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The Influence of Implementing the Personalized Learning Approach on Improving EFL learners Engagement.

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Submitted by: **Supervised by:**

REZLI Sabrina.   Dr.DJOUB Zineb.

Board of Examiners

Examiner: Dr. BENYOUCEF Radia.

Supervisor: Dr. DJOUB Zineb.

Chairwoman: Mrs. MAAROUFI Soumia.

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Dedication

This work is dedicated to

My beloved, encouraging and caring parents,

"Ali & Hafidha", Thank you for everything.

My precious siblings, Imene, Fethi, Sanaa.

My uncle Yazid, his wife; Souad; and their children.

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Abstract

21st century education focuses on upgrading the quality of the teaching-learning process, through introducing teaching approaches that improve learners' enthusiasm and engagement towards their learning. Therefore, the present study is an attempt to investigate the influence of implementing the personalized learning approach on enhancing EFL learners' engagement towards their learning process. Moreover, it sheds light on the effectiveness of embracing this approach within the teaching - learning process for the purpose of providing learners with an engaging and lifelong learning experience. Hence, to achieve the objectives, one means of data collection tools was used. It consists of a teachers' questionnaire which has been administrated to middle school EFL teachers to investigate their varied point of views regarding the integration of the personalized learning approach as a means to foster their learners 'engagement. Thus, the findings revealed that the implementation of the personalized learning approach has a significant influence on the learners' engagement. In the sense that, it accounts for learners' diversity by aligning the learning process in a way that fosters the learners' sense of belonging and engagement towards their learning experience.

Key Words: 21st century education, teaching approaches, the personalized learning approach, learners' engagement, teaching -learning process.

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List of Abbreviations

DI: Differentiated Instructions.

EFL: English as a Foreign Language.

FA: Formative assessment.

PL: Personalized Learning.

General Introduction

The purpose of 21st century education resides in fostering and upgrading the quality of students' learning through creating lifelong learning experience for them. In the sense that, it introduces them to an engaging learning atmosphere, with the hope of creating lifelong learners who master 21st century skills i.e., collaboration, critical thinking, communication and creativity. Therefore, it is required from teachers to implement new teaching methods and approaches that prioritize their learners and account for their diverse characteristics i.e., their learning needs, interests and learning profiles. In fact, the recognition of these differences makes students feel at the centre of their learning experience, by boosting their sense of belonging towards their learning. Indeed, Advocating for learners' diversity acts as influential criteria with regards to their engagement in learning.

The issue which faces many teachers is the decline of their learners' engagement. Several scholars such as Willms (2003) claim that learners are not engaged and involved towards their learning. They are detached from their learning process due to the implementation of the old fashioned approaches to teaching. Additionally, learners are considered as the same individuals; who perceive and demonstrate learning in the same way; under the one-size-fits -all approach, in which learners 'varied characteristics are not taken into account. However, good teachers are searching for efficient teaching approaches and techniques that recognize their learners' diversity in terms of their needs, interests and learning profiles. Furthermore, they are looking for teaching methods that empowers the learning outcomes, develops their engagement in learning and directs learners towards achieving lifelong learning goals.

Therefore, the current study is an attempt to investigate the concept of personalized learning approach and its influence on enhancing learners' engagement, through gathering EFL middle school teachers' perceptions concerning the integration of the personalized learning aspects within the teaching- learning process. Moreover, it directs teachers' attentions to the urge need to put aside the old fashioned approaches of teaching. Further, it focuses on the necessity to embrace new approaches to teaching that account for learners' diversity, enthusiasm and engagement in learning, for the purpose of promoting their academic outcomes. Thus, to fulfil the mentioned objectives, a research question was raised which is: Does implementing the personalized learning enhance EFL learners' engagement? It is supported by a sub -question: to what extent EFL teachers implement the aspects of the personalized learning

within the teaching-learning process. Correspondingly, we can hypothesis that implementing the personalized learning approach may enhance learners' engagement. Moreover, we can hypothesis that maybe EFL teachers are implementing the aspects of the personalized learning approach within their classrooms through introducing their learners to customized learning materials.

This research is descriptive and analytical, in which one method of collecting data was used in order to prove or disapprove the hypotheses. That is to say, a teachers' questionnaire was administrated to middle school EFL teachers. It aimed at gathering their varied point of views concerning the implementation of personalized learning aspects within their classroom as well as gathering their perceptions regarding their learners' engagement.

The present study is composed of two chapters, the first chapter deals with the theoretical part. It introduces the concept of the personalized learning approach including its definitions. Also, it highlights learners' diversity and teachers' role within this approach. Moreover; it introduces the methods used within the personalized learning approach. Furthermore, it defines learners' engagement and indicates its importance. By the end, it highlights the importance of implementing this approach on fostering engagement in learning.

The second chapter is dedicated to the practical part i.e., the research methodology and data analysis. In the first place, It describes the data gathering tool i.e., the teachers' questionnaire. Also, it presents and interprets the research findings. By the end, it suggests pedagogical recommendations directed to teachers concerning the implementation of the personalized learning in relation to their learners' engagement.

Chapter One

The Literature Review

1.1. Introduction

Education is the key element of the human development in terms of preparing adequate persons to face life challenges. In fact, 21st century education is bringing new approaches to be implemented within the teaching - learning process, through rethinking the traditional ways of teaching. It brought a shift from the teacher centred approach where learners do not have a voice and a choice; they just receive knowledge passively; to learners' centred approach. Actually, this shift makes it possible for learners to get involved and it makes them engaged in a lifelong learning experience. This remodelling is done by considering them as active and different individuals through implementing new approaches of teaching that advocate for learners' diversification including the personalized learning approach.

Therefore, this chapter attempts to provide an overview about the personalized learning approach i.e., it presents its definitions and lists its stages. In addition, it gives its methods as well as the teacher's role within this approach. Moreover, this chapter introduces the concept of learners' engagement and it indicates its importance regarding the learning outcomes. Finally, it highlights the relation between implementing the personalized learning approach and learners' engagement

1.2. Definitions

The term personalized learning has been defined in variety of ways. According to the Oxford dictionary (1995) the word personalize means," to mark something to show that it belongs to a particular person"(p.863). Keefe and Jenkins (2005) believe that personalized learning refers to teacher's attempts to consider learners' diversification and individual characteristics when designing the learning environment. Moreover, they state that PL allows teachers to customize the instructions according to learners' needs in order to enhance their learning and encourage them to be autonomous, self-directed. Also, it creates an authentic learning atmosphere for each learner. Additionally, (Wolf, 2010) claims that:

> "Personalized learning provides the opportunity to dramatically redefine the very concept of equity, from the one that goes beyond providing all students with the same educational input and opportunities to one which all students have access to a unique learning experience".(p.9)

That is to say, PL provides a chance to reformulate the learning process for each learner; through customizing students' learning according to their special, diverse learning needs and interests, rather than exposing them to the same input which may not be relevant to their diverse characteristics. Moreover, personalization refers to "the instructions that is paced to the learning needs, tailored to the learning preference and tailored to specific interest of different learners" (The US Department of Education, as cited in Bray and McCaskey, 2013, p.13). To clarify, PL advocates for learners 'centeredness. It considers them as active and important individuals in the learning process by customizing the learning process according to what they need to learn, their interests and their preferred ways of approaching learning. Similarly, Patrick et al. (2013) declare that PL means aligning the learning content according to learners' different aspects; it also empowers learners' voice and choice in a way that leads to achieving success in learning.

Indeed, PL allows teachers to show their care towards their students' learning by accommodating the content in a way that suits their diversity. Moreover, it makes learners' voice heard with the intention of making the learning experience authentic and meaningful for each one. Furthermore, PL rejects the idea of the one -size -fits -all approach where learners do not have a say on how they learn according to their interests, needs and capacities. Educationists, including Tomlinson (1999), Zmuda (2015), agree that the one -size -fits -all classroom considers learners as the same individuals who receive knowledge passively at the same time, in the same way.

However, PL recognizes learners' differences and considers their diversification as a key element of an effective learning environment. Zmuda et al. (2015) claim that " personalized learning is a progressively students driven model in which students deeply engage in meaningful, authentic and rigorous challenges to demonstrate the desired outcomes "(p.7). In other words, PL is an approach to teaching which is initiated by learners' aspects, in a way that makes them engaged in a customized learning experience that ensures a personal fit for each learner.

Alongside with the same line, PL is defined by the Glossary of Education Reform (2015) as an approach to education which includes different learning programmes, learning opportunities, together with providing learners with a significant help that meets their diverse characteristics including their needs and their interests (as cited in Twyman, 2016).

This implies that PL embraces within it the implications of set of programmes. In addition, it designs different instructions that support learners' centeredness and fit their differences. It has the intention of creating a significant learning environment through taking into account learners' differences while designing a suitable learning content.

Moreover, Twyman (2016) asserts that "true personalized learning varies the time, place, path, pace, practice and trace of learning for each and every student"(p.147). In fact, effective PL diversifies the time and the rate of learning. Learning pace is determined by learners' mastery of the content. PL also ensures different learning roads in order to arrive at the same learning objective. Simply put, students learn through different ways, thanks to the varied choices and opportunities they are given within PL environment; which is flexibly aligned according to their diversity.

