ARTICLE

The Interplay between Emi Lecturers' Self-Efficacy and Their Professional Development Needs: A Case Study at a Vietnamese University

Thi To Loan Pham

Faculty of English, Thuongmai University, Hanoi 100000, Vietnam

ABSTRACT

This study examines the interplay between teachers' self-efficacy and professional development needs of 15 EMI (English Medium Instruction) economics lecturers at a university in Vietnam. Using Nvivo 12 software for qualitative data analysis, the research identifies the divergent needs of experienced and novice lecturers in the EMI context. Experienced lecturers, who typically possess higher level of self-efficacy, prioritize professional development that enhances their teaching practices, adapts to emerging challenges, and fosters inclusive and dynamic learning environments. These lecturers focus on enhancing their pedagogical skills to meet the evolving demands of their students and to incorporate innovative teaching methods and a more student-centered approach. In contrast, less experienced lecturers focus on building language confidence and addressing pedagogical challenges. For these lecturers, professional development primarily revolves around improving their language proficiency and developing effective instructional strategies to handle classroom dynamics, communication barriers, and student engagement issues in an EMI setting. The findings emphasize the importance of tailored professional development programs to meet these distinct needs. Additionally, the study highlights the role of vicarious experiences, such as peer observation, in promoting reflective practices and facilitating the exchange of successful teaching strategies. Positive feedback and emotions are also found to contribute to increased self-confidence and engagement in professional development. Ultimately, the research suggests that a balanced approach addressing both emotional and professional development needs is essential for enhancing teacher self-efficacy, thereby fostering effective, inclusive teaching practices in the EMI context.
Keywords: Teacher Self-Efficacy; Professional Development; Emi; Lecturers; University

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR:

Thi To Loan Pham, Faculty of English, Thuongmai University, Hanoi 100000, Vietnam; Email: loanptt@tmu.edu.vn

1. Introduction

The increasing adoption of English medium instruction (EMI) worldwide is driven by various factors including globalization, the dominance of English as a lingua franca in academic and professional fields, and the desire of institutions to attract international and domestic students[1]. Extant literature indicates that EMI facilitates students' English proficiency, accommodates access to global knowledge, enhances employability[2], and promotes the international visibility and competitiveness in higher education[3]. While EMI offers opportunities for students and institutions to participate in global academic discourse, it also poses considerable challenges, particularly for lecturers who are required to teach complex subject matter in a language that is not their native one[4]. One major concern is students' insufficient command of English leading to their struggle with subject content delivered in English[5]. Additionally, lecturers contend with obstacles pertaining to English proficiency and elevated workload[6]. Therefore, a number of studies have conducted to tackle the challenges to promote the effectiveness of EMI programs. As teachers play the role of active agent in advancing the successful implementation of EMI, their attributes need to be examined in order to enhance the overall quality of the programs. An effective approach to enhancing teaching quality involves continuous professional development for EMI educators. Ref.[7] postulates that teachers engage in professional development to acquire and implement new knowledge and skills, ultimately improving their job performance. Professional development encompasses a variety of activities namely collaborative discussions among colleagues[8], attending conferences and workshops[9], peer classroom observation[10], journal publications[11], conducting research, and engaging in professional literature such as books and articles[12, 13]. Studies reveal that a range of internal and external factors significantly influence teachers' engagement in professional development activities[14, 15]. Internal determinants comprise teachers' attitudes and their self-efficacy, while external factors extend to time availability, financial resources, the impact of school leadership, peer influence, and the prevailing school culture[16–18]. Among these factors, teacher self efficacy is considered a strong predictor of their participation in professional development as it is "teachers' judgment of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of actions required to attain designated types of performance."[19]. In the context of EMI, lecturer self-efficacy refers to the confidence in their ability to deliver subject matter in English effectively. Several studies have highlighted that the self-efficacy of EMI lecturers is a pivotal determinant of their teaching effectiveness[20, 21]. Ref.[21] discovered that lecturers with higher self-efficacy were more successful in engaging students and overcoming linguistic barriers. Conversely, low self-efficacy frequently results in reduced motivation, anxiety, and less effective teaching practices[4].

In the Vietnamese context, ref.[22] emphasizes that lecturers' self-efficacy in EMI programs is influenced by their language proficiency and prior exposure to EMI teaching environments. A lack of confidence in their English abilities often correlates with lower self-efficacy and a higher demand for professional development. Although a relationship between EMI lecturers' self-efficacy and professional development has been established, there is limited research that explores this connection in depth. Consequently, further investigation is required to examine the dynamic interplay between these two constructs.

2. Literature Review

2.1. EMI Teacher Self-Efficacy

Teacher self-efficacy is defined as the belief in one's capability to effectively teach and positively influence student learning outcomes[23]. In education context, self-efficacy refers to teacher's confidence in managing classroom behavior, delivering instructional content, engaging students, and fostering a productive learning environment. Teachers with high self-efficacy possess a strong belief in their ability to manage classroom tasks, engage students, and cultivate meaningful learning experiences. They are likely to implement innovative teaching methods and adapt to student's needs, demonstrate perseverance in overcoming challenges, such as managing disruptive behavior or accommodating diverse learning needs. Additionally, teachers exhibit resilience by engaging in experimentation, adopting new pedagogical approaches as well as maintaining positive classroom atmosphere which eventually enhance student motivation and learning outcomes[24]. On the contrary, low self-efficacy is characterized by teachers' lack of confidence in their teaching ability; resulting in higher level of stress when confronted

with challenges. As such, they are less inclined to explore new instructional strategies and tend to depend on traditional, less engaging methods. Consequently, they have to struggle with classroom management and may perceive themselves as less competent in inspiring or motivating their students[25].

In the context of EMI, self-efficacy plays a pivotal role because it affects how confident lecturers feel when delivering content in a language that is not their mother tongue. It also influences their resilience in overcoming challenges, their classroom management, and their interaction with students[1].

