

The Relationship between Iranian EFL Teachers' Behavior and Academic Achievement of High School Students

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Abstract—Johnston & Pennypacker (1993) stated “Behavior” is defined as the action or activities of an organism that is anything that an organism does, including physical action, internal physiological and emotional processes and implicit mental activity. Teaching can in fact, be defined as conscious behavior that makes learning more probable and more efficient than it would have been without that behavior (as cited in Shafgat, 2009). The major purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between EFL teachers' behaviors and the academic achievement of the high school students in Iran. Sixty two High school English teachers from Sistan and Baluchistan were selected via the purposive sampling procedure. One questionnaire, for EFL high school teachers was developed for the collection of data. The data of the study were collected and analyzed through appropriate statistical techniques such as descriptive statistics and inferential statistics (Pearson correlation and linear regression analysis). The results of the study showed that there is significant relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' behavior and academic achievement of high school students. The results also showed that cognitive and psychomotor behavior of EFL teachers could predict academic achievement of students. Therefore, it could be argued that all dimensions of teachers' behavior could not predict academic achievement of high school students.

Index Terms—EFL teachers, behavior, academic achievement, cognitive behavior, affective behavior, psychomotor behavior

I. INTRODUCTION

Behavior is a description of observable outcome of teachers and performance of students in different activities of institutions (Joyce, 1980). Behavior may be negative or positive and ineffective or effective. Effective behavior produces the requisite results. Behavior is an action that is different at different time. There are three types of behavior feeling, thinking and doing (Joyce, 1980). Mostly behavior is also known as affective, cognitive and psychomotor. Affective behavior values the learners' attitudes and feelings. Cognitive behavior involves the learner in, remembering, thinking process, evaluating and problem solving. Psychomotor behaviors are those involving the learner, in some kind of muscular activity (Bloom, 1956).

The way that the teachers allocate time to spend on academic content affects student achievement. Good classroom management is a skill which can lead to high students' achievement. It involves plan effectively, establish rules that are reasonable and not excessive in number, and arrange the classroom so that instruction goes easily. Skills those are necessary for maintain a well-managed classroom contain group alerting, overlapping, using the principle of least intervention, wittiness, and creating smooth transitions (Sadkar, 2000).

Hayon (1989) a good teacher is expected to be committed to his work, would have the ability to take the initiative. Teacher's personality in the attitudinal sense is a significant factor in teacher's behavior and it has great impact on student's achievement. The teachers as a professional must know the art of communication, understanding others and ability to learn from the experiences. They should be able to facilitate learning effectively. Education recognized to be prime key of moral, cultural, political and socio-economic development of a nation. The nations, which have been taken major initiatives, made revolutionary advances and performed miracles in the last two decades. No doubt, this great achievement is based on their effective educational system (Ahmad, 2001). Saeed (2001) stated, educational system of any country can provide the guarantee of success and prosperity for their nations. The achievement of a comprehensive and effective educational system is necessary for the survival of nation (as cited in Shafgat, 2009).

Learning is a central focus of educational psychology. In the words of Santrock (2006), learning is a relatively permanent influence on behavior, knowledge and thinking skills, which comes about through experiences (as cited in Chadory & Arif, 2012).

Academic achievement has been variously defined: as level of proficiency attained in academic work or as formally acquired knowledge in school subjects which is often represented by percentage of marks obtained by students in examinations (Kohli, 1975). Researchers have shown that besides being the criteria of promotion into the next class, academic achievement is an index of all future success in life. Superior achievers in the academic world generally tend

to maintain their level, of achievement in the occupational field also. Moreover, Reis et al. (1984) reported that academic achievement also has a significant effect on self-evaluation of learners. To reach the goal of excellence in the academic sphere, and to optimize academic achievement to a maximum, a review of correlates of academic achievement and its implications for educationists and policy makers would be meaningful (as cited in Shafgat, 2009).

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The study was designed to identify, appraise and analyze the relationship between EFL teachers' behavior and the academic achievement of high school students. The teachers' behavior was seen in the light of his role as an effective teacher.

