

The Impact of Classroom Communication Skills between Teacher and Student on Academic Achievement from the Perspective of Secondary School Female Teachers in the State of Kuwait

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Abstract: *This study investigates the influence of classroom communication skills between teachers and students on academic achievement, based on the perspectives of female secondary school teachers in Kuwait. Adopting a descriptive analytical approach, the research identifies essential verbal and nonverbal communication strategies and examines how they shape academic outcomes. A questionnaire was administered to 100 female teachers from five secondary schools. The findings confirm that effective classroom communication, particularly in verbal clarity, listening, cooperative learning, and teacher enthusiasm, significantly enhances student performance. The study also highlights differences in perception based on teaching experience and suggests training programs to strengthen communication competencies among educators.*

Keywords: classroom communication, academic achievement, secondary education, teacher-student interaction, Kuwait

1. Introduction

The teaching and learning process is greatly influenced by classroom communication and interaction. Classroom communication affects classroom management as well as the practices of teaching and learning. Therefore, communication in the classroom should be based on mutual participation among all those present in the classroom-the teacher and the students-rather than being a one-way process.

The teacher's communication with students within the classroom environment is a form of human interaction, as the success of the teaching and learning process within the classroom depends on the teacher's ability to communicate effectively with students. The teacher serves as the medium of teaching and learning, fostering team spirit among classroom members, generating a sense of belonging to the school and its system, and enabling the teacher to identify students' needs and attitudes. Consequently, effective communication builds understanding between teachers and students, as well as among students themselves. It also facilitates comprehension of educational goals and the strategies to achieve them.

In essence, communication is at the core of classroom activities; it is a tool that, when mastered by the teacher, helping facilitate his or her duties, improve students' academic achievement, and develop their personalities. Positive classroom communication thus forms the cornerstone of the teaching and learning process.

1.1 Statement of the Problem and Research Questions

Teaching practices in many schools still rely heavily on lectures and rote memorization-methods that often lead to student passivity, lack of motivation, and superficial memorization without true understanding. This has been confirmed by several studies (e.g., Al-Sharqi, 1993).

From this perspective, and to explore how classroom communication skills between teachers and students affect academic achievement and enhance learner competence considering the learner as the core of the educational process the current study seeks to answer the following research questions:

- What are the most essential communication skills needed for secondary school teachers?
- To what extent do classroom communication skills affect students' academic achievement?
- Are there statistically significant differences among teachers' views on the effect of classroom communication skills on students' academic achievement that can be attributed to teaching experience?

1.2 Objectives of the study

The present study aims to identify the following:

- The most essential communication skills required for secondary school teachers.
- The extent to which classroom communication skills between teachers and students affect students' academic achievement, as perceived by female secondary school teachers.
- The effect of teaching experience on teachers' perceptions of how classroom communication skills influence students' academic achievement.

1.3 Significance of the Study

- Directing attention to the importance of classroom communication between teachers and students and its impact on students' academic achievement.
- The results of this study may help teachers employ strategies that enhance classroom communication with their students.

- c) The recommendations presented in this study may contribute to improving teachers' performance within the classroom environment.

1.4 Definition of Key Terms

- a) **Classroom Communication:** A direct interactive process that occurs between the teacher and students within the classroom environment, utilizing various communication skills to transfer ideas, information, and attitudes between the teacher and students, as well as among the students themselves.
- b) **Classroom Communication Skills:** The practical abilities and techniques that teachers must employ when interacting with students in the classroom. These skills encourage active participation among learners during the learning process and help achieve its main goal, transferring ideas, information, and attitudes between the teacher and all students, and among students themselves.
- c) **Academic Achievement:** According to Saidi & Salem (2004), as cited in Al-Saedi (2007), academic achievement is a systematic process of measuring specific cognitive aspects aimed at evaluating learning outcomes among students through standardized tests that meet the criteria of reliability and validity.

1.5 Research Boundaries

- a) **Spatial Boundaries:** Five secondary schools in the State of Kuwait.
- b) **Human Boundaries:** Twenty female teachers from each school, making a total sample of one hundred teachers.
- c) **Temporal Boundaries:** The second semester of the academic year 2024.

