

## Learner-Centered Assessment at Iranian Universities: EFL Students' Attitudes

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### Abstract

A paradigm shift in education has led to implementing learner-centered pedagogy (LCP) which considers learners as the central element of the learning process, and it is progressively being encouraged in higher education. Examining the implementation of learner-centered pedagogy in English language teaching (ELT) context is important. While this paradigm of teaching has long been introduced to education in general and language teaching in particular, it is claimed that scant attention has been given to its implementation in the Iranian EFL context. The present study was to compare the implementation of learner-centered pedagogy in assessment procedures at different Iranian universities. Therefore, using the convenience sampling technique, 378 TEFL students from both genders and different ages (mostly 20 to 35 years old) were selected. To gather data, a reliable, valid researcher-made LCP questionnaire was distributed among the participants. Gathered data were analyzed using one-way ANOVA. The results of the data analysis demonstrated that there was a significant difference between the performance of state universities and Islamic Azad and non-state universities, while no significant difference was observed between the performance of Islamic Azad and non-state university students. The outcomes can provide insights into considering learner-centered pedagogy in teaching to improve teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) program. Moreover, they can be practical for teachers, material developers, as well as syllabus designers.

*Keywords:* Assessment Practices; EFL; Iranian Universities; Learner-centered Pedagogy; Teacher Training Program.

### 1. Introduction

Recent practices of language teaching have shown a shift to focus on preparing students for appropriate functioning in the society (Richards, 2017). Consistent with recent tendencies in teaching, communicative competence is believed to be the principal aim of teaching and learning. Lizuka (2019) believes that in order to improve learning outcomes, teachers need to generate a communicative environment in which students can interact. He also mentioned that emphasizing a grammatical program is no longer satisfactory.

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Amongst the more general purposes of recent education, one relates to issues such as socio-cultural development as well as the benefits of continuous, life-long learning (Moradi & Alavinia, 2020). According to this view, students learn how to be good citizens and how to function appropriately in the society. One technique to generate more sustainable, lifelong teaching is by means of implementing more learner-centered approaches (Herranen et al., 2018).

Machemer and Crawford (2007, p.9) believed that "learner-centered education is a way of learning or teaching in which the learner is at the heart of education." Learner-centered pedagogy (LCP) is driven from the theory of constructivism in which learners learn by collaboration. It has its roots in the idea that learning is a qualitative alteration in an individual's understanding. Undeniably, the methodology of recent activities in language teaching is generated from the idea that learner-centered is a point around which current methodologies of language teaching and post-methods revolve (Hall, 2017; Nunan, 2012). According to this view, LCP in language teaching inspires the construction and negotiation of meaning by the learners (Badjadi, 2020).

It has been generally believed that assessing students' learning has a positive influence on second/foreign language teaching and it is regarded as a general subject of study in language teaching (Baker, 2016; Menken et al., 2014). The contemporary assessment approaches highlight the significance of learner-centeredness, the learning procedure, appropriate and meaningful practices, as well as general approaches to language (Douglas, 2018). These approaches use assessment to develop language teaching and to test learners' and instructors' performance and the language program as well as the course productivity (Green, 2018; Linfield & Posavac, 2018). The principal emphasis is not only on the final product but also on the entire teaching and learning procedure, considering all the elements in and out of the classroom environment that can influence language teaching (Purpura, 2016; Tsagari, 2016; Tsagari & Vogt, 2017).

With regard to the changing needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, higher education organizations need to progress and adopt novel forms of knowledge and skills to meet the new competencies today's learners require to develop. It is proved in the literature that these novel forms of knowledge and skills can be realized by employing learner-centered pedagogy (Zeki & Sonyel, 2014).

Regarding the ELT situation, it is generally proposed that in LCP classes, students will be encouraged to improve their language and more notably many learning styles are considered, and learners help each other to improve their skills (Jones, 2007). In spite of the success in using LCP in language teaching (Khajavi & Abbasian, 2011; Van Viegen & Russell, 2019; Villacís & Camacho, 2017), it has neither been used nor received considerable attention in Iranian EFL situations. Considering the literature, studies focusing on the employment of LCP in EFL settings are still rare (Moradi & Alavinia, 2020; Orabah & Bijani 2022). Hence, the current study intended to fill the existing gap by examining the implementation of LCP assessment practices in TEFL B.A. program among different universities regarding learners' attitudes. Since teacher training programs at B.A. level are mainly presented by three different universities namely; Islamic Azad university, state, and no-stated universities the comparison of the assessment procedures carried out by them can make a contribution to understanding

whether TEFL B.A students are assessed using LCP techniques and become familiar with these techniques to implement them in their future profession. This study adds to the knowledge base regarding teacher training system in Iran since it could make the teachers acquire the relevant skills which are needed in teaching English using LCP.