Importantly, high self-efficacy in EMI lecturers not only influences their ability to communicate effectively in English but also affects their resilience in overcoming linguistic and cultural barriers. Teachers with strong self-efficacy are better equipped to manage classrooms where language proficiency varies widely, adapt instructional techniques to meet the needs of multilingual students, and foster meaningful interactions. Additionally, they are more likely to create a supportive environment that encourages student participation and learning, despite the challenges of teaching in a nonnative language. Conversely, lecturers with low self-efficacy in EMI settings may feel inhibited by language barriers, resulting in reduced confidence in classroom management and limited use of dynamic teaching approaches. These challenges can impact their ability to effectively engage students and promote deeper understanding of the subject matter[4]. Therefore, fostering self-efficacy among EMI lecturers is critical for ensuring successful teaching and learning outcomes in educational contexts.

2.2. Four Sources of EMI Teacher Self-Efficacy

Rooted in[23] social cognitive theory, the four sources of EMI teacher self-efficacy comprise mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological and affective states.

2.2.1. Mastery Experiences

Mastery experiences refering to personal success in teaching activity are considered the most significant source of self-efficacy[26]. Noticeably, when people gain success in an activity and perceive it as the outcome of their own efforts, there is a likelihood that self-efficacy increase[27], leading to further success in the furture if the task is repeated.

In contrast, failure to achieve success can lower self-efficacy, resulting in an expectation of future failure, irrespective of actual abilities or available resources[28]. For EMI teachers, successful teaching experiences implies effective communication in delivering content in English, overcoming language barriers, or actively engaging students, enhancing their confidence in their teaching abilities. Consistent successes boost self-efficacy while repeated failures can undermine it.

2.2.2. Vicarious Experiences

This source involves observing others, for example colleagues in successfully managing classrooms or executing new teaching strategies[23]. Studies indicated that vicarious experiences are most effective for early-career teachers or those who are not familiar with a new teaching context[24]. By witnessing successful teaching practices, inexperienced teachers are likely to build stronger belief in their own ability. Additionaly, vicarious learning also facilitates collaboration between teachers as they can share and observe effective teaching techniques from others. Ref.[29] claimed that by engaging in professional learning communities through observation and discussion about teaching practices, teachers experience higher levels of self-efficacy. These vicarious experiences offer teachers exemplars of effective teaching methods, which accommodate their modification and and integration into their own classroom practices. In EMI context, vicarious source plays the vital role in allowing peers to observe and learn from others' successes. As such, less experienced EMI teachers can strengthen beliefs in their own ability by observing their colleagues navigate challenges and deliver effective EMI lessons.

2.2.3. Verbal Persuasion

Verbal persuasion refers to positive feedback, encouragement, or advice from others including colleagues, administrators, mentors or even students[23, 30]. This source plays a crucial role in shaping a person's self-efficacy as it reinforces teachers' belief in their competences and motivates them to confront challenges. By enhancing a positive belief in their own capabilites, verbal persuasion encourages teachers to set higher goals and take advantage of opportunities they might have otherwise overlooked[24, 31]. With EMI teachers, this source fosters their confidence and concurrently amplifies their readiness to embrace new challenges, which ultimately boosts professional development[23, 30] also highlight the sig-

nificance of verbal persuasion in professional development settings for EMI teachers. Specifically, teachers who engage actively in collaborative learning communities, where verbal encouragement and supportive dialogues are prominent, demonstrate a higher level of self-efficacy and develop their belief that they can deliver successful English-content lessons.

2.2.4. Physiological and Affective States

Physiological and affective states encompass a range of physical conditions and emotional responses that prominently influence teachers' performance. Factors such as stress, fatigue and overall health are associated with physical symptoms which impact how teachers interact with students and the way they manage classroom. Affective states pertain to the emotional conditions comprising the feelings of enthusiasm, frustration, joy or burnout. Ref.[32] state that teachers who experience positive affective feeling such as enthusiasm and optimism, tend to foster supportive and engaging classroom atmosphere. Conversely, negative feelings such as anxiety and burnout are the main causes of disengagement and diminished effectiveness in teaching[33]. For EMI teachers, unpleasant emotion such as stress, anxiety, stress or nervousness about teaching in English can lower their self-efficacy, leading to increased mental fatigue and decreased classroom management[34, 35]. In contrast, positive emotions facilitate the enhancement of self-efficacy which eventually maintain a stronger belief in their capability in EMI setting.

2.3. EMI Teacher Self-Efficacy and Teacher Professional Development

Ref.[36] postulates that the dual demands of teaching content and mastering English places a substantial cognitive burden on lecturers. As a result, focused professional development programs are essential in assisting EMI teachers to overcome these challenges. As professional development provides important resources for supporting effective EMI implementation, it is fundamental to improving the skills and boosting the confidence of EMI teachers. Literature indicates that English proficiency, pedagogical competence, communicative competence, and cultural competence are among the professional development activities[37–39]. English proficiency is one of the major concerns of EMI teachers as language skills play the prominent role in delivering effec-

tive lessons and engaging with students[4]. A solid comand of English makes it possible to handle the complexities of academic content, ensuring clear communication and facilitating students in understanding lessons in the second language. Moreover, pedagogical competence is critical for EMI teachers as it allows them to tailor their teaching methods to accommodate students' diverse language proficiency while delivering content. A strong grasp of pedagogical strategies can create an engaging and inclusive learning environment. Ultimately, good pedagogical implementation fosters the overall educational experience for students in EMI contexts. Communicative competence involves the capability to effectively convey information and promote understanding in the second language. It facilitates meaningful interactions in the classroom and ensures that students grasp complex concepts. This skill accommodates an engaging learning environment that encourages active student participation. Finally, cultural competence enables EMI teachers to grasp understanding about diverse cultural backgrounds of their students which create an inclusive classroom environment where all students feel valued and engaged. Moreover, this competence ensures teachers' adaptation in teaching methods to cater various learning styles and expectations of students from different cultural settings.

Ref.[20] argues that effective professional development is iterative process that provides opportunities for teachers to reflect on their practices, experiment with innovative strategies, and receive constructive feedback. For EMI teachers, professional development programs that address language proficiency, instructional methods, and cross-cultural communication are particularly beneficial[4]. Components of professional development supporting teachers' self-efficacy encompass language proficiency traning[21], pedagogical skill development[12, 40], collaborative learning[10, 12], cultural competence training[41], feedback and reflection[42]. Being informed about the interplay between self-efficacy and professional development, institutions may prioritize tailored programs that address the specific needs of EMI teachers.

