



Research into Iranian EFL Teachers' Knowledge of Educational Ethical Codes: Development of a Synergistic Model

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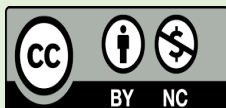
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Abstract

The study aimed to investigate the Iranian EFL teachers' knowledge of educational ethical codes in academic settings through the employment of a newly-designed questionnaire, developed by the researchers. To this end, six university professors as experts were invited to participate in an unstructured interview related to the issue under study. The preliminary themes were extracted from the relevant literature and the experts' opinions through qualitative analysis. Next, the initial questionnaire items were generated and approved by three experts. The reliability of the constructed questionnaire was calculated using Cronbach's alpha. Afterwards, the 40-item questionnaire was administered to 400 EFL teachers resulting in the elimination of eleven items through exploratory factor analysis. Five factors were drawn from the responses of teachers through EFA representing their knowledge of educational ethical codes. Additionally, the confirmatory factor analysis revealed that the five extracted components of the newly developed questionnaire including educational, affective, socio-cultural, behavioral, and professional ethics factors were all acceptably loaded on their constructs at an acceptable level, and the scale can successfully determine EFL teachers' knowledge of ethical codes in educational settings. The findings of the study have valuable implications for teachers, students, teacher trainers, educational policymakers and administrators.

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Introduction

Ethical issues in EFL teaching or learning are generally concerned with fairness and justice in the classroom atmosphere among all learners, taking into account individual differences, cognitive and affective needs of the EFL learners, their learning objectives, while directing them on the right route of life (Dobakhti, 2020). Furthermore, focusing on the learners' first culture and ethnicity, noticing learners' or teachers' empowerment and voices in curriculum development, finding similarities and differences in L1 and L2 cultures, and raising awareness and consciousness in EFL learners towards adopting and adapting the second culture would be regarded as parts of ethical codes in EFL educational systems. When ethics is concerned, education authorities should take into consideration self-confidence and motivation of EFL learners, establishment of fairness and justice in classroom activities as well as in assessment and testing (Shohamy, 2001; Brown, 2004).

Teachers' work is directly connected with reflection on ethical principles: in pedagogical activities, in curriculum development and syllabus design, in assessment and evaluation, in connections with learners, parents, and colleagues, and so on. In executing their obligations, teachers mirror their moral values and beliefs to their duties both overtly and covertly. Nonetheless, much of this ethical domain of teaching is automatic, latent, rather than the subject of active consideration by teachers (Blumenfeld-Jones et al. 2013; Mahony, 2009).

Heidari et al. (2015) mention that teachers need to be familiar with ethical science and behavior, and recognize its principles since they can effectively influence their mentality and behavior. They also claim that teachers equipped with professional ethics will endeavor to strengthen various factors including physical and intellectual health, commitment, social responsibility, honesty, modesty, accuracy, bravery, creativity, generosity, and flexibility among their students (Heidari et al., 2015, as cited in Ashraf et al., 2017).

Shapira-Lishchinsky (2011) presented five classifications related to ethical dilemmas that teachers may face during critical events: the conflict existing between school standards and distributive justice, the tension between a formal and a caring climate, the struggle between adherence to school norms and loyalty to colleagues and co-workers, the challenge of reconciling educational standards and family agenda, and finally, the disagreement between confidentiality and school principles.

As a result, based on ethical principles in educational environment, EFL teachers should be familiar with ethical issues in order to strengthen creativity, modesty, liability, and flexibility among learners, and produce ethical decision-making in the learning and teaching contexts. Practical ethical principles, consideration of educational components including teaching, learning, assessment, curriculum, and teacher efficacy, emphasis on the morals and ideals of teaching profession, and making a balance between school standards, family agenda, and educational criteria are among penetrating elements of ethical issues in EFL educational systems. The study framework is partly based on the code of ethics for student teachers (Maguire et al., 2010).

A considerable amount of research has been conducted in the area of ethics though there exists deficit of study on EFL teachers' knowledge of ethics in education especially in Iranian educational context. According to Sheikahmadi et al. (2024), to improve the quality of higher education, university faculty members should realize the importance of ethics in education. However, most studies have been conducted in the areas other than language teaching education such as business, public relations, or management. Many others, though relevant to the context of education, have placed their focus on English teachers' knowledge of morality issues (Hosseini Fatemi, et al. 2024). Consequently, the present investigation will seek for the EFL teacher's knowledge about ethical codes to discover the underlying components of ethics in education based on which to form a synergistic model which could influence quality education of our students.

Literature Review

Ethics in Different Fields of Study

It was postulated that in the 1970s, philosophers were not considered only the specialists in ethics. Developmental psychologists and scholars from other academic fields were debating ethics, creating codes of ethics, and presenting educational ethics in undergraduate curricula. The term *ethicist* turned up in the 1970s to define a person with ethical proficiency, or a theorist with academic concern in ethics.

Ethics, as Glucan (2014) defined, is the most significant and operational branch of philosophy today. Ethics is generally considered as moral philosophy. The word *ethics* has been formed based on the Greek term '*Ethos*' which denotes character, guiding standards and ideals. Hence, our routine life experiences and performances are regarded as ethics topics or concerns. We possess our own faculty of willing or discrimination to think about our alternatives and feel accountable for our decisions and deeds. Additionally, it can be stated that ethics deals with moral principles and values. It involves examining concepts such as good and evil, right and wrong, the difference between vice and virtue, or issues related to justice and injustice.

Ethics can be broadly divided into two categories: theoretical ethics, which involves abstract philosophical reflection or moral concepts, and applied ethics, which deals with the practical application of ethical theories to real-world situations. According to Glucan (2014), theoretical ethics entails descriptive, normative, and Meta ethics, while applied ethics is relevant to professional ethics. The study of normative ethics focuses on determining the moral rightness or wrongness of actions. Descriptive ethics is concerned with describing how people actually behave in regards to moral decisions. Meta ethics investigates the theoretical foundations of moral beliefs and practices. Applied ethics looks at ethical issues that arise in specific contexts, such as private or public life. Professional ethics, a subcategory of applied ethics, refers to the ethical standards or guidelines that guide the behavior of people in their professional roles. These standards often include principles such as confidentiality, avoidance of conflicts of interest, honesty, and responsibilities.

Professional ethics refers to the standards and regulations that govern the conduct of members of a particular profession, often outlined in a code of ethics (Tichenor & Tichenor,

2005). They encompass the values and beliefs that are basic and part of the profession which are meant to guide the behavior of its members in their relations with others (Wesley & Buyesse, 2006). These ethical principles often outline the responsibilities of professionals to promote public confidence in the profession's integrity (Fisher, 2013).

De George (2005) claimed that a code of conduct and ethics expound the behaviors that are confirmed in an organization and the ones that members of the organization are not able to assess their conduct against. Professions mainly have their own code of conduct and ethics which they acknowledge and employ as they take part in their professional tasks. It is crucial that raising awareness of the code and having an emphasis on ethical conduct and principles will empower them to execute their professional duties in line with the highest tradition of that profession. Code of conduct and Ethics are significant for all professionals encompassing engineers, doctors, lawyers, and specially teachers among others. These professionals possess more important obligations to society to perform their tasks ethically based on the expectation of the society (Dakin, 1996).

Relevant studies on ethical issues in education

Bullough (2011) examined studies related to ethical and moral matters in teaching and teacher education. Based on his review of such studies, he deduced that teaching is a profession that requires strong ethical and moral principles, and that ethical and moral conflicts that teachers may encounter often arise from differences in personal values, norms, and beliefs between individuals or within an individual. Teachers exhibit different responses to ethical conflicts, reflecting variations in their moral and ethical awareness and sensitivity; therefore, teacher educators should prioritize the cultivation of such understandings and awareness in teachers.

According to Kabir and Imam (2012), there should be training for teachers, students, guardians, and parents to notify them of their rights, their liabilities, such as the standards of service to be expected of teachers or the duty of parents to send their children to school, and to get help from them in case of observed wrongdoing. Since it is of great importance to focus on issues related to corruption and moral behavior during the formative years, actions should be taken to regard misbehaviors, and to develop a cultural sensitivity to all kinds of unethical acts from an early age.

