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From Inspiration to Impact: Elevating EFL Teacher Achievement through a Supportive Climate

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ABSTRACT

This longitudinal study investigates the dynamic nature of achievement goals among English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers, specifically examining how an empowering motivational climate influences these goals. Conducted over ten months with a final sample of 60 female teachers, the intervention included autonomy-supportive webinars, private debriefing sessions, and mixed-ability collaborative groups. Quantitative analysis through paired-samples comparisons revealed significant shifts toward mastery-oriented achievement goals and notable increases in performance avoidance goals. These findings underscore the complexities of motivational dynamics among teachers, indicating that while supportive environments can enhance mastery goals, they may also inadvertently heighten performance avoidance motivations. The qualitative data from thematic interviews further illuminate the nuanced impacts of the intervention, revealing themes such as pedagogical growth and fear of failure. Overall, this study highlights the critical role of supervisors in shaping motivational climates and emphasizes the need for educational policies that prioritize teacher autonomy and professional development. These insights contribute to the broader field of educational psychology, offering actionable recommendations for teacher training and institutional practices.

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1. Introduction

Research on teacher motivation has been guided by a variety of conceptual frameworks, among which the achievement goal theory has recently received increasing attention over the past decade (Jiang & Zhang, 2021). This theory assumes that individuals are motivated by various goals to engage in competence-relevant behaviors (Elliot & Hulleman, 2017). As such, these goals, referred to as achievement goals, function as cognitive lenses that bias individuals' interpretation and experience of achievement tasks (Elliot & Harackiewicz, 1996). Studies over the past decade (e.g., Butler, 2007; Mascret et al., 2015) have shown that achievement goals which focus on self-improvement (e.g., mastery-approach goals) are linked to positive processes and outcomes such as intrinsic motivation and productive feedback-seeking behavior. In contrast, goals focusing on avoiding failure (performance-avoidance goals) are associated with negative outcomes such as burnout and stress (Fasching et al., 2010; Authors, 2021).

While achievement goal researchers advocate the pursuit of mastery goals (e.g., Dickhäuser et al., 2020; Moghimi, 2020; Authors, 2021), empirical insight into the dynamics of teachers' achievement goals, particularly their evolution over time, remains limited, with existing studies predominantly cross-sectional in nature. Traditionally viewed as a relatively stable construct (Elliot & Thrash, 2002; Harackiewicz et al., 1998), achievement goals are now increasingly recognized as susceptible to change through self-regulatory processes involving goal monitoring, evaluation, and revision (Muis & Edwards, 2009; Shim et al., 2008). These changes may occur over relatively short periods-weeks or months-especially in response to feedback, shifts in teaching context, or professional development experiences (Daniels et al., 2008). This study aims to explore this changeability among EFL teachers.

Achievement goal theorists posit that several factors including life events, knowledge and experience of the task, and competence feedback are influential in prompting individuals to adjust the endorsement of achievement goals (e.g., Bong, 2005; Elliot & McGregor, 2001; Meece & Miller, 2001). Furthermore, environmental conditions created by significant others (e.g., supervisors), alternatively called motivational climates, are cited as major factors affecting goal change (Bardach et al., 2020; Bong, 2005; Tuominen-Soini et al., 2011). Motivational climate refers to the social and instructional cues in an environment that signal which types of achievement goals are valued and rewarded (Ames, 1992). Despite the challenges EFL teachers in private sectors such as language institutes face to maintain their motivation (Bahrami & Moradkhani, 2019) and the authority that supervisors exercise in these contexts (Agheshteh & Mehrpour, 2021), research examining how supervisor-driven environmental modifications influence EFL teachers' achievement goals—particularly in private language institutes—remains scarce, with existing studies offering limited empirical evidence and primarily focusing on student populations. The current study, therefore, seeks to address this gap by investigating whether an empowering motivational climate initiative can stimulate a transition toward more favorable achievement goals-specifically, an increase in mastery goal orientation and a reduction in performance-avoidance goals.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1. Achievement Goal Approach

Over the past decades, motivation researchers have recognized that perceptions about competence (i.e., achievement goals) differentially relate with how individuals think, feel, and behave (For a review see Elliot, 2005). This theorizing, supported by an extensive body of empirical research, has led to various conceptualizations of achievement goals. Traditionally, achievement goals were conceptualized as a dichotomy between mastery goals (the desire to improve competence) and performance goals (the focus on demonstrating competence) (Ames, 1992; Dweck, 1986; Nicholls, 1989). Future theorizing, however, incorporated the valence of competence into the dichotomous model in order to differentiate between goals that are directed at approaching success and goals that focus on avoiding failure (Elliot & Harackiewicz, 1996).