In the same line, Taylor and Gebre (2016) define personalized learning as the instructions that is customized and adjusted according to learners 'needs, these instructions are also designed and guided by their preferred ways of approaching learning, together with their diverse interests. This means, PL acknowledges that learners are not the same in terms of their needs, learning preference and interests. Henceforth, it takes into account their diversification when assigning instructions and designing the learning environment. Furthermore, Bill and Milinda 2014 Claim that:

> "Personalized learning seeks to accelerate students learning by tailoring the instructional environment what, when, how and where students learn to address the individual needs, skills and interests of each students. Students take ownership of their own learning while also developing personal connections with each other, their teachers and other adults".(cited in Groff, 2017, p.5)

This definition denotes that, PL aims at fostering learning outcomes through customizing the instructions for the purpose of meeting learners' varied needs, skills and interests. In addition, it leads them towards self- direction throughout their learning process. Moreover, PL inspires the learning process. It makes learners develop a sense of belonging towards their educational performance.

As a matter of fact, PL is a 21st century teaching approach which attempts to remodel the one-size-fits-all classrooms. It brings changes to the teaching -learning process in terms of

encouraging teachers to take care of their learners by determining their differences in addition to considering them as individuals who carry their own unique aspects, including their preferred ways of learning, needs, and interests. Further, it aids in designing suitable learning environment. Actually, PL carries the hope of creating a meaningful learning experience for each and every learner through inspiring the teaching- learning process by providing a chance to meet learner's diversity.

1.3. Learners' Diversity within PL

Despite the shared features among human beings, there are certain aspects that distinguish one from another. Correspondingly, learners differ from each other; they are individuals with specific characteristics. Tomlinson (1999) points out that learners are different in terms of their readiness to learn, their interest in learning and their learning profiles.

First Tomlinson (1999) defines readiness as learners' starting potential and level of knowledge regarding a specific understanding. Moreover, Tomlinson (1999) claims that learners do not have the same level of readiness. This means that, the needs of learners with a developed level of readiness and a less developed level of readiness differ. In the sense that, learners with a less developed readiness need an instructor who helps them in determining their learning lacks and deficiencies, in order to scaffold them in an effective way. Additionally, the instructor assigns simpler and customized activities or products that are close to their learning capacities for the purpose of aligning the activities' level of challenge. On the contrary, Tomlinson (1999) asserts that advanced students; with a developed readiness; may need to avoid the repetition of the already grasped understanding. They are not obliged to deal with less challenging tasks that will make them lose interest. Instead, advanced learners are interested in learning when they are introduced to challenging activities and products.

Consequently, determining learners' readiness is essential for selecting the appropriate content that they will be exposed to in a personalized learning environment. In this regard, recognizing learners' level leads to establishing a relevant learning experience. This means, advanced learners will be challenged; they will have opportunities to deepen their understanding. On the other hand, learners with less developed readiness will have the chance to understand and grasp what they have missed.

The second characteristic is interest. Tomlinson (1999) refers to it as the affection towards a particular topic. Also, Tomlinson (1999) claims that what interests a learner may not interest others. Interest is an essential element in motivating and energizing learners to learn and it makes them engaged in the task. In fact, learning is relevant when they deal with topics that address learners' personal interest. Moreover, the third feature is learning profile. Tomlinson (1999) defines it as the manner by which a learner learns through. It represents the varied ways in which learners prefer to perceive and deal with their learning process. In fact, learning styles and multiple intelligences are among the factors that shape the learning profiles.

In the same line, Tomlinson (1999) notes that "a learning style is a preferred way of learning and studying for example using pictures instead of texts, working in groups as opposed to working alone or learning in a structured rather than in an unstructured manner" (pp. 41-42). By the same token, Pitchard (2009) considers learning styles as a specific way by which an individual prefers to think about the information, process their understanding and show their learning. Further, Jaleel and Thomas (2019) believe that the ways of perceiving learning is directed by the learners' varied learning styles.

In fact, Gardener (2011) emphasizes on the necessity of knowing and classifying learners according to their diverse learning styles. Correspondingly, he identified eight multiple intelligences that influence the styles of learning. The first type of intelligence is the linguistic intelligence. Learners with this type of intelligence have an ability to learn language and use words in an effective way. They tend to memorize verbal information. In addition, linguistic learners learn best through storytelling and note taking.

The second type of intelligence presented by Gardner (2011) is the logical mathematical intelligence. It refers to the ability to use numbers effectively. Further, it makes it possible for learners think, reason and solve problems in a logical way. The third type of intelligence is the visual spatial intelligence. Learners with this type of intelligence prefer to learn through vivid images, colours, forms. In addition, they exhibit the capacity to visualize and represent their learning visually. In addition, they learn best when the lesson contains images. Also, they think in pictures and images.

According to Gardner (2011) the musical Intelligence is the fourth type which is related to musical skills. It refers to the ability to perceive, transform and express their ideas via

auditory materials and music. Learners with this type of intelligence learn best through videos, songs audiotapes. The fifth type is bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence; this intelligence refers to the ability to involve their body parts when learning. They learn best through gestures, miming and acting out.

The interpersonal intelligence is the sixth kind of intelligence. Gardner (2011) suggests that it includes the ability to understand other people and to work within groups. Learners with this type of intelligence prefer to work within groups. The seventh kind of intelligence is intrapersonal, in the sense that, intrapersonal learners use their self-understanding to enhance their learning. The eighth intelligence presented by Gardner (2011) is called naturalist intelligence in which learners can identify and classify species of their environment.

In fact, multiple intelligences influence the way students learn and shape their learning styles. They play a great role in understanding learners. Therefore, determining learners' multiple intelligences leads to an effective understanding of learners' innate capacities and learning preferences. For this reason, teachers need to select suitable content in a way that insures the relevance of the learned material and addresses their learner's varied learning styles.

Indeed, learners are different in terms of interests, readiness and learning profiles. Consequently, teachers are required to understand their learners' characteristics for the purpose of selecting the appropriate knowledge and enhancing the learning quality. Tomlinson (2001) claims that students learn efficiently when the tasks are aligned in a way that suits their learning skills, their interests and their preferred ways of approaching learning. Correspondingly, Tomlinson (1999) insists that "teachers must be ready to engage students in instruction through different learning modalities, by appealing to different interest and by using varied rates of instructions along with varied degree of complexity"(p.2). In fact, addressing learners' individuality is advocated by the teachers' new roles in a personalized leaning classroom.

1.4. Teachers' Roles within PL

Being a 21st century teacher means helping students learn in an effective way that promotes a lifelong learning experience for them. In addition, it requires from teacher to embrace new roles in order to implement the PL effectively. Correspondingly, PL gives teachers the opportunity to take new roles as 21st century teachers.

In fact, Grant and Bayse (2014) assert that within PL, teachers become facilitators of learning. It makes teacher acts as a facilitator who helps learners to succeed in learning. Moreover, PL introduces a change to teachers in terms of their roles within the classroom. Further, it reformulates the understandings of teachers' roles and responsibilities. The National Centre on UDL declares that there is a remarkable redefinition of teachers' roles when integrating PL aspects within their classrooms, it entails for teachers to be facilitators of learning instead of simply transferring information to their learners (cited in Grant and Bayse, 2014).

In fact, implementing PL implies for teachers to help their learners rather than being a dominant part in the classroom. Simply put, 21st century teachers assist learners, they seek to foster their learners' sense of belonging towards the learned material through selecting relevant topics and activities that match their diversity.

Alongside with the same line, Linn-Cohen and Hertzog (2007) point out, "Effective teachers take time to get to know each student in order to make informed decisions about instruction and curriculum selection to maximize each student's learning experience" (p.256). Indeed, teachers have to strengthen their professional relationship with their learners in order to know them well and identify their interest and academic skills for the purpose of ensuring the appropriateness of the learned material. In fact, teachers who consider learners as diverse individuals; who learn in a variety of ways; establish an effective and involving learning experience for their learners.

Accordingly, in order to implement the PL effectively, teachers need to know their students well. Actually, knowing learners and being familiar with their different characteristics is at the heart of PL. Moreover, when teachers try to understand their learner they will be aware about their learners' diverse characteristics. As a result, they deliver appropriate lessons that fit learners 'diversity. In other words, teachers need to be good observers in order to notice their learners for the purpose of distinguishing one learner from another. In fact, teachers are required to guide students and direct their learning in order to help them in taking ownership of their learning. In addition, they have to consider them as active participators rather than passive members who receive ready knowledge; which is delivered by a dominant teacher; in a teacher-centred learning environment. Furthermore, Wolf (2010) mentions that:

"Education leaders overwhelmingly agreed that the role of the teacher dramatically changes with personalized learning, as it emphasizes a shift from a single teacher delivering knowledge to his classroom of students to teachers as facilitators of learning, often as a part of a team of teachers with differentiated roles". (p.14)

This implies that, teacher becomes a facilitator by giving learners a voice on how, when, where, over their learning. In addition to that, flexible teachers take into account their learners' individuality. As a result, they apply relevant methods of teaching. Indeed, teachers' role is redefined within the personalized learning approach. Therefore, the new roles of teachers in a personalized learning environment challenge them to apply modern and customized methods with the intention of improving their learners' academic performance.

1.4.1. Methods Used within PL

Within the classroom settings, teachers use different methods and teaching strategies in order to implement PL effectively including the differentiated instruction, formative assessment and using technology.

1.4.1.1. Differentiated Instructions

Tomlinson (1999) cites that the differentiated classrooms is a learning environment that calls for learners' individuality in which the teacher provides his learners with varied ways, and different learning paths with the intention of accelerating and deepening the learning experience for each learner, since this approach does not consider the learning experience as being similar to all learners.

In addition to that, Tomlinson (1999) denotes that "teachers in differentiated classes use time flexibly, call upon a range of instructional strategies, and become partners with their students to see that both what is learned and the learning environment are shaped to the learner" (p.2). This means, the differentiated classroom does not consider learners as the same individuals who perceive knowledge in the same way. On the contrary, it considers them as different individuals who are provided with different ways of learning. This method is generally defined as a teaching means, in which teachers select set of strategies to provide learners with variety of options in order to reach a shared learning objective. Moreover, Tomlinson et al (2003) refer to DI as a method that expands the learning chances since it

accounts for learners' diversity and encourages teachers to introduce modifications to the learning content including the curricular, the resources, and the activities.