## 2. Review of Literature

### 2.1 *The theoretical framework of the study*

The theoretical framework of the present study is based on social constructivism theory proposed by Vygotsky (1978). According to this theory, the social situations of learning and that knowledge is mutually created and built. By cooperating with others, learners find the occasion to share their ideas, and consequently build a mutual understanding related to the idea (Kalpana, 2014). It is principally a theory about how individuals socially generate knowledge. Vygotsky (1987) mentioned that learning is a cooperative process and so, it might not be detached from social setting. Gray (1997) believed that constructivist education improves critical thinking, and generates interested and autonomous learners.

The main concept of constructivism is that human learning is constructed, and that learner constructs new knowledge upon the basis of previous information (Prawat, 1996). Active learning through collaboration, relating new information to the previous knowledge forms the constructs of Vygotsky's constructive theory which are considered in the present study. Constructivist classrooms are designed so that students are immersed in experiences within which they may be engaged in meaning-making investigation, action, imagination, creation, communication, and personal reflection (Gray, 1997). Constructivism needs a learner-centered classroom and includes a constructivist learner-centered pedagogy which concentrates on students learning than on teachers teaching (Kalpana, 2014). Democratic and collaborating nature is considered as the other characteristics of a constructivist classroom.

### 2.2 *Learner-Centered Pedagogy Studies*

Many different studies have proved the effectiveness of LCP in enhancing language learning from different perspectives (Moradi & Alavinia, 2020). LCP has recognized a universal record in encouraging learners, inspiring personal development and continuous, lifelong learning, and improving communicative skills, amongst other advantages (Ahmed & Dakhiel, 2019; Van Viegen & Russell, 2019). While, it is generally believed that the success of implementing learner-centered pedagogy is basically relates to the way teachers perceive and implement its techniques (Ilieva et al., 2019) the implementation can be challenging to numerous teachers (Kaymakamoglu, 2018; Yamagata, 2018). Furthermore, literature has shown that the implementation of LCP pedagogy entails great amount of consciousness and particular knowledge on behalf of teachers, along with motivating school situations (Marwan, 2017; Troyan et al., 2017). Likewise, many investigations revealed that implementing LCP regarding the improvement of teaching methods and materials and course design is challenging (Bai & González, 2019; Philominraj et al., 2017).

Another line of the studies regarding LCP considers instructors' and learners' views towards implementation of LCP. Tawalbeh and AlAsmari (2015) studied teachers' views of LCP and probable challenges of using this instructional method in teaching English at Saudi Arabian universities. The outcomes of the investigation revealed that educators had a positive

view toward LCP. They thought that it was a practical approach to improve students' learning. Finally, it was concluded that instructors approve all the challenges that deter the use of this instructional method, besides no significant relationship was found between teaching experience and instructors' use of LCP techniques. Moreover, in an investigation carried out by Du Plessis (2020) student teachers' views about learner-centered approach was studied. The sample of the investigation consisted of 38 sophomore students of teaching. It was revealed that instructors have poor understanding of learner-centered teaching, and they were presently experiencing serious challenges concerning learner-centered teaching. Badjadi (2020) studied the adaptation of learner-centered teaching in Algeria universities. The sample of the investigation included 128 instructors. The result revealed that instructors had positive attitudes towards implementation of LCP techniques. Similarly, Yilmaz (2009) observed social studies teachers attitudes towards learner-centered teaching. To gather data, semi- structured interviews were conducted. The results of inductive- qualitative analysis of the interviews revealed that the participants had positive views considering learner-centered teaching, and they thought that this approach makes teaching attractive, enjoyable, and challenging. The participants asserted that they use learner-centered techniques and activities in their teaching. All these studies considered teachers' and learners' attitudes towards LCP, but they did not consider both teachers' and students' attitudes simultaneously in one study. Moreover, these studies did not compare teachers' or students' attitudes in different educational contexts.

