

Charismatic Leadership Communication in Iranian English Language Institutes: Zooming in on Iranian EFL Teacher's Perspectives

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Research Paper

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Abstract: Charismatic leadership communication plays a crucial role in fostering effective educational environments and teacher motivation, particularly within language education contexts. This mixed-methods study investigated charismatic leadership communication as perceived by Iranian English teachers in language institutes. In the quantitative phase, a purposive sample of 102 teachers completed a 22-item Charismatic Leadership Communication Scale (CLCS) assessing perceptions of supervisors' task-oriented communication, enthusiasm, and empathy. Results showed that teachers generally valued enthusiastic, empathetic, and task-oriented supervisors. No significant differences were found between novice and experienced teachers regarding enthusiasm and task orientation; however, empathy scores approached significance, with experienced teachers perceiving higher empathy levels. Additionally, no significant differences emerged between teachers from the Iran Language Institute (ILI) and other private institutes in terms of these dimensions. In the qualitative phase, seven purposively selected teachers participated in semi-structured interviews, confirming these findings and emphasizing the importance of enthusiastic leadership, empathetic observation, and flexibility in supervisory communication. Teachers raised concerns about limited TEFL expertise, rigid task-oriented practices, and unannounced evaluations causing stress. The findings highlight the need for leadership development programs in institutes that emphasize empathy, enthusiasm, and flexible, supportive communication practices. These can enhance teacher motivation, alleviate classroom anxiety, and foster collaborative educational culture.

Keywords: Charismatic Supervisors, EFL Teachers, English Language Institutes, Experienced Teachers, Leaders, Novice Teachers

Introduction

Charismatic leadership, defined as a leader's ability to inspire and motivate followers through compelling communication and emotional resonance, has become a major concern in organizational and educational studies (Ameen, 2023; Hofmann, 2023; McMahan, 2024). It is also defined as a form of communicative leadership behavior that encompasses how leaders convey their vision, inspire their followers, and foster an engaging environment (Hofmann, 2023). This type of communication is not merely about the words spoken; it also involves a deeper connection with the followers and is associated with emotional resonance and motivational engagement (Hofmann, 2023). This leadership style is linked with educational contexts, where the interactions between leaders and educators significantly influence teaching effectiveness and ecology of institutions (Alhamed et al., 2024; Hazzam & Wilkins, 2023).

According to Al-Kahlan and Khasawneh (2024), the communication strategies employed by leaders within language institutes can greatly affect teachers' experiences, identity, motivation, and

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professional growth. Charismatic leaders often engage in a persuasive communication that resonates with their audience, thus enhancing engagement and commitment among educators. This study seeks to investigate how charismatic leadership communication manifests itself in Iranian English language institutes, focusing on the perspectives of Iranian English teachers who experience these leadership styles firsthand.

In Iran, the importance of language education and learning English is increased by globalization and the increasing demand for bilingualism, making the role of effective leadership in language institutes critical (Rassouli & Qasm, 2019). These institutes, their supervisors, and teachers have crucial roles in preparing learners with necessary linguistic skills, necessitating a deeper understanding of how charismatic leadership can foster an inspiring and productive educational environment.

Despite the extensive research on leadership in educational settings, there remains a significant gap regarding charismatic leadership communication within Iranian English language institutes (Hallinger et al, 2018 & Poddar, 2023). Most of the previous studies have primarily focused on Western educational contexts (Hazzam & Wilkins, 2023; Jamal & Bakar, 2021; Nassif, Hackett, & Wang, 2021), leading to a lack of understanding of how cultural and contextual factors in Iran can influence leadership practices and teachers' perceptions. Moreover, while the role of communication in leadership is well-established, the specific mechanisms through which charismatic leaders communicate and the effects of which on teachers' motivation and engagement in Iranian unique sociocultural environment have received little, if any, attention (Mohamadi & Ghanbari, 2022; Razavi, Imani & Sharifi, 2022). This study aims to fill this gap by understanding the Iranian English teachers' perspective of charismatic leadership communication and its contextual factors.

In this study, participants were asked to reflect on and assess their supervisors' charismatic leadership communication concerning these three dimensions: task-oriented communication, enthusiasm, and empathy. By focusing on these aspects, the research aims to uncover the nuanced ways in which charismatic leadership communication influences teachers' perceptions, motivation, and engagement within Iranian language institutes. In order to reach these goals, the following research questions were proposed.

Literature Review

Recent studies have increasingly focused on charismatic leadership, particularly examining its influence on organizational culture, communication, and individual performance (Alhamed et al., 2024; Hazzam & Wilkins, 2023). This literature review synthesizes existing research on charismatic leadership, drawing from various studies that highlight its effects in educational contexts and beyond. First of all, it should be mentioned that in exploring charismatic leadership communication, this study categorizes it into three primary dimensions: task-oriented communication, enthusiasm, and empathy. Each of these dimensions contributes significantly to the effectiveness of a leader in motivating and engaging their team, particularly in educational contexts (Jamal & Bakar, 2021 & Levine, 2008). Enthusiasm encompasses the passion and energy that leaders exude when discussing their vision and objectives (Bowen, 2022). This dimension is particularly important in educational settings, where the enthusiasm of a leader or teacher can be contagious, inspiring educators and students alike.

Task-oriented communication refers to the clarity and effectiveness with which leaders convey objectives, expectations, and strategies necessary for achieving those organizational goals (Elli, 2022). It is critical in educational settings because clarity of purpose can greatly influence teaching effectiveness and learning outcomes. It ensures that educators understand their roles, responsibilities, and the standards to which they are held accountable. Going beyond mere directives; it involves articulating a vision that aligns individual tasks with broader institutional goals (Qureshi & Khawaja, 2023). Leaders who excel in this dimension often employ clear, concise language and utilize various communication tools such as meetings, emails, and digital platforms to ensure that their messages are accessible and understood by all team members.