In other words, differentiated instructions takes into account learners' individual differences by providing them with a suitable learning material through bringing a change to the curriculum, the methods as well as the activities and resources, in a way that meets their different aspects. Moreover, it ensures the required balance between the curriculum and learners' individuality through attending to their different learning needs, interests and learning profiles. Furthermore, Wormeli (2005) highlights the role of DI in providing fairness in learning by pointing out that:

> "Differentiated instruction is doing what's fair and developmentally appropriate for students. It's a collection of best practices strategically employed to maximize students' learning at every turn; including giving them the tools to handle anything that is undifferentiated. It requires us to do different things, for different students some, or a lot, of the time. It's whatever works to advance the student. It's highly effective teaching". (p 1)

To clarify, DI is an effective method of teaching that provides learners with a fair learning experience through selecting appropriate learning it aims at developing the learning quality. In addition, Subban and Round (2015) cite that DI accounts for differences among learners and targets 21st century skills since it considers their different learning characteristics.

1.4.1.1 .1.Elements of DI

As a matter of fact, DI provides teachers with a chance to differentiate the content, the process and the product of the lesson. Tomlinson (2001) provides an explanation on how teachers differentiate the elements of the lessons. First, she defines the content as the input of teaching and learning. She claims that differentiating the content can be done in two ways; first, teachers have to customize what they teach. Second, they modify the ways of introducing the learning content. Differentiating the content can be done according to learners' interest readiness and learning profile.

To begin with, Tomlinson (2001) mentions that readiness differentiation of content relies on the goal of making the learned material or information fits learners' capacity by making and ensuring the appropriateness of the level of challenge. For example, exposing learners to

different texts with different level of challenge. To illustrate, the teacher provides his learners with texts of the same topic but with different level of difficulty and length i.e., learners with a high level of readiness are provided with texts that contains complicated words and expressions; on the other hand, the teacher customizes text's difficulty and length with the intention of addressing   learners who have a low level of readiness.

Moving to interest differentiating of content, Tomlinson (2001) explains that teachers can match curriculum ideas with learners' interest through aligning the curriculum according to learners' needs and creating a significant content that meets their interests. For example, selecting topics that meet their areas of interests. Apart from this, Tomlinson (2001) adds that teachers also opt for differentiating the content in a way that fits their learners' learning profiles. This means, teachers provide learners with content that falls under the same learning objectives but in different ways that meet their various learning styles. To demonstrate, teachers can expose an audiotape to auditory learners rather than providing them with a text in a written form. While, visual learner are provided with texts which is supplemented by images, pictures, and vivid colours.

The second element of differentiation Presented by Tomlinson (2001) is differentiating the process which is considered as set of activities which are designed to help students develop their current level of understanding to arrive to an enhanced level of understanding. Also, It can be differentiated according to learners' readiness, interests and learning profiles.

First, Tomlinson (2001) believes that differentiating the process according to learners' readiness means accommodating the tasks' level of challenge according to their' level of understanding. In other words, learners are exposed to tasks with different level of complexity, students with high level of readiness are asked to fulfil tasks for the purpose of developing their understanding.

Second, Tomlinson (2001) states that differentiating the process according to learners' interests is done through providing them with choices and relating the process with topics that interest them. Finally, Tomlinson (2001) claims that when differentiating the process according to the learning profiles, teacher provides learners with choices of exploring their learning according to their different learning preferences such as addressing visual learners with activities that contains colouring and vivid images. On the other hand, learners with linguistic learning

style are given tasks where they can produce paragraphs, and express their understanding in a written form.

Finally, Tomlinson (2001) highlights the third elements of DI, which is the product. It aids learners in developing the already grasped understandings. Teachers opt for differentiating the products assignments by providing learners with opportunities to express their understanding through using distinct ways of demonstrating learning.

1.5.2. Formative Assessment

Mahon (2016) defines formative assessment as the consistent investigation of learners' improvements concerning their learning achievements. However, it does not impact learners marks but rather; it equips teachers with the necessary information about their learners' academic performance in terms of grasping the content. Furthermore, Mahon (2016) mentions that FA helps teachers in bringing the right change to the curriculum, according to learners' feedback in order to scaffold them correctly and help them overcome the difficulties they are facing during their learning process.

Moreover, Formative assessment aids teachers in collecting information about their learners in order to tailor and adjust the content in a way that meets their needs and level of understanding. In fact, the process of checking for learners understanding is conducted through varied ways. Robinson (1995) stresses on the usefulness of integrating alternative forms of assessment within the teaching-learning process. He identifies varied ways of alternative assessments including, interviews between teacher and learners in the sense that they can provide teachers with significant details about their learners understanding. Henceforth, enabling teachers to bring the right customization to the teaching-learning process. In addition to that, portfolios are perceived by educationists as a way to track learners' progress. Paulson et al (1991) refer to portfolios as gathering learners' varied work and assignments along their learning process. In the same line, Robinson (1995) advocates the use of portfolios for assessing learners since it is considered as an effective way to determine learners' level of understanding and helps in checking their improvements. Furthermore, Andrade and Cizek (2009) highlight the effectiveness of FA in determining learners' aspects including their strengths and lacks for the purpose of supporting teachers in designing suitable instructions that

foster the learning outcomes. Moreover, Hanover research (2012) emphasised on the role of assessment in ensuring an effective implementation of PL by pointing out that,

"Personalized learning requires sophisticated data and assessment systems, which dynamically track, illustrate, and translate the data to inform not only the student and teacher, but also help determine the instructional tools, content, and learning approach best suited for each student-and all this must work together seamlessly"(p.11).

Additionally, Mahon (2016) believes in the important role of FA in providing learners with suitable learning level and it's effectiveness in preventing teachers from introducing their learners to one-size-fit- all learning atmosphere. It helps in providing teachers with a continuous feedback about their learners' progress and inspires them to bring the right personalization to the learned materials. This entails that, FA provides teachers with an opportunity to appropriately adjust learning process and it aids in the implementation of PL in terms of aligning the learning process since it provides teachers with regular feedback about their learners' characteristics i.e., their learning preferences, needs, strengths and weaknesses.

1.4.3. The Use of Technology

PL advocates the use of technology in enhancing learning opportunities for students. Wolf (2010) acknowledges the role of technology in providing teachers with chances to determine and organize learners' needs. Moreover, Wolf (2010) confirms that technology allows learners to reach varied learning resources and learning chances wherever and whenever they want.

Additionally, Redding (2013) asserts that using technology is a way to make PL an effective and practical experience for both teachers and learners. Furthermore, Grant and Bayse (2014) acknowledges the effectiveness of using technology within PL in helping learners achieve more and perform well in their academic learning. Indeed, technology brings a shift to the traditional classroom by introducing learners to a vivid learning experience since it aids teachers in addressing the learners' diverse needs, interests and learning profiles.

Similarly, Twyman and Redding (2015) claim that "personalized learning varies the time, place and pace of learning for each student. It enlists the student in the creation of learning pathways, and utilizes technology to manage and document the learning process and access rich sources of information"(p.3). That is to say, technology is a means to facilitate the

personalization through organizing learners' data in terms of their academic performance as well as providing varied learning materials.

To sum up, within PL teachers opt for using varied teaching methods and techniques that put learners at the centre. They also focus on upgrading the quality of the teaching-learning process through fostering learners' sense of belonging enthusiasm and engagement in learning.

1.5. Learners 'Engagement

Educationists define learners' engagement in a variety of ways. To begin with, Macey and schnieder (2008) describe engagement as a state which consists of a strong degree of commitment and enthusiasm concerning a specific task. In the same line, Kuh et al (2008) indicate that learners' engagement stands for time and energy dedicated by learners towards their learning performance and educational activities.

Additionally, the National Survey on Students Engagement (2009) perceive learners' engagement as the persistent contribution and involvement in distinct learning tasks; it is also shaped by two construct including the amount of the dedicated effort on the part of learners to their learning and the provided chances which are addressed by teachers for the purpose of fostering learners' engagement (cited in Barkely, 2010).That is to say, learners' engagement refers to learners' attempts to perform well in addition to being curious, inspired and eager to learn. Also, it refers to the degree of the invested work towards the learning process. Moreover, it is identified by both, the level of the learners' performance and the effective learning chances that are introduced by their instructors.

Skinner et al (2009), declare that engagement in learning includes within it the strong connection between learners and all what compose their learning process i.e., teachers, learning activities and gaols. Simply put, learners' engagement is about the strong relation that connects learners and the different aspects and components of their learning.

Moreover, learners' engagement is a considered as" a term which is used to describe an individual interests and enthusiasm for school which impacts their academic performance and behaviour "(Gallup, as cited in Olson & Peterson, 2015, p.1). Indeed, learners' engagement is at the heart of developing the quality of learners' performance since it helps in extending the degree of their interest enthusiasm and inspirations concerning their learning experience.