Another line of studies is dealt with considering the effect of implementing learner-centered pedagogy on developing different language skill (Dewali, 2023; Nyaki et al., 2022). These studies were very comprehensive methodologically regarding sampling, instruments, and data collection and all confirmed the usefulness of learner-centered approach.

Some recent studies have dealt with examining LCP on students' motivation (Cheng & Chen 2022; Elmarasi et al., 2022; Manzoor et al., 2023). The results demonstrated that LCP increases students' motivation. Regarding Iranian context, Amiri and Saberi (2019) examined the influence of learner-centered approach on Iranian EFL learners' motivation. A significant influence of LCP on EFL learners' motivation was observed. Though, no statistically significant difference was observed between Iranian EFL students learning motivation and their gender.

### *2.3. Learner-centered Assessment Studies*

Learner-centered assessment encompasses the dynamic involvement of learners in setting objectives for their learning and development, checking the movement towards those objectives, as well as deciding how to deal with gaps. Learner-centered assessment activities like self-assessment, peer assessment, and portfolios have the potential to assist learners learn the primary content knowledge and skills and improve significant self-regulatory habits (Allal, 2010). One line of the studies is dealt with considering assessment procedures in different educational contexts. In a study completed by López Mendoza and Bernal Arandia (2009) it was revealed that Colombian instructors used traditional approaches in assessment. Therefore, assessment does not enhance the quality of English teaching/learning. Similarly, Xu and Liu (2009) evaluated instructors' knowledge of assessment and features influencing the assessment practices. They concluded that the way instructors used assessment was shaped by the desire to follow how their co-workers used assessment. In the same vein, Jin (2010) carried out an

investigation to examine the assessment procedures implemented at teacher training courses at Chinese universities. The sample of the study composed of 86 EFL instructors. It was revealed that the assessment courses presented to teach students were satisfactory in the content, but the theoretical knowledge of assessment taught in these courses was not put into practice in language classrooms.

Ozdemir-Yilmazer and Ozkan (2017) examined the assessment procedures in a Turkish setting and found out that proficiency examination that performed as a gateway for learners to carry on their educational goals made the basis of assessment practices. In another investigation, Mede and Atay (2017) simulated the investigation conducted by Vogt and Tsagari (2014) using a sample of the English instructors at a university English preparatory program. They observed that considering classroom-based assessment and assessment-related theories, the assessment knowledge of the instructors was limited. Similarly, Zolfaghari et al., (2022) examined assessment practices in Iranian teacher training program. The result of their study revealed that regarding teachers' and students' views, LCP assessment was not carefully practiced in Iranian teacher training program.

Hemmati et al., (2020) examined the effect of learner-centered assessment on pragmatic and organizational competences. 98 Iranian EFL learners participated in the study. The results indicated that self-assessment followed by peer assessment has shown to be more effective than teacher assessment technique in promoting both pragmatic and organizational competence. Only female students participated in their study which could jeopardize the generalizability of the findings.

Jia (2022) compared higher education assessment system in Mainland China and Hongkong. The researcher concluded that Chinese students are still assessed using traditional assessment techniques. The study showed that Chinese instructors let their students be engaged in making decisions about assessment, but in Hongkong educators consider their students opinions in assessment. Moreover, unlike Chinese instructors, Hong Kong educators believed that the single examination-only assessment is no longer appropriate for the overall development of students. Although the study reported interesting finding, no information regarding the design, methodology, and sampling was not reported in the study.

Menzari (2023) tried to provide validity and reliability evidence for self-assessments among Iranian EFL university students. To do so, the researcher translated the Common European Framework of Reference Self-Assessment Grid. Besides, a C-Test battery was used as a criterion for concurrent validation. The result of the investigation suggested that self-assessments are reliable, but they lack validity.

Literature review suggests the usefulness of employing LCP in different educational contexts. Moreover, different studies aimed to compare the implementation of LCP in different settings such as public and private sectors, but such studies were not carried out in Iranian context. To fill the exiting gap, the researcher aimed to compare the implementation of LCP in assessment procedures at different Iranian universities.

The present study sought to find the answer of the following research question:

**Q1:** Is there any significant difference in implementation of learner-centered pedagogy in assessment procedures among different Iranian universities?