The third dimension, empathy, involves understanding and sharing the feelings of the followers (Zivkovic, 2022). For building strong, trusting relationships between leaders and educators, leaders must be attuned to the emotional and psychological needs of their team members, creating an atmosphere of support and care. Moreover, empathetic communication allows leaders to tailor their approaches to meet the diverse needs of their team (Jamal & Bakar, 2021). In a language institute, for instance, educators may come from various backgrounds and possess different levels of experience and confidence. A charismatic leader who is empathetic can recognize these differences and adapt their communication style accordingly, ensuring that all educators feel included and valued.

Charismatic Leadership and Effective Communication in Education

One of the research lines in this regard deals with the relationship between charismatic leadership and student engagement. Alhamed et al. (2024) investigated how charismatic leadership contributes to developing student learning outcomes through enhanced engagement. Their findings suggested that charismatic leaders create an environment that promotes student participation, motivation, resulting in a higher academic achievement. This aligns with Hazzam and Wilkins (2023), who concluded that charismatic leadership is instrumental in enhancing the educational experience by fostering a sense of belonging and motivation among students. Both studies emphasize that charismatic leadership significantly influences educational environments, resulting in improved student experiences and better outcomes because engagement is often linked to academic success.

Effective communication is another critical element of charismatic leadership. Al-Kahlan and Khasawneh (2024) examined how the communication skills of secondary school principals relate to teacher motivation. Their research highlights the importance of effective communication of school principals in boosting teacher morale and motivation, which directly impacts overall school performance. Jamal and Bakar (2021) also argued that charismatic leadership communication enhances the credibility of public organizations in Malaysia. They believed that effective communicators can build trust and rapport with their followers, which is essential for fostering a positive organizational culture. The ability to communicate effectively is thus a defining trait of charismatic leaders, impacting both followers' motivation and the perceived credibility of the organization.

On the other hand, charismatic leadership is connected to organizational culture (Ameen, 2023), and charismatic leaders shape and influence the culture within organizations. This is particularly critical in educational settings, where charismatic leaders are often seen as role models, and their values and behaviors can permeate the institution, fostering a positive work environment and promoting shared values among employees (Ameen, 2023). Hofmann (2023) further provides a comprehensive overview of charismatic leadership's role in ethical decision-making and organizational behavior, hence cultivating a supportive culture that aligns with ethical standards. In educational institutions, charismatic leaders can guide their teams in making decisions that reflect shared values and principles, thus enhancing organizational integrity and fostering a sense of community and collaboration among educators.

Leadership has been divided into three types: charismatic, virtuous, and ethical. Nassif et al. (2021) conducted a comparative analysis of ethical, virtuous, and charismatic leadership, revealing that these styles yield differential outcomes for both followers and leaders. Their findings indicated that while charismatic leadership enhances follower satisfaction and engagement, ethical leadership is crucial for fostering trust and ethical behavior within organizations. However, the study also highlights that without an ethical framework, the enthusiasm generated by charismatic leadership may not translate into sustainable organizational success.

Comparative Studies on Charismatic Leaders and Leadership

Research by McMahan (2024) compares the communication styles of notable charismatic leaders, such as Barack Obama and Donald Trump. McMahan's (2024) study underscores the significance of charisma in leadership across various contexts, highlighting that effective communication can shape

public opinion and drive political success. This research is particularly relevant in educational settings, where leaders often face the challenge of garnering support for their initiatives. By adopting elements of successful communication strategies employed by charismatic figures, educational leaders can better engage their stakeholders and foster a supportive environment for learning.

The sustainability of leadership practices in higher education is examined by Syakur et al. (2020), who linked charismatic leadership with organizational culture, cooperation, and trust. They argue that a charismatic approach to leadership is essential for fostering commitment among lecturers, which is vital for maintaining educational standards and institutional effectiveness. Charismatic leaders can inspire faculty members to work together towards common goals.

Most of the existing research on charismatic leadership has been conducted in foreign contexts, such as studies by Alhamed et al. (2024), and Hazzam and Wilkins (2023), which predominantly examine its effects in corporate settings and universities. In contrast, there are only a limited number of studies focusing on charismatic leadership within Iran, notably by Mohamadi and Ghanbari, (2022) Razavi et al., and (2022) Qavi (2022). Among these Iranian studies, the majority have concentrated on higher education institutions, leaving a significant gap regarding charismatic leadership in English language institutes. This study aims to address this gap by exploring the unique dynamics of charismatic leadership in the context of English institutes in Iran, contributing to a more nuanced understanding of its implications in diverse educational settings.

Research Question One: What are the key characteristics of charismatic leadership communication as perceived by Iranian English teachers?

Research Question Two: Is there any significant difference between novice and experienced teachers regarding their perceived characteristics of charismatic leadership communication?

Research Question Three: Is there any significant difference between ILI's and other private institute's teachers regarding their perceived characteristics of charismatic leadership communication?

Methodology

Design of the Study

This study employed a concurrent mixed-methods design to investigate the perceptions of Iranian English teachers regarding charismatic leadership communication in Iranian language institutes. This approach allows for an in-depth examination of participants' experiences and cultural contexts, providing rich qualitative and quantitative insights. The qualitative data gathered through interviews offers deep insights into participants' lived experiences, allowing for a rich exploration of their perceptions and the contextual factors that influence these views. In contrast, the quantitative data conducted through the questionnaire enables the researcher to gather numerical data that can be statistically analyzed, providing a broader perspective on trends and patterns across a larger sample size.

Participants

The participants in this study included English teachers from various language institutes across Iran. A purposive sampling technique was employed to select participants who were best suited to provide rich, relevant data on the topic. Seven teachers were selected for qualitative interviews to gain in-depth insights into their perceptions of charismatic leadership communication. They were English major teachers among whom four teachers were Ph.D. candidates in applied linguistics. From among the other three, two teachers had a B.A degree in translation and one in literature. In addition, four of these seven teachers were Iran Language Institute (ILI) teachers and the others were working in private institutes.

In terms of experience, three were novice teachers with 0–5 years of teaching experience, and four were experienced teachers with over six years of experience. This classification follows established

conventions in language teacher development research, where teachers with 0–5 years of experience are typically categorized as novice, while those with over six years of experience are considered experienced (Farrell, 2016).