This conceptual expansion of achievement goals led to the bifurcation of mastery and performance goals into mastery approach, mastery avoidance, performance approach, and performance avoidance goals (Elliot & McGregor, 2001). However, disagreements among achievement goal theorists about the nature of these goals fueled by inconsistent empirical findings about performance goals (Murayama et al., 2012) encouraged researchers to explore the subtleties of the original conceptualization of achievement goals in order to achieve conceptual clarity.

Therefore, two further features of achievement goals overlooked in previous accounts were embraced: standards of competence and standpoints on competence (Chung & Bong, 2017; Korn et al., 2019; Senko & Tropiano, 2016). While standpoints on competence represent "a perspective that one takes with regard to competence; one may view competence from the standpoint of developing it (mastery goal) or demonstrating it (performance goal)" (Korn et al., 2019, p. 93), standards of competence refer to the criteria for evaluating competence (self/task-based criteria and other-based criteria). This finer differentiation of various components of achievement goals yielded a more precise model of achievement goals in which the competence foci and valence of competence are equally and fully represented:

Original mastery approach (striving to increase self-referential, and/or task-referential, competence), *original mastery avoidance* (striving to avoid a decrease in self-referential, and/or task-referential, competence), *original performance approach* (striving to demonstrate other-referential competence), and *original performance avoidance* (striving to avoid demonstrating other-referential incompetence) (Korn et al., 2019, p. 93).

2.2. Teachers' Achievement Goals

Historically focused on students, the achievement goal framework is now increasingly applied to teachers, recognizing schools as arenas where teachers, like their students, strive to succeed in various ways (Butler, 2007). This shift in focus has led to several conceptualizations of teachers' achievement goals (e.g., Kucsera et al., 2011; Mascret et al., 2015; Nitsche et al., 2011; Retelsdorf & Günther, 2011; Retelsdorf et al., 2010) and, consequently, studies identifying how teachers' achievement goals link with diverse outcomes (e.g., Cho & Shim, 2013; Mascret et al., 2015; Nitsche et al., 2013).

Much in line with the studies on students' achievement goals, research on teachers' achievement goals illustrates that achievement goals are differentially associated with several cognitive, affective, motivational, and behavioral variables. Broadly speaking, mastery goals are "connected to a positive nomological network, performance avoidance goals are connected to a negative nomological network and performance approach goals yield a mixed, and often null, set of results" (Mascret et al., 2015, p. 3). More specifically, empirical evidence yields strong support for the positive associations between mastery goals and adaptive patterns of emotion, thought, and behavior including job satisfaction, interest, positive attitudes towards help seeking and work, perceived competence, and self-efficacy beliefs (e.g., Butler, 2007; Cho & Shim, 2013; Fasching et al., 2010; Gorozidis & Papaioannou, 2011; Kucsera et al., 2011; Nitsche et al., 2013). In contrast, these goals are negatively related to variables such as burnout, stress, anxiety (Fasching et al., 2010; Retelsdorf et al., 2010).

Although there is inconclusive evidence about performance approach goals, there is sufficient literature to support the finding that performance avoidance goals are positively related to maladaptive processes and outcomes such as stress, student cheating, perceiving help seeking as a threat , burnout, and an emphasis on surface learning (Fasching et al., 2010; Nitsche et al., 2011; Retelsdorf & Günther, 2011) and negatively associated with variables such as job satisfaction and attitudes towards work (Kucsera et al., 2011; Nitsche et al., 2013).

2.3. Perceived Motivational Climates and Achievement Goals

Research on perceived motivational climate is informed by achievement goal approach (Ames, 1992; Nicholls, 1989) and self-determination theory (SDT; Ryan & Deci, 2017). Based on achievement goal approach, "the types of achievement goals emphasized in an environment" (Cho & Shim, 2013, p. 12), alternatively called goal structures, affect how individuals feel, think, and act by shaping their cognitions about competence (Ames, 1992; Barnes et al., 2018; Cho & Shim, 2013). As such, two dimensions of social environments include a *task-involving motivational climate* and an *ego-involving motivational climate* (Ames, 1992). A task-involving motivational climate, also called a mastery climate, refers to social environmental conditions that support the pursuit of mastery goals (the desire to improve competence) through valuing development, trying hard, cooperation, and learning (Duda & Balaguer, 2007). In contrast, in an ego-involving climate, a performance conception of competence (the desire to demonstrate competence) is highlighted. Therefore, the focus is on rivalry, punishment of mistakes, and superiority (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011).

