

The Self Regulation of Iraqi EFL teachers and its Role in Enhancing College Students' Cognitive Curiosity

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Abstract

Self-regulation is one of the important elements in the individual's personality, which focuses on the consistency and maturity of the individual's personality and its compatibility with the environment to which he belongs and giving him an identity of his own. Therefore , the current research aims to identify the self-regulation of Iraqi EFL teachers and its role in enhancing college students' cognitive curiosity. In order to fulfill the goal of the study, the researcher randomly selected (37) male and female students and (33) teachers as a sample. The students were asked to respond to a cognitive curiosity scale that consisted of (25) items while the teacher were asked to answer a self-regulation scale consisting of (20) items. The researcher verified the virtual, structural and subjective validity of the two tools, as well as their reliability , and the data were treated statistically. For the statical analysis, statistical program SPSS and Microsoft Excel were used to extract the results. In the light of the research results, a number of conclusions, recommendations and proposals were drawn up.

Keywords: self-regulation, EFL teachers, cognitive curiosity

1.1 Research Problem

Human life differs from one society to another and from one period of time to another, and this comes as result of the various traditions, values and development taking place in societies. Furthermore, what people go through from the stressful conditions of life within the society itself, and this difference affects people's behaviour and their psychological state, especially young people whose minds open and become clear. Self-regulation increases the motivation of people to achieve their targeted behavior, as they view themselves as people who can control their behavior and learn how to self-regulate their actiond and generalize what happened in the attitude of guidance to other situations. Self-regulation is one of the important foundations in the personality of the individual, whose role focuses on the consistency and maturity of the individual's personality and its compatibility with the environment to which he belongs and giving him an identity of his own

It works as a motive for the individual to organize his goals and evaluate his behavior to reach the goal he aspires to. The failure in self-regulation means a lack of control over the behavior of the individual and the inability to control oneself, and that poor self-regulation

means that the individual has a distorted or counterproductive self (Silmon 1960:70). The researchers see that the study of self-regulation is a social necessity. The research problem can be summarized in answering the question: Do EFL teachers' self regulation affects students enjoy cognitive curiosity?

1.2Research Aims

The current research aims to achieve the following:

- 1- The level of self-regulation of Iraqi EFL teachers.
- 2- Level of cognitive curiosity among students.
- 5- The relationship between the self-regulation of EFL teachers and the cognitive curiosity of college students.

1.3 The Importance of The Research

The importance of the research can be summarized in the following points:

- 1- Exploring the capabilities and energies of EFL teachers and putting them on the right path.
- 2- Identifying the relationship between self-regulation of teachers and its relationship to cognitive curiosity among students.
- 3- The current research may direct the attention of specialists in curricula, teaching methods and educators to interest in knowledge curiosity and knowledge of its patterns, and thus provide students with appropriate information.

1.4 Limitation of the Research

The current research is limited to Iraqi EFL teachers for the college students in the second stage for the academic year 2021-2022.

1.5 Definition of Terms

1. Self-regulation was defined by Bandura (1991), is the control of behavior that is achieved by observing people's behavior and performance, judging and evaluating it using personal criteria for them, and responding to it positively or negatively according to the stimuli

2. Introduction

The self-regulation system is highly responsible for bringing about the desired changes in one's behavior. Good self-regulation includes behaviors and beliefs that enhance and support a person's motivation and achievement of goals, while bad self-regulation includes goals and ideas that hinder a person's life 2012 (88). The self-regulatory system lies in poisoning the causative processes, it not only mediates most of the external influences, but also provides the very basis for purposeful action (Bandura 1991: 248). Self-regulation helps direct the person towards the goal and warns him when he does not achieve sufficient progress to reach it in a timely and effective manner. To build a technical snorer is one of

the effective strategies that a person can use in the future to complete similar tasks, which leads to raising his professional competence and increasing his production. Self-regulation generally occurs according to the degree of the person's use of self-operations. In controlling, directing, and strategic regulation of behavior and the surrounding environment, and these three components, self-operations, behavior, and the environment, are linked by a reciprocal relationship, where each affects the other, and the word reciprocity does not mean symmetry and consistency in the strength of influence or stereotyped in the simultaneous joint influence of both components in the other, but it means a relationship and influence between all components (Baumeister, 2006:44)

Additionally, self-regulation is of great importance in some aspects of personality, and this is what was indicated by the study (Smith 2001), which indicated that students who are characterized by self-regulation enjoy control over behavior and self-confidence, and the study (Feldman,1989:51) indicated that people who have self-regulation are characterized by self-satisfaction. We can understand self-regulation as a person's general ability as the subject of his purposeful activity and as a process to achieve this ability in a specific activity and in a specific form of communication and that the ability to self-regulate refers to the person's ability to exercise control over his behavior, thoughts and feelings.