A larger sample of 102 teachers was recruited for the survey component of the study. This larger group was essential for establishing broader trends and patterns in perceptions of charismatic leadership communication. Participants were categorized into two distinct groups: novice teachers, defined as those with 0-5 years of teaching experience, and experienced teachers, classified as those with over six years of experience. This categorization is significant, as it shows how experience influences views on leadership communication.

Instruments

Qualitative Phase: Interview

In the qualitative phase, semi-structured interviews were conducted with seven English teachers to explore their perceptions of charismatic leadership communication. The interview questions focused on three themes including the supervisor's enthusiasm, being task-oriented, and a sense of empathy toward teachers. Each interview lasted approximately 10-15 minutes and was audio-recorded with the consent of the participants. Following the interviews, the audio recordings were transcribed verbatim, providing a detailed account of the discussions that could be systematically analyzed.

To ensure the credibility and dependability of the qualitative findings, some trustworthiness strategies were applied. Member checking was conducted by sharing interview summaries and coded themes with participants for confirmation and clarification. Additionally, peer debriefing was used, involving an experienced qualitative researcher who reviewed a sample of the coded transcripts and emergent themes to verify coding consistency.

Quantitative Phase: Survey

In the quantitative phase, the study utilized a 22-item Charismatic Leadership Communication Scale (CLCS) developed by Levine (2008). This scale originally contained 42 items, and the selected items were tailored to align with the study's focus on charismatic leadership communication as a communicative behavior. Jamal and Bakar (2021) similarly adapted the Charismatic Leadership Communication Scale (CLCS) by reducing its original 42 items to a more concise format to enhance its applicability in their research context. The CLCS evaluates charismatic leadership communication through three primary dimensions: task-oriented communication, enthusiasm, and empathy. Participants were asked to reflect on and assess their leaders' charismatic leadership communication in relation to these dimensions. This quantitative approach enabled the researchers to compare the attitudes of novice and experienced teachers, as well as between teachers from Iranian Language Institutes (ILIs) and other private institutes.

Moreover, the CLCS was validated in Jamal and Bakar's (2021) study, where they confirmed its construct validity and reliability, providing further support for its effectiveness as a measurement tool in assessing charismatic leadership communication across various educational settings. The scale demonstrated strong internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient exceeding the acceptable threshold of 0.70, indicating that it is a reliable measure for this purpose.

The interviews were transcribed verbatim, and coding was performed to derive themes related to the characteristics of charismatic leadership communication. The thematic analysis of the interviews was conducted using MAXQDA, a qualitative data analysis software that facilitates systematic coding and thematic analysis. For the quantitative data analysis, descriptive statistics were employed to summarize the data, providing an overview of participants' responses and highlighting any notable trends. Inferential statistics, including t-tests, were used to determine any significant differences between novice and experienced teachers, as well as between the perceptions of teachers from ILIs and

those from other private institutes. In this study, informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to data collection, ensuring that they were fully aware of the study's purpose, procedures, and their rights as participants. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained throughout the research process, with all identifying information removed from the data analysis.

Results

Research Question One

RQ1. What are the key characteristics of supervisors' charismatic leadership communication as perceived by Iranian English teachers?

The analysis of the data revealed several key themes related to charismatic leadership communication among English teachers in Iranian language institutes. The code cloud obtained from MAXQDA (see Appendix A) highlights significant dimensions such as considerate, clarity, comfortable atmosphere, creativity, and communication. The findings are presented in the following order: interviews with ILI teachers, Interviews with private language institutes teachers, the total findings combining both groups. Based on the individual semi-structured interviews conducted with ILI language teachers, four themes were found, which are presented in the table below.

Table 1

Themes, Categories, and Codes from Interviews with Iran Language Institute Teachers

Theme	Category	Code
Enthusiastic Leadership Communication	Motivational	Skillful speaker
		Positive relationship
Empathy in Observations	Demotivational	Feedback in a supportive manner
		Lack of enough TEFL technical knowledge
		Creating real and continuous dialogue
Task-oriented Communication	Dialogue and Support	Understanding individual teaching styles
		Lack of empathy
Impact of Observational practices	Clear Expectations	Focus on mistakes rather than effectiveness
		Observations without prior notice
Impact of Observational practices	Rigidity	Following predefined methodologies
		Goal setting
Impact of Observational practices	Pressure and Stress	Expectations to follow guidelines strictly
		Feeling scrutinized
Impact of Observational practices	Opportunities for Development	Added stress from unannounced observations
		No clear feedback for the problem
		Need for a comfortable atmosphere

The findings are categorized into four primary themes: Enthusiastic Leadership Communication, Empathy in Observations, Task-oriented Communication, and Impact of Observational Practices.

1. Enthusiastic Leadership Communication

The first theme highlights the dual aspects of enthusiastic leadership communication. Teachers appreciate supervisors who exhibit enthusiasm and provide supportive feedback, which fosters a positive environment conducive to professional growth.

Motivational Aspects: Codes such as “skillful speaker” and “positive relationship” underscore the importance of effective communication in building rapport. Teachers noted that supervisors often employ a “sandwich” approach to feedback, which incorporates praise, constructive criticism, and encouragement. This method not only helps teachers feel valued but also motivates them to improve their practice.

T₁: *The supervisors in the ILI who come to our classes and observe our classes have enthusiasm, and they are skillful speakers, and they try to give us feedback in the form of a sandwich.*

T₂: *To me, the supervisors are supportive and at the same time they tell you about your mistakes or errors in pronunciation, methodology or teaching they are careful not to make you ashamed of yourself or disappointed with your teaching.*

Demotivational Aspects: However, the theme also revealed challenges, particularly regarding supervisors’ proficiency. The code “lack of TEFL technical knowledge” indicates that some teachers feel their supervisors may not fully understand the complexities of teaching, leading to ineffective evaluations. This inconsistency can undermine the positive effects of enthusiastic communication, as it may leave teachers feeling unsupported.

2. Empathy in Observations

Empathy emerged as another crucial dimension of effective leadership communication. Teachers emphasized the necessity of creating a genuine dialogue between supervisors and educators.