2. Theoretical Review

2.1 The Concept of Classroom Communication

Communication is considered one of the fundamental and broad concepts in modern times. It is closely related to the ideas introduced by earlier social and linguistic philosophies. To establish an accurate understanding of communication in general, and classroom communication in particular, it is necessary to clarify the concept both linguistically and contextually. In the Al-Mu'jam Al-Waseet, the word "communication" (ittisal) is derived from wasala-which means "to reach" or "to connect".

Salama (1993) defines communication as "a process of mutual interaction between two parties-individuals, groups, or communities-to exchange an idea or experience through a medium". In psychology, communication refers to "the transfer of an impression or influence from one area to another without physically transferring the material itself". In the field of education, communication is defined as "the process through which behavioral change is transmitted from one area to another".

2.2 Forms of Classroom Communication

Researchers have identified several forms of communication, one of which is intrapersonal

communication (self-talk), which appears in verbal expression-for example, "I said to myself..." (Al-Jewshi, 2002).

Teachers often use this type of communication during the planning and preparation stages of instruction. However, once in the classroom, they employ other forms of communication, which can be summarized as follows:

2.2.1. Verbal Communication

This is the most common form of communication, using spoken or written language. Verbal communication depends on spoken words to convey messages from sender to receiver, and learning occurs through the transmission of these messages between teacher and student. Verbal communication may take two forms:

- a) **Oral (spoken):** involving words and sentences used in speech.
- b) **Vocal (auditory):** involving tone, rhythm, pitch, and modulation.

Written communication, such as writing on the board or on worksheets, is also an essential form of classroom interaction. It allows the teacher to express thoughts clearly, verify information, and provide a lasting record for students. Written materials help reinforce key ideas, concepts, and information. According to Al-Suwaei and Qasim (2005): "Although verbal language is vital in shaping and expressing thought, teachers must be cautious not to rely solely on words, as doing so may isolate them in their own world and lead to intellectual stagnation".

Teachers should also ensure that students understand the verbal language being used, rather than assuming comprehension. Moreover, they must minimize classroom noise and chatter, as these can disrupt learning and hinder the achievement of objectives.

The importance of verbal communication can be summarized as follows:

- a) Enhances the teacher's creativity and ability to select innovative educational techniques.
- b) Bridges the gap between theory and practice in classroom studies and research.
- c) Enables teachers to reflect on and improve their own instructional practices.
- d) Increases teachers' awareness of the role of communication in enhancing learning outcomes.
- e) Encourages students to become active and engaged participants rather than passive listeners.
- f) Promotes students' independence and confidence in sharing and generating ideas.
- g) Reduces the chances of random or unplanned instructional interactions.
- h) Facilitates systematic observation and evaluation of teaching.
- i) Brings vitality and dynamism to lessons using modern educational technologies.
- j) Trains students in listening and responding effectively to the teacher.

k) Encourages respect for peers' opinions and fosters positive human relations within the classroom.

2.2.2. Nonverbal Communication

Nonverbal communication includes all forms of interaction that do not involve spoken or written words. It manifests through body movements, facial expressions, clothing, colors, music, and symbolic gestures. Although nonverbal communication has not received the same level of attention as verbal communication, its role in learning is significant. Many teachers tend to underestimate how students can learn through facial expressions, body language, and spatial or physical movement.

For classroom communication to be truly effective, teachers must integrate nonverbal communication alongside verbal communication, rather than relying solely on speech even if they are highly skilled in using tone and language. The benefits of nonverbal communication can be summarized as follows:

- a) It adds meaning and depth to verbal messages.
- b) Helps clarify ambiguous verbal expressions.
- c) Helps address listening difficulties among students.
- d) Reinforces spoken messages and makes them more impactful.
- e) Deepens interaction between the sender and receiver.
- f) Enhances message retention after the communication event.
- g) Captures students' attention and reduces monotony.
- h) Serves as an effective tool in presenting nonverbal activities such as drama and public speaking.