### 3. Method

#### 3.1. Participants and Setting

The current study was conducted in different universities of Iran running TEFL program. It was estimated that the entire number of teacher training students in Iran is almost 3400. Consequently, concerning Krejcie and Morgan's table (1970) which is a widely used method of determining sample size, the sample of the study composed of 378 students. The participants were selected based on convenience sampling. They were selected from different cities of Iran such as Tehran, Shiraz, Mashhad, Isfahan, and so forth. They were from both genders and they mostly ranged from 20 to 35 years old. Demographic information of the participants is reported in the following table.

**Table 1**

*Participants' Demographic Information*

		university type			Total
		State	Non-state	Islamic Azad	
Age	Less than 20	24	53	59	136
	20-25	50	54	80	184
	25-30	7	7	18	32
	more than 35	6	10	10	26
Gender	Male	25	51	66	142
	Female	62	73	101	236
Total		87	124	167	378

The table shows that the number of female students who participated in the present study was 236 (62.43), while the number of male students was 142 (37.57). Most of respondents were from Islamic Azad University (167) and the least of the participants were from state university (87). Moreover, students were classified based on age in four ranges. As expected, most of them (136=36%) were between 20-25 years old and least of them were above 35 (26=6.78%).

#### 3.2. Instrumentation

##### 3.2.1 LCP Implementation Questionnaire

In order to assess learner-centered implementation a researcher made questionnaire was used. The development and validation of the questionnaire included 2 different phases. Since the first phase, qualitative approach including literature review and interview with 20 experts and 25 TEFL B.A. students was completed, the researcher developed the first version of the questionnaire comprising 44 items with two constructs namely; teaching techniques and activities, and assessment procedures. In the second phase, to examine the content validity of the questionnaire through expert validation, it was given to 10 experts in the field of language teaching to mark each item considering the idea they had regarding the items. This process of content validation was performed in different studies such as (Ganjali et al., 2019; Nayernia et al., 2022; Tajeddin et al., 2022).

After checking the content validity qualitatively, the researcher decided to check the content validity in a quantitative manner. Therefore, content validity ratio (CVR) and content validity index (CVI) were checked. According to CVR calculated for 44 items regarding the two dimensions of learner-centered pedagogy, 1 item with CVR lower than 0.62 was removed. Therefore, the 44-item questionnaire turned out to be a questionnaire with 43 items.

In order to develop a strong instrument to be used in a specific context, it is crucial that the instrument goes through a pilot study in a relevant and similar context followed by the required modification of the instrument (Nunan & Bailey, 2009). Accordingly, the designed questionnaire was administered to 240 TEFL B.A. students. Gathered data were examined running Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) to prove the number and the correlations of the extracted components. The KMO index considered the subtle correlation among the variance of the variables revealed that the variance of the items of the questionnaire had *Not* been influenced by the common variance of hidden variables. Besides, Bartlett index (Sig.=.000) rejected the hypothesis of correlation matrix convergence. Employing maximum likelihood extraction method, the factor matrix for the scale resulted in two components and the related item for each component had a satisfactory correlation index (more than .40). The result related to the second component, assessment procedure, are reported in Table 2.

**Table 2**  
*Factor Matrix for LCP Implementation Questionnaire*

	Component	
	1	2
Q1		.58
Q2		.80
Q3		.59
Q4		.86
Q5		.80
Q6		.59
Q7		.82
Q8		.86
Q9		.60
Q10		.45
Q11		.49

Extraction Method: Maximum Likelihood.

a. 2 components extracted.

The correlation matrix between the explored components of the students' version scale (.27) is shown in Table 3.

**Table 3**

*Component Correlation Matrix for Students' Version Scale*

Component	1	2
teaching techniques and activities	1.000	.273
assessment procedures	.273	1.000

Extraction Method: Maximum Likelihood.

Rotation Method: Promax with Kaiser Normalization.

Following EFA, parallel analysis was run. Accordingly, parallel analysis considering the two components of the questionnaire revealed that the mean eigenvalue for these two components was more than one, thus it was allowed to have two proposed components.

The convergent validity indices for each factor of the data analyzed in this phase were .72 and .74 for teaching techniques and activities and assessment procedures, respectively. Thus, it can be claimed that the components enjoyed acceptable convergent validity. According to the calculations and the formula for evaluating the discriminant validity, the average variance extracted between the components (.52) should be higher than the average correlation square for the components (.07). Therefore, the discriminant validity was established.