Dialogue and Support: The code “creating real and continuous dialogue” reflects the desire for ongoing communication rather than one-off observations. Teachers expressed that meaningful conversations about teaching practices should extend beyond the observation day. This ongoing engagement fosters trust and collaboration, creating an environment where teachers feel comfortable discussing their challenges and successes.

T₃: *Empathy is creating real dialogue between observers and teachers. This conversation shouldn’t just happen on the day of the observation as in the past.*

T₂: *Ultimately, empathy in observation isn’t just about being nicer. It’s about recognizing that every teacher has their own style, and every classroom has unique dynamics. And no single method of teaching fits all situations.*

Lack of Empathy: Conversely, some teachers reported experiences of supervisors focusing primarily on identifying mistakes rather than evaluating overall effectiveness. The code “observations without prior notice” further complicates this issue, as unannounced evaluations can create anxiety and hinder performance. This lack of empathy can lead to feelings of being scrutinized rather than supported, ultimately impacting teachers’ confidence and effectiveness.

T₃: *Some of them seem more focused on catching mistakes rather than evaluating the overall effectiveness of their lesson.*

T₁: *Another issue is that these observations happen without prior notice. I personally think this negatively impacts the teacher’s performance because the sudden pressure can interfere with delivering an effective lesson.*

3. Task-oriented Communication

The theme of task-oriented communication highlights the balance between providing clear expectations and maintaining flexibility in leadership practices.

Clear Expectations: Teachers acknowledged the importance of following predefined methodologies and having clear goals. The codes “following predefined methodologies” and “goal setting” illustrate how structured approaches can help align teaching practices with institutional

objectives. Effective supervisors communicate these expectations clearly, which can lead to a more organized and productive teaching environment.

T₂: *I guess yes. They are task oriented because they follow the predefined methodology of ILI for each level and book. ILI also has some expectations of teachers and students and there also are some priorities to which observers pay attention.*

T₃: *The best observers in my experience are those who have clear expectations, but also understanding dynamic nature of teaching.*

Rigidity: However, the theme also addresses concerns about rigidity in adherence to these methodologies. The codes “expectations to follow guidelines strictly” and “fear of negative evaluations” indicate that strict adherence can stifle creativity and responsiveness to classroom dynamics. Teachers expressed worries that deviating from prescribed methods could lead to negative evaluations, which may discourage innovation and individualized teaching approaches.

T₁: *While having structures is important, the problem is that some observers expect everything to be followed blindly as written without considering classroom realities.*

T₃: *The underlying worry is that if we deviate from the prescribed steps, it might negatively affect our evaluation.*

4. Impact of Observational Practices

The final theme focuses on the implications of observational practices on teacher performance and professional development.

Pressure and Stress: Many teachers reported feeling scrutinized during observations, particularly when evaluations are unannounced. The code “feeling scrutinized” captures the anxiety that can arise from such practices, which may detract from teachers’ ability to deliver effective lessons. The added stress from “unannounced observations” can create an environment of fear rather than one of growth and support.

T₃: *In fact, some supervisors intentionally add more stress to this situation instead of making it a productive experience.*

Opportunities for Development: Despite these challenges, teachers expressed a desire for more constructive feedback and professional development opportunities. The code “no clear feedback for the problem” signifies a gap in the support that teachers receive during observations. Many teachers feel that rather than being guided toward improvement, they often feel under a microscope, which can hinder their professional growth.

T₃: *Opportunities in this respect are often overlooked and teachers end up feeling like they are under microscope rather than being guided toward improvement.*

In summary, the thematic analysis reveals a complex interplay between enthusiastic communication, empathy, task-oriented practices, and the impact of observational methods in charismatic leadership. While positive communication styles can enhance teacher motivation and engagement, challenges such as rigid methodologies and a lack of empathetic dialogue can undermine these benefits. Thus, to improve the experiences of English teachers in Iranian language institutes, educational leaders should focus on fostering a culture of empathy, flexibility, and constructive feedback. By addressing the identified challenges and enhancing communication practices, leaders can create a more supportive and effective educational environment.

In order to depict a better picture of the situation, the findings of private language institutes are presented below. The interviews conducted with teachers from private language institutes provide complementary perspectives on the characteristics of charismatic leadership communication, particularly focusing on enthusiasm, task orientation, and empathy.

Table 2*Themes, Categories, and Codes from Interviews with Private Institute Teachers*

Theme	Category	Code
Enthusiastic Leadership Communication	Positive Influence	Uplifting team morale
		Encouraging collaboration
		Passion for work
	Communication Skills	Lack of skillful speaking
		Code-switching between L1 and L2
		Limited use of English
Task-oriented Communication	Goal Orientation	Setting clear expectations
		Monitoring progress
		Structured planning
	Collaborative Approach	Seeking ideas from teachers
		Joint decision-making
		Limited emphasis on TBLT
Empathy in Leadership	Supportive Behavior	Willingness to assist
		Understanding individual needs
	Relationship Building	Open communication
		Creating an inclusive environment

1. Enthusiastic Leadership Communication

The theme of enthusiastic leadership communication is evident in the responses from private institute teachers. While teachers acknowledge the enthusiasm of their supervisor, there are concerns regarding communication skills, particularly in using English effectively.

Positive Influence: Teachers emphasize that enthusiastic supervisors uplift team morale and foster collaboration. For instance, one teacher noted how the supervisor's enthusiasm can motivate the entire team, promoting a positive work environment conducive to shared goals. This aligns with the previous findings where enthusiasm was linked to a supportive atmosphere that encourages professional growth.

T₅: *This kind of energy can carry out to positive work environment, making people feel valuable and motivated.*

Communication Skills: However, the lack of skillful speaking and frequent code-switching between L1 and L2 hinder the supervisor's effectiveness. This duality reflects a common challenge in educational settings, where language proficiency can impact communication and understanding. Teachers expressed that while enthusiasm is crucial, it must be paired with effective communication skills to maximize its positive impact.

T₄: *Unfortunately, she is not a skillful speaker and she constantly switches between L1 and L2, and rarely do we see she speaks English professionally.*

2. Task-oriented Communication

The theme of task-oriented communication highlights the balance between goal orientation and collaborative approaches among private institute teachers.