2.1. Self-regulation

The emergence of the term self-regulation is mainly due to the writings of Bandura (1986), who highlighted the central issues such as the symbolic representation of goals by individuals to obtain expected positive results and reject possible negative results. The pursuit of this goal is governed by the beliefs of self-efficacy of individuals. Individuals carry out the tasks in which they see themselves effective. Self-efficacy is of particular importance with regard to self-regulation because it has an impact on a set of variables that have a role when people seek to organize their behavior (Cervone et al., 2004:190). This theory was initially known as the Social Learning Theory, but Bandura renamed it the Social Cognitive Theory. Many researchers consider him a cognitive psychologist because of his focus on the mechanisms of self-regulation and (motivation) because they have a greater contribution to the behavior of the individual than the environmental factors (Bandura, 2001). Among the important determinants that characterize social cognitive theory, which Bandura referred to, is the ability of self-regulation. The process and our energies are preoccupied with symbolic thinking, which provides us with the means, methods, methods, and strategies through which we can interact continuously (Kocovski&Endler,2000:75).

According to Bandura, self-regulation means the willingness of the individual to control his own behavior, and this means that every human being has the ability to control his behavior, which when developed to include the cognitive and emotional system. Furthermore, self regulation is not limited to behavior and it includes cases when the individual has his own ideas about what is appropriate or inappropriate behavior, and he chooses actions accordingly, the meaning of that is to set special and general criteria for himself, according to which he behaves (Bandura, 1986: 288). Social cognitive theory posits that social factors influence the self-regulatory system as well as internal factors. Self-

regulation is a multifaceted phenomenon that operates through a number of sub-cognitive processes including self-monitoring and norm-setting, evaluative judgment, self-evaluation, and emotional self-reaction (Bandura,1991:282).

2.3 Components of Self-Regulation

Bandura states that individuals with mechanisms of second regulation have the potential for directed changes in their behaviour. The manner and degree to which people self-regulate their actions and behavior involves the accuracy and consistency of their self-observations, self-monitoring and judgments. Human behavior is greatly stimulated and regulated by the constant exercise of influence (Ozhiganova,2018:30).The main self-regulatory mechanism operates through three main sub-functions.This includes self-monitoring of an individual's behavior and its determinants and effects and judging the individual's behavior in relation to personal standardsenvironmental conditions; and emotional subjective reaction (Bandura, 1991: p248).

1. Self Observation

Self observation means observing the individual himself, his behavior, and his performance when dealing with others...

2. Self-judgment

It is when an individual evaluates his performance in the light of personal standards compared to the performance of others.

3. Self-Response

It is an individual's belief that he is making good progress compared to others (Bandura, 1991: 941).

2.4 Cognitive Curiosity

Curiosity represents an innate love for knowledge and learning. Curiosity is of two types: good curiosity and bad curiosity. This is the beginning of initial experimentation after an intellectual process is necessary for the individual in the inference process in the subsequent years, and then generates in him curiosity from an endless series of questions, and that curiosity pushes the learners to do more activities and increases their acquisition of understanding and knowledge of many events, things and phenomena around them in the environment (Borowkex,2005:31).It helps them solve problems and contradictory events. It's worth mentioning that motives similar to thirst and hunger cannot arouse curiosity, but it can be aroused by cognitive things, and this is confirmed by studies and research conducted in this direction by paying attention to the concept of novelty, which is considered the essence of the concept of creativity that has a close relationship with cognitive curiosity (Maw, 1964.39). Curiosity led to many scientific progress and discoveries in various fields and their impact on the development of individuals' personality and liberation from thinking models traditional and imparting skills and abilities which enables them to take alternative paths, by offering new solutions to the problems and challenges facing them in the contemporary world (, 2008, 24). Arousing curiosity among

students requires the teacher to formulate educational situations in a way that challenges the cognitive abilities of students but not to the point of frustration that leads to their loss of inclination to learn, and for this reason the teacher must insert hints indirectly to direct their activity in the correct and desirable manner (Berlyen,1960:22).