Finally, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was run to make sure of the factor(s) and items loadings with another group of 157 TEFL B.A. students. Loadings of the teaching techniques and activities ranged from .41 to .90. Loadings of the assessment procedures ranged from .28 to .80. Loading of each item is reported in Table 4.

**Table 4**

*Loading of the Assessment Procedures Items*

	Assessment Procedures
Q1	.57
Q2	.80
Q3	.28
Q4	.33
Q5	.66
Q6	.53
Q7	.80
Q8	.79
Q9	.64
Q10	.52
Q11	.69

Extraction Method: Maximum Likelihood.

a. 2 components extracted.

As shown by Table 4, Loadings of the assessment procedures range from .28 to .80. To check whether the model fits the data adequately, goodness-of-fit indices were used. Since some measurement models did not show adequacy to the data, the researcher made a modification on the model ( $\chi^2/df= 2.98$ , CFI=.91, GFI= .9., RMSEA=.07). This modification



included the removal of 1 item; therefore, the final questionnaire included 42 items. It is worth mentioning that 32 items were under the classification of the “teaching techniques and activities” and 10 items were categorized as “assessment procedures”. The reliability of the questionnaire using Cronbach's alpha was estimated to be .93.

The responses of each item were on a five-point Likert scale including always, often, sometimes, rarely, never for the two subscales. Regarding the aim of the present study the data related to the second subscale namely; assessment procedures were used and the data regarding the first subscale; namely teaching techniques and activities were not considered. Items of the assessment subscale of the questionnaire are as follows:

1. Assessment is closely related to the syllabus.
2. Our professors use various quizzes.
3. Our professors assess us based on our portfolios.
4. Our professors assess us while we are involved in pair work.
5. Our professors assess us based on our self-assessment.
6. Our professors negotiate on the type of assessment to take with us.
7. Our professors negotiate on the content of assessment to take with us.
8. Our professors assess us based on the projects we have carried out.
9. Our professors assess us while we are involved in group work.
10. Our professors assign take-home tests.

### *3.3.Procedures*

Due to the Crona virus (Covid-19) pandemic and the restrictions over the world, the questionnaire was organized in Google-form and was distributed to the participants using different kinds of social media such as; Telegram, WhatsApp, Linked- in, and email. Creating the electronic forms of questionnaire is a suitable way for researchers to gather data from different parts of the country (Dörnyei, 2008). At the beginning of the questionnaire, following a short explanation of the objectives of the study, the demographic information of the participants like their gender, age, and university type was asked. The confidentiality of the participants was carefully considered. The collected data were summarized on SPSS software. The participants' demographic information was summarized followed by one-way ANOVA to find the differences between implementation of learner-centered assessment at different Iranian universities.

### *3.4 Study Design*

The design of the present study was a descriptive comparative one. The researcher compared three different groups in order to draw a conclusion about them.

## **4. Results and Discussion**

Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used to check the normality of data distribution. Table 5 shows the results of the Kolmogorov- Smirnov test.

**Table 5**

*The Results of K-S Test*

	<b>Statistic</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
<b>Student Questionnaire</b>	.06	378	.07

Regarding Table 5, the obtained sig. value of the questionnaire is more than .05. Thus, it can safely be concluded that the data is normally distributed across the instrument. According to the df reported in the table, 378 students participated in the study.

Descriptive statistics of students' responses based on university type is reported in Table 6.

**Table 6**

*Descriptive Statistics of the Participants' Assessment Scores Based on University Type*

<b>Assessment</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Min.</b>	<b>Max.</b>
<b>State</b>	87	2.53	.47	1.30	3.50
<b>Non-state</b>	124	2.72	.55	1.30	4.40
<b>Islamic Azad</b>	167	2.71	.52	1.30	4.40
<b>Total</b>	378	2.67	.52	1.30	4.40

As seen in Table 6, the highest mean score (2.72) is for non-state university students and the average minimum score (1.30) is equal for all students from different university types, while average maximum score for non-state and Islamic Azad university students (4.40) was equal and it is lower (3.50) for state university students. Regarding mean scores, it can be claimed that assessment procedures in non-state and Islamic Azad universities are more learner-centered than state universities. To see whether this difference is meaningful, ANOVA was run.