Goal Orientation: Teachers recognize the importance of having a task-oriented supervisor who sets clear expectations and monitors progress, hence enhancing productivity and keeping the team focused on achieving specific goals. One teacher noted that balancing enthusiasm with this task orientation can lead to increased motivation and a more productive environment.

T₄: *"She does not speak much about tasks... she tries to seek ideas from the teachers, not dictating her ideas."*

Collaborative Approach: Interestingly, the teachers reported that their supervisor often seeks input from them before proposing ideas. This collaborative approach fosters a sense of ownership among teachers but raises concerns about the lack of emphasis on specific teaching methodologies, such as Task-Based Language Teaching. The emphasis on collaboration reflects a broader trend in educational leadership where inclusivity and teamwork are prioritized, yet it also indicates a potential gap in providing structured guidance and direction.

T₅: "A task-oriented supervisor focuses on achieving specific goals... balancing this with enthusiasm can lead to a more motivated and productive team."

T₄: "she is generally task oriented, but she does not put much emphasis on TBLT."

3. Empathy in Leadership

Empathy remains a critical theme in the interviews, echoing the findings from ILI teachers.

Supportive Behavior: Teachers consistently highlighted the empathetic nature of their supervisor, particularly in understanding individual needs and offering assistance when required. For example, the willingness to find substitutes for teachers who need to be absent demonstrates a commitment to supporting staff well-being.

T₆: "She is quite empathetic... understands me in difficult situations and tries to search for a substitute."

Relationship Building: The importance of open communication and creating an inclusive environment was underscored by several teachers. Empathetic supervisors foster strong relationships, which in turn contribute to higher job satisfaction and productivity. This aligns with previous findings, suggesting that empathy in leadership enhances teacher motivation and engagement.

T₅: "Empathy is crucial for a supervisor... helps in building strong relationships."

In conclusion, the thematic analysis of private institute teachers provides valuable insights that complement the earlier findings from ILI teachers. The themes of enthusiastic leadership communication, task-oriented practices, and empathy collectively portray a nuanced picture of charismatic leadership in language education. To enhance the effectiveness of leadership communication, supervisors in both ILI and private institutes should focus on developing their communication skills, fostering a collaborative environment, and ensuring that empathy is at the forefront of their interactions with teachers. This will not only improve teacher satisfaction and performance but also contribute to a more positive and productive educational environment overall.

The findings were in two tables above in order to show the possible differences resulting from the different teaching contexts. To provide a comprehensive answer to the first research question, the findings of both institutes are now presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Combined Themes, Categories, and Codes from ILI and Private Institute Teachers

Theme	Category	Code	Source	
Enthusiastic Communication	Leadership	Positive Influence	Uplifting team morale	Private Institute Teachers
			Encouraging collaboration	Private Institute Teachers
			Passion for work	Private Institute Teachers
	Motivational	Skillful speaker	ILI Teachers	
		Positive relationship	ILI Teachers	
		Feedback in a supportive manner	ILI Teachers	
	Demotivational	Lack of proficiency	ILI Teachers	

	Communication Skills	Lack of skillful speaking	Private Teachers	Institute Teachers
		Code-switching between L1 and L2	Private Teachers	Institute Teachers
		Limited use of English	Private Teachers	Institute Teachers
Task-oriented communication	Goal Orientation	Setting clear expectations	Private Teachers	Institute Teachers
		Monitoring progress	Private Teachers	Institute Teachers
		Structured planning	Private Teachers	Institute Teachers
	Clear Expectations	Following predefined methodologies	ILI Teachers	
		Goal setting	ILI Teachers	
	Collaborative Approach	Seeking ideas from teachers	Private Teachers	Institute Teachers
		Joint decision-making	Private Teachers	Institute Teachers
		Limited emphasis on TBLT	Private Teachers	Institute Teachers
	Rigidity	Expectations to follow guidelines strictly	ILI Teachers	
		Fear of negative evaluations	ILI Teachers	
Empathy in Leadership	Supportive Behavior	Willingness to assist	Private Teachers	Institute Teachers
		Understanding individual needs	Private Teachers	Institute Teachers
	Relationship Building	Open communication	Private Teachers	Institute Teachers
		Creating an inclusive environment	Private Teachers	Institute Teachers
	Dialogue and Support	Creating real dialogue	ILI Teachers	
		Understanding individual teaching styles	ILI Teachers	
	Lack of Empathy	Focus on mistakes rather than effectiveness	ILI Teachers	
		Observations without prior notice	ILI Teachers	

Enthusiastic Leadership Communication

Both groups of teachers recognized the importance of enthusiasm in leadership. While private institute teachers noted that enthusiastic supervisors uplift morale and encourage collaboration, ILI teachers expressed concerns about the lack of proficiency in communication. Supervision that combines enthusiasm with effective communication skills is essential; without this balance, supervisors may fail to inspire or connect with their teachers fully.

Task-oriented Communication

Task orientation emerged as a significant theme across both groups. ILI teachers emphasized the need for clear expectations and structured methodologies, while private institute teachers highlighted the importance of goal orientation and collaborative approaches. A clear focus on tasks can enhance productivity and motivation among teachers. However, both groups also indicated potential drawbacks of rigidity in task orientation. For instance, the fear of negative evaluations can stifle creativity,

suggesting that while task orientation is vital, it should be implemented flexibly, allowing for individual teaching styles and approaches.

Empathy in Leadership

Empathy was a critical theme for both groups, with teachers emphasizing its role in building strong relationships and fostering open communication. ILI teachers highlighted the importance of creating real and continuous dialogue, while private institute teachers pointed out supportive behaviors and understanding individual needs. This suggests that empathetic leadership not only enhances teacher job satisfaction but also contributes to a more inclusive and collaborative work environment.

Research Question Two

RQ2. Is there any significant difference between novice and experienced teachers regarding their perceived characteristics of charismatic leadership communication?

The second research question addressed the possible significant difference between novice and experienced teachers regarding their perceived characteristics of supervisors' charismatic leadership communication. Having checked the normality of the data, the researchers conducted an independent samples t-test to check if teaching experience levels might influence their perceptions and the implications for teacher development and training programs.