Nonverbal communication encompasses multiple "languages," including sign language, symbolic gestures, facial expressions, body language, spatial movement, and temporal communication (use of time). These forms enrich verbal language and empower teachers to communicate more effectively with their students.

Another form, visual communication (through drawings, images, charts, and diagrams), is particularly useful in clarifying abstract concepts and supporting students with learning difficulties. It is a powerful means of communication that significantly enhances understanding and engagement.

2.3. Objectives of Classroom Communication

- a) Achieving educational goals: Effective communication serves as the link that connects students' mental and physical efforts, coordinating their various school activities and promoting cooperative teamwork to achieve educational objectives.
- b) Facilitating understanding and knowledge acquisition: Good communication enables students to work collaboratively and minimizes potential problems that may arise from misunderstandings.
- c) Developing positive attitudes: Effective communication fosters favorable attitudes toward the teacher, the curriculum, the school, and the learning process as a

whole. This, in turn, reduces behavioral and motivational problems.

- d) Encouraging student participation and responsibility: Communication helps students learn the proper way to complete tasks, express their opinions confidently, and propose constructive ideas for educational improvement. It promotes the exchange of ideas and collaboration, allowing each student to understand their role in achieving collective goals.

2.4. Classroom Communication Skills

Classroom communication skills are generally divided into two main categories:

- a) Oral (Verbal) Skills: These include clear and accurate speaking, questioning and discussion techniques, active listening, reading comprehension, reinforcement, capturing attention, and maintaining student engagement.
- b) Visual Skills: These involve the use of visual aids such as diagrams, the whiteboard, clear handwriting, models, posters, scientific displays, and demonstrations.

2.4.1. Active Listening

Listening plays a vital role in the communication process. The Qur'an emphasizes its importance by mentioning hearing before sight: "And it is He who produced for you hearing, vision, and hearts". (Al-Mu'minun, 23:78).

Allen (2002) expressed the significance of listening by stating that "listening with awareness and understanding is one of the key traits of intelligent and creative individuals who learn to use their ears more than their insistence on voicing their own ideas against others". Research shows that most of human communicative activities involve listening. For example, Rankin's study revealed that adults spend about 45% of their communication time listening, 30% speaking, 16% reading, and 9% writing. Similarly, Parker's study on university students showed that listening occupied 53% of communication time (Al-Jewshi, 2002). Key listening skills include:

- a) Preparation for listening: The teacher should create a calm, comfortable, and distraction-free classroom environment, stimulate students' motivation to listen, allocate sufficient time, and ensure proper seating arrangements while considering students' hearing abilities.
- b) Effective listening implementation: The teacher should focus on the speaking student, provide sufficient time for expression, and interact thoughtfully with the speaker.

2.4.2. Verbal Expression and Speaking Clearly

Speaking is a fundamental classroom communication skill that has attracted the attention of many researchers. Studies have focused on developing oral communication skills among different groups such as students, trainee teachers, and in-service teachers. Examples include:

- a) Bahgat (1986): Found that science teachers performed moderately in communication skills such as presenting lessons, maintaining attention, and using examples.

However, they showed weakness in skills such as correcting wrong answers and reinforcing positive behavior.

- b) Howeida Youssef (2003): Emphasized the need to enhance English language teachers' oral communication skills in primary schools, noting significant deficiencies.
- c) Al-Issawi & Mousa (2003): Found that education students at the University of the UAE showed weakness in oral communication prior to curriculum reform.

2.4.3. Conscious Reading of Written Material

Effective reading is an essential element of classroom communication. Teachers must not only read skillfully but also manage students' reading practices to enhance classroom engagement. Nasif (1995) emphasized the importance of systematic training in reading and the need to give it special attention in education. Key classroom reading skills include:

- a) Oral reading: Teachers should model accurate, expressive, and audible reading at an appropriate pace.
- b) Handling students' reading: Teachers should correct reading errors constructively, help students develop proper reading habits, and assess comprehension through targeted questions.