Iqbal (1996) stated that teaching is an arrangement and manipulation of situation in which there are gaps or obstructions and individual tries to overcome the problem from where he learns. Teaching is an intimate contact between a more mature personality and a less mature one. The more mature one is a teacher and less mature is a student and it is designed to further the education of the latter. He further stated that the teaching might be characterized as an activity aimed at the achievement of bearing and practiced in such names as to respect the student's intellectual integrity and capacity for independent judgment. He described the roles and behaviors of a teacher who is mainly responsible for instruction. The teacher is engaged more and more today in the implementation of new educational procedures taking advantage of all the resources of modern educational devices and methods. He is an educator and a counselor who tries to develop his pupils' abilities and interests (as cited in shafgat, 2009).

A. Behavior

Behavior is a response, which an individual shows to his environment at different times (Taneja, 1989). Various authors have defined it in different words:

UNESCO (1986) documented that the meaning of behavior is conduct or carry oneself or behavior is what we do, especially in response to outside stimuli and anything that an organism does that involves action and response to stimulation.

Joyce (1980) also defined that behavior is lawful and subject to variables in the environment. He further defined that behavior is an observable, identifiable phenomenon.

Watson (1919) defined behavior as follows: "We should mean by response the total striped and unstriped muscular and glandular changes which follow upon a given stimulus" (p. 14).

Das (1993) has suggested seven categories of behavior, response behavior, Association behavior, Multiple-discrimination, Behavior chains, Class concepts behavior, Principles, and Strategies.

He further highlighted the school characteristics that positively affect the students, behavior and their academic achievements. Both good standards set by the institution and good behavior models provided by the teachers had positive effects (as cited in shafgat, 2009).

B. Academic Achievement

Academic achievement has been variously defined: as level of proficiency attained in academic work or as formally acquired knowledge in school subjects which is often represented by percentage of marks obtained by students in examinations (Kohli, 1975). Researchers have shown that besides being the criteria of promotion into the next class, academic achievement is an index of all future success in life. Superior achievers in the academic world generally tend to maintain their level, of achievement in the occupational field also. Moreover, Reis et al. (1984) reported that academic achievement also has a significant effect on self-evaluation of learners. To reach the goal of excellence in the academic sphere, and to optimize academic achievement to a maximum, a review of correlates of academic achievement and its implications for educationists and policy makers would be meaningful (as cited in Shafgat, 2009).

A formal beginning to explore the determinants of academic achievement as made with Binet's attempts to predict children's academic achievement from their intelligence scores. There is an overwhelming evidence establishing intelligence as the most significant predictor of academic achievement (Karnes et al., 1984). Thorndike (1963) pointed out, an exact correspondence between intelligence and achievement (as cited in Shafgat, 2009).

Some studies have been done to relate cognitive style with academic achievement. Field independent subjects were found to be higher on achievement, than field dependent subjects (Holper and Helen, 1986).

Generalized expectancies developed by students also play a crucial role in their achievement. Internality (belief in Internal Control) is positively related with academic achievement (Tesiny et al., 1980).

The teacher's personality and style of interaction with the students has been reported to be a very crucial variable in student's achievement. Pupils like no authoritarian teacher's better, feel free in expressing their difficulties with them, and achieve higher results in their classes. Hsu (1983) found similar results. Teachers who are successful in creating a climate of warmth and support can extract greater pupil achievement. Adjustment in school, at home and with peers generates greater classroom trust (as cited in Shafgat, 2009).

Murray and Staebler (1974) reported that teachers score on Locus of control was directly related with students achievements. Stake and Norman (1985) reported that teacher attraction was positively associated with academic growth, confidence and motivation. But this was true only for students with same sex teacher models. Marshall and

Weinstein (1986) reported that teacher's communication patterns, and his differential treatment to students as perceived by students was very important determiners of student's achievement (as cited in Shafgat, 2009).

Good (1991) reported review of personality characteristics with academic success reveals that, there is not simple straightforward relationship between personality and achievement as there are other relevant intervening variables like teaching strategies, age, sex and arousal level of the learner etc. When teachers, and researchers wanted to discover the reasons for the superior achievement of introverts, a few facts emerged which can be useful in enhancing the academic achievement of extroverts also. It was felt that the low achievement of extroverts could be due to their low arousal, which makes it difficult for them to maintain concentration for long periods required for successful academic study. Campbell and Hawley (1982) carried out a study among students in the university library, with extroverts taking more breaks than introverts, and more concerned about selecting a study location that offered greater socializing opportunities. This need of the extroverts for social stimulation may clash with the need to spend time on studies and thus may be to disrupt their academic pursuits after adolescence. This may be a reason why introversion is associated positively with achievement after 13 years or so only (as cited in Shafgat, 2009).

