

Beginning Omani EFL Teachers' Perspectives on the Challenges They Encounter

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Abstract

Teachers are of course key agents in all formal educational systems. If well-adjusted and well-prepared, they can motivate and inspire their students, while those facing challenges might find it difficult to teach effectively and so fail to achieve the goals set by the educational institution they work in. Research has found that novice teachers face many challenges, such as classroom management, lack of curricular freedom, unsupportive colleagues and unstimulating school environments (Goodwin, 2012). For new EFL teachers, these challenges might be very numerous indeed and the effect on their teaching serious. This study aims to reveal the problems encountered by novice English teachers in Oman's Al Sharqia Region. The study sample included 40 participants (20 female and 20 male) who had taught no more than 5 years. Through a questionnaire, the study found three factors playing vital roles in either supporting or handicapping novice teachers. These come under school conditions, the students, and the teachers themselves. Workload requirements top the list of factors. Next comes large class sizes, novice teachers' inability to deal with special needs students and student misbehaviour. And finally, beginning teachers appear unable to strike a balance between work requirements and their personal life. To support novice teachers and help them to satisfactorily carry out their career responsibilities, the study recommends that they be provided with emotional and task-based support programs upon joining schools.

Keywords: beginning teachers, novice EFL teachers, challenges, Omani EFL teachers