Professional ethical principles have crucial roles in any education system specifically in teaching English as a foreign language. Awareness of professional ethics and morality is of great importance in education system; it can also manifest a vital role in other areas of study including management, business and several other fields. In many developed countries, there have been various attempts to establish codes for professional ethical principles for teachers in educational settings, but few studies have been conducted on the professional ethics of English language teachers, specifically in EFL context (Salehnia & Ashraf, 2015).

According to Mercader (2006), the ethical values that can be emphasized in education include attentiveness, kindness, decision making, honesty, fairness and justice, communication and comprehension, forgiveness and compassion, friendliness and unity, generosity, gratitude and appreciation, humility, creativity, knowledge and learning, perseverance and hard-

working, vision and objectivity, responsibility, self-discipline and temperance, self-fulfillment and diligence, respect, integrity, and tolerance.

It is commonly believed that students spend a great portion of their life with teachers who try to raise the general 'quality of students' lives'. There exist plentiful possibilities for teachers to have impact on the students to alter their conducts into good manner, and to feel that they can inspect their life styles and behavioral triangles by recognizing what is right, and resolving what liabilities they should have for themselves and others, and to develop a sort of society they want to live in. It is concluded that our faculties and institutions are aware of their obligations in forming the moral and ethical values of students (Shobana & Kanakarathinam, 2017).

According to Maguire et al. (2010), ethical student teachers should honor and detect the following ethical codes as guidelines: respecting human dignity; considering vulnerable persons; recognizing confidentiality and privacy; observing justice; noticing safety of students; obeying existing ethical codes and professional standards; adjusting harm and benefits.

The faculty community plays a key role in conveying ethical knowledge to the student associations (Khalili, et al., 2024). They are expected to maintain high standards of academic integrity in their teaching practices and to follow strong ethical and moral principles in their educational work and activities. However, there is a scarcity of recent research on faculty perspectives on the importance of ethics in higher education (Madsen, 2009; Sami et al., 2012, as cited in Nair, 2014). Every culture, community, or society across the globe has constituted different ethical codes and principles that have been passed down for generations and are expected to be followed and put into practice by its members. Every cultural context includes specific organizations and sections which influence and create values, beliefs and behaviors for people of that society (Kotler, et al., 2010, as cited in Nair, 2014). Hence, it is the responsibility of schools and universities to develop ethical rules and codes for the teachers and students to observe and practice in their teaching and learning environment.

Learning environment should be creative and EFL teachers have this responsibility to provide such an atmosphere for their learners through using their expertise and experience. Learning environment was regarded beyond the physical surroundings of the place where learning occurs (Dudek, 2000) to entail pedagogical and developmental attributes (Fraser & Fisher, 1982; Roth, 2000), and should contain the effect of people and places outside of the school context. Creative skills can be broken down into subcategories such as creative thought processes (Mumford, Mobley, Uhlman, Reiter-Palmon, & Doares, 1991), creative strength (Torrance, 1977), creative learning (Jeffrey, 2006), creative problem-solving ability (Williamson, 2011), and creative learning environments (Davies et al., 2013), which all demonstrate that these skills have both cognitive and practical aspects. Considering the above-mentioned points, it can be inferred that EFL teachers need to receive training to gain sufficient knowledge in ethical codes and follow these principles in the learning and teaching environment, be good models in their professions and transform their ethical knowledge to their students for the betterment of their society. The present study aimed to address the following research questions:

- What are the underlying components of Ethics in Education Model, and to what extent is the model-based questionnaire (EIEQ) reliable and valid?
- What is the Iranian EFL teachers' perceived level of knowledge in ethics?

Methodology

Below, a detailed explanation of the study design, information about the participants, the tools used to collect data, and the process of data collection are provided.

Design of the Study

This study aimed at developing an instrument to assess Iranian EFL teachers' knowledge of educational ethical codes. The construction of this questionnaire was carried out in two phases: In the first phase, the items of the questionnaire were generated based on the literature review and expert opinions, and in the second phase the questionnaire was piloted and validated. In so doing, a '*sequential exploratory mixed methods approach*' (Creswell, 2009) was adopted. In fact, a small-scale qualitative study was conducted to obtain the necessary information and themes for creating a reliable and valid survey scale based on the responses of a sample population.

Participants

The present study was comprised of two main phases including the qualitative and quantitative phases, each of which with its own participants and their distinct characteristics. During the preliminary stage of the qualitative phase, a careful review of the relevant literature was performed to provide a suitable basis for the study model development. The interviews were conducted with 6 university professors, expert in the fields of applied linguistics and TEFL. The interviewees were selected from two state universities in Tehran based on purposive sampling with requirements of a minimum of five years' teaching experience. The second phase, which was quantitative in nature, was carried out to measure the construct validity of the developed questionnaire using exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis. The questionnaire was administered to an almost large sample size consisting of 400 EFL teachers from different language institutes and educational centers in Tehran, teaching at intermediate, upper-intermediate, and advanced levels of English language proficiency. Both male and female EFL teachers whose ages ranged from 23 to 55 years were recruited. The demographic information of the participants is displayed in Table 1.

Table 1. *The participants' demographic profile*

Phase 1 (Interview) Background Information	No.
Age	
35-61	6
Gender	
Male	4
Female	2
Academic Qualification	
PhD	6
Major	

TEFL	3
Applied Linguistics	3
Phase 2 (Questionnaire Validation) Age	
23-55	
Gender	
Male	146
Female	254
Academic Qualification	
BA	285
MA	108
PhD	7
Major	
Different English-related Majors (i.e. Literature, Translation, Linguistics, etc.)	

Instruments

In this research, a newly designed scale entitled 'Ethics in Education Questionnaire', constructed by the researchers (Appendix A), was employed as the main study instrument. In fact, to assess EFL teachers' knowledge of ethical issues in education, a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire (from 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree) originally with 60 items was developed based on the relevant literature and the results of experts' opinions. As already mentioned, to obtain the required data for the development of the questionnaire, an unstructured interview with the experts was conducted in addition to a careful literature review after examining the published materials including books and articles in the last few decades. The gathered information from the literature review as well as the collected data from unstructured interviews were used as the source for the generation of questionnaire items and model development.

Data Collection Procedure

To answer the research questions of the study, the following steps were taken: First, in the initial phase, the related literature on ethics in education was duly reviewed and relevant information was extracted from the research articles, books, and online sources. Next, unstructured interviews were conducted with 6 university professors, expert in the fields of applied linguistics and TEFL. The interview sessions lasted between 20 to 25 minutes each, depending on the responsiveness of participants to interview questions. The participants' consent was obtained prior to the commencement of the interviews. Also, before starting the sessions, the interviewees were provided with a comprehensive briefing regarding the assurance of participant data confidentiality in full compliance with ethical standards.

As the major themes were supposed to be extracted from the literature discussions on the mentioned topic and the participants' responses to the interview questions, the contents of the interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim by one of the researchers for further content and thematic analysis. According to Joffe (2012), the final outcome of the thematic analysis will highlight the most outstanding constellation of meanings existent in the text. In the present

study, the interviewee data were analyzed to answer the second research question of the study. Based on the themes extracted from the relevant literature and the expert opinions through the unstructured interviews, the items of the questionnaire were constructed and modified by the researchers. Care was taken to generate new items that were clear, concise, and free from ambiguity or bias. To ensure the face and content validity of the questionnaire as well as the representativeness, accuracy, and intelligibility of the generated items, three TEFL university professors specialized in teacher education were asked to review the developed questionnaire and rate the items on the basis of their importance and relevance to the research topic in the range of 1 to 4. In the mentioned scale, '1' referred to 'not relevant or important to be included', '2' indicated 'somewhat relevant or important', '3' showed 'important and relevant', and '4' reflected 'extremely important and relevant'. If all or two out of three experts chose 'important' or 'extremely important', that item was kept; otherwise, it was deleted. The obtained results from this step reduced the items from 60 to 52, and the reasons for the omission of items included unclear wording, redundancy, and low relevance.

Next, in the piloting phase of the study, the developed questionnaire was distributed among 60 EFL teachers who were similar in characteristics to the main study participants; piloting can help the researchers to remove any flaws, ambiguities, complexities, or other weaknesses in the constructed instrument and evaluate its feasibility and practicality. After calculating the reliability indices and eliminating 12 defective items at this stage, the 40-item (first draft), 5-point Likert-scale questionnaire (Appendix A-1) was administered to 400 EFL teachers to establish its construct validity through running both exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis. In the following section, the main steps in the process of data analysis will be discussed followed by the study results.