Teaching strategy has also been found to be very important in determining the achievement of extroverts. It was found that extroverts benefit more from informal, unstructured teaching methods, while introverts learn better in a structured learning environment with traditional teaching approach. When extroverts were taught by the method they preferred, they were higher in achievement than introverts, again which was evident even a month later (Leith, 1974 and Shadbolt, 1978). Until recently our educational system has been highly structured and formal therefore the reported academic superiority of introverts may be due to the fact that our educational system is geared to the needs of introverts rather than extroverts, who require a different teaching strategy, one which stresses individuality, personal interaction, flexibility and spontaneity in teaching. Teachers may be keen on knowing about certain intervention strategies which can improve the achievement of students. In this context, findings of several researches are very relevant (as cited in Shafgat, 2009).

This study aimed at investigating the relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' behavior and academic achievement of high school students. For this reason, we try to answer following research question.

1. Is there any significant relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' behavior and academic achievement of high school students?
2. Which dimension of EFL teachers' behavior can more successfully predict academic achievement of high school students?

III. METHOD

A. Participants

The participants of the study included 62 male and female EFL teachers and their students at high school in Sistan and Baluchistan province working as full time teachers in Ministry of Education who graduated from teacher training centers. They were selected through purposive sampling. A criterion for including participants was three years of experiences of teaching at high school and having Bachelor of Arts (BA) in teaching English as a foreign language.

B. Instrumentation

As the study was descriptive in nature, one reliable and valid questionnaire was used in the study. The instrument consists of two sections: the first deals with teacher's demographic information. The second section consists of 49 items rated on a five-point-Likert-Scale "strongly agree (1)" to "strongly disagree (5)" (SA = strongly agree, A = Agree, UD = Undecided, DA = Disagree, and SDA = strongly disagree) and three open-ended questions, on the basis of literature. Items of the questionnaire consists of different categories of behavior: A. Cognitive behavior (questions related to process of thinking), B. Affective behavior (questions related to feeling and attitude), and C. Psychomotor behavior (question related to doing activity). This instrument was developed to investigate teachers' behavior in institutes and the relationship between academic achievements of students. The questionnaire was developed and used by Shafgat et al (2009). The reliability of this instrument was estimated through Cronbach alpha. The alpha was .92 which was an acceptable value.

For academic achievement of students their mean scores during three years were calculated.

C. Procedure

As to the procedure applied in this study, 62 Iranian EFL teachers of high school in Sistan and Baluchistan were selected through purposive sampling. Then teachers' behavior questionnaire developed by Shafqat et al (2009) was used. The questionnaire consists of 49 items measured on five-point-Likert-Scale. The teachers were required to rate items of the questionnaire from the following options:

SA= strongly agree (1), A= agree (2), UN= undecided (3), DA= disagree (4), and SDA= strongly disagree (5).

For academic achievement of students their scores during three years were calculated. For each year's scores of one class in grade three of high school was randomly chosen and averages of scores in three years were calculated. The mean for three scores of students across three years were calculated for each teacher. The average of students' scores for each teacher ranges from "not bad (4)" to "excellent (1)" (4= Not bad, 3= Good, 2= Very good, and 1=

Excellent).The students’ with scores of 10 to 12.50 were labeled not bad(4), the students’ with scores of 12.50 to 15 were labeled good(3), the students’ with scores of 15 to 17.50 were labeled very good(2), and the students with scores above 17.50 are labeled excellent(1).

At the end, data was analyzed with statistical procedure of Pearson Product correlation and linear regression to answer research questions.

IV. RESULTS

A. Results for the First Question

For this research question 62 EFL teachers included and answered to items of questionnaire. Responses for forty nine items of the questionnaire were analyzed to answer to this question. Descriptive statistics of items for teachers’ behavior questionnaire and students’ scores were respectively computed.

For this research question, the best statistical procedure to analyzing data was Pearson Product.