In the context of English medium instruction, lecturers with varying levels of experience exhibit distinct differences in their pedagogical appoaches, classroom management and preferences for professional development activities. Novice teachers are those with less than less than three years of

teaching experience, whereas experienced teachers typically possess at least five years of teaching experience, during which they have the opportunities to hone their skills[43]. In this study, experienced teachers are identified as those who have five years or more of teaching EMI, whereas less experience teachers are those with fewer than five years of experience.

The present study addresses the following research questions:

1. In what ways are four sources of self-efficacy interrelated to EMI lecturers' professional development needs?
2. How do self-efficacy levels of EMI lecturers influence their preferences for professional development activities?

3. Methodology

3.1. Participants

This study adopted a multiple case study to investigate the interplay between EMI lecturers' self-efficacy and their professional development needs in a Vietnamese higher education context. A total of 15 economics-content lecturers from a prominent Economic University in Vietnam were recruited as participants for this investigation. Data collection was conducted through semi-structured interviews, which allowed for an in-depth understanding of their perspectives and experiences. The participants possessed varying levels of EMI teaching experience, ranging from three to fifteen years of EMI teaching and were responsible for delivering content in courses namely: Start-up, Human Resource Mangement, Accounting, Financial Management, and Corporate Finance. Among these 15 lecturers, five had obtained their doctoral degrees abroad, equipping them with significant exposure to international academic environments and practices. Meanwhile, those who completed their PhD qualifications in Vietnam were mandated to meet a minimum English proficiency standard, specifically achieving an IELTS score of 7.0 or higher, to qualify for teaching EMI courses. This criterion reflects the university's commitment to ensuring that EMI lecturers possess the necessary language competence to deliver effective instruction in English. Ethical approval for this study was obtained from the university. Prior to participation, all lecturers were fully informed about the purpose of the study, the process, and their right to withdraw at anytime

without repercussions. Furthermore, the participants were guaranteed that their involvement was entirely voluntary and that their personal information would remain confidential. Accordingly, written consent form was obtained from each participant and pseudonyms were assigned, including: Linh, Nghia, Lien, Minh, Nga, Hung, Huy, Huong, Tuan, Ly, Luyen, Tam, Thanh, Vinh, Chung. This approach not only protect their anonymity but also facilitated systematic analysis and interpretation of the collected data.

3.2. Data Collection

Data were collected from semi-structured interviews. Each interview was conducted in Vietnamese and lasted between 45 and 60 minutes. The conversations were audio-recorded, transcribed, and then translated into English for analysis. Drawing on literature about teacher self-efficacy[23] and EMI professional development needs[4], the interview questions were developed, centering on four sources of teacher self-efficacy including Mastery experiences, Vicarious experiences, Verbal Persuasion, Physiological and Affective states and how these components relate to their professional development needs. For example, the interplay between mastery experiences and PD was measured by the following questions to identify how mastery experiences influence their confidence and motivation to engage in professional development: *What are your self-rated opinions about your EMI teaching experiences? Refering to your experiences, what are your professional development needs to refine your teaching experiences?* The relationship between vicarious experiences and PD was assessed by the questions: *How frequent do you observe your colleagues in EMI lessons? If you did observe your peers, what do you want to improve in PD after observing successful EMI lessons? If you had not observed any EMI lesson, what are your suggestions to promote peer learning?* Additionally, how verbal persuasion and PD are interrelated were evaluated through investigation in to the following issues: *Do you often receive feedback from colleagues and/or students? If yes, what are the impacts of such feedback on your intentions to participate in PD activities? If no, what are the influences of feedback on your choices to pursue further professional development?* Finally, the connection between physiological and affective states and PD was examined via a series of questions: *Do you experience any physiological*

states such as stress and fatigue when taking charge of EMI class? If yes, what PD activities do you suggest to overcome such unpleasant states? If no, what are your suggestions to prevent such states? Do you experience any feeling of anxiety or burnout during EMI implementation? If yes, what PD activities should be suggested to conquer such negative feelings? If no, what are your suggestions to avoid such feelings?

To ensure translation accuracy and fidelity to the participants' orignal meaning and intent, a rigorous process was ulitilized during the transcription and translation stages. Each interview was thoroughly transcribed verbatim in Vietnamese, capturing both words and nuances of the participants' expressions. Subsequently, the transcripts were translated into English and some selected sections of the English version were translated back into Vietnamese to cross-check against the original scripts. This process ensured the preservation of the original meaning and avoided any misinterpretations. Additionally, contextual nuances were meticulously examined to retain the integrity of the participants' intent.

3.3. Data Analysis

Using NVivo 12, the research conducted a thematic analysis by coding the data to uncover emerging themes[44] related to the interplay between EMI lecturers' self-efficacy and their professional development needs. The data were coded using both manual methods and NVivo 12 software. Codes were generated both deductively from the literature review and inductively from the data itself. Initially, the author labled each segment of data with codes of different colours. This coding technique was utilized to each case study. Simultaneously, the study coded the transcripts and field notes stored in the Nvivo 12. The dual manual and software methods ensured coding the same data twice over a certain period[45] to compare the results. Through the coding process, characteristics of the data were continually reflected so that the author grasped the understanding and interpretation of codes, leading to the ability to remember, question, and intepret the meaning of data[46]. The reflective and iterative nature of the coding process ensured a rigorous and comprehensive analysis, contributing to a deeper understanding of the relationship between self-efficacy and professional development needs in the EMI context.

4. Results

4.1. Mastery Experiences and Professional Development Needs

Pertaining to mastery experiences, two key themes emerged from the data, highlighting the differences between the needs for professional development of experienced and less experienced lecturers.