Table 4

The Group Statistics for Comparing Novice and Experienced Teachers' Perspectives

Group Statistics					
	exp1	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Enthusiasm score	1.00	13	21.0000	5.93015	1.64473
	2.00	82	22.8049	5.87407	.64868
Task oriented score	1.00	13	8.3077	3.01066	.83501
	2.00	82	9.2317	2.66805	.29464
Empathy score	1.00	13	17.3077	5.48307	1.52073
	2.00	82	20.5366	5.21914	.57636
Total score	1.00	13	46.6154	12.99063	3.60295
	2.00	82	52.5732	12.32786	1.36138

The Group Statistics table summarizes the means and standard deviations of different leadership communication scores for novice and experienced teachers:

Enthusiasm Score: Novice teachers ($n = 13$) had a mean score of 21.00 ($SD = 5.93$), while experienced teachers ($n = 82$) had a mean of 22.80 ($SD = 5.87$).

Task-Oriented Score: Novice teachers scored an average of 8.31 ($SD = 3.01$), compared to experienced teachers who scored 9.23 ($SD = 2.67$).

Empathy Score: The novice group had a mean empathy score of 17.30 ($SD = 5.48$), while experienced teachers scored higher with a mean of 20.54 ($SD = 5.21$).

Total Score: Novice teachers averaged 46.62 ($SD = 12.99$) in total scores, whereas experienced teachers had a higher average of 52.57 ($SD = 12.33$).

Table 5

The Results of t-test for Comparing Novice and Experienced Teachers' Perspectives

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Enthusiasm score	Equal variances assumed	.041	.839	-1.028	93	.307	-1.80488	1.75574	-5.29142	1.68166
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.021	15.966	.323	-1.80488	1.76803	-5.55357	1.94381
Task oriented score	Equal variances assumed	.071	.790	-1.140	93	.257	-.92402	.81041	-2.53332	.68529
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.044	15.139	.313	-.92402	.88547	-2.80983	.96180
Empathy score	Equal variances assumed	.083	.774	-2.059	93	.042	-3.22889	1.56844	-6.34351	-.11428
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.985	15.647	.065	-3.22889	1.62629	-6.68280	.22501
Total score	Equal variances assumed	.057	.812	-1.607	93	.111	-5.95779	3.70632	-13.31780	1.40223
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.547	15.624	.142	-5.95779	3.85157	-14.13876	2.22319

The Independent Samples Test provides insights into the differences between novice and experienced teachers on various leadership communication characteristics:

Enthusiasm Score: The t-test results indicate no significant difference between novice and experienced teachers, $t(93) = -1.03$, $p = 0.307$. Levene's Test for Equality of Variances was not significant ($F = 0.041$, $p = 0.839$), indicating that the assumption of equal variances is met.

Task-Oriented Score: Similarly, for task-oriented scores, the difference was not statistically significant, $t(93) = -1.14$, $p = 0.257$. Levene's Test confirmed equal variances ($F = 0.071$, $p = 0.790$).

Empathy Score: The empathy score approached significance, $t(93) = -2.06$, $p = 0.042$, suggesting that experienced teachers perceive higher levels of empathy in charismatic leadership. Levene's Test showed equal variances ($F = 0.083$, $p = 0.774$).

Total Score: The total score analysis revealed no significant difference, $t(93) = -1.61$, $p = 0.111$, with equal variances supported by Levene's Test ($F = 0.057$, $p = 0.812$). In summary, tables 4 and 5 illustrate the differences in perceived charismatic leadership communication characteristics between novice and experienced teachers. While empathy approached significance, indicating potential differences, enthusiasm and task-oriented scores did not significantly differ.

Research Question Three

RQ3. Is there any significant difference between ILI's and other private institute's teachers regarding their perceived characteristics of charismatic leadership communication?

The last research question dealt with any significant difference between ILI's and other private institutes' teachers regarding their perceived characteristics of supervisors' charismatic leadership communication. The objective of this analysis was to investigate whether there are significant differences in the perspectives of teachers from the Iran Language Institute (ILI) and private institutes regarding charismatic leadership communication.

Table 6

The Group Statistics of Comparing ILI and Private Institutes' Teachers' Perspectives

Group Statistics					
	Where do you work?	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
enthusiasm_score	Private Institute	22	22.3636	6.75803	1.44082
	Iran Language Institute (ILI)	80	22.9375	6.07411	.67911
task_oriented_score	Private Institute	22	9.0000	3.05505	.65134
	Iran Language Institute (ILI)	80	9.3375	2.86376	.32018
empathy_score	Private Institute	22	19.3636	5.88416	1.25451
	Iran Language Institute (ILI)	80	20.7125	5.47074	.61165
total_score	Private Institute	22	50.7273	14.43271	3.07706
	Iran Language Institute (ILI)	80	52.9875	13.01265	1.45486

The Group Statistics table presents the means and standard deviations for enthusiastic leadership communication scores between teachers from Private Institutes and those from Iran Language Institute (ILI):

Enthusiasm Score: Teachers from Private Institutes ($n = 22$) had a mean score of 22.36 ($SD = 6.76$), while teachers from ILI ($n = 80$) had a mean of 22.94 ($SD = 6.07$).

Task-Oriented Score: Private Institute teachers scored an average of 9.00 ($SD = 3.06$), compared to ILI teachers who had a mean score of 9.34 ($SD = 2.87$).

Empathy Score: The average empathy score for Private Institute teachers was 19.36 ($SD = 5.88$), while ILI teachers had a higher average of 20.72 ($SD = 5.16$).

Total Score: Teachers from Private Institutes averaged 50.73 ($SD = 14.43$), compared to 52.99 ($SD = 13.01$) for ILI teachers.

