

HUMANISTIC VERSUS AUTHORITARIAN TEACHERS: A REFLECTION ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC MOTIVATION AND PERFORMANCE

By

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ABSTRACT

This prospective study using self-determination theory was conducted to predict the students' motivation and academic performance based on their perceived teachers' humanistic vs. authoritarian orientations in the classrooms. The sample consisted of 300 students aged 14-18 years taken from different schools of Multan. The Pupil Control Behavior Scale, Intrinsic Motivation Inventory and exam scores were used to measure the perceived teachers' humanistic vs. authoritarian orientations, and students' motivation and performance respectively. The study revealed that students' intrinsic motivation and performance are significantly positively related to humanistic orientation while negatively related to authoritarian orientation of teachers. A result pertaining to gender differences implies that female students report higher intrinsic motivation and performance as compared to male students.

Keywords: Academic Performance, Motivation, Authority, Autonomy, Rewards.

INTRODUCTION

At school level the motivation of students to accomplish sufficient scholarly tasks in their classrooms is considered as a main aim or objective (Weiner, 1992). Learning and achievement of the students are the two important consequences of education needed to attain victory and accomplishment in schools. For the fulfillment of these upshots, it is identified that students must require following scholarly objectives in their classrooms. Even though there are numerous components of classrooms that may influence the scholarly accomplishment and motivation of students, the role of classroom atmosphere is very important and fundamental. Specifically, the command system of classrooms that assure students to be self-governing and independent with respect to their knowledge is directly stated to their intrinsic motivation (Connell & Wellborn, 1991; Deci & Ryan, 1994).

A significant element associated with the atmosphere is teachers humanistic vs. authoritarian attitudes. Teachers' orientations whether they emphasized that student must be disciplined or be given independence and autonomy in making judgments describes the overall system of classrooms, which reciprocally influence student's

motivation to acquire knowledge. Furthermore, it is also believed that students quickly observe their instructors briefings which interpret teacher's conduct. If students notice that their teacher is concern about their point of view or hears them, then their motivation to acquire knowledge and perform in a suitable societal manner is improved (Deci, Eghrari, Patrick, & Leone, 1994).

Desire to be successful and scholarly performance as the two elements of students' motivation is the center of attention of current research. The procedures of academic motivation and attainment of objectives are usually explained with regard to different perspectives (Bandura, 1986). Despite of all, the acknowledging issue of the current research is Harter's (1981) intrinsic-extrinsic motivation model. Harter's intrinsic motivation model was basically preferred because intrinsic motivation of students are thought over one of the essential element to follow control, command, authority, knowledge, and aim in Pakistani schools programs (Ali & Begum 1993).

Intrinsic motivation is an adjustment in approaching or acquiring command and control in classroom, ignoring the external factors (Harter, 1981). Specifically intrinsic motivation is defined as a satisfied condition of a child

which is perceived through his or her innate curiosity in knowledge, wisdom, education, peculiarity & selection of difficult task. In comparison of intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation indicates a child's satisfaction condition that centered on acquiring instructor consent, compensation and reliance on instructors for guidance.

Harter (1981) observed that intrinsic - extrinsic motivation as multifaceted perspectives have five conditions of learning in classroom, which are identified as having internal and external encouraging stems. The conditions are (i) knowledge activated by peculiarity (internal) or knowledge activated due to delight instructors (external); (ii) motive to perform for personal satisfaction (internal) or to perform practically to satisfy instructors and obtain high marks (external); (iii) selection of ambitious tasks (internal) or selection of moderate tasks (external); (iv) motive to perform autonomously (internal) or servility on an instructor for support or guidance (external); (v) inherent standards for victory and defeat (internal) or extraneous guidelines for marks, ranks, instructor contribution to decide victory or defeat) (external).

The present research focuses on the elements of humanistic versus authoritarian orientations of teachers which in turn determine the boundaries of teacher's directive briefings. Cognitive evaluation theory basically expands the idea of humanistic versus authoritarian teacher's alignment (Deci & Ryan, 1985). According to this theory people adopt a comprehensive alignment in handling their children which can be observed as shifting from acknowledging children's sovereignty to supervising their conduct. Teachers who have the tendency to make the use of extraneous factors such as compensation and contrasting to encourage conduct are determined as ruling, on the other hand, teachers who preferred to make less use of extraneous components to control and focus more on the students interior structure are taken as autonomous.

According to the humanistic orientation, school is perceived as a tutorial society where the students master and acquire knowledge through communication and happenings. From the context of this model, training and conducts are noticed in mental, emotional and societal

ways not in rigorous demands. Humanistic approach basically emphasizes the significance of every student and the development of environment in order to fulfill the various needs of students (Agne, Greenwood & Millar, 1994).