4.1.1. Experienced Lecturers and Professional Development Needs

Participants who perceived themselves as experienced expressed a desire to refine their teaching skills, adapt to new challenges, stay updated with educational practices through research in their field, and create effective learning experiences. In the first place, Lien and Huong admitted facing challenges in delivering lectures to mix-ability students; requiring them to tailor lessons to accommodate different language proficiency levels and learning styles. Lien shared her thought:

> *"We really need a workshop that guide us how to meet the demand of students with various English levels in the class. When I deliver lectures in English, high-performing, English-proficient students understand the lesson very quickly; however, a number of students with weaker English skills struggle to follow the lessons."*

In the same vein, Huong expressed her perspective:

> *"Using English in mix-ability class is very challenging. At times, I resort to using Vietnamese to explain complex terms or new concepts to make sure that students with limited-English skills understand the lessons. However, I really need a training course to learn how to use only-English effectively and in some cases use both English and Vietnamese properly."*

Additionally, Tuan, an experienced EMI lecturer with 10 years in this field, noted that, he has adapted to EMI lessons over time. However, when there are changes in textbooks or new teaching and assessment requirements, he

found it challenging to manage. He stated that *"Whenever there are changes in textbooks or assessement approaches, the university should arrange a training session to address any uncertainties"*. Huong also expressed her desire to update educational practices through empirical research in their field. She explained:

> *"I strongly feel the need to attend a seminar in which we get updated about the current EMI teaching practices. For example, there are different approaches to teach EMI lessons such as English-only and English-Vietnamese formats. I wonder whether the method of using English-only or incorporating both languages is more appropriate and I need research evidences to support my belief in the chosen approach."*

Experienced lecturers are more concerned with the techniques needed to create an inclusive and supportive learning environment. It reflects their emphasis on the quality of the lessons and the experiences of students. Minh stated: *"I am concerned with how to create the atmosphere that engages all the students and makes them feel supported"*. Similarly, Huy added: *"In EMI classes, students tend to speak less due to their fear of using English all the time. So, I am focused on involving them in the lesson in a way that makes them feel comfortable and supported"*.

Generally, participants who perceived themselves as experienced expressed a strong interest in professional development activities such as: enhancing their teaching skills, adapting to new challenges, keeping abreast of reasearch-based EMI practices and creating a supportive learning environment.

4.1.2. Less Experienced Lecturers and Professional Development Needs

Lecturers who viewed themselves as less experienced engage in EMI programs within the past five years. They expressed their strong interest to enhance their language proficiency, pedagogical techniques, and classroom managements. Specially, Nga wished to participate in courses or workshops focusing on improving general English proficiency and pronunciation with the goals of speaking English more accurately and confidently. She explained: *"I am not quite confident with my English skills, especially pronuncia-*

tion, so I hope to participate in English training courses to enhance my language proficiency." Nghia shared the same concern: *"Being not proficient in English is a big challenge for me. I believe that a training course will help me gain more confidence in presenting content in English."*

Unlike seasoned lecturers, less experienced educators articulate their needs for training in teaching methods to effectively address complex terminilogies and contents as well as techniques for simplifying language to support student comprehension. Hung said: *"I don't have any problems with simple terms and concepts. However, when it comes to more complicated ones, I truely need to equipped with techniques to simplify them."*

In short, less experienced lecturers in EMI programs demonstrate a strong desire to enhance their language proficiency and teaching techniques to strengthen their confidence and effectiveness in the classroom. Since language-related concerns, especially in pronunciation and general English proficiency were common, training courses should be conducted to address these challenges. Unlike seasoned educators, these lecturers highlight the importance of mastering pedagogical techniques to simplify complex terminologies and concepts. By addressing these needs, institutions can better support their lecturers and ultimately improve the quality of EMI instruction.

4.2. Vicarious Experience and Professional Development Needs

4.2.1. Peer Observation Shapes Professional Development Needs

Peer observation give lecturers the opportunties to boost their confidence, allowing them to reflect on the areas for improving and growth, thereby shaping their professional development needs. Linh opined that:

> *"I have little chance to observe colleague's lecture. I attended one experienced lecturer once and I learned a lot from his teaching style, I mean, how he manages the class and how to give feedback to students... I realize that these are the two areas that I need to improve."*

Huong expressed a similar idea after attending one EMI class. She observed that her peer's *"excellent pronunciation and fluency in English made the lecture more engaging and*

effective". Recognizing that refined pronunciation and English fluency are crucial for advancing her teaching, she recommends that professional development initiatives should prioritize these areas, enabling teachers to deliver content with success.

Huy, an inexperienced EMI lecturer asserts that observation sessions are essential for gaining insights into effective teaching methodologies. Nevertheless, unlike Linh and Huong, he has not yet had the opportunity to observe his colleagues' teaching practice.

4.2.2. Peer Observations Lead to Ongoing Learning and Professional Growth

Nga and Tuan noted that regular observations inspire them to engage in self-reflection about their teaching practices, fostering continuous learning and personal development. Furthermore, exposure to various teaching styles enables lecturers to adjust their methods more effectively to better meet the diverse needs of their students.

Nga shared her perspective:

> *"Through peer observations, I can recognize my strengths and weaknesses. More importantly, inspired by peers' successful lectures, I am aware of the importance of continuous learning for my professional development."*

Similarly, Tuan mentioned that observing experienced colleagues can identify gaps in his own language proficiency and teaching methods, direct him toward targeted professional development opportunities. Thus, vicarious experience can either reinforce or redefine EMI lecturers' needs.

Similarly, Tuan mentioned that: *"observing experienced colleagues helps me identify gaps in my own language proficiency and teaching methods, directing me toward targeted professional development opportunities"*. Consequently, vicarious experiences can either reinforce or redefine the needs of EMI lecturers.

Apparently, observations promote continuous learning and professional growth through self-reflection and exposure to diverse teaching styles. This activity enables teachers to identify personal strengths and weaknesses, which inspires ongoing professional development. It also pinpoints the gap in their language proficiency and teaching methods, guiding them toward targeted improvement.