Data Analysis

The findings of this study were analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively to account for the posed research questions. In the qualitative phase of the study, after collecting the data from the experts, the verbatim transcripts of the participants' responses to interview questions, which aimed to discover the major themes relevant to ethics in the Iranian education system and EFL teachers' knowledge of ethical codes, underwent content and thematic analysis using the qualitative software MAXQDA (version 2023). After the themes were extracted from the qualitative analysis of the data, the tentative model was created based on which the questionnaire items were generated. As Dornyei and Taguchi (2010) state, the construction of a scale is a stepwise process, and its entire value is based on the quality of each individual sub-step. Therefore, care was taken to assess the reliability and validity of the newly developed questionnaire as a suitable research tool to measure EFL teachers' knowledge of educational ethical codes.

After designing the first draft of Ethics in Education Questionnaire (EIEQ) and checking its face and content validity, it was piloted with the target participants of the study. Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient was calculated using SPSS V.26 to estimate the internal consistency of the questionnaire. To establish the construct validity of EIEQ, two types of factor analysis, namely exploratory (EFA) and confirmatory (CFA), were conducted on the newly developed

questionnaire. The details of the scale validation procedure are discussed in the following section.

Results

The present study aimed to develop a questionnaire to investigate the Iranian EFL teachers' knowledge of educational ethical codes. To answer the first research question, following a comprehensive review of the relevant literature, an unstructured interview was conducted with six university professors in the fields of applied linguistics and TEFL.

In order to delve into the underlying components of ethics in education from the perspectives of Iranian university professors, expert in the above-mentioned fields, a qualitative approach was adopted to gain a deeper understanding of the issue under study. After carrying out unstructured interviews, also referred to as non-directive interviewing with no set of arranged patterns or predetermined questions, the responses of the interviewees were recorded and further transcribed verbatim. To enhance the credibility of the findings and also its confirmability, in addition to one of the researchers who conducted the interviews and coded the data, a statistics expert, experienced in education research, coded 50% of the data. Inter-coder reliability was calculated using Cohen's Kappa coefficient. It yielded a score of .89, indicating an almost strong agreement between coders (Saldaña, 2015). It is noteworthy to mention that the coding was performed using MAXQDA software (version 2022). In fact, employing thematic and content analysis techniques, MAXQDA facilitated the stages of open, axial, and selective coding. These analytical phases unearthed a number of prominent themes embedded within the participants' accumulated interview data. and displayed in the following table. The frequency of the themes and their percentages of occurrence in the interview transcripts, as displayed in Table 2, will be elaborated on, along with supporting extracts from the participants' responses.

Table 2. *The extracted themes pertaining to ethics in education*

Themes	Frequency	Percentage
1) Fairness and justice	5	83%
2) Affective, cognitive, and social needs of learners	4	67%
3) Honesty	4	67%
4) Responsibility and respect	3	50%
5) Creative learning	3	50%
6) Compassion and empathy	2	33%
7) Generosity	1	17%

Upon the meticulous analysis of the interview data, distinct thematic patterns and categories emerged, representing key insights from the participants. As illustrated in Table 2, among the seven predominant themes characterizing Iranian EFL teachers' knowledge of educational ethical codes, the theme of "fairness and justice" emerged as quite salient, notably surpassing the others in frequency. Conversely, "generosity" was observed to exhibit the lowest frequency among the identified themes.

a) Fairness and Justice (83%)

The theme ‘fairness and justice’ was one of the most recurrent ideas that emerged from the interviews conducted with experts. The majority of interviewees highlighted the fact that providing a fair and just atmosphere for language learners will lead to their more active participation in class activities and enhance their learning. A just atmosphere could signify the fact that people, particularly students, need to be fairly treated in their classrooms, schools or any other educational contexts. Most educators and teachers claim that if fairness or justice is observed by EFL teachers, language learners will utilize their talents to acquire new subjects, knowledge, and skills in more efficient ways. As one of the professors claimed:

In a class where the subject of study is a new language, many EFL teachers find it hard to give equal attention to all students. However, I realize that lack of teachers’ fair behavior and justice, even though it’s unintentional, could discourage almost all students who believe they deserve fair treatment (Participant # 2, male, PhD in TEFL).

Another interviewee, an associate professor of applied linguistics, who focused on the equity of student treatment asserted:

Fairness is one of the most important characteristics of a good language teacher. All teachers should treat their students equally without being influenced by students’ achievements, their family background, or sociocultural status as discrimination can’t be tolerated by students, and they may choose inappropriate ways to deal with situations where justice is not considered in making ethical decisions. (Participant # 5, female, PhD in TEFL)

This acknowledgment showed an understanding of the issue and the necessity of rectifying it. A further participant who seemed to be more reflective added:

While we strive for fairness and justice in our classes, there are moments when we might falter. Sometimes practice of being unfair in our classes or following injustice is not deliberate, but when students point it out, it could be a warning to reassess our methods. (Participant # 1, male, PhD in applied linguistics)

b) Affective, Cognitive, and Social Needs of Learners (67%)

One of the most prevalent themes extracted from the participant interviews was the idea that ethics in education requires teachers to consider a learner as a whole person and pay attention to students’ cognitive, affective, and social needs of their students. The majority of interviewees believed that respecting learners’ needs in educational contexts ensures students feel heard leading to a high level of motivation for language learning. As one of the teacher interviewees stated:

Language learners’ emotional needs are of great importance; therefore, it is the responsibility of EFL teachers to create a positive and relaxed atmosphere for learners encouraging them to take part in the classroom activities with greater interest. (Participant # 4, male, PhD in applied linguistics)

Such viewpoints highlight the importance of dealing with students' affective needs in the language learning process, particularly in promoting their engagement in the class activities. With regard to the perceived learner needs, a second interview participant tried to present a justification for such approach by saying that,

Teachers, especially language instructors, should pay close attention to their students' individual needs and try to spend more time with those who show less interest. I strongly believe that our students have their unique ways of learning and deserve attention and feedback from teachers, though some of them might not show it in the classroom. Our duty is to consider their cognitive needs and provide new and challenging tasks based on their intelligence, knowledge, and capability to solve problems. (Participant # 3, female, PhD in TEFL)

A further participant referred to social needs of learners when catering to different students. He stated that

As classroom is a small society, students should be taught to cooperate with each other by respecting their teachers as well as their peers. They need to learn ways of establishing relationships with their classmates and get involved in collaborative activities. To comply with ethical principles, teachers should be careful not to cause any feeling of alienation on the side of students and spend more time who are lagging or feel sidelined. (Participant # 6, male, PhD in applied linguistics)

Such responses shed light on teachers' responsibility to ensure that all students, regardless of their achievements, efforts, and behavior feel equally supported and valued.

c) Honesty (67%)

The concept of honesty was considered by the majority of the interviewees as one of the best attributes of mankind; They believed students should learn to be honest in class and in their society if they want to figure out their strengths and weaknesses and get support from the members of their community. Schools and academic centers should be devoid of dishonesty and deception. This kind of perspective was highlighted by several experts who believed in the importance of cultivating moral principles, values education, and ethical behavior. One of the interviewees talked about the concept of honesty and why it should be encouraged in our educational contexts more than other virtues as reflected in the following extract:

Teaching isn't just about imparting knowledge. It's about nurturing and uplifting. Our students should be educated to be honest and trustworthy as teachers' profound responsibility goes beyond academic instruction. Only through honesty, the students can avoid cheating, plagiarism, and off-track behaviors. Such unethical behaviors will prevent them from having a genuine relationship or effective cooperation with their teachers and peers in class or even people in their society. (Participant # 5, female, PhD in TEFL)

Another participant expressed the positive effects of honesty and the fact that honesty builds trust among students.