Teachers categorized as humanistic are always calm, diligent, compatible and have a comfortable accessed for students. They brighten students personal regard and autonomy and agreeable with students proposal thoughts and arguments. Making the comparison with the humanistic approach, the authoritarian context portrays a classroom environment as firm and extremely under control surroundings related with the sustenance of instructions. From this perspective authoritarian teachers behave in an unfavorable and irritated way with students by clearing their doubts and mistrust which in turn affect their motivation and performance in the class. They respond individually and critically with their student's who behave poorly (Lunenburg & Mankowsky, 2000).

In accosting this topic, the current research explores the association among teachers' orientations and student's academic intrinsic motivation and performance. Specifically the study explores these associations in the appurtenance of government schools in Pakistan, focusing on the expectations from students with low socialized environment to accomplish scholastic objectives in their confined and classroom lodgings.

Research Methodology

Participants

The sample consisted of 300 students (150 males and 150 females) ranging in age from 14-18 years. All the participants were taken from the different public schools of Multan. Convenience sampling technique (non probability approach) was used to select the sample.

Instruments

Following instruments were used to collect the data. The relevance of the instruments was firstly checked by educationists and then translated from English to Urdu by using the back translation method. Finally, the instruments were, administered to a sample of 50 students to determine the reliability and validity of the scales.

The Pupil Control Behavior (PCB): PCB is a 20-item scale (Helsel & Willower, 1974) with 5 point rating responses. It assesses the teachers' students control behavior along an authoritarian-humanistic continuum as perceived by students.

Intrinsic Motivation Inventory (IMI): The Intrinsic Motivation Inventory (McAuley, Duncan, & Tammen, 1987) is a multidimensional measurement device intended to assess participants' subjective experience related to a target activity. One of the subscales, the interest/enjoyment subscale is considered the self-report measure of intrinsic motivation and is a 7-item scale with 7-point Likert scale. To score the scale, two items are reversed score. A total score on the measure indicates the level of intrinsic motivation.

Performance: The average of the three term exams' scores was used to measure the students' performance in the class. Performance scores were obtained from the school examination incharge.

Procedure

The participants were informed on the objectives of the study and then they were given the instructions about how to fill the questionnaires. A booklet containing three measures along with consent form and demographic information sheet was given to each participant. They were assured that all the information would be kept strictly confidential and would be used for research purposes only. SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) was used for the analysis of the data collected from participants.

Results

This study was focused on to know the reflection of teachers' humanistic vs. authoritarian orientations on students' intrinsic motivation and performance. To see the effects of humanistic vs. authoritarian orientations on students' motivation and performance, regression analysis (Table 1), and correlation (Table 2) was computed, and to see the main effect of interaction of gender and orientations, Two Way Analysis of Variance for 2(Gender of Participants) × 2(humanistic vs. authoritarian orientations) was computed (Table 3). Independent

sample t-test was computed to see the gender differences in perceived humanistic vs. authoritarian orientations, intrinsic motivation and performance (Table 4).

Table 1 shows a significant F values for the multiple regressions ($F(1, 298) = 42.57, \& 55.47, p < = 0.01$). Results indicate that the two orientations: humanistic and authoritarian as significantly predictors explain 77% of variance of motivation and 68% of variance of performance. The results of beta weights are found significantly related to the dependent variable of motivation and performance which implies that motivation and performance of a student is regressed upon humanistic vs. authoritarian orientations.

Results (Table 2) show that intrinsic motivation and performance of students are significant positively related to humanistic orientation while negatively related to authoritarian orientation of teachers.

Predictors	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	p
(Constant)	4.23	1.18		2.15	.032
Humanistic	.15	.04	.48	1.48	.01*
Authoritarian	.14	.06	.32	0.18	.07
(Constant)	3.50	2.12		2.15	.012
Humanistic	.12	.05	.42	2.18	.03*
Authoritarian	.01	.07	.38	0.79	.09

$R^2 = 0.772$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.44$, ($F(1, 298) = 42.57, p < = 0.01$)
 $R^2 = 0.68$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.64$, ($F(1, 298) = 55.47, p < = 0.01$)
 * $p < = 0.05$,

Table 1. Regression Analysis showing reflection of humanistic vs. authoritarian orientations on students' intrinsic motivation and performance

	Teachers' Orientations	
	Humanistic	Authoritarian
Intrinsic Motivation	0.71 *	-0.23
Performance	0.82 *	-0.15

* $p < 0.05$

Table 2. Correlations between Teachers' orientations and students' motivation, and performance

Source	SS	MS	df	F	p
Main Effect					
Gender	3.633024e-2	4.2275e-4	1	4.011	.02*
Orientations	2.52461138	0.2719641	1	5.472	.03*
Interaction					
Gender * Orientations	0.626119242	0.2842851	1	5.623	.01*
Error	310.153533	1.184888e-1	298		
Total	418.4302121		295		

* $p < 0.05$

Table 3. Two Way ANOVA for 2(Gender) × 2(Orientations) for the scores on intrinsic motivation and performance

Two Way Analysis of Variance (Table 3) for 2(Gender) × 3(Orientations) indicates the significant main effects of interaction between gender of participants and two types of orientations on students' motivation and performance.