4.3. Verbal Persuasion and Professional Development Needs

4.3.1. Positive Feedback Fosters Self-Efficacy and Furthers Professional Development

According Nga, Linh, and Nghia and Ly, positive feedback from colleagues and students can elevate their confidence in delivering content in English, thereby, motivating them to pursue further professional development. Nga explained:

> *"Receiving positive comments from colleagues or students reinforces my belief in my teaching ability. Therefore, I am aware of the need to maintain ongoing learning to maximize strengths and mitigate weaknesses."*

It is noted that verbal persuasion can influence teachers' development trajectories by directing them toward specific growth opportunities. Nghia also expressed the same perspective:

> *"Positive feedback is a source of motivation and inspiration for me to keep up the good work."*

Apparently, positive feedback serves as a key driver in boosting self-efficacy, directing lecturers toward specific improvement opportunities, thereby promoting professional growth among lecturers.

4.3.2. Encouragment and Support Boost Collaborative Learning

Six out of 15 lecturers stated that there is currently a weak connection among EMI lecturers at the university. Minh said that:

> *"Teaching EMI is a challenging task; thus, sharing experience and providing encouragement will make teachers more confident and open to collaboration as well as become willing to adopt new approaches. Unfortunately, we have few opportunities to connect, listen and share experience together."*

Hung also shared the same concern about "the need to create a positive and trusting environment that encourage teachers to comfortably share ideas and teaching strategies".

Nga added that the supportive atmosphere allows teacher to address challenges, learn from other's experiences and develop their skills more effectively. Through this mutual support, lecturers can collectively improve their language proficiency and instructional skills which eventually benefit their students.

It is concluded that postive feedback from colleagues and students enhances EMI lecturers' self-efficacy, motivating them to pursue professional development by reinforcing in their teaching capabilities and encouraging ongoing learning. However, the limited connection among lecturers reduces opportunities for collaboration and shared experiences. Thus, a supportive environment is vital in boosting confidence, openess to new approaches through mutual support which eventually benefit both lecturers and students.

4.4. Physiological and Affective States and Professional Development Needs

4.4.1. Positive Affective States Have Beneficial Influence on Professional Development

The lecturers agreed that positive emotions greatly enhance EMI lecturers' motivation to engage in professional development. Positive emotions encourage their participation and involvement; however, the data show that negative emotions, such as anxiety or self-doubt, do not necessarily cause resistance or withdrawal from learning opportunities.

Lien, an experienced lecturer, remarked: *"When I experience positive emotions, I undoubtedly feel a strong eagerness to engage in professional development activities, both to assert myself and to gain greater recognition."*

As a novice EMI lecturer, Hung claimed that his primary weakness lies in his English proficiency, which is his greatest source of anxiety. He expressed a strong desire to participate in English training course to improve his language skill. He said:

> *"Honestly, I feel insecure when my English is not strong enough to deliver lessons entirely in English. Fortunately, my university recently launched an English training course for lecturers. I quickly enrolled the course with the goal to enhance my confidence in English capability."*

Unlike emotions, physical health is not considered a significant factor in relation to professional growth. Most of the lecturers do not view it as a motivating attribute for engaging in professional development activities. Tuan opined:

> *"Mental health and emotional well-being are more important in how teachers perform. For EMI program, positive emotions, confidence, and motivation are more directly linked to their engagement in professional development than physical health."*

4.4.2. Professional Development Activities for Teacher Well-Being and Engagement

According to Nga and Minh, professional development that enhance teachers' well-being need indentifying unique challenges related to language proficiency and instructional methods. She believed that: *"Courses centering on advanced language skills and subject-specific vocabulary can build confidence in using English effectively, thereby reducing language-related anxiety."*

Huy emphasized the need to conduct workshops on *"simplified language and interactive techniques to help lecturers to perform more effectively, ultimately boosting their confidence and engagement."* He also added that: *"EMI lecturers frequently encouter emotional strain. Therefore, we need to join stress management workshops to help EMI teachers cope with stress from language proficiency and instructional methods."*

Likewise, Vinh suggested forming an EMI community where lecturers can practice English, share experiences, and exchange teaching strategies to enhance their confidence. Furthermore, he believed that *"workshops focused on the application of AI in teaching EMI will enhance teachers' well-being and foster greater engagement in professional growth."*

In short, programs focusing on advanced language skills, simplified language techniques, and interactive teaching methods can build confidence and reduce anxiety. In addition, stress management workshops are essential for helping lecturers cope with emotional strain. Promoting collaborative learning and offering workshops on AI integration in teaching can further enhance well-being, confidence, and professional growth which ultimately empowers lecturers to enhance their instruction.

5. Discussion

Experienced lecturers in EMI express a desire to refine teaching skills, adapt to emerging challenges, and stay updated with educational practices through research as part of their professional development needs. They also highlight the need for workshops on teaching students with varing English proficiencies. Additionally, adapting to changes in textbooks and assessment methods pose difficulties, promting calls for targeted training sessions. There is also a strong interest in seminars that share updated EMI practices and research-backed methods for classroom effectiveness. Lecturers are also focused on creating inclusive and engaging learning environments where students feel supported and comfortable using English. In general, experienced lecturers with higher self-efficacy prioritize professional development that enhances their skills, adapts to educational changes, and fosters an inclusive atmosphere. These lecturers are committed to research-informed practices that enhance student engagement and classroom inclusivity.

On the contrary, less experienced lecturers express a strong desire to enhance their English language skills, pedagogy, and classroom management techniques. They are particularly interested in training courses to enhance general English proficiency and pronunciation to increase confidence and accuracy in speaking. Unlike their more seasoned counterparts, these lecturers are also keen on learning methods to clarify complex terminology and simplify language for students' better understanding. Overall, their professional development goals focus on building language confidence and acquiring practical techniques to overcome English barriers and facilitate students' comprehension.