2.4.4. Clear Writing

Writing is a major channel of classroom communication that enables both teachers and students to express ideas, share understanding, and record key information. Common written communication practices in class include writing key terms or concepts on the board, preparing worksheets, or presenting written material using slides or digital tools. Main classroom writing skills include:

- a) Clarity of handwriting: Teachers should ensure legible handwriting on the board and in handouts, free from spelling or grammatical errors.
- b) Clarity of written ideas: Teachers should express ideas using simple, age-appropriate language and confirm that students can read and understand the written material through reading aloud, questioning, and writing exercises.

2.4.5. Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning is an instructional strategy where students are divided into small, heterogeneous groups (usually 4–6 members) who work together to achieve shared goals. The teacher's role in cooperative learning is that of a facilitator, not a lecturer. Teachers set learning objectives, form groups, explain concepts, monitor progress, teach teamwork skills, and evaluate performance. The teacher should:

- a) Provide an open and motivating environment while maintaining order and discipline.
- b) Recognize each student's individuality and help them integrate into the group.
- c) Guide students toward self-directed learning.
- d) Study students' developmental characteristics, academic levels, and classroom behavior.

- e) Assign students to groups that include varying achievement levels and rotate members when needed.
- f) Encourage peer learning, publicly reward cooperative efforts publicly to promote healthy competition.
- g) Involve high-achieving students in supporting their peers.
- h) Ensure equal participation and prevent dominance by a few students.
- i) Use group assessment tools and celebrate collective success to enhance motivation.

2.4.6. Using the Scientific Method (Inquiry and Problem-Solving)

This skill involves engaging students in scientific thinking, encouraging them to make predictions about learning situations, test hypotheses, and explore real-world problems. Such learning helps students construct meaning from their experiences, builds confidence in their ability to solve problems, and promotes independence rather than reliance on the teacher for ready-made answers.

A successful teacher ensures that learning tasks are authentic and relevant to students' lives, allowing them to see the connection between knowledge and real-world experiences.

2.5. Concept of Academic Achievement

Academic achievement refers to the kind of learning outcomes associated with studying or mastering various school subjects. The score a student attains represents the grade achieved in a standardized examination that is administered intentionally or as part of planned instructional evaluation. The highest score achieved by a student during a given period is considered the student's achievement benchmark, recorded and recognized by the teacher (Nasrallah, 2004).

2.6. Importance of Academic Achievement

A student's level of academic achievement reflects their standing relative to peers. Achievement levels vary among students due to differences in intelligence, ability, and effort. Thus, a student's academic performance serves as a key indicator of their effort and progress over a specific period and remains an important measure throughout their educational journey.

According to Nasrallah (2004), academic achievement has recently become a major focus for all stakeholders-families, society, teachers, and students themselves. It is now considered the primary measure of student intelligence, talent, and success. Moreover, it serves as an indicator of a student's potential for future success, adaptability, and ability to interact effectively with others in social and professional contexts.

2.7. Factors Affecting Academic Achievement

2.7.1. Teacher's Personality

A teacher's personality is expressed through their behavior, speech, and interactions with students. These actions leave a strong impression on students and influence their respect for

the teacher and their enthusiasm toward the subject. When students admire their teacher's character, they tend to develop a positive relationship with them showing more interest in the subject, participating actively, engaging in related activities, and striving to achieve higher grades to gain the teacher's approval and appreciation.

2.7.2. Teacher–Student Interaction

Al-Jabri (2008), in *The Educational Development Journal*, observed that many teachers often complain about their students' weak performance and low engagement, leading to frustration and professional stagnation. However, he argues that the root causes of low performance may lie in the student, the curriculum, or the teacher.

A teacher who seeks to foster classroom engagement must embody the professional qualities of an effective educator. Ahmad Lubban (1984) summarized these key traits in his book *Zad Al-'Ilm (The Teacher's Provisions)* as follows:

- a) Respect for the student's personality.
- b) Ability to maintain classroom discipline.
- c) Encouraging students to express themselves freely.
- d) Considering individual differences among learners.
- e) Practicing fairness and moderation in discipline.
- f) Incorporating humor and positive interaction to create a relaxed atmosphere.

