

# Male vs. Female Mindsets on the Principles of Post-method Pedagogy: A Case of Iranian EFL Teachers

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## Abstract

This study aimed to investigate Iranian male and female EFL teachers' mindsets on the post-method pedagogy and to discover if there was any statistically significant difference between their mindsets on the principles of post-method pedagogy. To this end, 118 Iranian EFL teachers (72 male and 46 female teachers) from four higher education establishments in Shiraz and Ahvaz were selected through convenience sampling. A 22-item questionnaire based on the 5-odd parameters of post-method pedagogy (i.e., particularity, practicality, possibility, teacher role, and learner role) was administered, and the descriptive statistics and the independent sample *t*-test were utilized to analyze the data. Findings revealed that despite both groups' holding positive mindsets on the post-method pedagogy, a significant difference existed between their mindsets on the post-method pedagogy in general as well as the principles of practicality and learner role so that the female teachers had significantly more positive mindsets than the male teachers. However, the male and female teachers' mindsets were not significantly different in terms of particularity, possibility, and teacher role as the other principles of post-method pedagogy.

**Keywords:** Iranian EFL teachers, Male and Female Teachers, Mindsets, Post-Method Pedagogy, Principles of Post-Method Pedagogy

## Introduction

After a century of methods and approaches in language teaching we have what Kumaravadivelu (1994) coined, and afterward referred by Brown (2000) and Richards and Rogers (2001) as 'the post-method era' in which they are involved in the negotiations of language teaching without stating the word method or approach. Other scholars named this condition 'The Death of the Methods' (Allwright, 1991) or 'emergence beyond the dark ages of methods' (Brown, 2002). Researchers and scholars believed that the search for the best method was in practice futile (Allwright, 1991; Kumaravadivelu, 1994; Nunan, 1991; Prabhu, 1990), which defined new roles

for all factors involved in the process of learning or teaching the language, among them, learners and teachers (Kumaravadivelu, 1994).

Based on Kumaravadivelu (2006), post-method pedagogy defines a new relationship between teachers and theorists, which helps teachers move towards the world of skills, knowledge, and autonomy. Also, Cheng (2006) considered post-method pedagogy as a flexible, dynamic, and open-ended teaching concept, indicating that post-method pedagogy is different from any traditional approaches of language teaching. It highlights that society, politics, and the education system have a significant effect on language teaching.

Kumaravadivelu (2003) believed that there is a need for post-method pedagogy, which is not a method. Post-method pedagogy is not the end of the method, but it includes some ways 'to go beyond the limitations of the concept of method,' and 'so it is important to have a clear understanding of the distinction between the concept of method and post-method.' While the method is defined to 'consist of a single set of theoretical principles derived from feeder disciplines and a single set of classroom procedures directed at classroom teachers' (Kumaravadivelu, 1994, as cited in Can, 2009), post-method can be defined as the construction of classroom procedures and principles by the teacher himself/herself based on his/her prior and experiential knowledge and/or certain strategies (Can, 2009). In other words, the concept of the method involves theorizers' constructing 'knowledge-oriented' theories of pedagogy and post-method involves practitioners' constructing 'classroom-oriented' theories of practice (Kumaravadivelu, 1994, as cited in Can, 2009).

The post-method pedagogy, as proposed by Kumaravadivelu (2006), talks about three types of parameters or principles: *The Parameter of Particularity*, *The Parameter of Practicality*, and *The Parameter of Possibility*. As far as the parameter of particularity is concerned, post-method pedagogy emphasizes the key aspect of local context or what Kumaravadivelu calls 'situational understanding' (p.171). From the perspective of this parameter, L2 policymakers and administrators will pay attention to local contingencies and, most probably, make do with whatever is amenable to teaching effectiveness. Concerning the parameter of practicality, post-method pedagogy suggests that, rather than being overly concerned about what outside experts have to say regarding teaching efficacy, local teachers should themselves begin to seek avenues that will help them teach and their students learn most successfully. They are not supposed to follow in the footsteps of any teaching 'gurus.' In the words of Kumaravadivelu:

'[t]he parameter of practicality, then, focuses on teachers' reflection and action, which are also based on their insights and

intuition. Through prior and ongoing experience with learning and teaching, teachers gather an unexplained and sometimes explainable awareness of what constitutes good teaching.’ (p.173)