**Table 7**

*Test of Homogeneity of the Variance*

	<b>Levene</b>			
	<b>Statistic</b>	<b>df1</b>	<b>df2</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
<b>Assessment</b> Based on Mean	.80	2	375	.44
Based on Median	.92	2	375	.39
Based on Median and with adjusted df	.92	2	372.45	.39
Based on trimmed mean	.79	2	375	.45

The assumption for homogeneity of variance is not to have a significant value in that column. Regarding the Levene's test, based on different mean scores, no significant difference among variances were observed (sig. >.05).

The analysis of variance between three groups (students from three university types) is reported in Table 8.

**Table 8**

*ANOVA Analysis for Students' Assessment Scores Regrading Different University Types*

<b>Assessment</b>					
	<b>Sum of Squares</b>	<b>Df</b>	<b>Mean Square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
<b>Between Groups</b>	2.15	2	1.07	3.94	.02
<b>Within Groups</b>	102.51	375	.27		
<b>Total</b>	104.67	377			

The results demonstrate a significant, meaningful difference among the performance of three groups ( $F(2,375)=3.94$ ;  $Sig.=.02$ ). To compare the performance of learners in more details, Tukey and Scheffe tests were run. Results are demonstrated in Table 9.

**Table 9**

*Comparison of Assessment between Groups*

**Dependent Variable: assessment**

	(I) university type	(J) university type	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
<b>Tukey HSD</b>	State	Non-state	-.18*	.07	.03	-.35	-.01
		Islamic Azad	-.175*	.06	.03	-.33	-.01
	Non-state	State	.18*	.07	.03	.01	.35
		Islamic Azad	.009	.06	.98	-.13	.15
<b>Scheffe</b>	Islamic Azad	State	.17*	.06	.03	.01	.33
		Non-state	-.00	.06	.98	-.15	.13
	State	Non-state	-.18*	.07	.04	-.3643	-.00
		Islamic Azad	-.17*	.06	.04	-.3451	-.00
Non-state	State	.18*	.07	.04	.0049	.36	
	Islamic Azad	.00	.06	.98	-.1429	.16	
Islamic Azad	State	.17*	.06	.04	.0053	.34	
	Non-state	-.00	.06	.98	-.1617	.14	

\*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

As revealed by Table 9, there is a significant difference between the performance of state university, Islamic Azad and non-state university (.03, .04, regarding Tukey and Scheffe tests, respectively), while no meaningful difference (.98) was found between the performance of Islamic Azad and non-state university students. In other words, students studying at state universities hold a different perception of LCP assessment practices in their educational program. This implies that teacher training students of Islamic Azad universities and non-state universities hold the same perceptions about implementation of learner-centered assessment in

their academic program. In other words, the results suggest that assessment procedures in Islamic Azad and non-state universities are more learner-centered.

The aim of the present study was to observe the difference in implementing learner-centered pedagogy in assessment procedures among different Iranian universities. Analyzing data revealed a meaningful difference between the performance of state university and Islamic Azad and non-state university, while no meaningful difference was found between the performance of Islamic Azad and non-state university students. In other words, it was observed that assessment procedures in Islamic Azad and non-state universities are more learner-centered than state universities. The results of the study highlighted the need to bridge the gap between theory and practice in the teaching career (McGarr et al., 2017; Trent, 2019). The present study led credence to theoretical underpinnings of learner-centered approach in language teaching suggesting that identifying learner' evaluation of this approach is of utmost importance (Garrett & Shortall, 2002; Le Ha, 2014).

Assessment is key to generate a more learner-centered classroom and learner-centered assessment is informative and beneficial for many reasons. Learner-centered assessment offers useful information that stakeholders at all levels such as students, teachers, administrators, and policy makers can use to support learning. It should be considered that learner-centered assessment encompasses the active involvement of students in setting objectives for their learning and growth, evaluating their progress toward those objectives, and think how to address any gaps. Classroom assessment practices such as self-assessment, peer assessment, and portfolios can help students learn core content knowledge and skills and develop important self-regulatory habits.

Some recent studies mentioned different formative assessment methods and demonstrated that the learner-centered assessment procedures are employed at institutional and national levels (Gaebel et al., 2018). However, Coates (2015) stated that assessment techniques do no correspond to the new changes in the field of teaching language.