2.7.3 Teacher Characteristics

Nasrallah (2004) emphasized that teachers play a critical role in determining students' academic performance—whether high or low—and in ensuring the overall effectiveness of the educational process. Researchers have established a strong relationship between teacher characteristics and student achievement, classifying these characteristics into two main categories:

- a) Cognitive Characteristics: These include the teacher's knowledge base, intellectual abilities, and teaching methods used to stimulate and motivate students. Effective teachers use these cognitive abilities to raise students' academic performance.
- b) Personal Characteristics: These refer to the teacher's warmth, emotional stability, enthusiasm, and human approach to dealing with students. A teacher's behavior often mirrors the behavior students display in return—meaning that a positive, empathetic teacher typically inspires positive responses and higher academic performance among students.

3. Previous Studies

3.1. Rasmi (2008)

Rasmi emphasized that teachers should not focus solely on high-achieving students but rather aim to raise the performance of lower-achieving students to reach similar levels. He argued that the ideal teaching method is one that presents knowledge for practical application, not merely for theoretical understanding. He also highlighted the importance of flexibility, spontaneity, and fluency in

teaching, noting that these traits positively influence student achievement. According to him, flexibility reflects a teacher's ability to internalize information and connect it to methods, tools, and goals, while spontaneity enables progress toward educational objectives, and fluency ensures smooth classroom interaction. Rasmi further pointed out the significance of motivation and reinforcement, both of which have a positive effect on academic performance. He emphasized the teacher's questioning skills, describing good questioning as “half of teaching,” since effective questions stimulate students' thinking and focus. He also underscored the role of listening skills, noting that when teachers listen attentively and respond with encouragement—for example, through supportive facial expressions or positive comments—students feel valued, even when their answers are not entirely correct.

3.2. Al-Zughloul & Al-Mahamid (2007)

These researchers asserted that successful classroom management requires emotional balance and self-control from teachers, especially when facing stressful or challenging situations. They found that positive teachers are characterized by enthusiasm and perseverance in both teaching and classroom management. Their study also revealed a positive correlation between teachers' enthusiasm and students' academic performance: the more passionate and persistent the teacher, the higher the students' academic achievement.

3.3. Dhiab (2006)

Dhiab confirmed earlier findings that teachers have a direct and significant impact on students' academic achievement. He argued that teachers play a vital role in stimulating intellectual curiosity and fostering active learning. According to him, the primary criterion for evaluating an effective teacher is the degree of behavioral and academic change observed in students as a result of the teacher's influence.

3.4. Al-Dasouqi (2005)

Al-Dasouqi's study showed that low academic achievement among students is often linked to teacher inefficiency, inappropriate teaching methods, and poor teacher–student relationships. These factors collectively contribute to weak student performance.

3.5. Watson & Lindgren (2004)

In their study on the impact of positive teacher–student interactions, Watson and Lindgren proved that teachers who handle classroom problems positively tend to enhance students' problem-solving skills and improve their overall academic achievement and performance in various school domains.

3.6. Nasrallah (2004)

Nasrallah found that highly effective teachers are those who exhibit tolerance toward students' behaviors and motivations, express genuine friendliness, and adopt non-

directive teaching approaches. These teachers listen attentively to their students, accept their ideas, and encourage participation in diverse classroom activities-all of which contribute to improved academic achievement.

3.7 Buhaza (2001)

Buhaza's study revealed a strong correlation between student participation and subject mastery. Students who actively participated in discussions demonstrated higher levels of academic achievement. Therefore, classroom discussion was identified as one of the most effective communication strategies, moving beyond traditional teacher-centered instruction and significantly enhancing learning outcomes.

3.8 Good (1979)

Good's research found a statistically significant relationship between using multiple teaching methods in the classroom and improved student achievement levels.

3.9 Brophy (1982) & Erlwanger (1975)

Both studies concluded that effective teachers are those who give students opportunities to apply what they learn, provide direct supervision, and offer constructive feedback.

They found that students who receive clear, guided instruction from teachers achieve higher academic performance than those who attempt to learn independently without structured support.

4. Research Methodology

The descriptive method was adopted in this study as it suits the study's nature and goals. According to Rajab and Taha (2009), the descriptive method is based on "describing current facts related to the nature of a given phenomenon and interpreting them adequately".