Parameter of possibility aims at providing a more comprehensive context for language teaching in terms of its social engagement and political accountability. From this perspective, post-method pedagogy considers L2 teaching and learning not as grasping new linguistic and cultural knowledge but as a site of struggling between the old and new identities for teachers and learners alike. That is to say, L2 teaching is seen more as a tool to help learners come to grips with their own identity and as a vehicle to explore other peoples and cultures. This parameter of possibility enables L2 learners to adopt a critical mindset towards their L2 learning experiences. In other words, an L2 they are attempting to acquire will be not just a new linguistic experience but, more importantly, a new lens through which to appreciate the world out there and the world inside, hence the global and local becoming part and parcel of the whole L2 experience.

According to Fat’ hi, J., Ghaslani, R., & Parsa, K. (2015), the post-method pedagogy was validated according to the three constructs of *teacher sense of social justice*, *teacher autonomy*, and *teacher sense of academic enthusiasm*. Moreover, the teacher Reflectivity instrument has been designed based on five factors, including *cognitive*, *metacognitive*, *affective*, *practical*, and *critical*. These five elements of teacher reflection can be related to the three post-method components in terms of nature and the domain of the constructs.

## **Literature Review**

In the Turkish EFL context, Tekin (2013) investigated novice English teachers’ views and beliefs about the method and post-method pedagogy. Based on the results, the participants knew about the historical development of language teaching methodology and about the methods and techniques that were popular once. However, their knowledge concerning recent issues in ELT, such as the post-method pedagogy and its significance, was somewhat limited. The researcher reported that the majority of the participants were unaware of the post-method discussions.

By collecting the data through lesson observations and interviews in China, Zeng (2012) investigated Chinese novice EFL teachers’ conceptions and implementation of post-method pedagogy. Based on the results, the novice teachers are greatly influenced by examination-oriented education and lack the knowledge of post-

method pedagogy; also, there is a discrepancy between teaching behaviors and teacher beliefs in China.

Mardani and Moradian (2016) investigated the implementation of post-method parameters of particularity, possibility, and practicality and existing limitations or obstacles in implementing it in Iranian private language schools. 30 Iranian EFL teachers constituted the sample of the study. They concluded that Iranian EFL teachers are familiar with post-method principles. Besides, the results showed that EFL teachers in Iran, while aware of the achievements of the post-method era, face many limitations in implementing teaching based on its criteria.

Razmjoo, Ranjbar, and Hoomanfar (2013) explored the familiarity of Iranian EFL teachers and learners with post-method and its realization. The findings raised uncertainties about the feasibility, possibility, or practicality of a fully post-method based teaching pedagogy and queried its emergence into the Iranian context. The findings also revealed that Iran's language educational system is mainly based on the eclectic method.

Gholami and Mirzaei (2013) conducted a survey study to investigate the Iranian EFL teachers' understanding of English language teaching in the post-method era, predominantly the challenges they face in its implementation. One hundred sixty-two language teachers participated in the study. The researchers reported that Iranian EFL teachers are aware of the achievements of the post-method era. However, they encounter many difficulties and barriers in implementing teaching based on their criteria. According to the results, despite being curious and eager to develop post-method pedagogy, Iranian teachers are rather pessimistic about its realization unless the obstacles are removed.

The familiarity and preferences of Iranian EFL teachers in using post-method concepts were investigated by Razmjoo and Afhami (2016). 90 EFL teachers from the English language institutes and schools in Shiraz participated in the study. Based on the results, the existence of post-method pedagogy on the principles of particularity, practicality, and possibility and particularly the last two principles in the EFL context of Iran, seems impractical and far-reaching.

Khatib and Fathi (2014) explored the perspectives of the Iranian EFL domain experts about post-method pedagogy. The participants were 21 domain experts in the field of applied linguistics in Iran. Based on the gathered data, the researchers reported that the Iranian language education has never experienced a method in its actual meaning, what is known as the method has been an eclectic approach any teacher has adhered to simply based on his/her taste. Besides, the researchers concluded that

post-method pedagogy with its three principles is not applicable in the Iranian context.