Furthermore, learners' engagement is multidimensional. Fredricks et al (2004) identify three dimensions of learners 'engagement. The first dimension is behavioural engagement. It consists of learners' behaviour including their interactions inside the classroom, attention and concentration during a task in addition to fulfilling the required work. Moreover, Fredericks et al (2004) refer to the second dimension as emotional engagement which is described as experiencing positive emotions towards their learning including interest enjoyment and curiosity and feeling a sense of belonging towards their learning process. Finally, the third dimension presented by Fredericks et al (2004) is the cognitive engagement in which learners are involved in their learning activities and seek to expand their understanding through making varied attempts to learn. In fact, the importance of learners' engagement must be highlighted since it considered as an influential factor that promotes learning outcomes and lead learners towards achieving success in learning

1.5.1. The Importance of Learners 'Engagement

Learners' engagement is conceptualized as an important and vital aspect of learners 'academic success. It plays a great role in enhancing their academic achievements. Pascaralla and Trenzini (1991) insist on the strong relation between learners' engagement and their performance in learning i.e., a developed level of learners' engagement upgrades their learning outcomes and accomplishments (as cited in Barkely, 2009). This means, learners' engagement influences the learning achievement. In the sense that, it enhances their desire to learn and it helps in maintaining interest and passion along the learning experience.

Furthermore, according to Harper and Quaye (2009), learners' engagement entails for learners to contribute in varied learning activities whether within the classroom settings or beyond its walls, in return, this significant contribution boost the learning achievements in a remarkable manner. The National Commission for Further and Higher Education (2017) acknowledges the role of learners' engagement since it improves learners experience by making it meaningful where learners enjoy and learn enthusiastically. In addition, it improves the quality of interaction by exposing students to new learning opportunities.

Consequently, learners' engagement needs to be included as a critical factor in determining the success of the teaching –learning process. It must be taken into account when designing learning content; one way of doing this is addressing learners' various aspects

including needs, interest and learning profiles. Therefore, the role of PL in enhancing learners' engagement is highly appreciated.

1.6. The Role of PL in Enhancing Learners' Engagement

The importance of personalized learning resides in encouraging learners to be involved and engaged in their learning. However, the absence of learners' engagement prevents them from performing in the desired manner. To begin with, Ridnour (2011) claims that addressing learners' interest acts as an influential aspect in maintaining engagement in learning. In fact, learners are likely to be disengaged if the learned material is not relevant to their preferred ways of learning. Indeed, it is also on the part of teachers to provide learners with interesting and engaging learning experience for attaining higher achievements in their academic performance.

Furthermore, Hanover research (2014) acknowledges the role of personalized learning in influencing engagement in learning. Hanover research (2014) claims that PL is capable of engaging learners since it provides them with a caring and a supportive learning environment. In the same line, Redding (2016) insists on the efficient role of PL in engaging learners and boosting their learning capacities. That is to say, engagement in learning is crucial for maximizing learners' academic performance. Learners are likely to be engaged if the learned material is relevant to their learning differences. Indeed, meeting learners' needs and interests inspires them to learn and it helps them in developing the sense of belonging and ownership towards their learning. In fact, the purpose of PL is to foster academic engagement. Actually, PL provides learners with chances to show their voices and choices in a way that empower their engagement in learning. It advocates the notion of voice and choice since it focuses on tailoring the educational experience in a way that corresponds to learners' strengths, needs and interests.

Indeed, within PL learners are the main focus because it considers them as different individuals and it encourages them to be involved in the learning process. Furthermore, Patrick et al. (2013) notes that "personalization allows students to take ownership of their learning by giving them the opportunity to feel valued, motivated and in control. It also changes the dynamic between the teacher and the students, fosters innovation, self-regulation and goal setting" (p.5).

In the same line, when learners feel that their voice is valued, their needs are met and embraced within the learning process, they are likely to be engaged and motivated to perform better in their learning process. Moreover, PL customizes learners' educational experience through taking into account their diversification as well as giving them a chance to speak up their voices. Also, it develops their sense of belonging. As a result; it leads to enhancing the chances of having an engaging and relevant experience for all learners**.**

1.7. Conclusion

21st century Education is continuously bringing changes and developments to the teaching - learning process, through introducing new approaches to education; that advocate for and focus on learners varied aspects; in the hope of developing lifelong learning experiences for them. Hence, allowing them to develop engagement and creativity in learning, communicate effectively, and collaborate with each other, in addition to reflecting on their own learning experience through being critical thinkers.

Correspondingly, PL is twenty first century teaching approach which aims at fostering the learners' academic performance including enhancing their engagement in learning. Additionally, it takes into account learners' diversity in terms of readiness, interests and learning profiles. This chapter highlighted the main elements concerned with PL including its definitions, the main methods used within it. Moreover, it emphasized on the new roles of 21st century teachers within this approach. Furthermore, it introduced the concept of learners' engagement and explored its importance regarding the learning process. It dealt also with the role of PL in providing learners with an engaging learning atmosphere. Thus, the next chapter will deal with the practical part of the study. It attempts to present the research methodology and it investigates the impact of implementing the PL aspects on learners' level of engagement.

Chapter Two

Research Methodology

2.1. Introduction

The present chapter deals with the practical part of this study. It describes the research design and methodology and it presents the participants. In addition, it provides a description of the data collection tool. Moreover, it analyses and interprets the findings. By the end, it suggests some educational recommendations addressed to the teachers.

2.2. Research Design

This research aims at exploring the influence of implementing the personalized learning approach to teaching on boosting EFL learners' engagement. In addition, it is set out to investigate how EFL teachers perceive the integration of the PL aspects as a means to create an engaging learning atmosphere. Further, it aims at unveiling the extent to which teachers implement the aspects of this approach within their classrooms.

The main question that directs this research is: Does implementing the personalized learning approach enhance EFL learners' engagement? It is supported by a sub-question which is: To what extent EFL teachers implement the aspects of PL in their classrooms? Moreover, it is hypothesized that implementing the personalized learning approach to teaching; which focuses mainly on meeting learners' diverse characteristics; may foster their engagement in learning. Additionally, it suggests that the aspects of the personalized learning approach could be integrated by EFL teachers within the classroom settings; in the sense that they account for their learners' diversity when designing the learning content.

With the intention of testing out the validity of the suggested hypotheses, the research follows the analytical descriptive method of collecting data. It describes and analyses the findings collected through one data collection tool i.e., the teachers' questionnaire.

2.2.1. Participants

The research sample consists of EFL middle school teachers. This sample has been chosen to answer an online questionnaire which has been administrated to them via their varied Facebook groups. They were selected in order to collect their views concerning the implementation of PL regarding their learners' engagement and explore how EFL teachers perceive PL aspects within their classrooms.

2.2.2Data Collection Tool

To carry out this study, one method of collecting data was used which is a teachers' questionnaire. It was administrated to the teachers Online, through sharing it via their different Facebook groups.

2.2.2.1. The Teachers' Questionnairee

The teachers' questionnaire (see appendix 1) has been addressed to middle school EFL teachers through sharing it via middle school EFL teachers' Facebook groups. Twenty – seven teachers, who were members in these groups, accepted to answer this questionnaire. It aims at collecting their varied point of views and perceptions towards the implementation of the personalized learning aspects; along with unveiling the degree of their awareness about the impact of the PL regarding their learners' engagement.

The teachers' questionnaire is composed of thirteen questions; among which are closed, open-ended questions, and yes no questions; classified under three sections. The first section deals with the background information of the respondents. It includes one question. It aims at gathering teachers' teaching experience.

The second section deals with the implementation of the PL aspects by the questioned teachers. It includes six questions, from (Q2- Q8). In (Q2) the participants were asked if they acknowledge the fact of having different types of learners who have different characteristics; that distinguish one from another; within the same classroom. The third question (Q3) is a yes no question, in which they were asked if they collect their learners data regarding their varied characteristics i.e., needs, interests, learning profiles. It was followed by asking them to explain their chosen answers. To clarify, teachers who answered with "yes"were asked to explain the way they conducted this action. On the other hand, teachers who answered with" No", were requested to explain the reasons that impeded them from gathering information about their learners varied characteristics. For question number four (Q4), the participants were required to indicate the extent to which they adjust and introduce changes to the lessons according to their students 'diverse aspects.

In (Q5) the respondents were requested to indicate the extent to which they provide their learners with chances to choose the topics or type of activities, in a way that suits their diverse

features. In question number six (Q6), the participants were questioned about their point of views concerning considering their learners as partners in the learning process rather than passive members in the classroom. Moving to question number seven (Q7), where they were asked about the role of teachers in the classroom; they were offered four options to select from; a facilitator of students learning. A guider, a person who deliver the necessary knowledge and a person who creates an engaging learning experience for learners. Finally, in question number eight (Q8) teachers were provided with a yes no question about the use of educational technologies when teaching, followed by a sub-question in which they were requested to demonstrate how they use the educational technologies.

As for the third section, it is concerned with teachers' perceptions about their learners' engagement. It includes five questions (Q9–Q13). To begin with, in (Q9) the participants were required to indicate if they consider their learners as engaged or not engaged in their learning or whether they don't know about their learners' engagement state. In question number ten (Q10), the participants were requested to mention the extent to which they agree or disagree with the efficiency of enhancing engagement in learning through providing their learners with the chance to express their choice and voice. In (Q11), the participants were asked to choose in what situation their learners are more likely to be engaged. For question number twelve (Q12), they were required to indicate the degree to which learners' engagement enhances the academic performance. Finally, question number thirteen (Q13) is a yes no question in which the respondents were questioned about the effect of selecting relevant topics, activities, that meet their learners diverse characteristics on providing them with an engaging learning environment.

2.3. Data analysis

## 2.3.1. Teachers' Questionnaire Data Analysis

To begin with, when the participants were questioned about their years of teaching, (48%) of the teachers mentioned that they have been teaching English for more than 10 years. In addition, (15%) of the questioned teachers have a teaching experience that range from 5 to 10 years. Whereas, (37%) of them have been teaching English for less than 5 years. The obtained result implies that most of the participants have a considerable teaching experience. This entails that they are familiar with teaching-learning process and they may be acknowledgeable about the ways of dealing with learning issues and the ways of addressing their learners' needs.