4.1. Research Population

The study population consisted of 1,576 female teachers working in 20 secondary schools across the State of Kuwait. These figures were obtained from the official statistics of the Ministry of Education in Kuwait for the 2023–2024 academic year.

4.2. Research Sample

The study sample included 100 female secondary school teachers selected from five schools in Kuwait, with 20 teachers from each school participating in the study.

4.3. Research Instrument

After reviewing previous research tools related to the topic, the researcher developed a questionnaire to measure the impact of classroom communication skills between teachers and students on academic achievement from the perspective of secondary school teachers. The questionnaire consisted of two parts:

- Part One: Background information related to the study variable (e.g., teaching experience).
- Part Two: Twenty-five (25) items designed to measure perceptions of classroom communication skills and their effects on achievement, rated on a three-point Likert scale:
 - a. Agree
 - b. To some extent
 - c. Disagree

4.4. Statistical Analysis

To answer the research questions, percentages were used to analyze the responses and identify trends among participants. The main research questions addressed were:

- a) What are the most influential communication skills affecting classroom interaction between teachers and students?
- b) To what extent do classroom communication skills affect students' academic achievement?
- c) What is the effect of teaching experience on teachers' perceptions of classroom communication skills and their impact on academic achievement?

5. Research findings

5.1. Response rate for the first question:

What classroom communication skills are required for secondary school teachers? The results indicated that teachers rated the following items as very high: items 6, 9, 14, 15, and 21, each receiving 100% agreement.

High ratings were also observed for items 22, 1, 3, 2, 17, and 16, with percentages ranging between 94%, 93%, 91%, 90%, 74%, and 50%, respectively. However, item 13 received a very low rating, with only 20% agreement.

5.2. Response rate for the second question

To what extent do classroom communication skills affect students' academic achievement?

The teachers confirmed, through their classroom practices, that communication skills significantly influence students' academic performance. Items 24 and 4 received high percentages (86% and 87%, respectively), supporting the findings of previous studies. For instance, Nasrallah (2004) found that effective teachers show tolerance toward students' behaviors, express friendliness, and encourage participation, all of which enhance academic achievement. Similarly, Dhiab (2006) emphasized that teachers play a crucial role in stimulating student engagement and shaping behavioral and academic progress. Al-Dasouqi (2005) also found that inefficiency, poor methods, and weak relationships between teachers and students lead to low academic performance.

Buhaza (2001) demonstrated a positive correlation between student participation and academic achievement, showing that discussion-based classrooms improve learning outcomes. Thus, there is a positive correlation between effective classroom communication skills and students' academic achievement.

5.3. Response rate for the third question:

Are there statistically significant differences among teachers' views regarding the impact of classroom communication skills on students' academic achievement that can be attributed to teaching experience?

The results showed that teachers with five years or less of experience responded differently from those with more than five years of experience. This variation suggests that teaching experience influences teachers' perceptions of the role of communication skills in improving academic performance.

6. Conclusion

The study confirms that classroom communication skills, both verbal and nonverbal, substantially influence student academic achievement in Kuwaiti secondary schools. Teachers with effective communication strategies create more engaging and supportive learning environment, leading to improved academic outcomes. Moreover, teaching experience shapes the perception of communication's role in student success. These insights underscore the importance of professional development and continuous evaluation of communication practices in educational settings.

7. Recommendations

Based on the results of this study, the following recommendations are proposed:

- Educational supervisors should be trained in classroom communication skills and in how to teach and evaluate these skills among the teachers they oversee.
- Teachers should engage in self-assessment by periodically reviewing and reflecting on their classroom communication practices to identify strengths and areas for improvement.
- Developing training programs based on self-learning to enhance classroom communication skills using modern technologies such as video tutorials, digital media, and interactive software.
- Creating a Stimulating Learning Environment: Focus on organizing classroom environments that promote excitement, curiosity, and active participation through realistic learning situations that stimulate students' thinking.
- Teacher training programs should emphasize the shift from the traditional lecturer role to that of a learning facilitator, while developing traits such as flexibility, keen observation, innovation, and a desire to nurture students' critical thinking skills.

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