By implementing relevant questionnaires, Fathi, Ghaslani, and Parsa (2015) aimed to examine the relationship between Iranian English teachers' willingness and conformity to principles of post-method pedagogy and the degree of their reflection in their classrooms. According to the results, there was a significant positive relationship between the post-method mindsets of the participating teachers and their reflection in teaching. In the same vein, it was revealed that the five elements of teacher reflection could be related to the three post-method components in terms of nature and the domain of the constructs.

Aboulalaei, Poursalehi, and Hadidi (2016) explored the familiarity of Iranian EFL teachers with post-method. To this end, 131 teachers from an English language institute in Tabriz constituted the sample. The results indicated that most EFL teachers held similar perspectives toward post-method pedagogy in terms of their gender, experience, and previous background knowledge and education in English- or non-English related fields. The findings also showed that language teachers' knowledge of post-method methodology was an important factor in determining the importance and effects of their teaching.

The results of the previous studies on Iranian EFL teachers' mentalities on the post-method pedagogy could be inconclusive. Some studies carried out concluded that Iranian EFL teachers have an optimistic view of the realization of post-method and its implementation in Iran. The others indicated that it is very far-fetched to expect post-method to emerge out of Iranian education.

Given the significance of post-method in the current English language teaching debate, the present study aims to explore Iranian male and female EFL teachers' mindsets toward post-method pedagogy. It also attempts to compare their mindsets toward basic tenets of post-method pedagogy. Accordingly, this study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What are Iranian male EFL teachers' mindsets on post-method pedagogy?
2. What are Iranian female EFL teachers' mindsets on post-method pedagogy?
3. Is there any statistically significant difference between male and female teachers' mindsets on the principles of post-method pedagogy?

## **Methodology**

118 EFL teachers (72 male and 46 female) who were teaching English as a foreign language at upper-intermediate and advanced levels participated in this study. As the sampling was based on the availability of the participants, this study followed the convenience sampling method. All participants were Persian native speakers whose ages ranged from 22 to 40 years, teaching at four higher education establishments in Shiraz and Ahvaz, Iran.

Following a quantitative research design, the current research was conducted by administering a questionnaire developed by Razmjoo, Ranjbar, and Hoomanfar (2013), which consisted of 22 Likert items. The questionnaire was based on the 5-odd principles of post-method pedagogy, including particularity, practicality, possibility, the role of teachers, and the role of learners, defined as the following:

*The parameter of practicality:* It assumes that the relationship between theorists and practitioners must be dialectical and make it possible for teachers to make their theory of practice.

*The parameter of particularity:* It emphasizes the need for a context-sensitive language instruction which takes into consideration the linguistic, socio-cultural, and political particularities.

*The parameter of possibility:* It deals with the empowerment of teachers and students to help identity formation and social change.

*The role of teachers:* The teachers who used to be transmission models or passive technicians are assuming the role of reflective practitioners or even transformative intellectuals.

*The role of learners:* Learners are considered as active and autonomous players (Razmjoo & Afhami, 2016).

Table 1 illustrates the distribution of items in each category.

**Table 1**

*Distribution of items of each category*

Category	Items
The parameter of particularity	5, 7, 13 & 17
The parameter of practicality	3, 11, 14 & 19
The parameter of possibility	2, 4, 10, 15, 16 & 20
The role of teachers	1, 6, 9 & 21
The role of learners	8, 12, 18 & 22

The reliability of the instrument was estimated through the application of a pilot study. A small group of teachers (N=15) was selected to participate in the pilot study. To find out the reliability of the questionnaire, Cronbach's alpha test was used, the results of which revealed that the questionnaire was reliable ( $r=.82$ ). Besides, the validity of the questionnaire items was checked by two experts in the field.

To investigate the participants' mindsets toward post-method pedagogy, the twenty-two items of the questionnaire including 5-odd principles of particularity (four items), practicality (four items), possibility (six items), the role of teachers (four items), and the role of learners (four items) were distributed. All 22 items of the questionnaire were on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 'strongly agree =5' to 'strongly disagree =1'. As items 1, 3, 4, 7, 8, 10, 12, 17, 19, 20, and 21 were negative, their results had to be reversed for interpretation. Then both descriptive statistics and inferential statistics, including an independent sample t-test were used to compare the male and female teachers' mindsets on the principles of post-method pedagogy.

