

WCES-2011

The effect of teacher's teaching style on students' adjustment

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Abstract

Regarding the importance of adjustment in improving learning and adaptive behaviours of students, this study has been done to investigate the effect of two types of teaching style, i.e. teacher – oriented and learner – oriented ones on adjustment of students in three emotional, social and educational domains. 31 teachers and 300 students in fifth grade were selected by multi-stage cluster sampling in academic year of 2010-2011. Findings indicated the mean scores of emotional, educational and social adjustments of students whose teachers use an active teaching style is more than students that their teachers use an inactive teaching style. Also, there is a significant difference between the emotional and educational adjustments among the students who have two different kinds of active and inactive teaching styles. But its effect on social adjustment was not significantly different, © 2011 Published by Elsevier Ltd.

Keywords: teaching style, emotional adjustment, educational adjustment, social adjustment;

1. Introduction

During the past twenty years, a global movement is started among researchers and policy makers to study the effective factors in making the educational system efficient (Teddle & Reynolds, 2000). The concept of professional promotion of teachers has emerged since the mid-twentieth century – i.e. when the implementing reforms in educational systems became necessary. The research findings and comparisons between educational systems had played a great role in the advent of this concept since the research indicate that "teacher" has a mutual role in implementing educational reforms. In one hand, the "teacher" is the subject of educational reforms and on the other hand he/she is the cause of educational reforms. So, the main objectives of training teachers are: professionalization (focusing on low quality teachers or without quality), making teachers' capable (preparing teachers for accepting new responsibilities or confronting curriculum changes), updating teachers and their knowledge according to new conditions and teaching methods (Huberman 2004; Tong & Han 2005).

Teaching styles (which often reflect teachers' views on teaching and learning and their preferred behaviour) have also received a considerable degree of attention within the educational literature over the past two decades. There is some evidence that teaching styles can help to interpret the influences of teachers on student achievement (Aitkin & Zuzovsky, 1994; Ebmeier & Good, 1979). Teachers who continually review their perceptions and their supporting basics increase their ability to communicate properly with wide variety of students. (Capra, 1996). The key to

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maintaining good discipline is to establish a good relationship with pupils based on mutual respect and rapport (Cooper and McIntyre, 1996; Morgan and Morris, 1999; Pollard et al, 2000). This involves us showing respect for our pupils, by treating them in a polite and courteous manner, and not resorting to making unfair and hurtful comments based on sarcasm or belittling the pupil. The teacher also, however, needs to be able to command authority. However, this authority should not be based on pupils' fear of the teacher's 'nastier' side. Rather, it should come from the feeling of trust and respect that the pupils have in the manner in which the teacher characteristically exercises their teacher role.

In this study, teaching styles is defined based on 4 components including creation, continuity, effectiveness and evaluation and is divided into two styles: teacher-centered style (direct) and learner-based (indirect). Teachers who use more learner-centered practices (i.e., practices that show sensitivity to individual differences among students, include students in the decision-making, and acknowledge students' developmental, personal and relational needs) produced greater motivation in their students than those who used fewer of such practices (Daniels & Perry, 2003; Perry & Weinstein, 1998)..

As MacBeath(1999) points out, teachers and students do not exist in a vacuum but are influenced by one another's expectations and behaviours .mutual discussion about expectations and behaviours can lead to increased understanding about teacher-learner relationships that promote learning. Explicitness about what is valued in teachers and learners encourages a learning community. A process that invites dialogue about what it means to be members of the community, to be learner, a teacher, what are good lessons, for example, can promote self-review at an individual and organizational level. The good teacher, described above, has relationships with students that are based on trust, openness and they therefore allow this kind of self-review process to take place. Weinstein (1983) describes how children perceive the teachers relationship to high- and low-achieving students. Students described as low achievers received more negative feedback and teacher direction, and more work and rule orientation than high achievers. High achievers were perceived as receiving higher expectations, more opportunity and choice than low achievers. Studies have shown that what teachers expect from students can be a realizable prediction. Students expected to work well by teachers have more tendency for development than those who are not expected to do well.

The relationship between teacher and students can be extended along a continuum from formal to informal and cold to warm. Findings indicate that warm and supportive environment is critical for teacher to be effective and also for encouraging student to participate in courses. Teachers who are sympathetic, supportive and intimate and lead without strictness cause an increase in cognitional and emotional success among students. Teachers who are unreliable, dissatisfied and advisor lead to less cognitional and emotional success (Wubbless,Brekelmans &Hooymayers,1991) Marcel,1954 and Burton1952 reported that learners have more progress in individual and social learning in permissive environments. So that they have defended democratic organization of class rather than authoritarian organization regarding the nature of desired tasks or the relationship between teacher and students. When teachers have positive relationships with their students, it affects the student's behaviour in relation to school. Students who perceive their teachers as highly supportive have better attendance and avoid problem behaviour. (Rosenfeld, Richman, & Bowen, 2000). Sawatzki (1993) noted that not only teachers are responsible for mental and cognitional progress but also they must be careful about their moral, social and emotional progress and pay attention to the emotional efficiency of education.