As for the question of acknowledging the fact of having diverse learners within the same classroom, it is mentioned in figure 2.1 that the majority of the participants (78%), strongly agreed with the fact of having diverse learners with different characteristics. While (22%) of them agreed with the provided statement. Apparently, all of the participants recognize and admit their learners' diversification within their classrooms.

Figure2.1: Teachers' Recognition of their Learners' Diversity
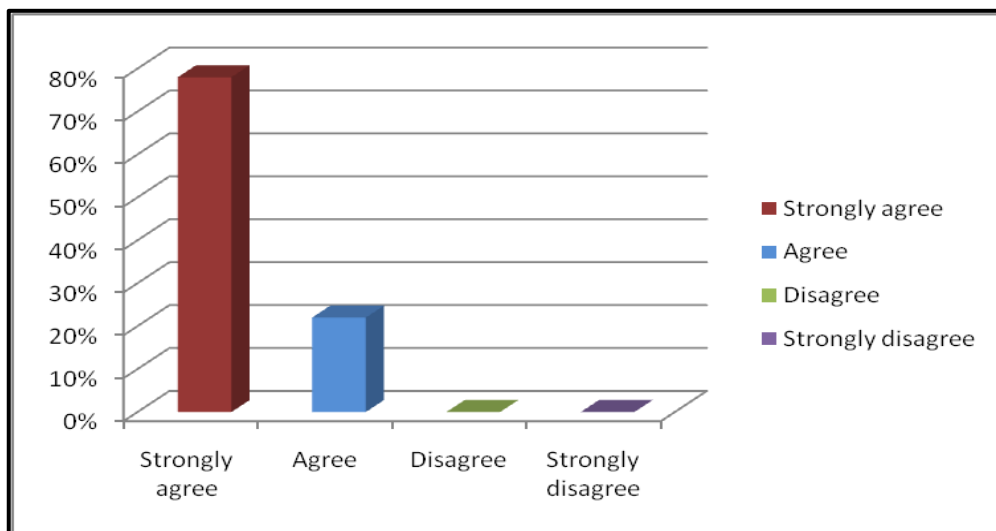
Concerning the obtained results from the second question, it is demonstrated in figure 2.2 that the majority of the participants (82%) confirmed that they try to get to know their learners. As for the way they collect their data, they mentioned various examples including observations, surveys, assessments, tests, using questionnaires at the beginning of the school year, using portfolios and concept checking questions .On the other hand, (18%) of them answered with "no", they justified their claim with the lack of time in addition to having over-crowded and large classrooms. In the sense that, this action would take much time and efforts on the part of those teachers.

**Figure 2.2: Teachers' Attempts of Trying to Know their Learners**
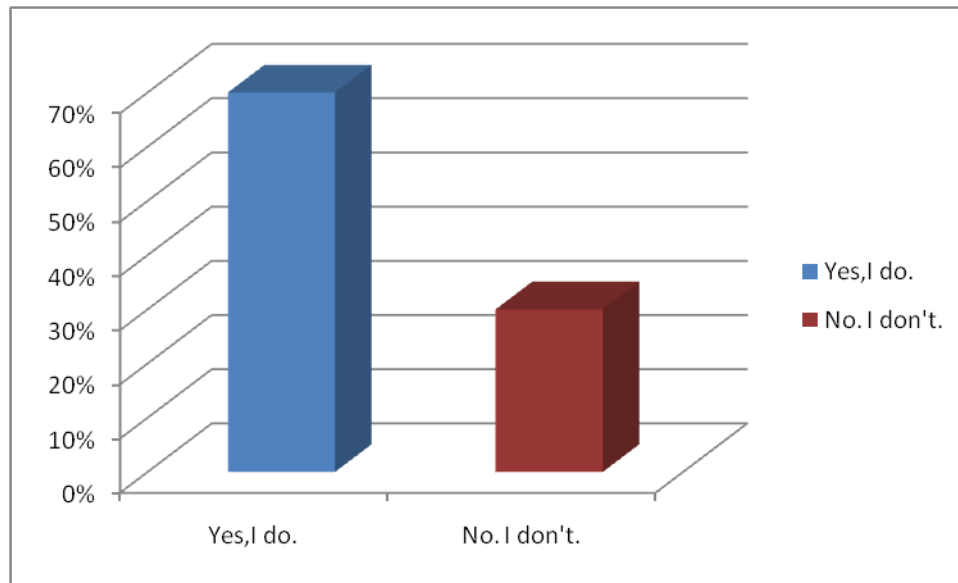
As it is shown in figure 2.3 the results revealed that (56%) of the participants sometimes bring changes to the lessons regarding the topics and type of activities in a way that suits their learners diverse characteristics. In addition, (44%) of the participants mentioned that they always modify the content of the lessons in a way that suits their learners' diversity.

Figure 2.3: Teachers Frequency of Bringing Changes to the Lessons
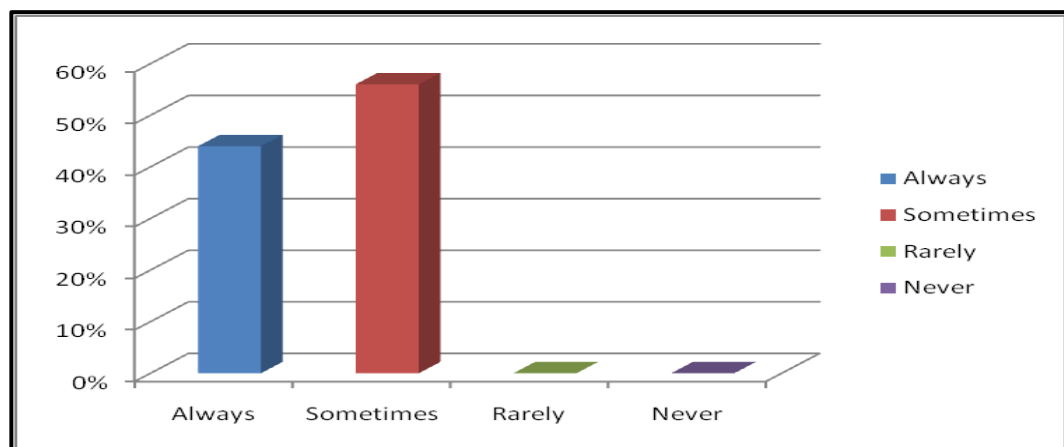
With regards to the question of providing learners with the chance of choosing and selecting their learning aspects, the indicated findings in figure 2.4 denote that most of the participants (52%) sometimes provide their learners with this opportunity. While (11%) of the participants always allow their learners to select the topics and types of activities. Whereas, (22%) of the respondents mentioned that they rarely introduce their learners to the opportunity

of choosing their learning. On the other hand, (15%) of them do not provide their learners with this chance.

Figure 2.4: Teachers 'Frequency of Providing the Learners with the Chance to Choose and Select Type of Activities
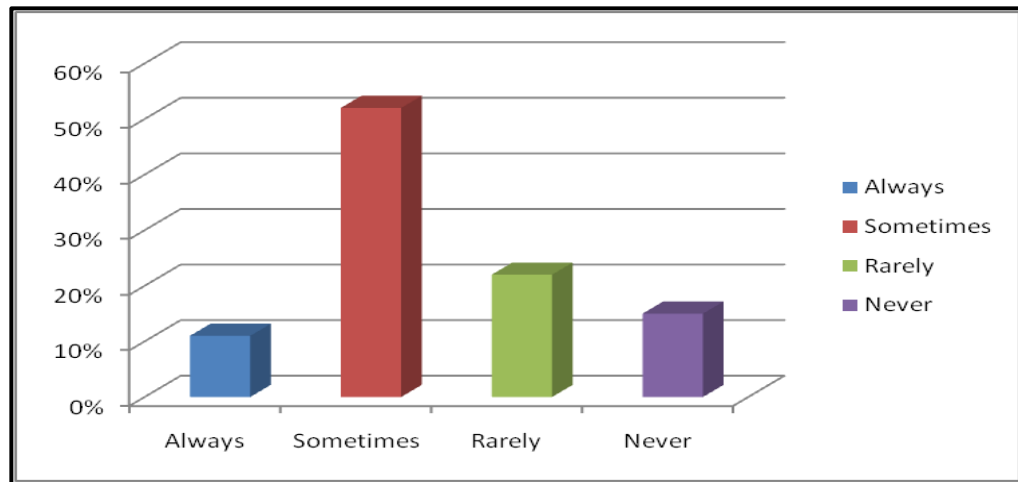

Concerning the question of considering the learners as partners in the teaching –learning process, the participants answers in figure 2.5 revealed that (96%) of them always consider their learners as partners in the teaching learning process rather than passive members in the classroom. While only (4%) of the respondents declared that they sometimes consider their learners as partners in the teaching- learning process.