## Results

In Table 2, the results of the descriptive statistics of the male teachers' mindsets are illustrated.

**Table 2**

*Descriptive statistics of the male teachers' mindsets*

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Mindset (Total)	72	2.13	4.80	3.69	.63
Valid N (listwise)	72				

As shown in Table 2, the mean scores of the male teachers' mindsets on post-method pedagogy is 3.69. Since the male teachers' mean score is higher than the neutral point, it can be concluded that male teachers had favorable mindsets toward post-method pedagogy.

Table 3 depicts the percentages of male teachers' responses. To have a better picture of the respondents' answers to the items, the first two (strongly agree and agree) and the last two (disagree and strongly disagree) were added up together.

**Table 3**

*Percentage of the male teachers' responses*

		Strongly disagree + Disagree (Percent)	Uncertain (Percent)	Strongly agree + Agree (Percent)
1	My role is to transmit knowledge without altering the content.	58.3	22.2	19.4
2	I give learners institutional, political, social and cultural awareness.	11.1	11.1	77.8
3	I cannot generate my theories to teach in class.	58.3	13.9	27.8
4	I am not interested in the sociopolitical context and its power dimensions.	61.1	16.7	22.2
5	My teaching is in line with the notion that every class context is unique.	5.6	11.1	83.3
6	My role is to help students gain a sense of ownership of education.	5.6	8.3	86.1
7	My teaching does not vary from context to context.	72.2	16.7	11.1
8	My learners do not have a role in pedagogic decision making.	41.7	13.9	44.4
9	I have a fair degree of autonomy in pedagogic decision making.	25.0	27.8	47.2
10	I am not interested in sociopolitical issues in my classes.	55.6	13.9	30.6
11	I observe, analyze, and evaluate my teaching to generate my theories.	6.3	11.1	80.6
12	My learners do not search for language beyond the classroom.	50.0	22.2	27.8
13	My teaching is sensitive to a particular group of learners in a particular institutional or socio-cultural context.	47.2	8.3	44.4
14	I generate my theory of teaching.	36.1	19.4	44.4
15	I try to tap the sociopolitical consciousness of learners as change agents.	22.2	38.9	38.9
16	I try to bring about social, cultural, and political change and transformation.	13.9	27.8	58.3
17	I do not adjust my teaching to the particular conditions of different contexts.	83.3	11.1	5.6
18	My learners are active and autonomous.	19.4	16.7	63.9
19	I am not interested in making my theory of practice.	75.0	11.1	13.9
20	I do not encourage learners to investigate how language as ideology serves vested interests.	55.6	27.8	16.7



21	The system does not recognize my role to teach autonomously within constraints of institutions, curricula, and textbooks.	25.0	19.4	55.6
22	My learners explore the Internet and bring class their topics.	55.6	11.1	33.3

Based on the data gathered, the male teachers predominantly agreed with the items 6 (My role is to help students gain a sense of ownership of education (86.1%), 5 (My teaching is in line with the notion that every class context is unique) (83.3%) and 11 (I observe, analyze, and evaluate my teaching to generate my theories) (80.6%), respectively. Also, they mainly disagreed with the items 17 (I don't adjust my teaching to the particular conditions of different contexts) (83.3%); 19 (75.0%), 7 (72.2%), 4 (61.1%), 1 (58.3%), 3 (58.3%), 10 (55.6%) 12 (50.0%), 20 (55.6%) and 22 (55.6%). On the other hand, they chiefly agreed with the items 2 (I give learners institutional, political, social and cultural awareness) (77.8%) and 18 (My learners are active and autonomous) (63.9%) as well as 16 (58.3%) and 21 (55.6%).

Considering male teachers' mindsets on the 5-odd principles of the post-method category, the results in Table 4 were drawn.