From the perspective of SDT, it is through satisfying or thwarting individuals' psychological needs for autonomy (to act of one's own volition), competence (to effectively interact with the environment), and relatedness (to have a sense of belonging and being valued) that social environments can play a significant role in individuals'

motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2017; Wang et al., 2024). Put another way, the satisfaction of these basic needs improves more self-determined types of motivation. In contrast, thwarting the needs contributes to controlled motivation. Seen in this way, other aspects of social psychological environments relate to the extent to which these needs are satisfied or diminished. Research guided by SDT suggests that motivational climates can be autonomy supportive or autonomy controlling, with autonomy supportive climates focusing on individuals' preferences, feelings, perspectives, and interests (Mageau & Vallerand, 2003) and autonomy controlling environments coercing individuals to behave in significant others' desired manners (Bartholomew et al., 2010). Moreover, motivational climates can be socially supportive where individuals are cared for, respected, and valued as people (Mageau & Vallerand, 2003; Reinboth et al., 2004).

2.4. Stability and Change in Achievement Goals

As stated earlier, despite the general perception that goals are relatively stable traits, research suggests that they are amenable to change through two mechanisms, namely, goal switching and goal intensification (Senko & Harackiewicz, 2005). Goal switching takes place when individuals switch from one type of goal to another type and goal intensification represents another form of goal regulation which involves a decrease or increase in the level of goal pursuit without a change in endorsing goals (Senko & Harackiewicz, 2005). Empirical research into stability of achievement goals within educational contexts has typically explored students' achievement goals (for an overview, see Fryer & Elliot, 2007; Pintrich, 2000). Comparatively, less research has considered the stability of teachers' achievement goals, with the existing studies focusing mainly on student teachers (Malmberg, 2008; Tönjes & Dickhäuser, 2009) or teacher trainees (Fasching et al., 2010; Tönjes & Dickhäuser, 2009). The few studies in mainstream teacher education on achievement goal stability have shown varying levels of change, influenced by factors like institutional support and supervisory practices.

In one study, for example, Praetorius et al. (2014) examined the stability of German mathematics teachers' achievement goals. Praetorius and colleagues found that performance goals were stable over time, attributed to the uniform assessment of competencies and stable interpersonal standards within the educational environment. In contrast, learning goals showed more variability. This variability was linked to individual differences and the diverse aspects of competence that learning goals encompass. The researchers suggested that the specific assessment of learning goals affects their stability-more concrete assessments lead to less stability because teachers might focus on different professional learning aspects at different times. They recommended further experimental research to clarify the instability observed in learning goals.

The study by Kunst et al. (2017) investigated the impact of managerial coaching on the achievement goal orientation of teachers at Vocational Education and Training institutions over one year. Managerial coaching was broken down into three components: guidance, inspiration, and facilitation. The results showed that while the majority of teachers maintained stable goal orientation profiles, facilitative coaching specifically led to significant changes in some teachers, helping them transition from a diffusive to a success-oriented profile. In contrast, guidance and inspiration did not significantly alter teachers' goal orientations. This finding emphasizes the role of leaders as situational factors that can influence teachers' goal orientations, particularly highlighting the effectiveness of facilitation in promoting goal change.

The reviewed literature underscores a critical gap in our understanding of how supervisory factors influence EFL teachers' achievement goals. This study aims to address this gap by exploring how modifications in teachers' motivational climate can foster more adaptive achievement goals. More specifically, this study aims to answer the following research question:

How does a motivational climate initiative aiming at improving teachers' motivation affect their achievement goals?

3. Methodology

3.1. Design of the Study

This longitudinal Mixed-methods study aimed to investigate changes in EFL teachers' achievement goals over time, as influenced by an empowering motivational climate created by supervisors. Specifically, the study examines whether such a climate fosters an *increase in mastery-approach goals and a decrease in performance-avoidance*

goals, which are considered more adaptive and desirable in educational contexts. The study is exploratory in nature, given the limited longitudinal research on the changeability of teachers' achievement goals, particularly within private language institutes.