TABLE 1:
PEARSON PRODUCT CORRELATION FOR EFL TEACHERS’ BEHAVIOR AND MEAN SCORES

CORRELATIONS		All items	Students’ scores
All items	Pearson Correlation	1	-.401**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	62	62
Students’ scores	Pearson Correlation	-.401**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	62	62

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The results in the above table show that Pearson Product correlation for all items of EFL teachers’ behavior questionnaire and students’ scores were -.401 according to this we concluded Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level. Therefore, the null hypothesis which indicated that there is no significant relationship between EFL teachers’ behaviors and academic achievement of high school students was rejected. Moreover, the results indicate that p value of Pearson Product correlation is .001, which is less than .01. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between behavior of EFL teachers and their academic achievement of high school students.

B. Result for Research Question Two

The second research question dealt with academic achievement of high school students due to different dimension of EFL teachers’ behavior. In doing so, 62 EFL teachers answered to items and the data gathered through the research made scale were submitted to different statistical analyses. Linear regression to determine the relationship between sub-skills behavior of EFL teachers and academic achievement of high school students used and presented in the following sections. Then, all the data are discussed respectively.

TABLE 2:
ANOVA OUTPUT OF REGRESSION ANALYSIS

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	8.368	3	2.789	6.713	.001 ^b
	Residual	24.099	58	.416		
	Total	32.468	61			

a. Dependent Variable: Students mean scores

b. Predictors: (Constant), Psychomotor behaviour , Affective behaviour , Cognitive behaviour

As it can be seen from the above table, the regression model is significant at $p = 0.05$ ($F = 6.71$, $df = 3$, $p = 0.001 < 0.05$). That is, at least one of the predictors (constant variables) significantly predicts the learners’ scores on the dependent variable (students mean scores).

TABLE 3:
REGRESSION MODEL SUMMARY

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.508 ^a	.258	.219	.64460

a. Predictors: (Constant), Psychomotor behaviour , Affective behaviour , Cognitive behaviour

The results in the above table show that the adjusted R square is .219. That is, 21 percent of the variance of students’ achievement is predicted by the dimensions of EFL teachers’ behavior.

TABLE 4:
BETA, T AND SIG (P) VALUES FOR EACH OF THE MODELS

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	2.357	.573		4.114	.000
	Affective behaviour	.008	.028	.069	.291	.772
	Cognitive behaviour	-.080	.030	-.872	-2.709	.009
	Psychomotor behaviour	.053	.025	.437	2.081	.042

a. Dependent Variable: Students mean scores

The results in the above table show, Using the enter method, a significant model emerged ($F, 61=6.71, p < 0.05$. Adjusted R square = .219). Significant variables are shown below:

Predictor variable	Beta	p value
Cognitive behaviour	-.872	0.009 < 0.05
Psychomotor behaviour	.437	0.042 < 0.05

As it can be seen from the above table, cognitive behavior contributed to the model (Beta= -0.872, $p= 0.009 < 0.05$) and psychomotor behavior contributed to the model (Beta= -0.437, $p= 0.042 < 0.05$) but the affective behavior of EFL teachers do not contribute. The Beta value shows that that each added point on the cognitive behavior and psychomotor behavior increase the students' scores by -.872 and .437.

V. DISCUSSION

The main objective of the present study was to find out the relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' behavior and academic achievement of their high school students. The results of the study in table 1 show that behavior of EFL teachers has significant relationship with academic achievement of high school students. The study results showed that for improving the relationship between teachers' behavior and the academic achievement of high school students, no discrimination in students should be maintained. This idea supported Murray and Staebler (1974) who reported that teacher's behavior was directly related with student's achievement. This idea also supported Stake and Norman (1985) they viewed that teacher's behavior was positively associated with academic achievement. This idea supported Lecky (1945) he reported that low academic achievement might be related to a student's self – perception of being unable to learn academic material. The idea was suggested that academic achievement may not be simply an expression of students' intelligence, but of students' perception of their intelligence, which when positive helps them feel confident and able, but when negative makes them feel hesitant and uncertain (as cited in Shafgat, 2009).

The results of the present study (linear regression analysis for affective behavior of EFL teachers and their students mean scores) also indicated that affective behavior of EFL teachers could not predict academic achievement of high school students. Therefore, it could be strongly argued that affective behavior of EFL teachers is not influential factor on students' achievement. These qualities of teachers' behavior increased the performance of students. When anyone becomes a teacher, society will accord him respect because it values the worth of what he does. He will be considered a professional, someone with specialized training and skills that can be used to benefit others. This ideas supported Evans (1965) he stated that pupils appreciate others qualities more, and they like teachers to be patient, friendly and fair with a sense of humor and willing to answer questions. These are qualities, which affect the atmosphere of the life in the classroom and make it comfortable place in which to work (as cited in Shafgat, 2009).