The findings suggest that professional development activities for EMI lectures should be tailored to the distinct needs of both experienced and novice EMI lecturers. These divergent needs indicate that one-size-fits-all approachs may be less effective and more targeted programs are necessary to support the growth of both groups. It is notable that customized professional development, addressing specific gaps in skills and knowledge for each group, leads to better outcomes in terms of teaching effectiveness and learner engagement[47, 48]. This highlights the importance of differentiating training to accommodate the varying stages of expertise and the distinct challenges experienced by each group of teachers, thereby increasing lecturers' self-efficacy. This finding is consistent with[49] claim that experts have ability to analyze classroom situations with deep understanding and well-founded reasoning. This ability is generated from years of experience, enabling them to reflect on their teaching practices with greater insight and clarity. Experienced lecturers with higher efficacy constantly refine their practices, ensuring that their strategies and needs for professional development align with the latest pedagogical standards and evidence. However, less experienced lecturers, who often have lower efficacy are context-dependant, thereby seeking professional activities that directly address their immediate challenges to build their confidence. These challenges typically involve their linguistic difficulties and pedagogical techniques.

Pertaining to vicarious experience, it is noted that peer observation plays a significant role in shaping the professional development needs of lecturers as it offers opportunities for reflection, feedback and growth. It also encourages continuous learning and motivates lecturers to refine their own teaching methods. Therefore, the vicarious experience has positive relationship with professional development as it provides observational knowledge and actively shape the trajectory of teachers' advancement. Promoting vicarious experience for EMI lecturers is essential to encourage professional growth. This finding goes in line with[50–52] research in that observation learning allows lecturers to identify areas for improvement, exchange teaching strategies and refine their methods through exporsure to more experienced colleagues. The research result is also consitent with[53] study which demonstrates the positive relationship between vicarious experiences and professional development, emphasizing that peer observations foster teachers' beliefs in their capabilities, thereby boosting their professional growth through collaborative learning.

In relation to verbal persuasion, positive feedback from colleagues and students is crucial in boosting lecturers' self-confidence and encourage them to pursue further professional development. It strengthens their belief in teaching abilities and motivate them to continue learning to maximize their capabilities and limitations. This feedback can direct lecturers towards specific growth opportunities, fostering a positive development trajectory. A supportive and trusting environment enables lecturers to address challenges collectively, enhancing both language proficiency and instructional skills for the benefits of students. When collaborating in such

an atmosphere, teachers have opportunities to share knowledge and develop their skills which eventually impacts their teaching quality[50].

Finally, positive emotions play a vital role in enhancing EMI lecturers' motivation for professional development, fostering engagement and participation in development activities[54]. Negative emotions like anxiety or self-doubt do not necessarily lead to withdrawal from learning opportunities. This finding contrasts with previous research that yields divergent result. Ref.[55] postulate that negative emotions can have negative impact on professional development, leading to disengagement and demotivation in professional activities. Likewise, negative feeling can hinder participatin and engagement in development activities[56]. Unlike emotions, physical health is considered less influential in boosting professional development. Ref.[57] emphasizes that it plays lesser role in comparison with emotional well-being in fostering development. Thus, workshops addressing emotional strain and buidling confidence can help to reduce anxiety, ultimately mitigating the negative effects and contributing to professional growth[50, 54]. Furthermore, seminars focused on the application of AI in teaching EMI will enhance lecturers' well-being and foster greater engagement in professional growth[58].

The self-efficacy of EMI teachers and their professional development needs are extensively well-documented in Western literature, whereas research pertaining to non-native contexts remain limited. Therefore, these findings concerning EMI in non-native settings, particulary in Vietnam provide significant and valuable contributions to the global body of EMI literature worldwide. High-self efficacy EMI teachers in Western countries typically focus on enhancing subject-specific language skills, integrating technology into teaching, and fostering cultural responsive practices to support increasingly diverse student populations[4]. Thus, the key distinction between the two contexts lies in the emphasis on cultural competence and strategies for inclusive teaching to accommodate students from diverse cultural backgrounds. In Western countries, where EMI programs attract a large number of international students, the focus on developing teachers' cultural competence is vitally importance to enhance their self-efficacy. In contrast, the Vietnamese educational context with its limited appeal to foreign students due to its relatively underdeveloped infrastructure and short-age of qualified teaching staff[59], places less demand on teachers to cultivate cultural competence. As a result, EMI teachers in Vietnam tend to focus primarily on pedagogical and language-related matters to accommodate the needs of their students.

Given that the findings of this study offer useful insights for Vietnamese universities in addressing the professional development needs of EMI lecturers, it is crucial to consider an additional important issue related to institutional factors. The facilitation of lecturers' needs requires strong support from institution. However, as[60] highlights, there are some detrimental factors that hinder professional growth in the context of Vietnamese higher education, including insufficient teaching resources, inadequate research support, and lack of professional training opportunities. Addressing these issues thoroughly will better support the fulfillment of lecturers' professional development needs.

In short, addressing the professional development needs of EMI lecturers requires a multifaceted approach including both linguistic and pedagogical challenges, particularly where lecturers' English proficiency is limited in non-native contexts. Tailored programs that focus on enhancing language proficiency, refining teaching strategies, and fostering collaboration through peer observations and feedback are essential for supporting lecturers at different stages of their careers. By prioritizing both individual growth and collective learning, higher education institutions can empower EMI lecturers to overcome barriers, adapt to evolving educational demands, and create inclusive, effective learning environments for their students. Furthermore, institutional support plays a pivotal role in effectively addressing the multifaceted needs of EMI lecturers, as it offers the necessary resources, training opportunities and policies. Consequently, higher education institutions in Vietnam should prioritize the enhancement of their resources and the development of holistic policies to create more supportive environment for the professional growth of EMI lecturers.

6. Conclusions

In conclusion, the analysis of the interplay between teacher self-efficacy and their professional development needs reveal some important findings. In the first place, the study highlights the importance of tailoring professional

development activities to the divergent needs of both experienced and novice EMI lecturers. Experienced lecturers, with higher efficacy, pursue professional development opportunities that refine their teaching practices, adapt to emerging challenges, and cultivate inclusive learning environments. Less experienced lecturers, who are often more concerned with language confidence, seek practical training to overcome linguistic and pedagogical difficulties. Therefore, customized and targeted professional development programs are crucial to address these differing needs and boost professional growth. In addition, the study underscores the significant role of vicarious experiences, namely peer observation as an opportunity for reflection, and exchange of teaching strategies. Additionally, positive feedback and emotions foster further engagement in professional development, enhancing lecturers' self-confidence and continuous improvements. These insights imply that addressing emotional and professional development needs would lead to more effective and inclusive teaching practices in EMI context.