**Table 4**

*Male teachers' mindsets on the 5-odd principles of post-method pedagogy*

Principle	Strongly disagree+ Disagree (Percent)	Uncertain (Percent)	Strongly agree+ Agree (Percent)
Particularity	17.4	11.8	70.8
Practicality	21.5	13.9	64.6
Possibility	19.4	22.7	57.9
Teacher role	26.4	19.7	54.2
Learner role	36.8	16.0	47.2

Table 4 indicates that the male teachers chiefly agreed with the 5-odd principles of post-method pedagogy. Concerning the particularity parameter, the pattern of responses shows that the mainstream of the male teachers (70.8%) identified the importance of context. Also, based on the results, a good number of the participants (64.6%) agreed that involving teacher-generated theories of practice in pedagogy (i.e., practicality) has great importance. Another point is that 57.9% agreed with the possibility parameter, which demonstrates the male teachers' interest in bringing about socio-political change or transformation. Additionally, a majority of the institute teachers (54.2%) declared that their roles are in line with those of a post-method teacher. Besides, 47.2% of the male teachers were in favor of the role of learners as active and autonomous players defined in post-method pedagogy.

The study also aimed to determine Iranian female EFL teachers' mindsets on the principles of post-method pedagogy. In this vein, the descriptive statistics of the female teachers' responses are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5**

*Descriptive statistics of the female teachers' mindsets*

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Mindset (Total)	46	2.30	4.60	3.95	.51
Valid N (listwise)	46				

As shown in Table 5, female teachers' mean score is more than the neutral point, which shows that female teachers hold favorable mindsets on the principles of post-method pedagogy. To gain a better understanding, the percentage of female teachers' responses related to each question is presented in Table 6.

**Table 6**

*Percentage of the female teachers' responses*

		Strongly disagree + Disagree (Percent)	Uncertain (Percent)	Strongly agree + Agree (Percent)
1	My role is to transmit knowledge without altering the content.	67.4	8.7	23.9
2	I give learners institutional, political, social, and cultural awareness.	13.0	34.8	52.2
3	I can't generate my theories to teach in class.	69.6	17.4	13.0
4	I am not interested in the sociopolitical context and its power dimensions.	39.1	26.1	34.8
5	My teaching is in line with the notion that every class context is unique.	4.3	4.3	91.4
6	My role is to help students gain a sense of ownership of education.	4.3	17.4	78.3
7	My teaching does not vary from context to context.	87.0	4.3	8.7
8	My learners do not have a role in pedagogic decision making.	69.6	21.7	8.7
9	I have a fair degree of autonomy in pedagogic decision making.	13.0	39.1	47.8
10	I am not interested in sociopolitical issues in my classes.	39.1	34.8	26.1

11	I observe, analyze, and evaluate my teaching to generate my theories.	4.3	8.7	87.0
12	My learners do not search for language beyond the classroom.	65.2	13	21.7
13	My teaching is sensitive to a particular group of learners in a particular institutional or socio-cultural context.	37.0	21.7	41.3
14	I generate my theory of teaching.	27.1	13	65.2
15	I try to tap the sociopolitical consciousness of learners as change agents.	8.7	52.2	39.1
16	I try to bring about social, cultural, and political change and transformation.	21.7	21.7	56.5
17	I do not adjust my teaching to the particular conditions of different contexts.	84.8	2.2	13.0
18	My learners are active and autonomous.	26.1	26.1	47.8
19	I'm not interested in making my theory of practice.	80.4	17.4	2.2
20	I do not encourage learners to investigate how language as ideology serves vested interests.	69.6	21.7	8.7
21	The system does not recognize my role to teach autonomously within constraints of institutions, curricula, and textbooks.	21.7	47.8	30.4
22	My learners explore the Internet and bring class their topics.	13.0	8.7	78.3

The pattern of responses in Table 6 reveals a significant consensus among the responses provided by a majority of the female teachers as compared with the male ones. For instance, similar to the male responses, they predominantly agreed with the items 5 (My teaching is in line with the notion that every class context is unique) (91.3%), 6 (My role is to help students gain a sense of ownership of education) (78.3%), and 11 (I observe, analyze, and evaluate my teaching to generate my theories) (87%), respectively. Nonetheless, there were items such as 15 (I try to tap the sociopolitical consciousness of learners as change agents) and 21 (The system does not recognize my role to teach autonomously within constraints of institutions, curricula, and textbooks) that show the participants' impartiality, as they neither agree nor disagree. As a whole, it can be concluded that the female teachers had favorable mindsets on the principles of post-method pedagogy. The results of the descriptive statistics for the female teachers' mindsets toward the 5-odd principles of post-method pedagogy are depicted in Table 7.