The results of the current study were in contrast with some of the studies carried out by different researcher round the world. For example, the results of the present study differ with the findings of the study carried out by Isik (2020) which showed that the type of school did not meaningfully influence how assessment was perceived by the TEFL students in Turkish context. Moreover, it was found that the students were displeased with the assessment procedures and they did not believe that they were assessed. The results also differ with the finding of an investigation carried out by Salema (2017) which showed that there is no difference between implementation of LCP assessment procedures in public and private schools of Klimanjaro. He believed that learner-centered assessment procedures were still behind the LCP standards at schools. Moreover, the results are in contrast with the findings of Myers and Myers (2015) which showed that institutional contextual differences did not have much impact on the differential use of learner-centered assessment practices.

The results are in line with the findings of the study conducted by Webber (2012) which revealed that the extent to which LCP assessment techniques are implemented in different educational context differ with regard to institution type. Besides, the results of the study confirmed the results of the study conducted by Orabah & Bijani (2022) which showed that assessment practices in Oman are not learner-centered.

Besides the formal assessment procedures that take place in all the classes, peer evaluation, self-assessment, and other forms LCP assessment must be employed in English classes to improve learning and making new knowledge constructs. This can be better understood with teachers' guide, descriptions and exemplifications concerning the goal of conducting different forms of assessment, its benefits and disadvantages. This study proposes that when learners are prepared with sound knowledge and become ready for employing peer-evaluation, it can aid students' learning, encourage them, and bring about future collaboration in their future studies. It is highly recommended that teachers use sound assessment that doesn't merely rely on recalling information, but assessment procedures should be based on collecting, developing, and evaluating information. Since learning in LCP is individualized, multiple intelligences must always be realized while assessing students (Duncan & Cohen, 2011). Instructors must not see themselves as the only ones who have information to provide, but rather they must believe that learners may also have information to share (Weimer, 2002).

## 5. Conclusion

The current study was to examine the probable existence of significant difference in implementation of learner-centered pedagogy in assessment procedures among different Iranian universities in the view of students. One-way ANOVA was run to analyze the data and answer the research question. The results of the analysis indicated a significant difference in the performance of state university and Islamic Azad and non-state university. In other words, the students studying at state universities hold a different perception of LCP assessment practices in their educational program. This implies that assessment procedures implemented at Islamic Azad and non-state universities are more learner-centered.

Implementing LCP in classes is a real challenge, but it is believed to be useful in the present age. The process of integrating it into our education system requires hard work from both teachers and students. The significant key to the effective use of LCP, on the teacher's part, is a detailed study and a comprehensive understanding of its principles, and a genuine understanding of its significance. Over the new improvements in the education, teachers need to change their old opinions and experiences; they are suggested to set the new objectives and values, plan their teaching, and consider what is best for learners. Accordingly, teachers are highly recommended to improve professional development. As mentioned by Tawalbeh and AlAsmari (2015) professional development sessions are highly suggested for teachers to state their opinions about learner-centered teaching and the obstacles that might impede the use of learner-centered teaching.

If students understand that they are to follow the rapidly changing world, and to contest in the global market place that has an increasing call for educated workers with abilities in decision making, critical thinking, and problem solving they should modify the long-time exercise from passive to active students. They should be trained how to authorize themselves, control their learning, and become independent students. Finally, it is obvious that instructors and learners working in cooperation have progressively made the learning situation more creative and meaningful. Therefore, learner-centered class is not a myth but a real improvement in educational system.

The implications of these findings can help teachers fit their assessment practices regarding learner-centered parameters to improve students' achievement. Another implication of the study for EFL teachers, learners, policy makers, and curriculum planners is the absolute potential of learner-centered approach in increasing EFL learners' learning motivation. One of the significant implications for teachers is that owing to living in the age of information, and globalization, the former educational approaches can no longer fulfill the changing requirements of 21<sup>st</sup> century EFL students. This requires EFL teachers to adopt the newest modifications in the educational shift from teacher-centeredness to learner-centeredness.

Like many other research studies, this study was impeded by certain limitations, which directly or indirectly threatened its validity. This study was confined to TEFL B.A. program, and did not consider other fields of English such as translation and English literature. Also, it didn't take into account the learner-centered pedagogy at schools, or private English institutes. Moreover, the number of the participants from different universities were not equal; many participants were the students of Islamic Azad university.

Further studies can be done to find out the associations between the degree of implementation of learner-centered techniques and teachers' personality traits. Studies with longitudinal or experimental designs are suggested to observe the students' views on different features of learner-centered pedagogy. More studies can also be conducted to find the challenges of implementing learner-centered pedagogy in Iranian context.

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The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

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