The results of linear regression analysis for cognitive behavior of Iranian EFL teachers and academic achievement of their high school students showed that regression analysis model for cognitive behavior of EFL teachers and students' achievement was significant.

Majority of the teachers held that they treated their students without discrimination; they guided and appreciated students to adopt good manners and habits. They gave feed back to the students with constructive criticism and guided students how to use spare time. They focused their attention on character building of students. The study results showed that teachers performed their duties regularly. They established link between previous learning with present learning and check assignments in time, encourage the students in co-curricular activities and increased participation after getting proper time to answer the required questions This idea supported Smith and Smith (1994) that teachers can shape the views of the people more directly than they can of the public in general (as cited in Shafgat, 2009).

The other finding (linear regression analysis for psychomotor behavior of EFL teachers and their students mean scores) was that psychomotor behavior of EFL teachers could successfully predict academic achievement of high school students. Therefore, it could be argued that those behaviors involving the learner, in some kind of muscular activity can successfully predict academic achievement of high school students. This idea supported Shafqt (2009) that teachers expressed that priority wise, punctuality, honesty and hard work are important qualities of teachers while students viewed that friendship, confidence and competency are important qualities in the behavior of good teachers. Students suggested in their preference that teachers should come in the class well prepared.

VI. CONCLUSION

The study was designed to identify, appraise and analyze the relationship between EFL teachers' behavior and the academic achievement of high school students. The major purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between EFL teachers' behaviors and the academic achievement of the high school students in Iran. The main objectives of the study were (i) to investigate the behavior of the Iranian EFL high school teachers in Iran (ii) to examine the academic achievement of the high school students as a result of teachers' behavior (iii) to highlight the causes which affect academic achievement of the students (iv) to recommend strategies for the improvement of teachers' behavior. Sixty two High school English teachers from Sistan and Baluchistan were selected via the purposive sampling procedure. One questionnaire, for EFL high school teachers was developed for the collection of data.

The data of the study were collected and analyzed through appropriate statistical techniques such as descriptive statistics and inferential statistics (Pearson correlation and linear regression analysis). The results of the study showed that there is significant relationship between Iranian EFL teachers' behavior and academic achievement of high school students. The results also showed that cognitive and psychomotor behavior of EFL teachers could predict academic achievement of students. Therefore, it could be argued that all dimensions of teachers' behavior could not predict academic achievement of high school students.

VII. IMPLICATIONS

The results of the present research, coupled with the results of some other previous studied, may either directly enable us to draw some potential implications. Here, we present the main theoretical and pedagogical implications and we hope the further studies will provide more insights in this regard.

The theoretical implication is that behaviours of teachers influence student's achievements and it can certainly lead to innovation in teaching methodology, syllabus, and types of learning activities, as well teaching materials.

Although there are restrictions to what teachers can do to use assessment effectively to help their students' learning, they are the only ones whose teaching activities directly influence students (Harlen & Crick, 2003 as cited in Pan, 2009). Chapman and Snyder (2000) stated that "it is not the examination itself that influences teachers' behaviour, but teachers' beliefs about those changes" (p. 462). Bailey (2005) also argues that teachers may have limited power to influence international examinations and high stakes national, but they do have great power to guide the students to learn, to teach them the academic language which they need to do the tasks in target language use situations and how to work with test results and tests.

Therefore, those who make the tests should try to use the tests to increase students' learning since at the same time not inhibit the test takers' motivation by cramming too much.

Furthermore, teachers can make use good behavior in order to decrease stressful variables and increase their motivation in order to do both inside and outside the classroom activities.

Moreover, language learners can become more aware about teachers behaviors while they are in the class and students were helped to acquire good manners and habits.

Another important pedagogical implication for teachers in this study is behave with no discrimination in students should be maintained and make teaching more effective.

To conclude, all material designers, schools managers, teachers, and students can draw on the findings of the present study to shape design materials, manage schools and conduct classes accordingly.

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