Honesty and truthfulness are ethical values that are to be promoted among students. When students are honest in their relationships with others, they build trust with them and expand their possible fulfillment capabilities. Being sincere and truthful about one's feelings and actions can lead to transparency and loyalty in friendships. An honest student is usually more energized and can easily create healthy relationships with his friends and peers. (Participant # 3, female, PhD in TEFL)

d) Responsibility and Respect (50%)

Another major theme that emerged from the analysis of qualitative data was feeling of 'responsibility and respect'. Almost half of the participants pointed out that students, especially EFL learners, should be taught to respect their parents, teachers, peers, and people from different nationalities and linguistic backgrounds if they want to be successful members of a community. They should also learn to be independent of their teachers and peers in their learning process and feel responsible for their own actions, behaviors, and mistakes. As one of the interviewees stated:

One of the main ethical responsibilities of EFL teachers is to guide their students about knowledge of right and wrong, but at the same time help them to take on responsibility for their own learning. Feeling responsible reflects one's care about others and that his/her actions might affect them. Such feeling can help students to understand their rights within the educational system and take appropriate action to achieve their academic goals. (Participant # 1, male, PhD in applied linguistics)

Another interviewee who seemed to be more introspective and analytical said:

As teachers should respect the students' rights and privacy, it's also a moral duty for students to respect their teachers, peers, family members, and educational community values and norms. The importance of respecting others, especially those who try to guide you on your academic path, won't be underestimated if you remember the times when you felt disrespected, ignored, and of course emotionally hurt. (Participant # 4, male, PhD in applied linguistics)

e) Creative Learning (50%)

One of the themes emanating by half of the participants was 'creative learning'. Creativity is believed to be a valuable skill or power that should be fostered if teachers and educators want their students to think critically and be capable of finding various solutions to a problem. Creative learning is not at all about memorizing information or reiterating what has been learned; it is just about learning to use imagination to create novel ideas and look for new possibilities to promote people's well-being. This aspect of educational ethics is directly related to creative learning and its positive outcomes as touched on by one of the interviewees.

I think EFL teachers should consider the fact that ethics in education revolves around topics such as student reflection and creativity in addition to fairness and values education. Learners of a foreign language need exposure to multi-

ethnic, multi-cultural, and other global experiences to expand their creative skills. They thrive on challenging unknown concepts and look for opportunities to elevate the well-being of their society. (Participant # 6, male, PhD in applied linguistics)

Another participant added:

Our EFL learners should be provided with enough opportunities to express their creative thoughts and useful opinions freely. When they are interested in an activity or task, they complete it without their teacher's assistance. Many scholars believe that creative learners have a strong desire to learn, feel motivated, act independently, and behave more ethically. (Participant # 4, male, PhD in applied linguistics)

f) Compassion and Empathy (33%)

The emergence of the recurring theme 'compassion and empathy' centered around the emotional state of caring for those who need help and support, shows that ethical principles are to some extent rooted in the values of kindness, compassion, friendliness, and empathy. These concepts lie at the heart of all human relationships and interconnectedness. One of the participants raised an interesting point worthy of notice.

Compassion is an important factor in boosting ethical awareness. It not only facilitates understanding one another, but also having appreciation and respect for other learners. Such an affective trait doesn't merely touch upon the educational and academic realm but deeply influences EFL students' emotional well-being, self-worth, and overall motivation for language learning. (Participant # 6, male, PhD in applied linguistics)

A further interviewee added:

Feelings of empathy and compassion toward other classmates, as sources of moral values, can lead to the exchange of facts, opinions, ideas or even emotions between two or more individuals creating a common ground of understanding and a healthy learning atmosphere. (Participant # 3, female, PhD in TEFL)

g) Generosity (17%)

The last emerged theme, 'generosity' raised by only one interviewee, is a call to action for EFL teachers who wish to foster a classroom dynamic that is more inclusive and emotionally stimulating.

The EFL teachers should teach their students to be generous, kind, and open-handed in their relationships with peers. Through generosity can EFL learners forgive their friends' mistakes, help those who need support, and share their knowledge and experiences in teamwork activities. Such a class environment could negate the divisive effects of discrimination. (Participant # 2, male, PhD in TEFL).

Considering the major themes extracted from the qualitative phase of the study, the first draft of EIEQ with 60 items was developed. The purpose of the second phase of the study was to pilot and validate the newly constructed questionnaire based on the responses of the EFL teacher participants. In the piloting stage, the number of items was reduced to 40 after having removed the problematic statements. In the following sections, the results of questionnaire validation are presented.

Exploratory factor analysis

An exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was run to explore the construct validity of the EIEQ. The EIEQ had 40 items arranged on a 5-point Likert scale. Before running the EFA, two decisions were made: i) which rotation method should be used, and ii) how many factors should be extracted. The SPSS software runs EFA using two rotation methods: orthogonal and oblique. The former assumes that the factors underlying the items of EIEQ are not correlated, and the latter is based on the assumption that the factors are correlated. As noted by Grande (2016), and Dagdag et.al (2020), if all elements in the “Factor Correlation Matrix” are higher than +/- .32, it can be assumed that the factors are correlated; thus, oblique rotation should be employed. As displayed in Table 3, all elements in the Matrix were not higher than +/- .323. That was why varimax rotation, a rotation technique under the orthogonal method, was run to explore the underlying constructs of the EIEQ.

Table 3. Factor (Component) correlation matrix

Component	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1	1.000											
2	.367	1.000										
3	-.338	-.339	1.000									
4	-.009	-.004	.030	1.000								
5	-.066	.008	.068	.049	1.000							
6	.217	.200	-.194	-.033	-.030	1.000						
7	.006	.021	.045	.039	.046	-.059	1.000					
8	-.090	-.053	.024	.022	-.053	-.044	-.024	1.000				
9	.034	.032	.006	.024	.037	-.012	-.021	-.007	1.000			
10	.039	.045	-.018	-.047	-.031	.053	-.014	-.023	-.006	1.000		
11	.262	.237	-.260	.039	-.072	.089	.005	.005	.017	-.004	1.000	
12	.039	-.009	-.017	-.005	.013	-.046	-.001	-.036	-.023	.038	-.028	1.000

The results of the scree plot as shown in Figure 1 suggested 2 to 12 factors to be extracted, and the table of eigenvalues suggested 12 factors, as the underlying constructs of the EIEQ. As displayed in Table 1a (Appendix B), the obtained factors accounted for 35.79 percent of the total variance.

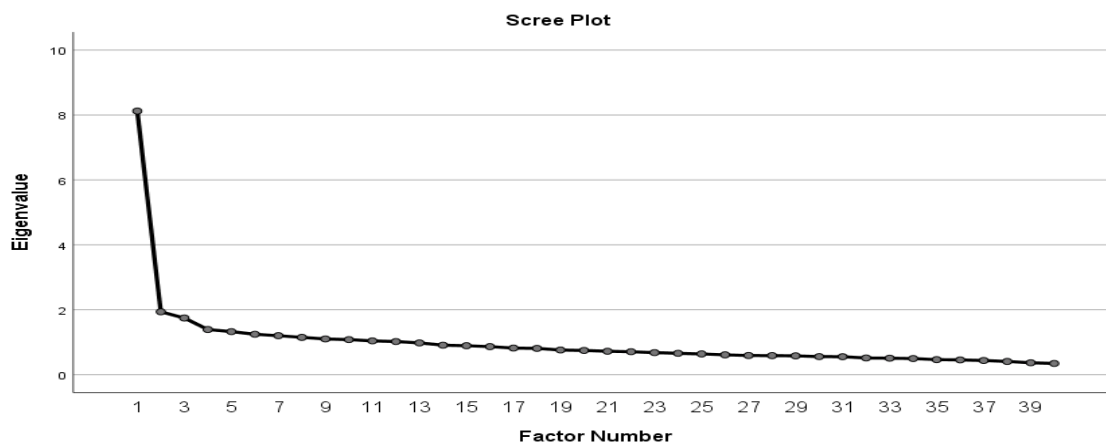


Figure 1. Scree plot for the Ethics in Education Questionnaire

The SPSS software assumes that each of the 40 items of the EIEQ is measuring a different factor. However, after eigenvalues drop below one, factor extraction terminates, and the derived factors are rotated. Table 2a (Appendix B) displays the communalities before and after extracting factors.