2.6 Theories of Cognitive Curiosity

There are many theories that explain cognitive curiosity, and among these theories is Freud's (1915) psychoanalytic theory, which is similar to curiosity motivated by thirst and hunger. Curiosity as a feature of a unilateral nature enjoyed by individuals, but they differ in degree, and Bandura's theory (1977 Bandura), which emphasized the observation of what the model does affects the individual's response and enhances exploratory behavior, and Loewnstain's (1995, Loewnstain) theory, called the information gap reduction theory, confirmed that the feeling of information deprivation when one realizes that there is a gap between what he knows and what he wants to know, and the theory of Berlin (Berlyn 1960), which indicated that cognitive curiosity is a deep thinking about the meaning and content of ideas through continuous questioning. The researcher adopted the theory of Berlin (Berlyn 1960) because he gave a clear explanation of the concept and found that this theoretical frameworks fall under three types of interpretations, which are as follows:

1- Cognitive interpretation: I interpreted curiosity cognitively as causing a feeling of deprivation in the individual when he realized that there is a difference between what he knows and what he wants to know at a later time in the future, which is similar to what was stated in the interpretation of Loewnstain (1995, Loewnstain) the theory of reducing the information gap.

2- The procedural explanation states that curiosity occurs when the individual encounters a stimulus, and responds to it positively by moving towards it in order to find a treatment for it and discover it. Among the scientific theories that explained curiosity in terms of procedural terms are Maw and Maw's theory (Maw and Maw 1964).

3- The neurophysiological explanation: Theories showed curiosity on this basis, including Berlin (1960, Bertyn) when the individual is in a situation and there is a conflict in response that will generate an impulse. For his curiosity, he has the motivation to search for information.

2.7 The Characteristics of a Person who has Cognitive Curiosity

A person who is characterized by cognitive curiosity is distinguished by his many distinctive questions, and has the ability to locate sites and recognize places and has a love of adventure and collecting information about the world in which he lives. The information that the individual possesses and the level of complexity of the stimulus that curiosity faces. Curiosity is a positive motivational system that is effective is linked to the individual's search for all new stimuli that are characterized by challenge, mystery, novelty, and organizing them in ways that distinguish the individual from others, and that the curious individual is more in response to events and situations that provide him with the opportunity

for growth and development (Livson, 1967, 74), curiosity leads individuals to positive self-experiences in the growth of their personality through:

1. Increase in the distribution of individuals' attention and direct it towards new stimuli and stimuli.
2. Searching for the behavioral and cognitive stimuli through which the individuals get the reward. Merging the new experiences of the individuals with what they possess through the process of assimilation. Each of these steps is a self-regulation of the experiences of individuals, and with the increase of their curiosity, it will provide many opportunities to engage in activities that make the lives of individuals meaningful (Collins,2004).

3.Data Analysis

3.1 Research Design

The researchers relied in this research on using two questionnaires one is for measuring the self-regulation of teachers and the other is to identify students' cognitive curiosity. Being one of the most common approaches in organized scientific interpretation to describe a specific phenomenon or problem and visualize it quantitatively by collecting data and information.

3.2 Research Population

The research community includes EFL teachers and their students in the second stage of college why were asked to respond to the two questionnaires.

3.3 Research Tools: Cognitive Curiosity Scale

The researcher started from Perlain's theory in testing cognitive curiosity, in which he identified five characteristics that should be available in cognitive curiosity, which are (dissonance, complexity, novelty (novelty), astonishment, indeterminacy). The researcher formulated the cognitive curiosity scale after examining many previous studies and expert opinions, and by benefiting from the items of some of the previous standards, (25) items were formulated, the appropriate alternative was chosen (I strongly disagree, I disagree, I agree, I strongly agree). As for the scale instructions, the researcher prepared instructions explaining how to answer the scale items.

3.4The Validity of the Scale

The items of the scale were presented to a number of arbitrators and specialists to review its items and indicate their validity and reliability for the content of the scale and the accuracy of their instruction and to make the necessary adjustments.