Results (Table 4) show the significant gender differences in students' intrinsic motivation and performance. It implies that female students report higher intrinsic motivation and performance as compared to male students.

Discussion

The major aim of the study was to assess the effects of humanistic vs. authoritarian teachers' orientations on the students' intrinsic motivation to learn, and their performance level in the class grades. It was expected that the students who perceive their teachers more humanistic orientated in the class rooms, become more intrinsically motivated in their learning of that course, and perform better in the course as compared to the course taught by teachers who are perceived by the students more authoritarian in the classrooms. This assumption was in accordance with the Self-determination theory suggesting inverse impact of the two orientations of teachers on students' outcomes (Deci & Ryan, 1991).

SDT suggests that the extents to which behaviors are controlled either under humanistic way or under authoritarian way, the behaviors are motivated in varying levels. Behaviors promoted by humanistic teachers are volitional, and are performed with personal interest and significance. On the contrary, behaviors promoted by authoritarian teachers are experienced as being pressured by external demands, such as the thinking that one must has to achieve high grades in the course to be a popular one among students (Deci & Ryan, 1994)

With regard to relationships between teachers orientation (humanistic vs. authoritarian) as perceived by their students and students' motivation to learn with own interest, a regression analysis was carried out, and the

	Males (N=150)		Females (N=150)		t	p
	M	SD	M	SD		
Motivation	39.82	10.49	41.11	9.85	-1.131	0.003**
Performance	330.35	27.06	368.85	25.83	-1.054	0.01*

df. = 298, *p < 0.05, **p < 0.01

Table 4. Gender-based differences in teachers' orientations and students motivation and performance

results revealed a strong positive influence of humanistic approach followed by the teachers in the classroom on students' intrinsic motivation. Intrinsically motivated students always work with personal interest and perform the task successfully due to their own choices. This finding implies that students' behaviors may differ in the context of receiving humanistic vs. authoritarian regulation. When behaviors are directed by the external rewards where parents are setting the goals of study for their child, are taken as controlled, but when these external regulations are transformed into internal regulations, behaviors become autonomous (Deci et al., 1994).

These findings are consistent with the study by Deci et al., (1994) that reported a positive relationship of autonomy supportive environment provided to students during studies with students' achievements and motivation. The finding is also consistent with the theory suggesting that if students perceive their teachers as more authoritarian, their intrinsic motivation will be undermine. This can be discussed from a Pakistani cultural perspective where the people are collectivists and their teachers, parents, and social groups decides their values. People perform for the sake of obedience, compliance, and conformity (Arnett & Tauber, 1994). So for, the classroom with authoritarian pattern is usually considered as the healthy environment for academic achievement in Pakistan which in turn is transferred into the thinking of achieving high success of interest. It is in contrast to the West. Therefore, the students in such type of orientation adopted by their teachers may interpret their teachers' style as optimal for learning.

Further, about the link between teachers' orientation and student performance, as expected, teachers' humanistic control in the class was linked positively to students' good performance in the course and teachers' authoritarian control was linked negatively to students' performance in the course. Findings indicated consistency between teachers' orientations as perceived by students and their performance. That is, if teachers were more autonomy supporting, their students achieved better grades in that course. One possible explanation of this result may be put from the theory of humanistic (autonomy) approach (Deci & Ryan, 1985) which explained that a person who is

in a authority status accepts the other's point of view, acknowledges the other's emotions, share the information, supply the events of choice, and very importantly reduce the use of strictness, authority, and demands. Under this perspective an autonomy-supportive teachers will encourage their students to utilize the knowledge provided to them in finding solutions for problems independently. On the other hand, a teacher with authoritarian try to control others to act in prescribed manners even through the use of punishments. It might be clearer with this example that a teacher who instructs students to solve problems in own way in order to do better on a task, get the good performance of their students in that task. Students being instructed under humanistic approach (rather than controlling) find themselves in good standings in the class.

Limitations and Suggestions for future research

When interpreting these findings, some limitations should be taken into consideration. First, the sample used in the study is not large enough to represent the population of school going students. Second, the study has utilized a convenience sampling technique to select the participants. Therefore the findings of the present study lack the external validity and cannot be generalized. It is recommended that the study should well be replicated in other settings with a larger sample, exploring some more variables of students' behaviors which could be associated with teachers' orientations e.g. self-esteem, exam anxiety, achievement goals. Finally, further research will be necessary to explore the role of students' other characteristics e.g. education level, age, rural vs. urban, socio economic classes in determining their motivation and performance.

Conclusion

In explicating academic motivation and performance of students, the significant role of humanistic vs. authoritarian behavior of teachers has addressed a fundamental issue concerning the function of social environment of the classroom. In peculiar, the findings of the present research affirm the theory that caring and humanistic classroom climate enhances students' academic

motivation and performance, in other words, it predicates that students' motivation and performance are raised when teachers in the classroom express empathy, humane, and caring attitude for their students.

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