As defined by Field (2018, p 1030), “communality is the proportion of common variance within a variable”. Factor analysis starts by estimating the variance that is common; therefore, before extraction the communalities are a kind of best guess. Once factors are extracted, the common variance can be determined. Table 3a (Appendix B) displays the KMO index of sampling adequacy, and Bartlett’s test of sphericity. The KMO index of .903 was higher than .60 indicating that the present sample size of 400 was adequate for running EFA. The significant results of the Bartlett’s test ($\chi^2(780) = 3565.70, p < .05$) manifested that the correlation matrix was appropriate for running EFA. It should be noted that EFA requires that items loading under a factor should have high correlations with each other; consequently, they should have low correlations with items loading under other factors. If all these correlations are extremely high, all items load under a single factor; on the other hand, and if they are weak (close to zero) no factor will be extracted. The Bartlett’s index examines that the correlation matrix is an adequate one for running EFA. Finally, Table 4a (Appendix B) represents the factor loadings of the 40 items under the 5 extracted factors. Except for items 1, 5, 8, 9, 12, 16, 19, 21, 22, 27, and 29, all other items were loaded under their respective factors; that was why another EFA was run after dropping these 11 items the results of which are discussed below.

After excluding the 11 items that did not load under their respective factors, another EFA was run on the 29 remaining items of EIEQ. As displayed in Table 4, the assumptions of sampling adequacy ($KMO = .934 > .60$) and sphericity ($\chi(406) = 3217.19, p < .05$) were retained after excluding the 11 items not loaded under their respective factors. The scree plot for the Ethics in Education Questionnaire demonstrates the number of factors to be extracted suggesting two to five factors as the underlying constructs of the 29 items of the EIEQ.

Table 4. *KMO and Bartlett's test*

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.934
	Approx. Chi-Square	3217.191
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Df	406
	Sig.	.000

Table 5 unveils the eigenvalues and the total variance explained by the EFA model. The SPSS drew five factors as underlying constructs of EIEQ. These five factors accounted for 37.11 percent of total variance.

Table 5. *Total variance explained*

Factor	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	8.092	27.904	27.904	7.467	25.748	25.748	3.314	11.429	11.429
2	1.864	6.426	34.330	1.241	4.281	30.028	2.993	10.322	21.750
3	1.654	5.703	40.033	1.047	3.609	33.637	2.362	8.146	29.896
4	1.179	4.065	44.098	.542	1.869	35.506	1.116	3.847	33.743
5	1.086	3.745	47.843	.467	1.610	37.117	.978	3.374	37.117
6	.890	3.068	50.911						
7	.869	2.995	53.907						
8	.860	2.966	56.872						
9	.846	2.917	59.789						
10	.786	2.710	62.499						
11	.750	2.585	65.083						
12	.703	2.425	67.509						
13	.689	2.377	69.886						
14	.670	2.310	72.196						
15	.662	2.284	74.480						
16	.643	2.216	76.696						
17	.635	2.188	78.885						
18	.616	2.122	81.007						
19	.600	2.067	83.074						
20	.593	2.045	85.119						
21	.562	1.938	87.056						
22	.553	1.906	88.963						
23	.523	1.804	90.767						
24	.504	1.738	92.505						
25	.483	1.667	94.172						
26	.477	1.643	95.815						
27	.423	1.457	97.272						
28	.400	1.379	98.652						
29	.391	1.348	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.

Table 6 manifests the communalities after excluding the 11 items that did not load under their respective factors. The results showed that item 32 (46.3 %) had the highest common variance followed by items 23 (45.8 %), and 20 (45 %). The three items with the least common variances were items 25 (31.3 %), 26 (30.5 %), and 3 (25.5 %).

Table 6. *Communalities (after excluding 11 items)*

	Initial	Extraction
q2	.373	.417
q6	.336	.338
q10	.372	.406
q17	.325	.342
q35	.409	.445
q37	.302	.346
q38	.307	.336
q39	.337	.375
q40	.374	.383
q4	.341	.355
q7	.325	.346
q13	.317	.355
q18	.282	.322
q23	.408	.458
q24	.357	.409
q31	.312	.344
q34	.322	.334
q15	.347	.372
q20	.394	.450
q30	.310	.332
q32	.378	.463
q33	.343	.378
q36	.310	.349
q11	.271	.443
q25	.256	.313
q26	.284	.305
q3	.242	.285
q14	.264	.315
q28	.308	.450

Finally, Table 7 presents the rotated factor loadings, which can be interpreted based on these criteria; .10 = weak, .30 = moderate, and .50 and above = large. The results revealed that all the factor loadings were higher than .30. The results suggested that items 2,6,10,17,35,37,38,39, and 40 were loaded under the first factor labeled as 'educational', items 4,7,13,18,23,24,31, and 34 under the second factor labeled as 'affective', items 15,20,30,32,33, and 36 under the third factor named as 'socio-cultural', items 3,14, and 28 under the fourth

factor named as ‘behavioral’, and ultimately, items 11, 25, and 26 under the fifth factor labeled as ‘professional’ factor.

Table 7. *Rotated factor matrix*

	Factor				
	1	2	3	4	5
Educational					
q35	.619				
q2	.597				
q10	.570				
q39	.557				
q40	.556				
q37	.524				
q38	.517				
q6	.485				
q17	.480				
Affective					
q23		.587			
q24		.578			
q31		.544			
q7		.533			
q13		.528			
q34		.501			
q4		.501			
q18		.481			
Socio-Cultural					
q32			.617		
q20			.607		
q36			.544		
q33			.505		
q15			.498		
q30			.478		
Behavioral					
q28				.567	
q14				.445	
q3				.417	
Professional					
q11					.592
q25					.440
q26					.358

Cronbach's Alpha reliability indices

Table 8 demonstrates the Cronbach's alpha reliability indices for the EIEQ and its five components. The overall EIEQ enjoyed a reliability index of .907. The educational, affective, socio-cultural, professional and behavioral components of EIEQ enjoyed reliability indices of .837, .815, .784, .604, and .601 respectively.

According to Tseng et al. (2006), Dörnyei and Taguchi (2010), and Harrison et al. (2021), .70 is an adequate Cronbach's alpha reliability index for an instrument. George and Mallery (2020, 244) believe that, "there is no set interpretation as to what is an acceptable alpha value. A rule of thumb generally applied to most situations is that .9=excellent, .8=good, .7=acceptable, .6=questionable, .5=poor, and .5=unacceptable". Thus, the reliability index for the overall EIEQ was an "excellent" one; moreover, educational and affective components of EIEQ had "good" reliability indices. The Cronbach's alpha for the socio-cultural component was "acceptable"; however, the professional and behavioral components had "questionable" reliability indices. Pallant (2016) claims that if a test or its component has less than ten items, it is quite common to have low Cronbach's alpha reliability indices. She proposes the average inter-item correlations can be reported if number of items is less than ten.

Table 8. Reliability statistics of Ethics in Education and its components

	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Educational	.837	9
Affective	.815	8
Socio-Cultural	.784	6
Professional	.604	3
Behavioral	.601	3
Total EIEQ	.907	29

Confirmatory factor analysis

A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using maximum likelihood method was run to investigate the underlying constructs of the EIEQ. Figure 2 reveals the conceptual diagram of EIEQ. The model includes five latent variables each of which are being measured through a number of indicators as follows:

- Educational (items 2-6-10-17-35-37-38-39-40),
- Affective (items 4-7-13-18-23-24-31-34),
- Socio-cultural (items 15-20-30-32-33-36),
- Professional (items 11-25-26), and
- Behavioral (items 3-14-28).

Before the results are discussed, it should be mentioned that CFA assumes univariate and multivariate normality of the data. As exhibited in Table 9, the absolute values of skewness and kurtosis indices were lower than 2 (Bachman 2005, Bae and Bachman 2010, and Larsen-Hall 2016). Thus, it can be inferred that the assumption of univariate normality was retained. The Mardia's index of multivariate normality was 15.66. Since this index was lower than 899 (Khine, 2013), it was concluded that the multivariate normality assumption was retained too.