**Figure 2.5: Learners as Partners in the Teaching - learning Process**
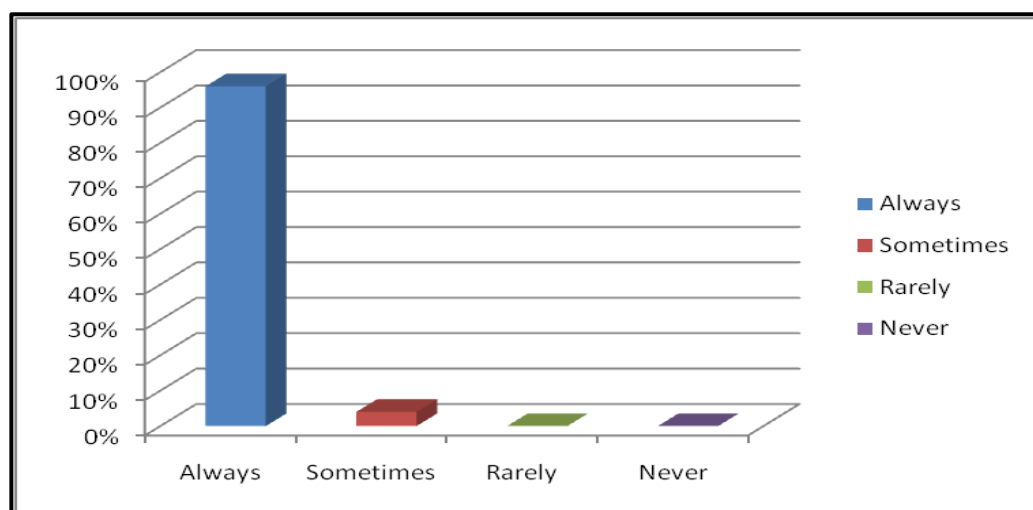
Regarding the role of teachers in the classroom, it is indicated in figure 2.6 that (48 %) of the participants believed that the role of teachers is a guider who helps and assists the students in their learning process. While, (33%) of them mentioned that the role of the teacher is to facilitate students learning process. Moreover, (19%) of them perceive the teacher as a person who creates an engaging learning process for the students. Finally, no participant considers the teacher as a person whose aim is to only deliver the necessary knowledge to the students.

Figure 2.6: Teachers Perception about their Roles
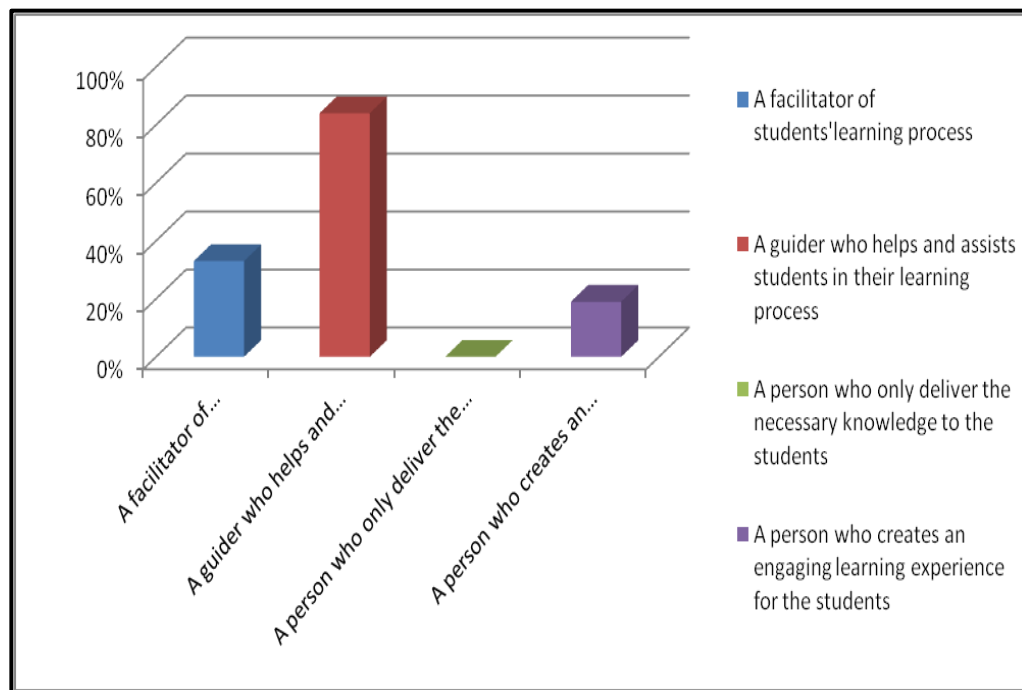
The obtained results from question number seven, as it is demonstrated in figure 2.7, indicate that the majority of the participants (70%) use the educational technologies while teaching .On the other hand, (30%) of them do not use them while teaching .Teachers who use educational technologies illustrated that they use these educational technologies as a means to provide their learners with songs, power points presentations and to present interactive lessons.

Figure 2.7: Teachers' Use of Educational Technologies
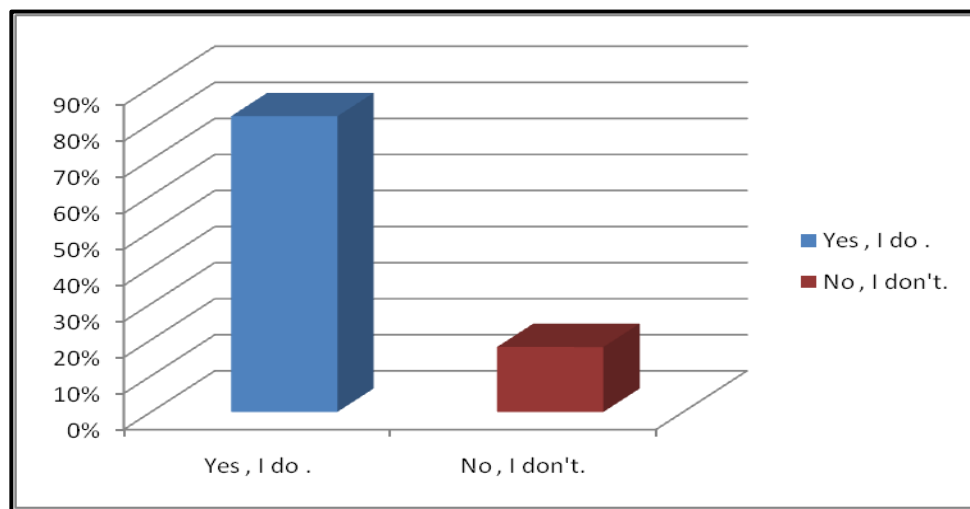
Moving to the second section, it is pointed out in figure 2.8 that most of the respondents (85%) perceive their learners as engaged learners. While (15%) of them admitted that they don't know if their learners are engaged or disengaged in their learning process .i.e., they don't have any idea about their learner's level of engagement.

Figure 2.8: Teachers 'Perceptions Concerning their Learners' Engagement
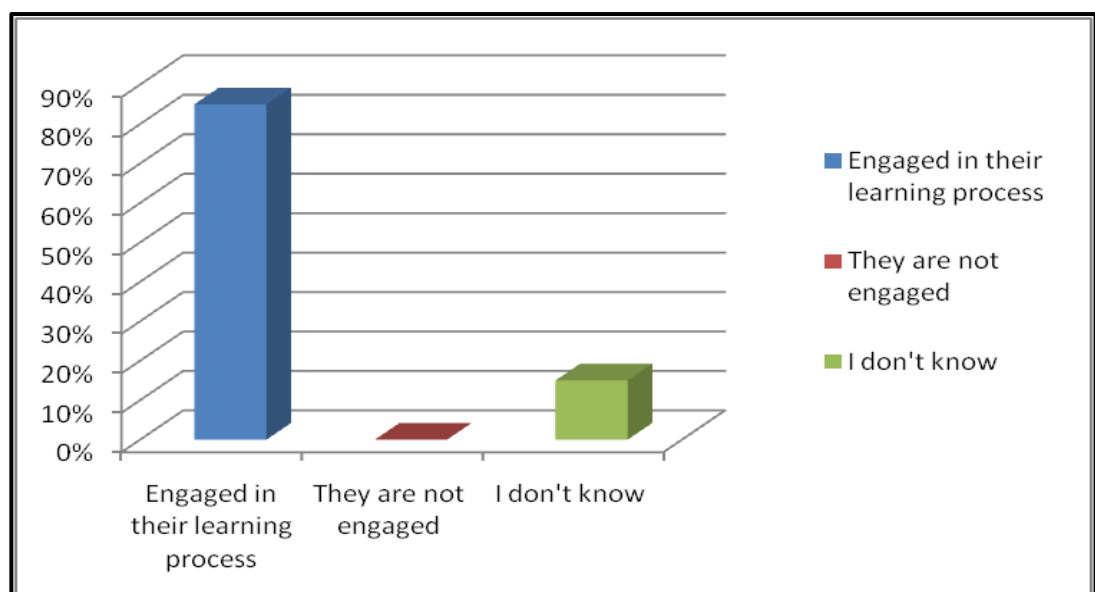
The findings presented in figure 2.9 demonstrated that most of the participants (52%) strongly agreed with the idea of giving the learners a voice and a choice helps in enhancing

their learning engagement. In addition (44%) of them agreed with the provided statement. In contrast, only (4%) of them claim that giving learners a voice and a choice do not help in providing them with an engaging learning environment.

Figure 2.9: The Positive Impact of "Choice and Voice" on Learning Engagement
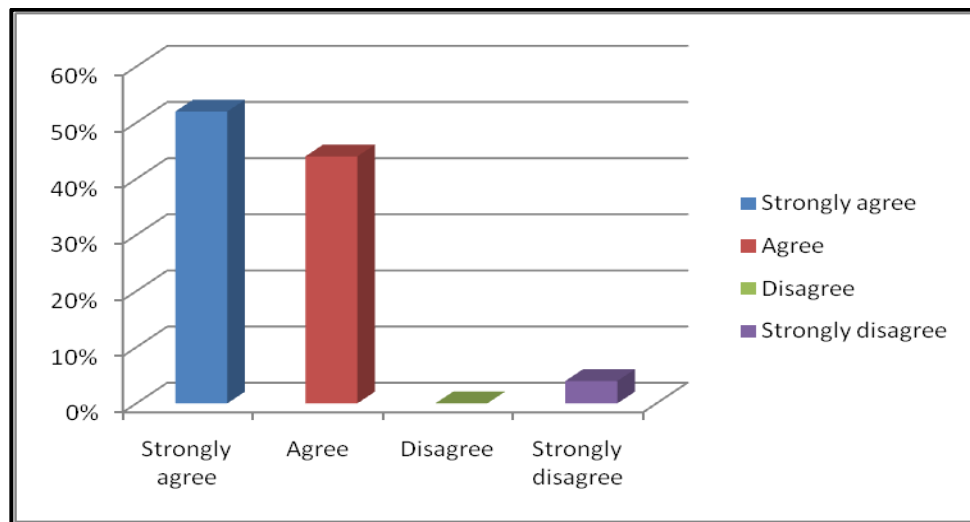
In their responses to the eleventh question, it is indicated in figure 2.10 that the majority of the participants(52%) believed that their learners are more likely to be engaged if the lessons are designed in a way that suits their interests and preferred ways of learning .Whereas, (48%) of them claimed that their learners are more likely to be engaged in both situations i.e., if the lessons are included in the exam together with introducing lessons that are designed in a customized way that account for their diversity .