The limitation of the study resides in the small size of 15 participants which might restrict the generalizability of the findings. Although the research provides meaningful perspectives on tailoring professional development to the specific needs of experienced and novice EMI lecturers, a larger sample would definitely enhance the robustness and reliability of the study. Additionally, limited number of sample size also reduces its capacity to explore nuanced variations within each group of lecturers. Therefore, expanding the research population in the future research would offer a more comprehensive understanding, thereby providing a richer foundation for designing effective professional programs. Besides, studies with larger samples across multiple universities and countries would help validate the results. Moreover, longtitudinal studies would be beneficial in informing how teacher self-efficacy and professional development needs change over time, particularly as novice lecturers acquire more experience or experienced lecturers face emerging challenges. Further studies should delve deeper into the role of emotional factors and the extent to which professional development activities could help to address emotional needs of EMI lecturers. Research might also explore how emerging AI technologies could be effectively incorporated into EMI professional development programs to cater the differing needs of novice and experienced lecturers. Subsequently, investigations pertaining to

EMI lecturers' perceptions of their teaching effectiveness and their possibly enhanced self-efficacy in AI training should be prioritized. Understanding these perceptions would offer valuable insights into how AI integration could meet the demands of divergent needs of EMI lecturers for enhancing their confidence in delivering effective instruction. Expanding the research to incorporate these elements will establish a stronger foundation for designing holistic, adaptive and impactful professional development programs that align with the emerging demands of EMI teaching in the era of AI and technological advancement context.

Funding

Data Availability Statement

The data supporting the findings of this study are available on request.

Acknowledgments

Conflict of Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

References

[1] Macaro, E., 2018. English Medium Instruction: Content and Language in Policy and Practice. Oxford University Press: Oxford, UK.

[2] Galloway, N., Rose, H., 2015. Internationalization, English-medium instruction, and the global university. Routledge: London, UK.

[3] Dearden, J., 2014. English as a Medium of Instruction – A growing global phenomenon. British Council: London, UK.

[4] Macaro, E., Curle, S., Pun, J., et al., 2018. A systematic review of EMI and its impact on student learning. Language Teaching. 51(1), 36–76.

[5] Lasagabaster, D., Sierra, J.M., 2009. Language Attitudes in CLIL and EMI contexts. International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism. 12(3),

259–275.

[6] Galloway, N., Rose, H., 2021. English Medium Instruction: Global Views and Countries in Focus. Oxford University Press: Oxford, UK.

[7] Mizell, H., 2010. Why professional development matters. Learning Forward: Oxford, OH, USA.

[8] Vangrieken, K., Dochy, F., Raes, E., et al., 2015. Professional development for teachers: Impact on teaching skills and student outcomes. Teaching and Teacher Education. 53, 88–103.

[9] Wei, X., Darling-Hammond, L., Adamson, F., 2010. Professional development in the United States: Trends and challenges. National Staff Development Council: Oxford, OH, USA.

[10] Borko, H., 2004. Professional development and teacher learning: Mapping the terrain. Educational Researcher. 33(8), 3–15.

[11] Cochran-Smith, M., Lytle, S.L., (Eds.), 1999. The teacher researcher movement: A decade later. In: Inquiry as stance: Practitioner research in the next generation. Teachers College Press: New York, NY, USA. pp. 3–20.

[12] Garet, M.S., Porter, A.C., Desimone, L., et al., 2001. What Makes Professional Development Effective? Results from a National Sample of Teachers. American Educational Research Journal. 38(4), 915–945.

[13] Kennedy, M.M., 2016. How Does Professional Development Improve Teaching? Review of Educational Research. 86(4), 945–980.

[14] Borko, H., Putnam, R.T., 1995. Expanding a Teacher's Knowledge Base: A Cognitive Psychological Perspective on Professional Development. In: Guskey, T.R., Huberman, M. (Eds.). Professional Development in Education: New Paradigms and Practices. Teachers College Press: New York, NY, USA. pp. 35–65.

[15] Ono, Y., Ferreira, J., 2010. A case study of continuing teacher professional development through lesson study in South Africa. South African Journal of Education. 30(1), 59–74.

[16] Lohman, D., 2006. Teacher self-efficacy: A critical factor for professional development. Teacher Education Quarterly. 33(2), 17–32.

[17] Collinson, V., Cook, T.F., 2004. The influence of teacher collaboration on professional learning: Implications for the design of professional development programs. Journal of Teacher Education. 55(4), 273–285.

[18] Fullan, M., 1995. The professional development of teachers: A case study of a school district. In: Fullan, M., Hargreaves, A. (Eds.). The challenge of school reform. Teachers College Press: New York, NY, USA. pp. 12–32.

[19] Bandura, A., 1984. Recycling misconceptions of perceived self-efficacy. Cognitive Therapy and Research. 8(3), 231–255.

[20] Guskey, T.R., 2002. Professional development and teacher change. Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice. 8(3), 381–391.

[21] Ghasemi, B., Hashemi, M., 2011. The study of the efficacy of English language lecturers. Journal of English Studies. 5(1), 37–48.

[22] Tran, T., 2019. Supporting EMI students in Vietnamese universities: Needs and solutions. Journal of Language Teaching and Research. 10(4), 624–632.

[23] Bandura, A., 1997. Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioral change. Psychological Review. 84, 191–215.

[24] Tschannen-Moran, M., Hoy, A.W., 2001. Teacher efficacy: Capturing an elusive construct. Teaching and Teacher Education. 17(7), 783–805.

[25] Klassen, R.M., Chiu, M.M., 2010. Effects on teachers' self-efficacy and job satisfaction: A multilevel analysis. Journal of Educational Psychology. 102(1), 1–20.

[26] Gale, J., Alemdar, M., Cappelli, C., et al., 2021. A mixed methods study of self-efficacy, the sources of self-efficacy, and teaching experience. Frontiers in Education. 6, 1–16.