3.2. Context and Participants

The study was conducted at an institute characterized by both ego-invoking and task-invoking motivational climates. Predominantly, the institute's environment discouraged autonomy, with strict adherence to prescribed teaching methods and performance evaluations that emphasized weaknesses via digital communication platforms. This characterization was based on preliminary interviews with staff and teachers and a review of post-observation reports.

The study initially included 68 EFL female teachers who were randomly assigned to experimental and control groups (N = 34 per group). The focus on female teachers reflects the staffing composition of the institute. Given the longitudinal nature of this study which lasted for ten months, eight teachers were excluded from the study as they left the profession for personal reasons. Therefore, the final sample consisted of 60 teachers (30 per group). Their experience ranged from 9 months to seventeen years, with ages between 19 and 45 years. Pretest checks confirmed no significant initial differences between the groups in terms of achievement goals.

3.3. Materials, Instruments and Procedures

3.3.1. Intervention: Empowering Motivational Climate Program

The theoretical framework for the empowering motivational climate intervention, which aimed to transform the institute's motivational climate, drew on Duda's (2013) hierarchical conceptualization of PMC and the TARGET model (Ames, 1992). Following Epstein (1989), Ames (1992) distinguished the key structural features that make up the motivational climate of achievement contexts. These features, collectively referred to as TARGET, represent *Task, Authority, Recognition, Grouping, Evaluation,* and *Time*, each of which makes different achievement goals prominent. It is assumed that manipulating these features can affect individuals' perceptions of task-involving or ego-involving climates. A number of researchers suggest that a task-involving climate can be fostered by presenting diverse challenging tasks, monitoring individuals' development, setting diverse goals, sharing authority, employing intraindividual evaluation, and acknowledging improvements and efforts. Moreover, encouraging cooperation, working in heterogeneous groups, and allowing sufficient time for improvement contribute to perceptions of a task-involving climate (Braithwaite et al., 2011).

Based on Duda's (2013) account of PMC, an empowering motivational climate can be created when significant others acknowledge individuals' preferences and perspectives, present them with choices, welcome their input in decision making, and give grounds for expectations. Moreover, establishing these positive climates requires significant others to respect and value individuals as persons, care for them, and support them emotionally. Taking all these issues into account, an empowering motivational climate intervention was designed comprising autonomy-supportive webinars, private debriefing sessions, and mixed-ability collaborative groups. Each component was selected to target specific dimensions of the TARGET framework and to reflect principles of empowerment as outlined by Duda.

3.3.1.1. Autonomy-Supportive Webinars

These webinars addressed the Authority and Task dimensions of the TARGET model. Teachers were actively involved in deciding the webinar details, such as topics and scheduling, which aligns with the principle of shared authority and autonomy support. This participatory design empowered teachers to take on responsibilities that matched their preferences, reflecting Duda's emphasis on acknowledging individual perspectives and providing choice. The webinars also aimed to enhance pedagogical content knowledge and confidence, promoting engagement with meaningful and challenging tasks.

3.3.1.2. Private Debriefing Sessions

This component primarily targeted the Evaluation and Recognition dimensions. The evaluation process was redesigned to focus on individual learning and development rather than normative comparisons, consistent with

intraindividual evaluation and mastery-oriented feedback. Supervisors emphasized each teacher's unique contributions and teaching styles, which aligns with Duda's call for emotional support and valuing individuals as persons. Recognition was personalized and effort-based, reinforcing self-efficacy and self-regulation.

Mixed-Ability Collaborative Groups

These groups addressed the *Grouping* and *Recognition* dimensions. By organizing teachers into heterogeneous teams, the intervention fostered cooperation and mutual support, which are central to a task-involving climate. The collaborative structure ensured that all members contributed and benefited, promoting a sense of interdependence and shared achievement. This approach also reflected Duda's emphasis on social support and emotional care, as teachers were encouraged to support one another's development.

Overall, the intervention was strategically designed to manipulate key TARGET dimensions while embedding Duda's empowering climate principles. This dual framework ensured that the activities not only addressed structural features of the motivational climate but also cultivated autonomy, emotional support, and personal growth.

3.3.2. Achievement Goal Scale

To assess teachers' achievement goals, the 2×2 SaS Achievement Goal Questionnaire was used. Participants rated the items on a 6-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (*very untrue of me*) to 6 (*very true of me*). One sample item for original mastery approach goals is "*My aim is to improve my classroom management skills over time*". In this study, the subscales had acceptable internal consistencies (*α ranges from .82 to .92*).