**Table 7**

*Female teachers' mindsets on the 5-odd principles of post-method pedagogy*

Principle	Strongly disagree+ Disagree (Percent)	Uncertain (Percent)	Strongly agree+ Agree (Percent)
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Particularity	15.8	8.2	76.1
Practicality	10.3	14.1	75.5
Possibility	18.8	31.9	49.3
Teacher role	17.9	28.3	53.8
Learner role	17.4	17.4	65.2

Based on the statistics presented in Table 7, 76.1% of the female teachers agreed with the parameter of particularity, which emphasizes the critical aspect of local context or what Kumaravadivelu (2001) calls ‘situational understanding.’ Also, 75.5% of the female teachers agreed with the principle of practicality that focuses on teachers’ reflection and action, which are also based on their insights and intuition. A large number of the participants (49.3%) agreed with the principle of possibility, which aims at providing a more comprehensive context for language teaching in terms of its social engagement and political accountability. The results also showed that the female teachers agreed with the teachers’ role (53.8%) and learners’ (65.2%) role, as defined in the post-method pedagogy.

To explore if there is any statistically significant difference between male and female teachers’ mindsets on the post-method pedagogy, an independent sample *t*-test was run. The results of the descriptive statistics of male and female teachers’ mindsets are presented in Table 8.

**Table 8**

*Descriptive statistics of male and female teachers’ mindsets*

Principle	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error mean
Particularity	Male	72	4.06	.66	.078
	Female	46	4.20	.74	.109
Practicality	Male	72	3.86	1.10	.130
	Female	46	4.30	.87	.128
Possibility	Male	72	3.76	1.02	.121
	Female	46	3.60	.90	.133
Teacher Role	Male	72	3.55	.79	.093
	Female	46	3.71	.67	.099
Learner Role	Male	72	3.20	1.17	.138
	Female	46	3.95	1.02	.150
Mindset (Total)	Male	72	3.69	.63	.074
	Female	46	3.95	.51	.075

Descriptive statistics of male and female teachers’ mindsets on the post-method pedagogy indicates that male and female teachers’ mean score are 3.69 and 3.95, respectively. Accordingly, the female teachers seem to have more positive mindsets on the post-method pedagogy in general (mean =3.95) as well as in the principles of

practicality (mean =4.30) and learner role (mean =3.95) than male teachers. The above findings were confirmed through inferential statistics, as shown in Table 9.

**Table 9**

*Independent sample t-test to compare the male and female teachers' mindsets on the post-method pedagogy*

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
									Lower	Upper	
Mindset (Total)	Equal variances assumed	3.410	.067	2.400	116	.018	.26610	.11090	.04646	.4857	
	Equal variances not assumed			2.512	109.431	.013	.26610	.10592	.05617	.47603	
Particularity	Equal variances assumed	1.725	.192	1.046	116	.298	.13708	.13108	-	.39669	
	Equal variances not assumed			1.020	88.009	.311	.13708	.13442	-	.40421	
Practicality	Equal variances assumed	.708	.402	2.301	116	.023	.44324	.19266	.06165	.82482	
	Equal variances not assumed			2.422	110.753	.017	.44324	.18298	.08063	.80584	
Possibility	Equal variances assumed	3.542	.062	-863	116	.390	-	.15982	.18528	-	.02071
	Equal variances not assumed			-888	104.788	.377	-	.15982	.18007	-	.51687
Teacher Role	Equal variances assumed	1.103	.296	1.144	116	.255	.16184	.14141	-	.11824	.44191
	Equal variances not assumed			1.187	107.085	.238	.16184	.13630	-	.10837	.43204
Learner Role	Equal variances assumed	2.611	.109	3.554	116	.001	.74819	.21051	.33124	1.1651	
	Equal variances not assumed			3.663	105.291	.000	.74819	.20423	.34324	1.1531	

Based on Table 9, there is a significant difference between male and female teachers' mindsets on the post-method pedagogy (sig. =0.01,  $p < 0.05$ ) in general, as well as in two principles of post-method pedagogy, i.e., practicality (sig. =0.02,  $p < 0.05$ ) and learner role (sig.=.00,  $p < 0.05$ ). Also, the male and female teachers' mindsets were not significantly different on the other principles of post-method pedagogy, i.e., particularity, possibility, and the role of teacher.