Table 9. *Indices of univariate and multivariate normality*

Item	Skewness	Kurtosis	Item	Skewness	Kurtosis	Item	Skewness	Kurtosis
2	0.461	-0.173	17	0.471	-0.222	32	0.260	-0.227
3	0.502	0.004	18	0.241	-0.383	33	0.298	-0.415
4	0.432	-0.148	20	0.336	0.037	34	0.333	-0.218
6	0.318	-0.296	23	0.414	-0.312	35	0.339	-0.248
7	0.312	-0.199	24	0.366	-0.257	36	0.272	-0.493
10	0.301	-0.282	25	0.335	-0.239	37	0.319	-0.140
11	0.368	-0.223	26	0.418	-0.222	38	0.233	-0.090
13	0.289	-0.433	28	0.310	-0.132	39	0.396	-0.193
14	0.280	-0.065	30	0.456	-0.294	40	0.241	-0.353
15	0.417	-0.160	31	0.220	-0.120		Mardia	15.66

The results revealed that EIEQ model enjoyed a good fit as shown in Table 10. The IBM SPSS AMOS software produces three sets of fit indices; i.e. absolute, incremental and parsimony fit indices. The results are discussed below.

A. The following absolute fit indices proved fit of the model:

- Non-significant results of chi-square ($\chi^2 (372) = 324.49, p = .964$).
- The ratio of chi-square over the degree of freedom; i.e. $324.48 / 372 = .872$ was smaller than 3.
- The standardized root mean residual (SRMR) of .032 was lower than .10.
- The root mean square of error approximation (RMSEA) of .000 was lower than .05.
- The 90 percent confidence intervals for RMSEA; i.e. [.000, .000] were lower than .05.
- The probability of close fit (PCLOSE) of 1.00 was higher than .05.
- The Goodness of fit index (GFI) of .949 was higher than .90.

B. The incremental fit indices also proved fit of the model:

- Tucker-Lewis's index (TLI) of 1.00 was higher than .90.
- Comparative fit index (CFI) of 1.00 was higher than .90.
- Incremental fit index (IFI) of 1.00 was higher than .90.

Normed fit index (NFI) of .902 was higher than .90.

C. Regarding the unstandardized and standardized regression coefficients for the EIEQ model displayed in Table 11, it should be noted that an unstandardized regression weight (b-values in a linear regression model) discloses the amount of change in a variable due to one unit change in another variable. For example, the unstandardized regression weight between item 2 (q2) and 'Educational' construct was .989. That is to say, if any of these variables increased one unit, the other variable increased .989 units. On the other hand; a standardized regression weight (beta-values in a linear regression model) manifests amount of change in a variable due to one standard deviation change in another variable. For example, the standardized regression weight between item 2 (q2) and "Educational" construct was .635. Therefore, if any of these variables increased one standard deviation, the other variable increased .635 standard deviations. Standardized regression coefficients which are analogous to Pearson correlations (Bowen and Guo 2011, Khine 2013, Kline 2016, and Schumacker and Lumax 2016) can be evaluated against three criteria; i.e. .10 = weak, .30 = moderate and .50 = large.

It should be stated that the unstandardized regression weights for some of the variables are 1.00. The software requires some initial values to start the computation process, which is why some of the paths have to be set equal to one. This matter does not affect the main results, because the standardized values can be reported. Based on these results it can be concluded that all items had large; i.e. $\geq .50$, contributions to their latent variables. The results also revealed that the five obtained variables had large contributions to Ethics in Education; Educational (Beta = .763), Affective (Beta = .806), Socio-Cultural (Beta = .777), Behavioral (Beta = .816), and Professional (Beta = .805).

Table 10. All fit indices of Ethics in Education

Indice	Fit Indices	Criteria	Decision
Chi-square	324.48	--	--
Df	372	--	--
P	.964	>.05	Good Fit
Ratio	.872	<=3	Good Fit
RMSEA	.000	.05 to .08	Good Fit
CI RMSEA	.000, .000	.05 to .08	Good Fit
PCLOSE	1.00	>.05	Good Fit
GFI	.949	>=.90	Good Fit
NFI	.900	>=.90	Good Fit
CFI	1.00	>=.90	Good Fit
IFI	1.00	>=.90	Good Fit
SRMR	.032	<.05	Good Fit
CN	514	>200	Sampling Adequacy

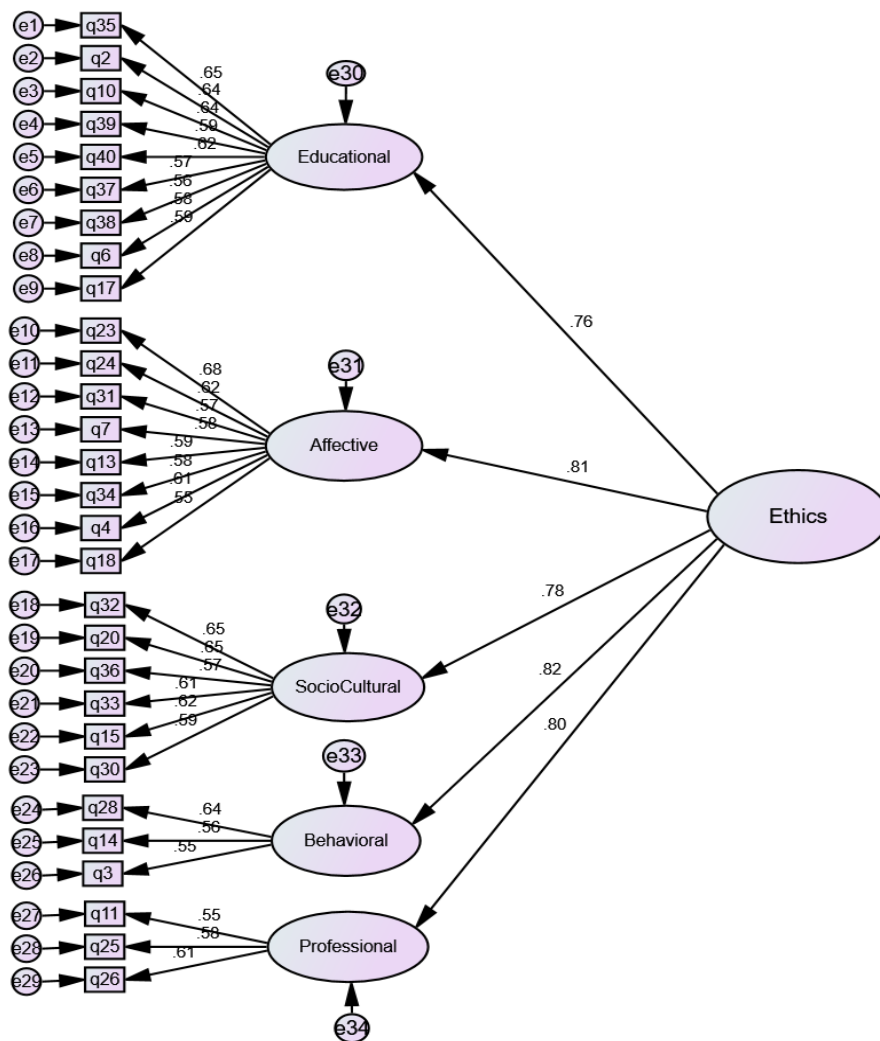


Figure 2. The Ethics in Education Model (standardized regression weights)

In this way, the second research question regarding the EFL teachers' perceived level of knowledge could be answered. On the basis of the EFA and CFA findings, the participant teachers were found to believe in and observe the ethical issues in academic settings. They regarded fairness and justice in their classes and appeared to have mostly considered and followed the components of EIE including the affective, educational, behavioral, socio-cultural, and professional factors. Possessing sufficient knowledge of educational ethics, they could more efficiently apply the ethical principles in their classes, convey such knowledge to their students, convince and encourage learners to follow ethics in and out of class atmosphere, and more importantly, control the students' academic dishonesty.