3.3.3. Interviews

To obtain more insights into the effects of the empowering intervention on EFL teachers' achievement goals and to triangulate the findings of the quantitative phase, semi-structured interviews were conducted with eight teachers in the last phase of this study. Interview questions were prepared based on the components of the original conceptualization of achievement goals. Each interview lasted 35-45 minutes.

3.4. Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS v22. Preliminary analyses included checks for data normality and homogeneity of variance. Subsequent analyses focused on mean-level changes and differential continuity, employing paired-samples *t*-tests. Qualitative data were analyzed using the scissor-and-sort technique, which involved thematic analysis of transcribed interviews to complement quantitative findings.

3.5. Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval was obtained from the institute's review board. Participants' consent was informed, voluntary participation was emphasized, and confidentiality was strictly maintained throughout the study.

4. Results

4.1. Preliminary analysis

To investigate changes in teachers' achievement goals following the intervention, paired-samples *t*-tests were conducted. The assumptions for these tests were verified, starting with Levene's Test (Sig.=.14), confirming equal variances across samples. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test indicated normal distribution of the data, supporting the use of parametric tests (see Table 1).

Table 1

Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Shapiro-Wilk		
	statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig
OMAP2	.239	30	.053	.840	30	.053
OMAV2	.124	30	.200	.935	30	.175
OPAP2	.186	30	.057	.916	30	.073
OPAV2	.182	30	.068	.849	30	.051

OMAP1	.184	30	.062	.927	30	.118
OMAV1	.143	30	.200	.931	30	.142
OPAP1	.195	30	.062	.906	30	.057
OPAV1	.187	30	.054	.899	30	.053

Note: OMAP = original mastery approach goals, OMAV = original mastery avoidance goals, OPAV = original performance avoidance goals, OPAP = original performance approach goals

4.2. Stability and Change

4.2.1. Differential Continuity (Rank Order Stability)

Differential continuity, assessing the consistency of rank-ordering of variables over time, showed that most achievement goals remained relatively stable. Correlations between the achievement goals are displayed in Table 2. The results show that most achievement goals are significantly related to each other. Notably, Time 1 OMAP goals were positively correlated with their Time 2 assessment, indicating that teachers continued to pursue OMAP goals after the intervention (see Table 2). Conversely, initial OPAP goals did not predict Time 2 outcomes, suggesting these goals are more susceptible to changes in the motivational climate.

Table 2

Correlations between Achievement Goals

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1-OMAP1							
2- OMAV1	.751**						
3- OPAP1	.665**	.875**					
4- OPAV1	.668**	.454*	.436*				
5- OMAP2	.685**	.621**	.756**	.579**			
6- OMAV2	.725**	.665**	.670**	.572**	.881**		
7- OPAP2	.237	.235	.336	.664**	.359	.218	
8- OPAV2	.653**	.450*	.431	.717**	.541*	.468*	.692**

** *Correlation is significant at the .01 level*

* *Correlation is significant at the .05 level*

4.2.2. Mean-level Change

Using paired-samples t-tests, significant mean-level changes were observed. Teachers reported higher levels of OMAP goals at Time 2 (M = 25.95) compared to Time 1 (M = 20.00), indicating a shift towards mastery-oriented goals, with a large effect size (d = 0.57). This suggests that the intervention effectively fostered an environment that supports the pursuit of mastery goals (Table 3). Although OMAV goals showed a slight increase (M1 = 17.47, M2 = 19.31), this change did not reach statistical significance (p = .06), and may be interpreted as a marginal trend. Notably, OPAV goals increased significantly between T1 and T2 (M1 = 16.71, M2 = 23.66), reflecting a rise in performance avoidance orientation—an outcome typically considered maladaptive (Lüftenegger & Muth, 2024). This unexpected shift may warrant further investigation into contextual factors or unintended effects of the intervention. OPAP goals demonstrated relative stability over the given period.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics and T-test Results

	Mean/SD Time 1	Mean/SD Time 2	t	Holm-Bonferroni Corrected a	Sig.	Cohen's *d*
OMAP	20.00 3.52	25.95 4.23	6.26	.0125	.000	.57
OMAV	17.47 4.30	19.31 3.76	3.89	.0167	.06	
OPAP	17.71 6.55	15.52 5.21	-2.03	.025	.055	
OPAV	16.71 5.99	23.66 2.10	6.27	.05	.000	.57

4.3. Qualitative Results

Thematic analysis of interview transcripts revealed themes such as 'job prospects,' 'pedagogical growth,' and 'fear of failure.' These themes illustrate the nuanced impacts of the intervention. For instance, teachers expressed enhanced pedagogical ambitions and a broader understanding of career opportunities within teaching, aligning with the quantitative findings of increased mastery goals. Table 4 shows the themes and their corresponding codes.