Figure2.10: Situation in which Learners are more likely to Be Engaged
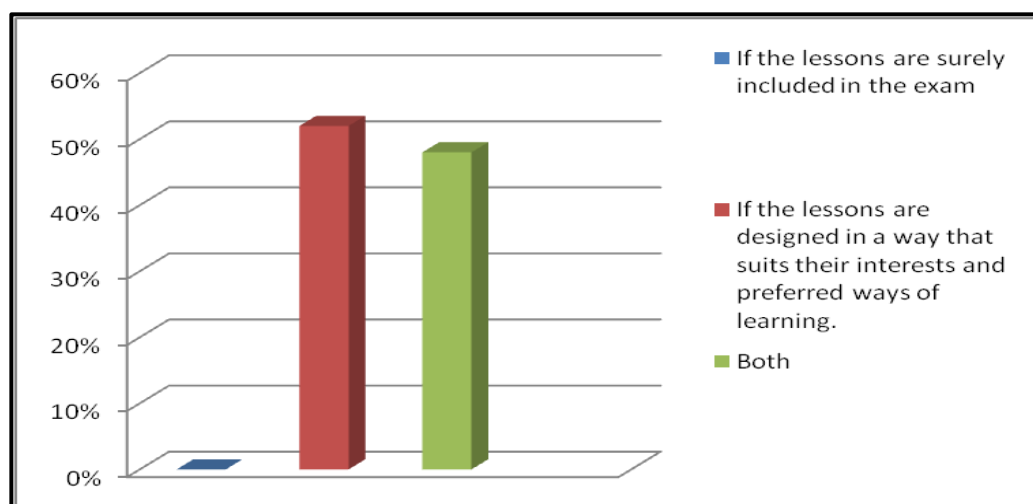
The demonstrated findings in figure 2.11 implied that most of the respondents (60%) agreed on the fact that being engaged in the learning process enhances the student's academic performance. In addition (37%) of them strongly agreed with the provided statement. Whereas, (4%) of the respondents denied the relation between the learners' engagement and their academic performance. They claimed that being engaged in the learning process does not impact the learning performance.

Figure2.11: The Impact of Learners' Engagement on their Academic Performance
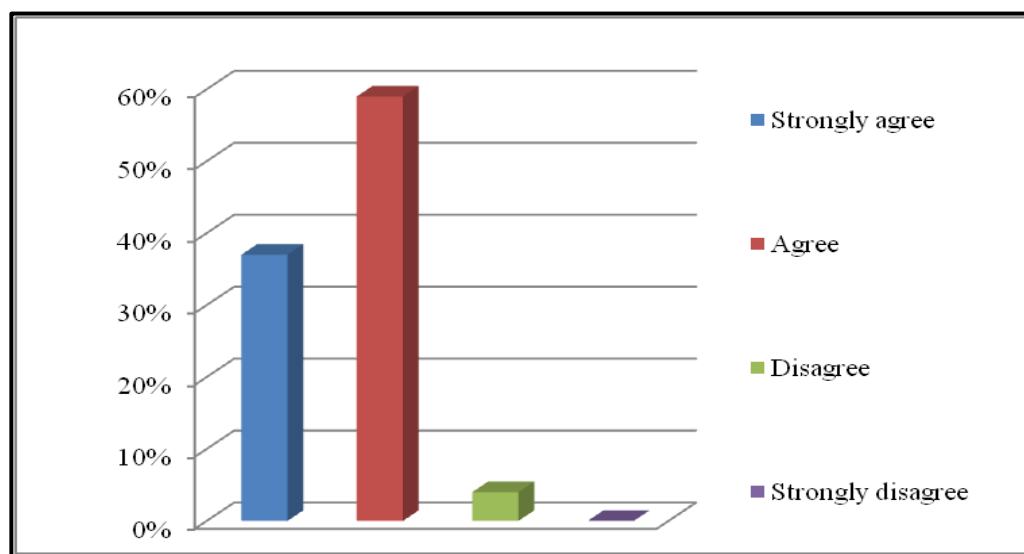

Figure 2.12 presents the results obtained from the last question. It indicates that all of the participants (100%) acknowledged that selecting topics, lessons and activities that meet learners' diversity aids in providing them with an engaging learning experience. They advocated the effectiveness of personalizing the leaning with regard to their learners' engagement.

Figure 2.12: The Role of Addressing Learners' Diversity on Improving Learners' Engagement
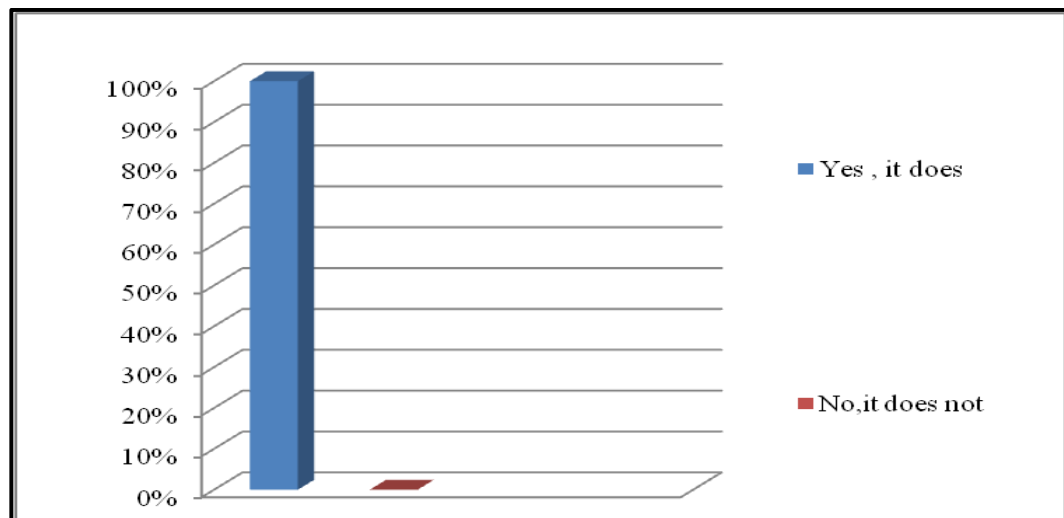
2.4. Interpretations

To begin with, the findings of the data collection tool revealed that the participants acknowledge their learners diversification, since they mentioned that they are aware of the existence of the differences between a learner and another. Additionally, it is deduced that most of the questioned teachers attempt to understand their learners by using different methods including questionnaires, surveys and diagnostics tests. This implies that they care about their learners and aim at providing them with suitable and purposeful learning opportunities as it is advocated by PL. On the other hand, there are some teachers who are not interested in understanding their learners, defending their claim by having crowded classes in addition to the lack of time.

However, the results implied that there are informants who   introduce suitable changes to the lessons, topics types of activities in a way that is personalized according to their learners' characteristics. It is also demonstrated that there exist teachers who provide their learners with chances to select the topics or type of activities that they prefer to learn through. In fact, they consider their learners as partners in the teaching learning process. This indicates that those teachers integrate the aspects of the PL within the teaching –learning process since they align the lessons type of activities topics in a way that matches their learners' individuality. Moreover, they give their learners chances to have a certain degree of control over their

learning. In contrast, the minority of respondents do not provide their learners with this opportunity despite its effectiveness in introducing their learners to relevant learning opportunities where they develop a sense of belonging rather than developing a feeling of detachment towards their learning experience.

With regards to the teachers' role, the findings revealed that the role of the teacher is not a person who only delivers the necessary knowledge to the students but rather the majority agreed that the role of the teacher is to facilitate students learning, guides and helps the students learn and mainly creates an engaging learning experience for their learners. This implies that the participants are aware of the varied roles of the teachers within the 21st century teaching approaches including PL. Furthermore, regarding the use of educational technologies, most of informants mentioned that they use educational technologies for the purpose of presenting images, videos audiotapes and presentations.

Concerning learners' engagement, the gathered data revealed that most of the respondents perceive their learners as an engaged learners. However, some of them don't really know if their learners are engaged in their learning experience or not, which means that they lack information about their learners i.e., they do not care about their engagement in learning, since they do not make efforts to be informed about their learners engagement state. Simply put, their learners 'engagement is not an important criteria in their teaching-learning process.

Furthermore, the minority of the respondents claimed that providing their learners with a voice and a choice do not really improve engagement in learning. However, they did not justify their claim. This implies that these teachers prefer to be the dominant part in classroom impeding their learners from expressing their choices and voices. On the contrary, the majority of the participants acknowledged the high importance of providing their learners with voice and a choice for the purpose of enhancing their engagement in learning. In fact, this action acts as a chance to provide learners with a sort of control over their learning; which in return empowers the learners' sense of belonging and ownership towards their learning process, as it is highly supported by PL.