Table 11. *Unstandardized and standardized regression coefficients*

			Unstandardized	S.E.	C.R.	P	Standardized
Educational	<---	Ethics	1.000				.763
Affective	<---	Ethics	1.061	.124	8.541	.000	.806
Socio-Cultural	<---	Ethics	.984	.120	8.215	.000	.777
Behavioral	<---	Ethics	.977	.122	7.974	.000	.816
Professional	<---	Ethics	.901	.125	7.238	.000	.805
q35	<---	Educational	1.000				.646
q2	<---	Educational	.989	.093	10.689	.000	.635
q10	<---	Educational	.961	.090	10.702	.000	.636
q39	<---	Educational	.894	.089	10.030	.000	.589
q40	<---	Educational	.958	.091	10.471	.000	.620
q37	<---	Educational	.865	.088	9.803	.000	.573
q38	<---	Educational	.843	.087	9.681	.000	.565
q6	<---	Educational	.899	.091	9.852	.000	.576
q17	<---	Educational	.853	.085	10.028	.000	.588
q23	<---	Affective	1.000				.676
q24	<---	Affective	.948	.088	10.765	.000	.624
q31	<---	Affective	.810	.082	9.904	.000	.568
q7	<---	Affective	.835	.083	10.029	.000	.576
q13	<---	Affective	.919	.090	10.206	.000	.587
q34	<---	Affective	.863	.086	10.023	.000	.576
q4	<---	Affective	.910	.087	10.499	.000	.607
q18	<---	Affective	.808	.083	9.671	.000	.553
q32	<---	Sociocultural	1.000				.652
q20	<---	Sociocultural	.992	.094	10.504	.000	.648
q36	<---	Sociocultural	.886	.094	9.467	.000	.569
q33	<---	Sociocultural	.972	.097	10.044	.000	.612
q15	<---	Sociocultural	.983	.097	10.156	.000	.621
q30	<---	Sociocultural	.938	.097	9.691	.000	.586
q28	<---	Behavioral	1.000				.637
q14	<---	Behavioral	.926	.114	8.142	.000	.560
q3	<---	Behavioral	.860	.107	8.019	.000	.548
q11	<---	Professional	1.000				.553
q25	<---	Professional	1.019	.134	7.607	.000	.577
q26	<---	Professional	1.085	.139	7.815	.000	.609

Discussion

In the current study, the ethical knowledge of Iranian EFL teachers was investigated. To achieve the study aim, several steps were taken as mentioned above. A number of items were removed from the initial draft of the constructed questionnaire after obtaining the experts' opinions and calculating the Cronbach' alpha coefficient as a measure of the instrument's reliability. The 40-item questionnaire was administered to 400 EFL teachers; then 11 items were deleted through exploratory factor analysis followed by confirmatory factor analysis through which a conceptual model was created including five factors for Ethics in Education. The Schematic representation of the conceptual EIE model is displayed in Figure 3.

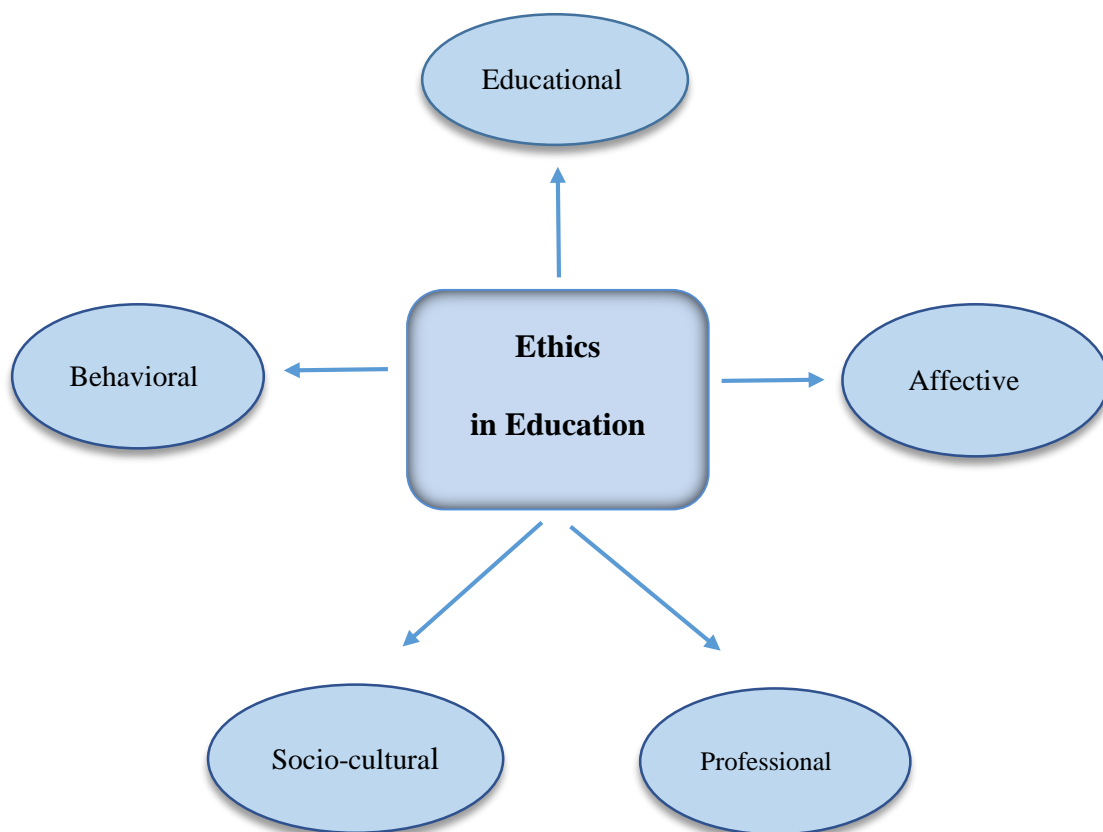


Figure 3. Schematic representation of EIE conceptual model

On the basis of the research findings, the EFL teachers and educators were familiar with different principles and concepts of ethics and their applications to EFL educational contexts. Such standards require the professional educators in the field to display liabilities to themselves as ethical professionals. They should not only observe the obligations to regard and respect ethical issues but also to foster and support the profession within and beyond the school community. Teachers need to illustrate engagement in high standards of practice and responsibly utilize data, materials, research results, and assessment tools when working with EFL students. They ought to regard the interests of all students in the best way possible and esteem their rights, dignity and attitudes to their utmost ability at work. The professional EFL instructors are expected to preserve students' trust and confidentiality while interacting with L2

learners in an increasingly appropriate manner and within proper confinements. They are strongly recommended to build effective and successful relationships with their colleagues, employers, other stakeholders and community members, and even students' parents. Teachers are believed to employ technology in a proper manner while ensuring their students' in educational settings.

Moreover, based on their responses, the EFL teachers know that they should create a positive and fair atmosphere for all students regardless of their cultural background and ethnicity, provide a creative learning environment, and pay attention to individual differences. They should regard the voices of L2 learners as well as their needs and objectives in the learning environment. They are required to develop just and fair assessment measures or techniques and make attempts to control EFL students' educational dishonesty involving cheating, plagiarism, off-track behavior, and so on. Teachers' ought to consider EFL students as whole persons based on their affective, cognitive and social demands in the learning environment and make efforts to improve their self-esteem, self-determination, and self-decision making.

As Harmer (2007) claims, if EFL teachers decide to manage their classroom efficiently, they need to be able to deal with a number of variables including arrangement of the classroom space, management of class time, students' autonomy or interest in group work. Further, teachers should regard how they come to the sight of the students, and how they employ the most effective and influential asset of their voice when communicating with their students during a lesson as an important aspect of EFL classroom management (Brown, 2001).

According to Shobana and Kanakarathinam (2017), ethics in education includes several components such as responsibility, respect, freedom, truth, honor, and fairness. They also consider devotion, commitment, equality of opportunity, trustworthiness, and respect for human rights and dignity as other key features of ethical behavior. These claims are in tune with the findings of this study, which show the same ethical standards as the underlying elements of educational ethics.

The findings of the present study are also in line with that of Salehnia and Ashraf (2015) who claimed that professional ethical codes have key roles in any education system particularly in TEFL; therefore, awareness of professional ethics and morality is of great significance in the educational systems. As Kabir and Imam (2012) have found, there should be training for teachers, students and parents to aware them of their rights and duties, such as the standards of service to be expected of teachers or the commitment of parents to send their children to school, and to receive help from them in case of observed wrongdoing. As recommended by Maguire et al. (2010), ethical student teachers should honor the influential codes of ethics including human dignity, confidentiality and privacy, justice, safety of students, and so on.