## Discussion

Regarding the first research question, findings showed that the male teachers had favorable mindsets on post-method pedagogy ( $M = 3.69$ ) as well as the five principles of post-method pedagogy. More specifically, the results indicated that 70.8% of the male teachers had positive mindsets towards the principle of particularity, which contributes to the context-sensitive, location-specific nature of language teaching. Also, 64.6% agreed with the principle of practicality, which emphasizes the relationship between theory and practice. It was also revealed that 57.9% of the male teachers agreed with the principle of possibility, which deals with socio-cultural realities and socio-political experiences that participants bring to the pedagogical setting. In addition, 54.2% of the male teachers agreed that teachers should be reflective practitioners or even transformative intellectuals (i.e., the principle of teacher role), and 47.2% had positive mindsets on the principle of learner role which indicates that learners should be active and autonomous players.

The results of the current study also show that Iranian male teachers hold a favorable view of the post-method pedagogy. The results of the study accord with Gholami and Mirzaei's (2013) research, which investigated Iranian EFL teachers' understanding of English language teaching in the post-method era, and predominantly the challenges they face in its implementation. In their study, 162 language teachers took part in a survey and answered three open-ended questions. The researchers concluded that EFL teachers in Iran had positive attitudes towards the post-method era, yet they encountered many difficulties and barriers in implementing teaching based on its criteria.

Concerning the second research question, the mean score of the female teachers' responses revealed that they held favorable mindsets on the post-method pedagogy (mean=3.95) and its principles. According to the results, 76.1% of them agreed with the parameter of particularity, indicating that they believed that they should have the opportunity to analyze and assess the situations, consider the alternatives, and then construct their theories according to the needs of their students. The results also indicated that 75.5% of the female teachers agreed with the principle of practicality,

which highlights the need for teachers to generate their theory of practice. Besides, 49.3% agreed with the principle of possibility, which shows teachers' belief in bringing socio-political changes in their classes. It was also revealed that the female teachers agreed with the role of teachers (53.8%) and learners (65.2%) in the post-method pedagogy.

Having investigated 30 EFL school teachers' attitudes towards the implementation of post-method principles, barriers, and challenges encountered in implementing post-method pedagogy, Mardani, and Moradian (2016) came to the same conclusion. They concluded that Iranian school teachers are not only familiar with post-method principles but also aware of the achievements of the post-method era. Nevertheless, they indicated that there is a gap between their familiarity and implementation of it and argued that Iranian school teachers face many limitations in implementing post-method criteria.

Finally, to respond the third research question, it was indicated that there were significant differences between the male and female teachers in terms of their mindsets on the post-method pedagogy in general (sig.=0.01), and the principles of practicality (sig. =0.01) and learner role (sig. =0.00). In this vein, the female teachers had more positive views toward post-method pedagogy, and the principles of practicality and the role of learner.

When it comes to possible explanations and speculations, it can be argued that the male teachers due to many socio-cultural issues are constrained by their occupational, socio-economical and financial constraints, which has been supported by other Iranian scholars as well (Akbari, 2008; Gholami & Mirzaei, 2013; Khatib & Fathi, 2014). In other words, due to varying financial and occupational constraints, some teachers are too busy to devote adequate time and energy to have a reflection or draw upon their own 'sense of plausibility' to overcome the language classroom problems in an era which there is not any method anymore (Khatib & Fathi, 2014).

The results of the current study also showed that although the male teachers had favorable mindsets towards post-method pedagogy, some of them believed that their teaching is not sensitive to a particular group of learners in a particular socio-cultural context (item 13). Hence, it seems that the healthy existence of post-method as proposed based on the principles of particularity, practicality, and possibility is too idealistic and far-reaching for a substantial number of teachers.