Table 7

The Results of t-test for Comparing ILI and Private Institutes' Teachers' Perspectives

Independent Samples Test								
		Levene's t-test for Equality of Means						
		Test for Equality of Variances						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-	Mean Differen	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference
						ce		

						tailed)	Differen ce	Lower	Upper	
enthusiasm_score	Equal variances assumed	.807	.371	-.383	100	.703	-.57386	1.49834	-3.54653	2.39881
	Equal variances not assumed			-.360	30.961	.721	-.57386	1.59284	-3.82265	2.67492
task_oriented_score	Equal variances assumed	.058	.810	-.483	100	.630	-.33750	.69934	-1.72496	1.04996
	Equal variances not assumed			-.465	31.880	.645	-.33750	.72578	-1.81608	1.14108
empathy_score	Equal variances assumed	.134	.715	-1.008	100	.316	-1.34886	1.33853	-4.00446	1.30673
	Equal variances not assumed			-.966	31.695	.341	-1.34886	1.39567	-4.19283	1.49510
total_score	Equal variances assumed	.212	.646	-.705	100	.483	-2.26023	3.20745	-8.62371	4.10326
	Equal variances not assumed			-.664	31.026	.512	-2.26023	3.40366	-9.20181	4.68135

The Independent Samples Test results indicated no significant differences between teachers from private institutes and those from the Iran Language Institute (ILI) across all dimensions of charismatic leadership communication. For enthusiasm, private institute teachers had a mean score of 22.36, while ILI teachers averaged 22.94, with the difference not statistically significant, $t(100) = -0.38$, $p = 0.703$. Similarly, no significant difference was observed in task-oriented communication scores, with private institute teachers scoring 9.00 and ILI teachers 9.34, $t(100) = -0.48$, $p = 0.630$. In terms of empathy, the difference approached significance but remained non-significant, as private institute teachers scored 19.36 and ILI teachers 20.71, $t(100) = -1.00$, $p = 0.316$. Finally, total leadership communication scores were also similar, with private institute teachers scoring 50.73 and ILI teachers 52.99, $t(100) = -0.71$, $p = 0.512$. Levene's Test for Equality of Variances confirmed equal variances for all comparisons.

The findings from tables 6 and 7 suggest that teachers from Private Institutes and ILI exhibited similar perspectives regarding charismatic leadership communication across all measured aspects. While empathy approached significance, no major differences were found in enthusiasm, task-oriented,

or total scores. This indicates a consistent perception of charismatic leadership qualities among both groups.

Discussion

This study provides valuable insights into the dynamics of charismatic leadership communication among English teachers in Iran. When compared to studies by Al-Kahlan and Khasawneh (2024), Ameen (2023), Jamal and Bakar (2021), and others, several key similarities and differences emerge that enrich our understanding of charismatic leadership in educational settings. While prior studies such as Al-Kahlan and Khasawneh (2024) emphasized the positive relationship between effective communication by school principals and teacher motivation in Saudi Arabia, the findings of this study suggest that in the Iranian context, charismatic leadership traits such as empathy and enthusiasm are especially valued. This could be explained by the historically top-down, inspection-oriented nature of educational management in Iran, where supervisors are often perceived as evaluators rather than mentors. Consequently, teachers experience heightened anxiety during classroom observations and increasingly appreciate leaders who can break this tension by offering emotionally supportive and motivating communication.

Similarly, Peták and Kalman's (2022) qualitative study on the motivational impact of charismatic foreign English teachers identified subject knowledge and positive personal traits as significant factors influencing learner motivation. However, the present study found that Iranian teachers voiced frustration over the lack of TEFL-specific expertise among supervisors. This concern likely stems from employment practices in many Iranian institutes, where promotions are frequently based on teaching tenure or institutional loyalty rather than advanced pedagogical training. As a result, supervisors who, while experienced, may lack updated methodological knowledge. In such cases, personal leadership traits like enthusiasm and empathy become even more valued, as teachers rely on these qualities to compensate for limitations in their supervisors' technical competence.

The findings related to task-oriented communication also align with Jamal and Bakar's (2021) work in Malaysia, where charismatic leadership was shown to enhance organizational credibility and morale. Iranian EFL teachers similarly acknowledged the importance of clear expectations and structured guidelines but expressed concern about rigidity in supervisory practices. This duality reflects the cultural emphasis on hierarchy and formality within Iranian professional environments, where strict adherence to prescribed methodologies is seen as a marker of institutional discipline. These concerns are further validated by Khany and Ghasemi's (2019) development of a teacher classroom leadership scale in the Iranian EFL context, which revealed that effective leadership should balance structure with flexibility, promoting both organizational coherence and teacher autonomy. In contexts dominated by strict methodologies, teachers often feel pressured to conform at the expense of classroom responsiveness and creativity. Thus, the tension between task orientation and pedagogical flexibility becomes a recurring theme, explaining teachers' calls for a more balanced, human-centered leadership approach.

In addition, Ameen's (2023) exploration of charismatic leadership's influence on organizational culture aligns closely with this study's findings, particularly concerning the role of leadership in shaping cultural values. Both studies emphasize that charismatic leaders can significantly influence the cultural dynamics within educational settings. In the Iranian case, the integration of English into society exemplifies how language learning is viewed as both personal empowerment and cultural negotiation. This is consistent with Moharami's (2024) work, which also highlighted how English education in Iran intersects with issues of cultural identity. The positive traits associated with charismatic leadership—visionary thinking, empathy, and flexibility—resonate with Iranian EFL teachers who perceive their engagement with English as essential for navigating evolving cultural values.

Further reinforcing these insights, Bowen (2022) discusses the sensitivity inherent in academic workplaces influenced by leadership styles, while Hazzam and Wilkins (2023) focus on the connection between lecturer leadership and student engagement in online learning contexts. Both studies emphasize the importance of emotional and relational leadership qualities, which were also evident in the current

study's findings. Similarly, Meslec et al. (2020) illustrated the connection between charismatic leadership, rewards, and individual performance—an outcome that aligns with Iranian EFL teachers' emphasis on supervisors fostering emotionally supportive, trusting environments that enable professional growth.

Additional studies further corroborate these findings. Azizpour and Gholami (2021) demonstrated that transformational leadership fosters a positive school climate and enhances teacher collaboration, supporting this study's conclusion that charismatic leadership cultivates environments conducive to motivation and professional development. Likewise, Gumah et al. (2021) emphasized that effective leadership feedback and communication strengthen teachers' self-efficacy in cross-cultural settings, a point echoed by Iranian teachers in both ILI and private institutes in this study. These findings collectively point to a critical need to enhance communication strategies in leadership training programs, a recommendation aligned with Elkhwesky et al.'s (2022) call for robust, context-sensitive leadership communication practices across various professional domains.