Table 4

Themes and Codes

Themes	Codes/frequencies
Job Prospects	Technical Courses (3), IELTS Classes (6), Tourism Courses (2), Job-Related Courses (2), Mindset Books (2), Skill-Based Courses (3)
Pedagogical Growth	Classroom Management (4), Teaching Techniques (3), Feedback (2), Establishing Rapport (7),
Fear Of Failure	Envy (4), Comparison (3), Role Models (6), Lack Of Knowledge (4)

For example, one teacher remarked on expanding her teaching repertoire beyond general English to include specialized courses, indicating a shift in her professional identity and aspirations:

..... to me, a good teacher was the one who was an expert in English. How funny! Now, I feel that I have a broader definition of teaching and the goals that a teacher can pursue. For example, I don't have to limit myself to the general courses and the levels that are assigned to me. I can even offer to teach more technical courses. That is my new aim.

Another theme, 'fear of failure,' corresponded with the quantitative increase in performance avoidance goals, highlighting areas where the intervention may require adjustment to better support teachers facing challenges. Two particularly illustrative quotes are

My colleague could explain the strategies for reading instruction in great detail. It was embarrassing that I had just some basic information about that. So, I didn't even reveal that I didn't know the strategies. That's a wise decision. I'm going to hide my inferiority to save face till…

Unfortunately, no. I still lack the confidence to show my abilities. I am always afraid of talking in front of my colleagues. The fear of being teased always makes me hide not only my skills but also my lack of knowledge.

5. Discussion

This study explored changes and stability in EFL teachers' achievement goals through an empowering intervention designed to influence the supervisor-created motivational climate. Consistent with prior research in mainstream teacher education (e.g., Daniels et al., 2013), the findings revealed both stability and change in teachers' achievement goals, underscoring the complex nature of motivational dynamics within educational settings.

Mean-level changes confirmed higher amounts of OMAP and OPAV, with OMAV and OPAP being stable.

This pattern is significant; OMAP and OPAV goals, rooted in distinct motivational antecedents—positive for OMAP and negative for OPAV (Fryer & Elliot, 2007)—exhibited expected changes. Conversely, the stability in OMAV and OPAP goals, associated with mixed antecedents, suggests a nuanced interplay of motivational factors. Notably, the enhancement in OMAP goals post-intervention aligns with theoretical predictions about the positive impact of supportive environments on mastery-oriented motivations (Deci & Ryan, 2000). This finding is also in line with empirical research on preservice teachers (e.g., Daniels et al., 2013) and practicing teachers (Butler, 2007), showing that, regardless of how teachers perceive their motivational climate, continued professional development is a major concern for them. A possible explanation for the increase in OMAP goals is that the empowering intervention was successful in motivating teachers to master their abilities. This is well explained by one of the teachers who attributed the increase in her OMAP goals to the responsibility she had for one of the webinars:

I had to prepare PowerPoint slides for one of the webinars. I could use any possible source for my presentation. So, I read several articles about grammar instruction. Learning new strategies or even knowing the logic behind the techniques I already used in my classes was a wonderful experience. It felt so great that I decided to continue improving my knowledge even after this project.

Given that shared responsibility, autonomy, and mutual respect were the key features of the empowering intervention, this finding can be explained in terms of SDT which states that individuals have intrinsic motivation when their basic needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are satisfied (Deci & Ryan, 2000). It is likely that the strategies that the supervisor employed such as giving teachers' complete freedom to make a decision about how to administer the webinars, allowing them to develop and enact their own approaches to instruction, etc. supported teachers' autonomy. This critical role of autonomy supportive leadership in teachers' motivation has been documented in other studies as well (e.g., Dickhäuser et al., 2020). It also makes sense that teachers' perceptions of their supervisor as a caring person who respects and values them fostered their motivation to develop their skills. Indeed, prior research on teachers' achievement goals (Janke et al., 2015) and student motivation (Anderman & Anderman, 1999) has shown that the satisfaction of psychological needs positively correlates with the pursuit of mastery goals. An alternative explanation is that teachers' perceptions of their work climate, characterized by an emphasis on their professional development, motivated them to strive for their personal growth. This finding aligns with studies that have linked mastery goal structure with teacher motivation and learning goal orientation (Bristi et al., 2025; Cho & Shim, 2013; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017).