3.5Results

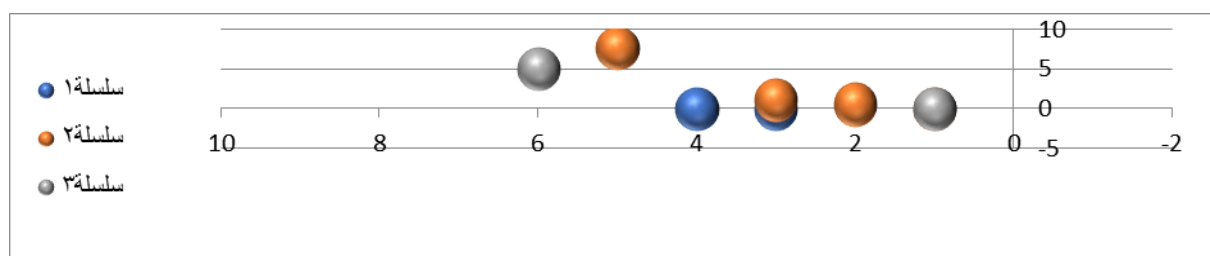
3.6The Level of Self-regulation of Teachers.

Table (1) shows that the mean score is (40.22) and the standard deviation is (20.67).The use of the t-test for one sample showed that the calculated t-value is (3.43), which is greater than the tabulated t-value of (1.05) at the level of significance (5)and the degree of freedom

(38), meaning that there are statistically significant differences, and this result indicates that teachers have adequate self-regulation .

Table (1) shows the level of Self-Regulation of Teachers

The Sample	Mean Scores	Standard Deviations	T- value		Freedom degree	Significance level
			Tabulated	Calculated		
33	40.22	20.67	1.05	3.43	38	5



Graphic(1) shows the level of Self-Regulation of Teachers

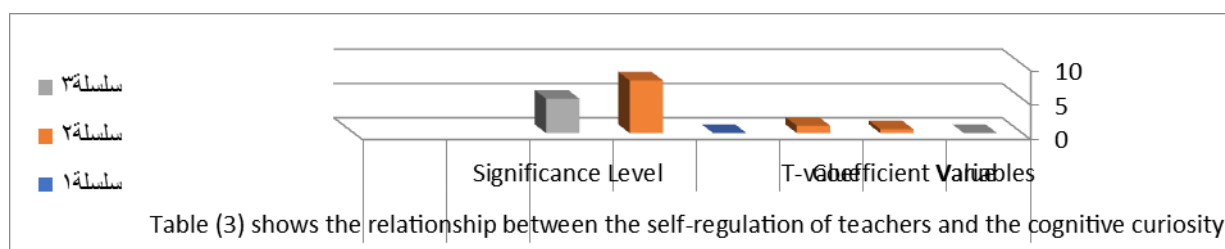
This results revealed that teachers with a high sense of effectiveness have more educational capabilities that push them towards enhancing their skills and raising the level of their personal and cognitive competence by enhancing their success and creating a positive educational climate, which affects their expectations before starting any activity and their interpretation of the factors causing their success.

3.7 The level of cognitive curiosity of students

Table (2) shows that the mean scores of a sample of students on the cognitive curiosity scale was (35.27) with a standard deviation of (19.11). Significance (5) and a degree of freedom (38). This result indicates that students have high social intelligence.

Table (2) Shows the level of Cognitive Curiosity among Middle School students

The Sample	Mean Scores	Standard Deviations	T- value		Freedom degree	Significance level
			Tabulated	Calculated		
37	35.27	19.11	2.09	5.88	38	5



Graphic (2) Shows the level of Cognitive Curiosity among Middle School students

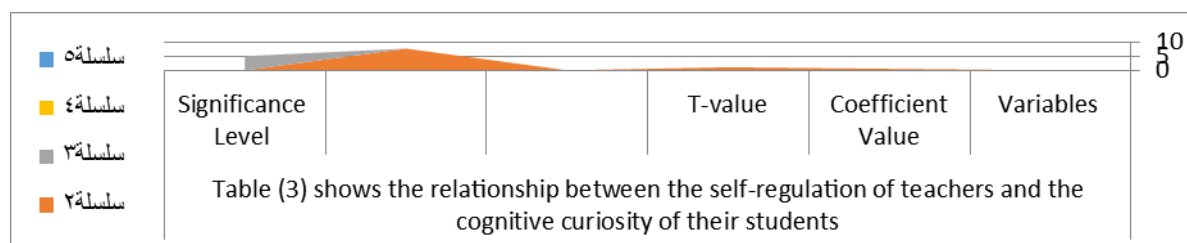
The researchers explain the result that if an individual is provided with an environment rich in stimuli, this may help develop his cognitive curiosity.

