$), but they were not statistically significant in the subcomponent of *Pedagogy and Curriculum Evaluation* (U= 15323.000; $P\text{-value} = 0.202$, $P > 0.05$) and *Problem Solving* (U= 14725.500; $P\text{-value} = 0.063$, $P > 0.05$). See Table 6.

The examination of the Mean Rank and Median scores also showed high scores for B.A. degree holders in the three subcomponents of *Pedagogy and Curriculum Evaluation* (B.A. ► Mrk = 198.64; Mdn= 13.00 and M.A. ► Mrk=183.37; Mdn= 12.00), *Decision Making* (B.A. ► Mrk= 205.72; Mdn= 14.00 and M.A. ► Mr = 169.44; Mdn= 12.00), and *Problem Solving* (B.A. ► Mrk = 200.98; Mdn= 11.00 and M.A. ► Mr = 178.77; Mdn= 10.00). See Table 6. The reliability effect test revealed a slight significant difference for B.A. and M.A. degree holders in the subcomponent of *Decision Making* ($Z = -3.028$; $r = 0.154$, $r < 0.3$). See Table 6.

Table 6.
Academic Level and Teacher Autonomy

Components	Group statistics				Mann-Whitney U-test			
	Academic level	N	Mean Rank	Median	U	Z	Sig. (2-tailed)	R (= Z/N ²)
1. Pedagogy and curriculum evaluation	Bachelor's Degree	79	198.64	13.0000	15323.00	-1.276	0.202	-
	Master's Degree	40	183.37	12.0000				
	Total	119	13.0000	13.0000				
2. Decision making	Bachelor's Degree	79	205.72	14.0000	13512.50	-3.028	0.002	0.154
	Master's Degree	40	169.44	12.0000				
	Total	119	13.0000	13.0000				
3. Problem solving	Bachelor's Degree	79	200.98	11.0000	14725.50	-1.858	0.063	-
	Master's Degree	40	178.77	10.0000				
	Total	119	11.0000	11.0000				

DISCUSSION

The findings regarding the degree of difference between Iranian and Turkish teachers' autonomy perceptions in reference to the three dimensions of *Pedagogy and Curriculum Evaluation*, *Decision Making*, and *Problem Solving* revealed a high mean rank and median for Turkish teachers (Iranian ► Average Mrk= 172.263; Average Mdn= 11.66 and Turkish ► Average Mrk= 224.813; Average Mdn= 13.33). This implies that Turkish teachers feel more autonomy than Iranian ones in (a) choosing appropriate teaching methods, strategies and techniques to meet student needs, (b) benefiting a flexible curriculum, and (c) being involved in decision making processes. Therefore, it can be argued that the educational system of Turkey is less centralized than that of Iran in teaching English as a foreign language, though it has been argued that it is more centralized and

restricted (Yildirim, 2003, Vorkink, 2006, Aksit, 2007; Uygun, 2008; Ozturk, 2011). However, it is speculated that either Iranian teachers are not aware of their autonomy in these areas or they really are not given enough opportunity to apply appropriate teaching methodology, to get rid of the excessive reliance on the curriculum in their teaching activities, to participate in various forms of school decision-making activities, and to use personal initiative to solve their work problems.

Moreover, the findings showed a statistically significant relationship between male and female groups in the subscales of *Decision Making* and *Problem Solving*, but not in the subscale of *Pedagogy and Curriculum Evaluation*, where the mean rank of female group was greater than that of the male one in the significant subscales. That is, females think they are involved in decision making processes more than that of males and they can handle their work problems better than males do. While both groups think equally about the flexibility or inflexibility of the curriculum with which they work. This may be attributed to the nature of women who take matters superficially and cannot bring all possible causes of a problem together to analyze and understand it deeply.

With regard to the age variable, the findings also demonstrated that there were statistically significant differences between the groups in the subscale of *Decision Making*, however, no significant differences were observed between them in the subscales of *Pedagogy and Curriculum Evaluation* and *Problem Solving*. A close scrutiny of the mean rank scores revealed that the middle-age groups (i.e., '31 to 35' and '36 to 40') had a small mean rank in comparison with the young-age (i.e., '25 and below' and '26 to 30') and old-age (i.e., '41 to 45' and '46 and above') groups in the significant subscale of *Decision Making*, that is, the middle-age groups perceive they are not participated enough in decision-making processes. This age group even had small mean ranks in the subscales of *Pedagogy and Curriculum Evaluation* and *Problem Solving*, that is, the middle-age groups also perceive they cannot benefit a flexible curriculum and cannot better use their initiative to solve work problems in comparison with the young-age and old-age groups. This may be attributed to the experience of middle-age groups in understanding the potential problems involved in these areas, to the ability and experience of old-age groups in handling the problems properly or their unwillingness to involve themselves in them anyway, and to the inexperience of young-

age groups in understanding the potential problems in these areas or handling the problems properly.

Furthermore, the results regarding the marital status showed no significant relationship between the single, married, and divorced groups in the three subscales of *Pedagogy and Curriculum Evaluation*, *Decision Making*, and *Problem Solving*, which meant that this variable did not play a role in teacher autonomy processes here. However, a close examination of the mean rank scores for the groups revealed that low scores were obtained by the married participants in the subscales of *Pedagogy and Curriculum Evaluation* and *Decision Making*. This means that the married group in comparison with the other two groups does not perceive much autonomy in the *Pedagogy and Curriculum Evaluation* and *Decision Making* subcomponents, that is, they perceive that they cannot benefit a flexible curriculum and are not enough involved in decision making processes, which may be attributed to the seriousness of married participants in understanding the difficulties in the field.

Finally, the results for the academic levels of Bachelor's Degree and Master's Degree demonstrated that there was a statistically significant difference between the groups in the subcomponent of *Decision Making*, but not in the subcomponents of *Pedagogy and Curriculum Evaluation* and *Problem Solving*. The mean rank and median scores of B.A. degree holders in the significant subscale, and even in insignificant ones, were greater than that of the M.A. degree holders. That is, the M.A. holders perceive the curriculum is not flexible; they are not involved enough in decision making processes; and they cannot better use their initiative to solve work problems in comparison with the B.A. holders. This can be attributed to their knowledge and experience in understanding the potential problems involved in these areas, that is, the higher the academic level, the less perception of autonomy.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The study aimed at finding out Iranian and Turkish EFL teachers' autonomy perceptions over the curriculum offered by their educational ministries from a cross-cultural perspective. The results revealed that there was a slight difference between Iranian and Turkish teachers' perceptions over the foreign language teaching curriculum of their

countries. However, it is argued that Turkish curriculum is less centralized and more flexible than that of Iranian one. The findings may be beneficial to policy-makers and curriculum designers if they want to develop their curriculum in the discussed areas.

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