Then, it was confirmed by the respondents that their learners are more likely to be engaged if the content is designed in a way that suits their interests and preferred ways of learning. This points out that the respondents believe in the need to implement PL aspects for the purpose of enhancing the chances of having engaged learners. Identically, the majority of

the participants agreed on the fact that being engaged in learning enhances their academic performance. This demonstrates that they are aware of the important role of their learners' engagement regarding their academic performance. However, the minority of the participants aren't aware of the importance of engagement in learning since they denied the relation between their learners' engagement and academic performance.

By the end, all of the participants acknowledged the importance of selecting relevant topics, lessons and activities that meet their learners' interests and learning need in providing them with an engaging learning atmosphere. This helps in answering the research question. It entails that the respondents believe in the efficiency of implementing the PL aspects within their classrooms, as an approach that enhances their learners' engagement, because it cares about learners' diversity including learning needs, interest and learning styles; in a way that empowers their learners' engagement within a suitable and customized learning environment where they can feel valued. More necessarily, such learning environment enables them to learn more, perform better and achieve success in their academic performance through engaging them in meaningful learning chances. As for answering the sub question, the interpretation of the results implies that not all of EFL teachers are implementing the PL aspects within their classroom. It is demonstrated that PL is implemented only by good teachers who make learning initiatives that empower each learners' voice and choice; in a way that account for their individuality in the classroom. Hence, it leads to providing each learner with relevant and lifelong learning opportunities.

2.5. Recommendations

Based on this study, it is concluded that teachers perceive the implementation of the aspects of personalized learning as a positive influence on boosting their learners' engagement. With this in mind, it is demanded from instructors to provide their learners with an engaging learning atmosphere that account for their diversity. Therefore, understanding the learners' characteristics; in terms of their varied learning profiles, interests and learning needs; is at the heart of developing enthusiastic lifelong learners who seek to ameliorate their performance and boost their academic achievements. Hence, teachers should be ready to have new roles as 21st century teachers, including being good observers with the intention of capturing the learners' aspects, facilitators of their students learning. Additionally, it is advisable to track the learners' progress along the learning process through diagnostic tests, questioning, and quizzes. Since it

paves the way for the teachers to be aware of their learners' individuality and guides them in aligning their teaching accordingly.

In addition, learners must have an active role including having a choice and a voice with regards to their learning. Henceforth, teachers have to provide their learners with a chance to have a certain degree of control and guidance over their learning. This means, teachers need to consider them as partners in the decisions of the selection of the learning materials; that sparks their interests and meet their learning needs. This in return aids in creating lifelong learners who are actively engaged in their learning process. Also, it develops a sense of attachment and belonging towards their academic earning process. Moreover, it is indeed an opportunity to develop their 21st century skills including collaboration, creativity, critical thinking and communication.

Furthermore, teachers should be encouraged by all means to develop the quality of the teaching – learning process mainly by avoiding the old fashioned method of teaching ,i.e., the one-size-fits-all approach which in fact makes learners feel detached from their learning process, since it does not account for their learning needs, interests and profiles. Rather, it is advisable to introduce them to a vivid learning atmosphere which is directed mainly by considering their diversity; with this mind teachers need to embrace the change and challenge themselves to develop the quality of the teaching – learning process.

2.6. Conclusion

This part dealt with the research methodology i.e., data collections tool's description, data analysis and interpretations of the findings. As a matter of fact, the obtained results revealed that EFL teachers confirms the usefulness of implementing the personalized learning approach on fostering engagement in learning since it advocates for meeting the learners diverse characteristics. It is also demonstrated that the aspects of PL are implemented by some of teachers whether intentionally or unintentionally. In contrast, there exist some teachers who face issues that impeded them from integrating this approach since they are teaching crowded classrooms. However, good teachers always challenge themselves to provide their learners with learning opportunities that promote their engagement in learning. Thus, some pedagogical recommendations were suggested at the end.

General Conclusion

Learners' engagement plays a great role in promoting the academic performance. It is at the heart of boosting their achievements and creating eager students who seek to learn more and perform well during their learning experience. In fact, it is up to the teacher to show care and effort for the purpose of providing learners with engaging learning atmosphere through considering their diversification and unique characteristics throughout the teaching-learning process. Therefore, implementing the PL is indeed an effective way to target learners' diverse characteristics. In this respect, this approach aligns the learning process according to the learners' individuality and unique aspects. Hence, it leads to providing them with the engaging environment that helps them in learning with the needed enthusiasm and engagement for a better academic achievement.

Therefore, this study aims at investigating the influence of implementing the personalized learning aspects within 21st century classrooms on the learners' level of engagement. It introduced first; in chapter one; the definitions of the PL. In addition, it presented the methods used within this approach; it also explored the teachers' roles and the learners' diversity. Moreover, it highlighted the concept of learners' engagement and its importance regarding the academic performance. Furthermore, it introduced the research methodology in order to provide an answer to the research question which is: does implementing the personalized learning aspect enhances EFL learners' engagement in learning? It is supported by a sub question which is to what extent teachers are integrating the PL aspects within their classrooms. Accordingly, it was hypothesised that implementing the PL may enhance learners' engagement. Moreover, it suggests that teachers could be integrating PL aspects within their classrooms settings. Then, it presented the data collection tool that was used to test the suggested hypotheses i.e., the teachers' questionnaire which was administrated online to EFL teachers; via their Facebook groups; in order to gather their perceptions and varied views concerning the implementation of the PL aspects and it is impact on their learners' engagement. This was followed by data analysis and interpretation in addition to the recommendations.

Actually, there are limitations that restricted the fulfilment this research. First, this research was supposed to be an experimental and turned out to be a descriptive analytical because a classroom experiment i.e., a pre-test and a post test,   was supposed to be conducted within observed classes. Unfortunately, due to this year pandemic and safety restrictions i.e., quarantine, middle schools were closed; this impeded the researcher from conducting an

experiment and using other data collection tools that aid in providing more considerable data. Therefore, the researcher opts for administrating the questionnaire via EFL teachers Facebook groups since there weren't any other ways to contact teachers.

Furthermore, the findings of the research revealed the significance and the positive impact of integrating the PL aspects within the classroom, since the respondents answers confirmed the usefulness of integrating the PL in addressing their learners' diversity and provide their learners with choices to show their voice and choice concerning their learning experience. Also, it calls for the learners' centeredness within the classroom and helps in boosting learners' level of engagement. Henceforth, it will positively influence the academic performance and improve their learning outcomes. Moreover, it appears that there exist some teachers who are already implementing the PL aspects within the teaching learning process since they try to understand their learners' characteristics through multiple ways including diagnostic tests, surveys for the purpose of introducing suitable changes to the learning content. However, there are teachers who are not integrating this teaching approach within their teaching learning process.

Additionally, the analysis and interpretations of the results helps in providing an answer to the research question. That is to say, the implementation of PL aspects acts as a positive influence on enhancing EFL learners' engagement. To give an answer to the sub question, one can deduce that the aspects of PL are not integrated by all EFL teachers within their classrooms; PL aspects are only integrated by teachers who seek to provide their learners with authentic and relevant learning atmosphere because PL pushes teachers to be hard workers, facilitators and meaningful learning opportunities providers. Therefore, this opens doors for further studies to be conducted regarding this approach for example: How do EFL teachers integrate effectively the personalized learning approach within the teaching- learning process?

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Appendix

Appendix 1: The Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear teachers, you are kindly requested to complete this questionnaire. Your answers are important for gathering significant data for this research. Please, select your chosen answers and write full statements where necessary.

I. Section one: Background Information

1. For how long have you been teaching English?

a) Less than 5 years
b) From 5 to 10 years
c) More than 10 years

II. Section two: The Personalized Learning Approach to Teaching

2. Within the classroom, there are different types of learners who have different Characteristics and different abilities.

Strongly agree ☐   Agree ☐   Disagree ☐   Strongly disagree ☐

3. 3 Do you collect your learners' data in terms of their different characteristics (their needs, interests, and learning profiles) for the purpose of being aware of their diverse needs and individual characteristics?

Yes, I do ☐   .... Please, indicate how...

No, I don't ☐   .... Please, explain why...

4. Do you adjust and bring changes to the lessons concerning topics, types of activities in a way that suits your learners' diverse characteristics?

Always ☐   Sometimes ☐   Rarely ☐   Never ☐

5. Do you provide your students with opportunities to choose and select the topics or type of activities that they prefer to deal with and learn through?

Always ☐   Sometimes ☐   Rarely ☐   Never ☐

6. As a teacher, I consider my learners as partners in the learning process rather than passive members in the classroom.

☐ **40**

Always ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely ☐ Never

7. According to you the role of the teacher in the classroom is :

a) A facilitator of students' learning process ☐

b) A guider who helps and assists students in their learning process. ☐

c) A person who only deliver the necessary knowledge to the students ☐

d) A person who creates an engaging learning experience for the students ☐

8. Do you use technologies when teaching

- Yes ☐

- No ☐

If yes, please indicate how

....

III. Section Three: EFL Students' Engagement in Learning

9. My students are

    A. They are engaged in their learning process ☐

    B. They are not engaged in their learning process ☐

    C. I don't know ☐

10. Do you agree that giving the students a voice and choice in the class enhances their engagement in their learning process?

Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree Strongly disagree

11. In what situation you think that your learners are more likely to be engaged in the lessons

a) If the lessons are surely included in the exam ☐

b) If the lessons are designed in a way that suits their interests and preferred ways of learning ☐

c) Both ☐

12. Do you agree that being engaged in the learning process enhances learners 'academic performance?

Strongly Agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree ☐

13. Does selecting relevant topics, lessons , activities that meet learners' interests and needs helps in providing the students' with an engaging learning experience ?

Strongly agree ☐ Agree ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly disagree ☐

Thank you for your collaboration.