According to performed studies about the relationship of teacher – student and teacher teaching style, the main purpose of this research is to examine the effect of teaching style on students' adaptation in three emotional, educational and social domains. Adjustment behaviors in the learning environment decrease the anxiety and tension of students and improve learning. The purpose of emotional adjustment is to identify the feelings and positive and negative emotions in self and having control on negative feelings related to self and others. Educational adjustment is defined as adaptation with school environment, teachers, classmates, training materials and lesson content and also having interest to education and attention to the lesson. Social adjustment refers to having some characteristics such as communication with classmates and friends, proper communication with teachers, participation in collective .works and group activities and having social skills

1.2. Research hypothesis

- 1-There is a significant difference between the rate effects of two teaching style on increasing educational adjustment of student.
- 2-There is a significant difference between the rate effects of two teaching style on increasing emotional adjustment of student.
- 3- There is a significant difference between the rate effect of two teaching style on increasing social adjustment of student.

2. Method

2.1. Participants and procedures

The type of current study is causative–comparative one. The investigated statistical population of this study is elementary school teachers and students in Mashhad. 30 teachers and 300 students in fifth grade were selected by multi-stage cluster sampling in academic year of 2010-2011.

2.2. Instrumentation

In order to evaluate the teaching style, Moosapoor teaching style questionnaire was used. The questionnaire includes 39 items that all are related to two different types of teaching:

- A) Teacher–oriented or active teaching
- B) Learner–oriented or inactive teaching

Each item has 6 options which have been adjusted on 'never' to 'very much', based on likerte-type scale. Validity of questionnaire was calculated by asking experts' opinions in teaching area and its reliability coefficient has been obtained 0.93 by using test-retest method.

The second instrument student adjustment questionnaire is developed by Sinha (1993). English version includes 60 questions which are decreased to 55 questions by Qodsi ahqar in Iran. This questionnaire includes 5 categories (very good, good, average, poor, very poor) and each category is described with related scores and separates the students with good adjustment from students with poor adjustment. This test consists of 55 questions and the options of each question are designed in form of Yes and No answer options. Zero score is considered for the answers which indicate adaptation and one score is considered for the answers which show the lack of adaptation. Thus, obtaining low scores in three domains represents more adaptation of individuals. Reliability coefficient of adaptation questionnaire was calculated by the Kronbach's Alpha and in emotional domain it was 0.90, in social domain it was 0.80 and in education domain, it was 0.85. Validity of questionnaire was approved by asking experts' opinions in teaching area.

3. Results

Table 1: Results of independent sample t-test for the comparison of the effects of teaching style on students' adjustment

Variable	Teaching	n	SD	Mean	t	df	P
Emotional	indirect	160	2.70	9.26	20.56	308	0.000***
	direct	150	1.57	4.04			
Educational	indirect	160	2.00	7.86	12.69	308	0.000***
	direct	150	1.97	4.66			

Social	indirect	160	1.99	6.40	1.85	308	0.06
	direct	150	2.42	5.98			

***P<0.000

According to the table, the mean of adaptation scores among students who their teachers teach with indirect style in emotional, educational and social is less than students who are taught with direct teaching style. Thus, indirect teaching style leads to increase in educational, emotional and social adaptation of students.

There is a significant difference between the rate of the two teaching style effect on educational and emotional adaptation of students. Therefore, besides the confirmation of first and second research hypothesis, learner centred teaching style causes to increase the educational and emotional adaptation of students.

There is no significant difference between the effects of the two teaching styles on social adaptation. Thus the third research hypothesis is rejected

4. Discussion and Conclusion

Results showed that learner-centred teaching style leads to more adaptation of students in all 3 domains-emotional, social and educational. Therefore, it is imperative to use new teaching patterns and methods, consider students' interests and individual differences.

Comparing the means and rejection of the third hypothesis of research, it is clear that the teaching style is effective on social adaptation but is not necessarily enough. One reason is that the individual's characteristics such as introspection and extroversion have a great effect on the tendency of students in group participation. Additionally, it is necessary to consider the other effective factors such as friends, family and school authorities' support and teaching social skills.

In a study that also relates to teacher, parent, and peer support, it was found that positive relationships with teachers, while an important aspect, it does not alone support positive school behaviour. "Perceived teacher support alone is not effective; teacher support must be perceived in combination with perceived support from parents or friends, albeit the best combination is perceived support from all three providers. (Rosenfeld, Richman, & Bowen, 2000) While this criticism affects the value of positive student-teacher relationships, it still notes that it is still an important variable that is factor for better attendance; spending more time studying, avoiding problem behaviour, higher school satisfaction, engagement, self-efficacy, and better grades.

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