The increase in the rank order of OPAV goals might reflect an unintended consequence of the intervention, possibly inducing competitive or evaluative pressures among teachers. Such findings echo Dickhäuser et al. (2020), who noted that autonomy-supportive strategies, while generally beneficial, might inadvertently heighten performance avoidance motivations due to increased pressure to avoid poor outcomes. The increase in OPAV goals can also be explained in light of Fuller's (1969) concern theory which states that novice teachers have concern over how they are perceived by others. This is well explained by one of the novice teachers who admitted an increase in her OPAV goals and attributed it to the discussion groups:

We discussed several issues in our heterogeneous groups. Sometimes, I was surprised to see that a colleague of mine was so knowledgeable. I couldn't let others know that I know less than her.

In fact, the shift away from an atmosphere where teachers had limited communication (at break time) and had no opportunity to weigh each other's skills and knowledge towards a setting that required teachers to share their information made them resort to avoidance motivation in order to save face. This fear of competence evaluation is already cited as one of the main factors leading to goal change (Fryer & Elliot, 2007). Given that OPAP goals remained stable, one possible interpretation is that climate factors are less likely to affect these goals. Partial support for this finding comes from Dickhäuser et al.'s (2020) study which showed that "schools do not differ much regarding climate factors that could induce a performance approach goal orientation" (p. 13). Another possible explanation for this finding is that teachers seldom find the opportunity to demonstrate their abilities and show their colleagues that they are superior (Retelsdorf et al., 2010).

To conclude, these findings offer compelling evidence for the effectiveness of empowering motivational climates in fostering the adoption of mastery approach goals among EFL teachers, which is essential for enhancing teacher motivation. More specifically, this study suggests that language institutes should grant more autonomy to teachers by offering them more control over diverse issues such as professional development choices and curriculum

choices. However, such practices should carefully balance autonomy support with adequate guidance to mitigate the risks of increased avoidance motivation. Educational administrators should consider conducting regular professional development workshops which focus on developing knowledge and skills such as pedagogical content knowledge, classroom management, and so on. Such attempts should be practiced in non-evaluative, non-competitive, and low-pressure environments in order to foster mastery-oriented climates. Moreover, given the crucial role of supervisors in teacher motivation, training for educational leaders should emphasize strategies that support teacher autonomy and competence without inducing fear of failure or incompetence. More specifically, supervisors should receive adequate training on providing constructive feedback that focuses on teachers' developmental milestones rather than punitive measures. By following these strategies, language institutes can shape motivational climates that not only foster teacher motivation but also promote student learning through more inspired teaching practices.

6. Conclusion and Limitations

This study provides valuable insights into the dynamics of teacher motivation, influenced by supervisory practices. By elucidating the complex effects of an empowering intervention, it offers a nuanced understanding of how educational environments can foster both adaptive and maladaptive motivational orientations among teachers. It also challenges the assumption that autonomy-supportive environments are uniformly beneficial, suggesting that contextual factors can moderate their impact. As the educational landscape continues to evolve, these findings underscore the importance of designing and implementing teacher support mechanisms that are as psychologically supportive as they are pedagogically sound.

The findings of this study are based on self-reported data from a homogeneous sample of female teachers, which may limit their generalizability. Future studies including male teachers and more diverse educational settings can provide broader insights into the dynamics of teachers' motivation. Additionally, future research should employ a mixed-methods approach and triangulate findings to deepen our understanding of motivational changes. It would also be valuable to investigate the influence of colleagues and students on teachers' achievement goals, as few studies have explored how contextual factors and significant others shape goal endorsement.

Another limitation concerns the role of the researcher/supervisor in delivering the intervention, which may introduce experimenter bias. To mitigate this, standardized procedures were followed, and efforts were made to separate the roles of facilitator and evaluator where possible. Finally, while the study's focus on a private institute in a specific cultural context may constrain generalizability, it also offers depth and contextual richness that can inform future interventions in similar environments.

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