Regarding differences in perceptions by experience level, the empathy dimension notably approached significance, with experienced teachers perceiving higher empathy levels in their supervisors. This result can be interpreted through professional identity development theories (Farrell, 2016), which suggest that experienced teachers are better equipped to navigate hierarchical institutional cultures and are more capable of interpreting empathetic leadership behaviors. Their familiarity with institutional norms and deeper professional networks may allow them to build stronger relationships with supervisors and perceive emotionally supportive gestures more readily than novice teachers, who remain more sensitive to criticism and formal evaluations.

Interestingly, no significant differences emerged between teachers from the Iran Language Institute (ILI) and private institutes in their perceptions of charismatic leadership communication. Although prior studies, such as Mohamadi and Ghanbari (2022), indicated that institutional affiliation might shape leadership perceptions, this study suggests a shared institutional culture across language institutes in Iran. This consistency likely results from the highly centralized, regulation-driven nature of English education in the country, where both ILI and private institutes typically follow similar managerial structures, supervisory practices, and cultural expectations. Consequently, teachers across these settings encounter comparable leadership styles, leading to relatively uniform perceptions of charismatic leadership qualities.

Finally, the findings resonate with broader trends in language education leadership. The parallels between this study and those of Kálmán (2023) and Safdari (2021) underscore the necessity for educational leaders to adapt their communication styles to foster inclusive, motivating environments. Kálmán's (2023) investigation of "super motivators" in language education highlights empathy, enthusiasm, and charisma as essential to teacher effectiveness. Safdari's (2021) phenomenological study likewise emphasized that EFL learners value personal traits such as empathy, rapport-building, and character over mere technical expertise in their instructors. These conclusions reinforce this study's finding that Iranian teachers value supervisors who combine pedagogical competence with the ability to build meaningful, supportive professional relationships, ultimately enhancing the teaching and learning experience.

Conclusion and Implications

This study's findings highlighted the intricate relationship between English language learning and cultural values in Iran, building on and expanding existing research on charismatic leadership and its implications. By fostering environments that support both personal development, supervisors can better facilitate language learning experiences that honor and integrate the rich cultural heritage of their teachers. Firstly, the findings did not reveal notable differences in the perceptions of charismatic leadership communication between teachers from the Iran Language Institute (ILI) and those from private institutions.

These findings underscore the importance of enhancing communication strategies in leadership training programs, ensuring they align with teachers' perceptions and expectations. Moreover, the thematic analysis from both groups illuminates the multifaceted nature of charismatic leadership communication, with elements such as enthusiasm, effective communication, task orientation, and empathy significantly impacting teachers' experiences. For supervisors to cultivate a motivating and supportive educational environment, they must strike a balance among these aspects.

In summary, this study underscores the vital role of charismatic leadership communication in shaping the experiences of Iranian EFL teachers. As teachers express a desire for supervisors who demonstrate enthusiasm, empathy, and effective communication, the findings suggest that cultivating these traits can enhance motivation and foster a supportive learning environment.

Professional development programs should focus on cultivating charismatic leadership qualities such as effective communication and emotional intelligence. Establishing transparent feedback mechanisms is essential for promoting job satisfaction among teachers, while ongoing research should explore the long-term effects of charismatic leadership on educational outcomes. Besides, future research should delve into the dynamics of leadership communication across various educational settings, focusing on strategies that can enhance leadership effectiveness and, ultimately, improve student outcomes in language education.

Further research should aim to further explore the nuances of leadership communication in diverse educational contexts, examining how varying institutional cultures and leadership training impact teachers' perceptions. Ultimately, understanding and addressing the interplay between leadership communication and teacher identity will be another interesting area of research. Ultimately, the insights gained from this study can enhance the development of training programs for educational leaders, equipping them with the skills necessary to foster charismatic communication that resonates with their teams and drives positive educational outcomes.

Based on these findings, leadership development initiatives in Iranian EFL institutes should prioritize training programs that balance pedagogical expertise with emotional intelligence, particularly emphasizing empathetic observation techniques, enthusiasm, and constructive feedback. Furthermore, institutional policies should promote leadership recruitment and evaluation criteria that value both managerial competence and interpersonal communication skills. Implementing these strategies has the potential to improve teacher motivation, reduce professional stress, and contribute to a more supportive and effective educational climate.

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Appendix A

Appendix 1. Code Cloud of MAXQDA about Charismatic Leadership Communication in Iranian English Language Institutes: Zooming in on Iranian EFL Teacher's Perspectives



Appendix B

Interview Questions

1. Does the supervisor have a sense of enthusiasm?
2. Is the supervisor a skillful speaker?
3. Does the supervisor use an active language?
4. Is the supervisor a positive thinker?
5. Is the supervisor task oriented?
6. Does the supervisor have definite ideas?
7. Does the supervisor show any empathy?
8. Does the supervisor put you at ease?

Appendix C

Questionnaire Items

Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	I. Enthusiasm The supervisor has a confident communication style.				
2	The supervisor is influential.				
3	The supervisor uses active language.				
4	The supervisor is poised.				
5	The supervisor communicates a sense of involvement with subject matter.				
6	The supervisor is a skillful speaker.				
7	The supervisor is a positive thinker.				
8	The supervisor is enthusiastic.				
9	The supervisor uses powerful language.				
10	The supervisor is persuasive.				
11	II. Task Oriented Communication The supervisor is goal-oriented.				
12	The supervisor is motivational.				
13	The supervisor has definite ideas.				
14	The supervisor is likely to achieve the goals that he/she sets out to accomplish				
15	III. Empathy The supervisor communicates effectively				
16	The supervisor is task-oriented.				
17	The supervisor asks others to share opinions.				
18	The supervisor listens well.				
19	The supervisor can empathize with others.				
20	The supervisor is genuine				
21	The supervisor understands other people's feelings.				
22	The supervisor can put others at ease.				