The results are also in agreement with that of Kotler et al., 2010 who stated that it is the liability of schools and universities to define ethical rules and codes for teachers and students and supervise their practice and observance in the cultural context of teaching and learning environment (as cited in Nair, 2014). However, the findings of the present study appeared to be somehow in contrast with those of Mahony (2009) and Blumenfeld-Jones et al. (2013), who

believed that much of this ethical domain of teachers' work and practices is to a great extent automatic and latent instead of a subject to be actively reflected on or considered by teachers.

The above-mentioned recommendations cannot be materialized unless our EFL teachers receive enough training in ethical principles to become familiar with such codes and feel responsible for observing and practicing them in the educational contexts as well as conveying these codes to their students.

Conclusion

Based on the gained results, it can be concluded that the majority of EFL teachers are acquainted with the ethical issues in the educational settings and they make an effort to obey these rules in their classes. It is believed that EFL teachers should be suitable models for their students. They ought to follow and observe ethical codes in their classes and provide a fair and just atmosphere for all learners in their classes. They should pay attention to affective and cognitive needs of their students. They are not only expected to have sufficient knowledge of their course subject matter but also required to respect and observe the fundamental principles of educational ethics. They should always try to disregard gender, social classes, ethnicity, color, and other markers of difference in their classroom atmosphere. Teachers should have no bias in their class or prejudice in their action and ought to treat students equally. It is essential for EFL teachers to notice ethical codes over the classroom time, management, space, and assessment.

As EFL students are to be prepared to live in a larger society, their problem-solving skills in schools and institutions should be increased; in this way, they know how to cope with their difficulties in the real world out of the class situation and never feel disappointed or frustrated if they confront with problems in their social life. The academic and educational systems should devise special plans and activities to teach and encourage EFL students to show honesty, integrity, generosity, and affection in their relationship with other people and even other creatures in their environment. They should learn how to overcome their selfishness and have cooperation and collaboration with their peers in class and other members of their society. They should also learn to respect other people with different views, ideologies and nationalities. All the above-mentioned ethical principles are of great importance; therefore, stake-holders including teachers, educators, supervisors, principals, parents, policy-makers, and other educational institution directors are responsible to provide a safe, fair and welcoming environment for the learners helping them to respect ethical and moral values in their local community as well as the global one. This demands all educational stake-holders themselves to respect ethical codes and principles and be ideal models for our youth at home, in class and in real social settings.

As a final word, this study was a limited-scope investigation of EFL teachers' knowledge of ethics in education. The future application of the constructed survey instrument, though validated and well-established in the present study, will definitely need further modifications based on contextual factors, participant types, educational settings, and research approaches. Other replication studies are required to broaden the scope and depth of the issues addressed in this study.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Ethics in Education Questionnaire (EIEQ)

Direction:

Below you can find a series of statements concerning EFL teachers' knowledge of ethical codes (principles) in education. There are no right or wrong answers. Please read the items carefully and record your first impression by indicating the degree to which you agree or disagree with each statement. Your contribution to this research project is greatly appreciated. Thank you very much for your cooperation and participation in advance. It should be mentioned that all the information in the questionnaire will be kept confidential and used only for research purpose. Please feel free to contact me in case you have any questions.

Teachers' Demographic Information

First Name.....

Last Name.....

Age.....

Gender: Male Female

Level of Education:

BA

MA student

MA

PhD student

PhD

Years of Work Experience

1: Strongly Disagree

2: Disagree

3: Neutral

4: Agree

5: Strongly agree

Items	1. Strongly Disagree	2. Disagree	3. Neutral	4. Agree	5. Strongly agree
1- Teachers' knowledge of ethics will directly influence their students' educational dishonesty.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2- All teachers need to know about students' rights.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3- It is important to have respect for students' feelings.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4- Teachers' justice is not a requirement of learner-centered education.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5- EFL instruction accommodates student individual differences.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6- Students' generosity is not related to educational ethics.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7- It is not always the teachers' responsibility to provide a suitable context for students' academic development.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8- Providing students with equal learning opportunity is of top priority to EFL teachers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9- Voices of different ethnic groups are to be heard in English language classes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10- Teachers' kindness and compassion could increase EFL students' learning opportunities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11- Students need to improve their self-decision-making in EFL classes without teachers' help.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12- Learners' confidentiality and privacy are to be honored by all language teachers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13- A sense of environmental friendliness should be encouraged among EFL students.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14- Students should be taught to act generously in their personal and academic lives.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15- It is the duty of an EFL teacher to familiarize students with the consequences of cheating in school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16- Education based on ethics helps students to develop analytical skills.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17- Teachers are expected to encourage creativity among their EFL learners.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18- In-service teachers of ELT need the ability to use reasoning skills to resolve problems and conflicts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19- Training in ethics can always help EFL teachers to develop their moral character.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20- It is the EFL teachers' responsibility to help students promote their academic integrity.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21- Knowledge of ethics creates a sense of patriotism.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22- Students' concern for others' rights and welfare should be emphasized in language classes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23- Students' parents can strongly contribute to promotion of language learning and teaching.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24- Native language and nationality of students should not be a major concern of EFL teachers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25- Teachers should regard their students' socioeconomic status in language classes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
26- In a healthy educational atmosphere, EFL teachers should tolerate gender differences.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
27- Language teachers should treat students with disabilities with more sensitivity.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
28- Language teachers are responsible for arrangement of classroom space.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
29- Time management and punctuality are always dealt with by EFL teachers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix B: Supplementary Tables**Table 1a.** *Total variance explained*

Factor	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	8.121	20.303	20.303	7.552	18.880	18.880	3.633	9.082	9.082
2	1.937	4.842	25.145	1.355	3.386	22.267	3.219	8.047	17.129
3	1.745	4.362	29.507	1.174	2.934	25.201	2.361	5.902	23.031
4	1.390	3.475	32.982	.694	1.736	26.937	.965	2.412	25.443
5	1.326	3.315	36.297	.644	1.610	28.546	.898	2.245	27.688
6	1.245	3.113	39.410	.586	1.465	30.012	.541	1.352	29.040
7	1.201	3.001	42.411	.464	1.159	31.171	.530	1.326	30.366
8	1.148	2.871	45.282	.447	1.117	32.288	.468	1.170	31.536
9	1.100	2.751	48.033	.383	.959	33.246	.439	1.097	32.633
10	1.080	2.699	50.732	.376	.940	34.186	.436	1.090	33.722
11	1.041	2.601	53.333	.352	.879	35.065	.419	1.047	34.769
12	1.021	2.552	55.885	.292	.730	35.795	.410	1.026	35.795
13	.978	2.445	58.330						
14	.908	2.270	60.601						
15	.892	2.229	62.830						
16	.864	2.159	64.988						
17	.820	2.049	67.037						
18	.809	2.024	69.061						
19	.760	1.900	70.960						
20	.747	1.866	72.827						
21	.721	1.803	74.630						
22	.706	1.765	76.395						
23	.678	1.695	78.091						
24	.658	1.645	79.736						
25	.638	1.596	81.332						
26	.610	1.525	82.857						
27	.589	1.473	84.330						
28	.586	1.466	85.796						
29	.579	1.448	87.243						
30	.556	1.391	88.635						
31	.553	1.383	90.018						
32	.515	1.286	91.304						
33	.508	1.270	92.574						
34	.496	1.240	93.814						
35	.463	1.157	94.970						
36	.455	1.138	96.109						
37	.438	1.094	97.203						
38	.407	1.017	98.220						
39	.367	.917	99.137						
40	.345	.863	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring

Table 2a. Communalities

	Initial	Extraction
q2	.393	.469
q6	.362	.463
q10	.386	.435
q17	.340	.389
q35	.415	.512
q37	.312	.358
q38	.325	.368
q39	.351	.408
q40	.391	.478
q4	.374	.374
q7	.336	.432
q13	.330	.383
q18	.304	.374
q23	.443	.560
q24	.381	.448
q31	.332	.411
q34	.348	.420
q15	.359	.393
q20	.410	.529
q30	.344	.411
q32	.390	.472
q33	.372	.464
q36	.324	.457
q11	.307	.525
q25	.287	.419
q26	.298	.320
q3	.260	.335
q14	.287	.419
q28	.338	.414
q1	.087	.183
q5	.092	.251
q8	.080	.157
q9	.133	.277
q12	.073	.108
q16	.087	.109
q19	.085	.146
q21	.105	.129
q22	.084	.081
q27	.127	.270
q29	.107	.167