3.8 The Relationship between Teachers Self-Regulation of Teachers and the Cognitive Curiosity of their Students

After processing the data statistically, the Pearson correlation coefficient was used to identify the relationship between teachers' self-regulation and cognitive curiosity among college students. At the level of significance (5), this result shows that there is a positive and significant correlation between the two variables and Table (3) explain that:

Table (3) Shows the relationship between the Self-Regulation of Teachers and the Cognitive Curiosity of their Students

Variables	Coefficient Value	T-value		Significance Level
		Tabulated	Calculated	
Self-regulation	0.55	1.08	7.66	5
Cognitive Curiosity				



Graphic (3) Shows the Relationship between the Self-Regulation of Teachers and the Cognitive Curiosity of their Students

The researcher explain the result that the teacher who believes that he has a high ability in self-regulation is more interactive with students and has leadership abilities and knows how to stimulate the cognitive curiosity of his students.

3.9 Conclusions

Through the results of the current research, we conclude that teachers enjoy organizing themselves, their behavior, and their performance through self-monitoring, judging , and responding according to the situations they face in their daily lives. They have the ability to bear responsibility for future goals, EFL teachers are distinguished by a kind of culture and openness with their academic and societal experiences, especially in line with the current development, which requires them to exert more effort and thinking in controlling their behavior and organizing their thoughts according to the circumstances they face in order to improve their personality. These result is consistent with the concepts of Bandura's social

cognitive theory, in which he asserted that individuals have the ability to control their behavior by observing, judging and responding to their behavior, meaning that individuals can regulate their behavior to a large extent by visualizing the results that they themselves generate (Bandura 1991:288). So we conclude that EFL teachers enjoy an organized Self-regulation, which means that the members of the research community have a high level of self-organization and this has a direct relationship to students' cognitive curiosity. Furthermore, the study has come up with two main conclusions which are

- 1- The teachers in the study own high self-regulation.
- 2- There is a statistically significant correlation between self-regulation and the level of cognitive curiosity among students.

3.9 Recommendations

The researcher came out with the following recommendations.

1. More attention should be given to cultivate a spirit of optimism and self-confidence
2. Involving students in various scientific, social and cultural activities.
3. More focus on providing quality education and appropriate support to achieve this.
4. Introducing teachers to the importance of practicing activities and skills that would stimulate cognitive curiosity.
5. Organizing educational seminars or programs to raise the efficiency and self-confidence of the teaching staff.

3.11 Suggestions

The researcher proposes the following suggestions:

1. Conducting a study to find out the impact of some environmental variables such as educational level, economic level, marital status on self-regulation
2. Conducting a study similar to the current study on different educational stages
3. Conducting a study on cognitive curiosity and its relationship to some variables such as (quality of education, classroom environment)

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Appendix 1: Self Regulation Scale

No	Items
1.	I think a lot about what other people think of me.
2.	I am willing to consider other ways of doing things.
3.	If I wanted to change, I am confident that I could do it
4.	I usually keep track of my progress toward my goals.
5.	When it comes to deciding about a change, I feel overwhelmed
6.	I have trouble following through with things once I've made up my mind to do something.
7.	I don't seem to learn from my mistakes.
8.	I'm usually careful not to overdo it when working
9.	I tend to compare myself with other people.
10.	I enjoy a routine, and like things to stay the same.
11	It's hard for me to notice when I've “had enough” (alcohol, food, sweets).
12.	I have sought out advice or information about changing
13	I reward myself for progress toward my goals
14	Ichange the way I do things when I see a problem with how things are going.
15	I have so many plans that it's hard for me to focus on any one of them.
16	I put off making decisions
17	I don't notice the effects of my actions until it's too late
18	I get easily distracted from my plans
19	Others tell me that I keep on with things too long

20	If I wanted to change, I am confident that I could do it.
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