Based on Young (2006), successful implementation of language education policies and the level of proficiency of learners might be affected by the attitude of learners. In other words, a positive attitude can lead to increased motivation, which, in turn, can lead to more proficiency (Young, 2006). Therefore, it is suggested that more

studies be conducted to more deeply explore the relationship between attitude and achievement based on principles of post-method pedagogy, which, by making it clear how attitudes could affect the language learners' achievements, can make a significant, valuable contribution on our understanding of language learning process in different contexts.

As Baker (1992) argued, attitude is dynamic, not static. However, due to time limitations regarding data collection, the present study was not able to describe the attitude of the participants within a specified time frame. Therefore, future longitudinal studies on attitude changes of participants could enhance our understanding of attitude formation of EFL learners toward post-method pedagogy and its application in classrooms.

It is worth mentioning that the questionnaire used in the study enjoyed a high degree of reliability and validity since questionnaires are self-reports; it cannot elicit in-depth data concerning the variable of the study. In other words, the data obtained from such a self-report can only tap into the surface of the issue being investigated. Therefore, it is difficult to discern if the measures accurately represent the participants' true attitude toward working and applying post-method pedagogy. Thus, to provide data that delves deep into the subject of investigation, a mixed methods research paradigm should be used. Besides, further studies can be conducted to investigate language learners' perception of post-method pedagogy in the language learning process and also their approaches to using this pedagogy during the learning process.

## **Conclusion**

Nowadays, there seems to be a shift toward a post-method era that defines a new relationship between teachers and theorists, which is pushing teachers towards the world of skills, knowledge, and autonomy (Kumaravadivelu, 2006). Additionally, the dramatic shift from the method era to the post-method era indicates a shift from a positivist-oriented perspective to a constructivist-oriented one and a shift from the transmission, product-oriented theories to process-oriented theories of learning, teaching, and teacher learning as (Crandall, 2000). Accordingly, there is a need to listen to teachers' voices in understanding classroom practice (Richards, 1996), and as Hargreaves, (1994) and Prabhu (1992) aptly maintained, teachers' performance in class ought to be shaped by their 'attitudes' and 'minds.'

As teachers' mentalities towards the post-method pedagogy play an essential role in the effect of this revolution on the teaching and learning processes, this study



investigated the mindsets of the two groups of Iranian EFL teachers (male and female teachers) toward post-method pedagogy and its principles. The results suggested that there is an optimistic view about the realization of post-method and its implementation in Iran. More specifically, both groups held positive mindsets on the post-method pedagogy, yet the female teachers had significantly more positive mindsets compared with the male teachers.

The findings of this study can have several implications for theorists, policymakers, educational authorities, and teachers: theorists and policymakers can be assured of the positive mentalities of Iranian EFL teachers towards the post-method pedagogy; also, educational authorities may consider the effect of context of teaching on teachers' attitudes that provide opportunities for them to try different strategies in their classroom, which is in line with teachers' autonomous decision-making proposed by post-method pedagogy. Concerning the importance of the post-method concepts in pedagogy can help curriculum designers gain a better understanding of teachers' mindsets on the post-method pedagogy, which can be of crucial importance not only to EFL teachers but also to test developers and material designers to pave the way for a better future in the process of language teaching/learning.

In order to gain a deeper, more real understanding of EFL learners' attitude toward post-method pedagogy, conducting different studies with different samples are recommended. However, since the present study was carried out in Iran, a country with different ethnicities, geographic features, and demographic density with different attitudes toward pedagogy, it is suggested that more specific studies be conducted in different regions of the country. Moreover, more pieces of research are needed to investigate how attitudes of Iranian EFL learners are formed in different situations and different age levels. In other words, regardless of the gender, it appears worth understanding that whether students majoring in the same level of proficiency in English, but different age levels have the same view toward principles of post-method pedagogy.

As the participants of the present study were selected from Iranian male and female EFL teachers of the upper-intermediate and advanced levels of higher education establishments, it might be a good idea to do the same research with teachers from other contexts and levels (e.g., elementary and (junior) high school). Additionally, further studies can be carried out by collecting data from other methods such as interviews and portfolios, as well as direct observations to investigate the teachers' predisposition towards the post-method pedagogy and to diagnose and analyze their orientation concerning barriers facing the implementation of post-method in different contexts.

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