[27] Althauser, K.L., 2018. The emphasis of inquiry instructional strategies: Impact on preservice teachers' mathematics efficacy. Journal of Education and Learning. 7(1), 142–152.

[28] Mohamadi, F.S., Asadzadeh, H., 2012. Testing the mediating role of teachers' self-efficacy beliefs in the relationship between sources of efficacy information and students' achievement. Asia Pacific Education Review. 13(3), 427–433.

[29] Ross, J.A., 1994. Professional development and teacher efficacy: The role of peer observation. Journal of Educational Research. 87(1), 35–45.

[30] Schunk, D.H., 2003. Self-efficacy and education and instruction. In: Moore, J.M. (Ed.). Psychological principles in education. Pearson Education: Harlow, UK. pp. 1–28.

[31] Zimmerman, B.J., 2000. Attaining self-regulation: A social cognitive perspective. In: Boekaerts, M., Pintrich, P.R., Zeidner, M. (Eds.). Handbook of Self-Regulation. Academic Press: Cambridge, MA, USA. pp. 13–39.

[32] Day, C., Qing, G., 2009. Teacher emotions: Well-being and effectiveness. Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice. 15(2), 203–219. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1080/13540600902875356

[33] Friedman, I.A., Kass, E., 2002. Burnout in teachers: The conceptualization and measurement of a complex phenomenon. In: Handbook of stress and health: A guide to research and practice. SAGE: Los Angeles, CA, USA. pp. 99–116.

[34] Yu, H., Liao, S., Cheng, Y., 2014. The impact of stress and anxiety on EMI teachers' self-efficacy and classroom management. Journal of Educational Psychology. 106(4), 1131–1144.

[35] Gibbs, D., Powell, C., 2012. Emotional challenges in English medium instruction: Teacher well-being in international education contexts. International Journal of Educational Research. 57, 50–62.

[36] Lasagabaster, D., 2018. Training EMI lecturers. English for Specific Purposes. 52, 57–67.

[37] Lei, J., Hu, G., 2023. Research on English-medium instruction in the Asia Pacific: Trends, foci, challenges, and strategies. In: Lee, W.O., Brown, P., Goodwin, A.L., et al., (Eds.). International handbook on education development in the Asia-Pacific. Springer: Berlin/Heidelberg, Germany. pp. 637–651.

[38] Luu, T.Q.H., Sit, H.H.W., Chen, S., 2023. Development of English Medium Instruction (EMI). In: Cultural Interactions of English-Medium Instruction at Vietnamese Universities. Springer: Singapore. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-8098-5_2

[39] Sun, Y., 2023. The professionalization of English medium instruction lecturer: Content and certification. Frontiers in Education. 8, 1–10.

[40] Byram, M., Doyé, P., 2017. Intercultural competence and foreign language learning in the primary school. The Primary Language Learning Journal. 1(1), 1–18.

[41] Holliday, A., 2018. Understanding intercultural communication: Negotiating a grammar of culture. Routledge: London, UK.

[42] Brookfield, S.D., 2017. Becoming a critically reflective teacher, 2nd ed. Jossey-Bass: Hoboken, NJ, USA.

[43] Tsui, A.B., 2003. Understanding Expertise in Teaching: Case Studies of Second Language Teachers. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, UK.

[44] Creswell, J.W., 2012. Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research, 4th ed. Pearson Education: Harlow, UK.

[45] Krefting, L., 1991. Rigor in qualitative research: The assessment of trustworthiness. American Journal of Occupational Therapy. 45(3), 214–222.

[46] Vaismoradi, M., Jones, J., Turunen, H., et al., 2016. Theme development in qualitative content analysis and thematic analysis. Journal of Nursing Education and Practice. 6(5), 100–110.

[47] Darling-Hammond, L., Hyler, M.E., Gardner, M., 2017. Effective teacher professional development. Learning Policy Institute: Palo Alto, CA, USA.

[48] Desimone, L.M., 2009. Improving impact studies of teachers' professional development: Toward better conceptualizations and measures. Educational Researcher. 38(3), 181–199.

[49] Tsui, A.B.M., 2009. Distinctive qualities of expert teachers. Teachers and Teaching: Theory and practice. 15(4), 421–439.

[50] Huston, T., Weaver, C.L., 2008. Peer coaching: Professional development for experienced faculty. Innovative Higher Education. 33, 5–20.

[51] Martin, G.A., Double, J., 1998. Developing higher education teaching skills through peer observation and collaborative reflection. Innovative Higher Education. 35, 161–170.

[52] Lygo-Baker, S., Kokotailo, P.K., Young, K.M., 2015. Developing confidence in uncertainty: Conflicting roles of trainees as they become educators in veterinary and human medicine. Journal of Veterinary Medical Education. 42, 364–372.

[53] Mather, B.R., Visone, J.D., 2024. Peer observation to improve teacher self-efficacy. Journal of Educational Research and Practice. 14(1), 1–22.

[54] Hattie, J., Timperley, H., 2007. The power of feedback. Review of Educational Research. 77(1), 81–112.

[55] Rowe, A.D., Fitness, J., 2018. Understanding the Role of Negative Emotions in Adult Learning and Achievement: A Social Functional Perspective. Behavioral sciences. 8(2), 27. DOI: https://doi.org/10.3390/bs8020027

[56] Lundberg, N., Tran, T., 2014. The Role of Negative Emotions in Learning. Journal of Educational Psychology. 106(2), 257–264.

[57] Tuan, L.T., 2015. Emotional well-being and its impact on professional development in teaching. International Journal of Education. 23(1), 42–59.

[58] Helm, F., 2019. EMI, internationalisation, and the digital. International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism. 23(3), 314–325.

[59] Le, H., 2014. Vietnamese higher education in the globalization context: A question of qualitative or quantitative targets. International Education Journal: Comparative Perspectives. 13(1), 17–29.

[60] Pham, T.T.L., Nguyen, K.N., Hoang, T.B., 2022. Mediating Job Satisfaction Among English Medium Instruction Teachers in Vietnamese Universities. In: Pham, M., Barnett, J. (Eds.). English Medium Instruction Practices in Vietnamese Universities. Springer: Singapore. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-2169-8_4