



Vol. 3 No. 2 (February) (2025)

Investigating the Effects of Teachers' Communication Skills on Students' Academic Achievement

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Abstract

Communication plays a key role in teaching learning process. Without effective communication one cannot clarify and understand something to someone. In this regard the teachers' communication skill plays a vital role in academic achievement of students. The purpose of the study was to investigate the impact of teachers' communication skills on students' academic achievement at secondary level. All Government Secondary Schools of District Mardan constituted the population of the study. Simple random sample techniques were used through which 45% (50 schools) of the total schools (111) were taken. The respondent of the study was comprised of 10th class students and Heads of the selected schools. 6% students of the selected schools were randomly selected. Two self-developed questionnaires, one for students and other for principals were developed and administered to the respondents of the study. The collected data were tabulated, analyzed and interpreted in the light of objectives of the study through chi-square and Pearson's correlation. It was concluded that there is great impact of teachers' communication skills on students' academic achievement. It was found that majority of the teachers have aggressive attitude while communicating to students. It was recommended that teacher may communicate in a well social and polite manner with students which will further contribute in the social development and academic achievement of students.

Key Words: Teacher communication, academic achievement

Introduction

Education is a continuous and long-life process in which teachers play a vital role. The teacher communication skill plays an important role in the teaching learning process which has a correlation with the students' achievement. Teacher is like an artist and must have a good communication skill. His simple and polite communicative language leads the students in the best way for



Vol. 3 No. 2 (February) (2025)

learning and understanding. Teacher mutual communication with their students is very helpful in understanding each other. His speak gently in the class can motivate and facilitate the students for learning. A good communicator discusses problems with others instead of quarrelling with them. When a teacher does not exchange any idea at all then the learners are left to their own procedure and those who have the ability to learn will do so. As teacher is the most important figure in the development of students, therefore teacher can play a vital role in the development of students. Teachers' communication skills have significant impact on students' academic achievement. Therefore the present study will explore the impact of teachers' communication on students' academic achievement.

Statement of the Problem

Communication is the back bone of the teaching learning process. Teachers' effective communication is a key to learning. Therefore the purpose of the study is to investigate the impact of teachers' communication skills on students' academic achievement.

Objectives

- i. To investigate the impact of teachers' communication skill on students' academic achievement.
- ii. To find out the impact of teacher verbal communication skills on students academic achievement.
- iii. To probe the impact of teachers' non-verbal communication on students' academic achievement.

Literature Review

According to Loy (2006) communication is the process of exchanging information of humans with each other. He is of the opinion that this process involves a speaker, his speech, listeners to him, and feedback or responses. Loy defined the process of communication as "the process of creating a meaning through speech." Communication is the best mean, source and link among teachers and students through which they can inculcate and receive information in the class for understanding each other and enhancing teaching learning process.

All the activities of the classroom depend upon the communication skill of a teacher either verbal or non verbal i.e. the way of talking, communicating ideas and information, body language and face gesture (khan, 2011).

Teacher's communication skills motivates students for developing their own communicative skills, the pronunciation, accent, vocabulary, pitch of speech and so many other aspects of language affects students positively as well as negatively (Lawrence & Shapiro, 2004). There are two aspects of teacher communication; one is direct communication in the form of teaching, seminars, interaction in different activities, question answer session and other is indirect communication through result cards, reports and portfolios which affect the students' performance in the class (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2010).The message of the teacher must be clear and understandable for their students (Guskey and Bailey, 2010).



Vol. 3 No. 2 (February) (2025)

During class communication, when teacher asking questions must wait for two to three second in order to give enough time to students for thinking and reply, because this habit create confidence among students and leads them towards success(Ormrod &Ellis, 2003)

According to Limon and Lafrance (2005), good and devoted teacher has always use effective communication style in a variety of positive ways which affect the students in the class. An unskilled teacher, who is unable to use or apply effective teacher communication style components, can badly influence the students in the class. The good communication style of a teacher play a key role in cognitive and affective learning of students, such teachers has good qualities students full of cooperation, honesty, and confidence and best responsive in nature while the number of students with behavioral problems is very less in classroom of such teachers. The outstanding teacher-students and student-students relationships have its roots in the best teachers' communication style as compared to poor teacher communication. The moody and unskilled teacher has a harmful effect on overall student/teacher relationship and education. The unbalanced style of teacher causes slow learning in the students. On the other side a poor teacher have a reasonable increase in cognitive learning of students; although the students are able to gain knowledge in spite of the teacher's, weak and boring style, but the effects remain negative on learning and student-teacher relationship as well.

While concluding it is clear from the above statements that in an effective teacher communication style all the six components are used often simultaneously and very rarely observed in isolation. An effective teacher knows the art how to communicate with their students and which communication style is suitable for which one teaching environment.

According to Richmond, Wrench and Gorham (2009) teachers, who do not know or unable to exercise suitable communication styles are unsuccessful or ineffective teachers. Effective teachers are sociable, accurate, caring, dynamic, peaceful, and impressive, whereas, ineffective teachers are unsociable, inaccurate, careless, non-dynamic, nervous, and unimpressive. Teacher communication style the same role during instruction, teacher-students relationship and students-students relationship as the soul in the human body.

Teachers has been expected to perform their best instructional and communication role in the classroom without any mistake, because teachers are the only vital force for the students in the classroom. Accordingly, teachers often have vast communication demands placed upon them. This communication demands has been placed upon them by the society, parents, superiors, other teachers, as well as students. Majority of the teachers spend most of their time in communication with their students as a duty, either verbally or nonverbally. A teacher is always adjusting, readjusting, and altering to meet the communication requirements of her or his listeners (yunas, 2014). A teacher performs a lot of roles. The most ordinary expected roles of teachers to perform are: organizer, instructive manager, supporter, assessor, facilitator, disciplinarian, formal and informal authority, specialist, socializing agent, agent of change, judge, and primary communicator. Communication provides a base to teachers in performing these roles which others also expect from them. Teachers seldom communicate in separation and their communication is not in one direction. Teachers' communication is a two-way process, in which teachers communicate,



Vol. 3 No. 2 (February) (2025)

others respond, and the process carries on. The study proposed the interactive or two-way process of teaching. Teachers have action on their students and in response students have reaction on their teachers (Richmond, Wrench and Gorham, 2009).

Research Method

Population

All the principals and students of government secondary schools of district Mardan constituted the population of the study.

Sample

Sample was selected randomly. Fifty schools were randomly selected as sample of the study. Out of which 30 male and 20 female principals and 6% students of class 10th from each sampled school were taken as respondents.

Data Collection Instrument

Data were collected from the 10th class students and principals of the sampled schools through self developed questionnaires.

Data Analysis Tool

The collected data were analyzed through chi-square and Pearson's Correlation for getting the results

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1: Expression of Teachers' Ideas

Respondent	Gender	$G \chi^2$	$L \chi^2$	r Value	Sig
Principals	Male	1.450	4.228	.405	.002
	Female				
Students	Male	3.551	.925	.321	.000
	Female				

df = 4, *significant at 0.05 level

Table 1 shows that the χ^2 value of principals gender wise and location wise are 1.450 and 4.228 at 0.05 level ($P < 0.05$) which are less than the tabulated value that is 9.49; thus, the results are insignificant, and showed that majority of the respondents did not agreed with the statement, While, the χ^2 value of students gender wise and location wise are 3.551 and .925 at 0.05 level ($P < 0.05$) which are less than the table value of 9.49; thus the results are insignificant, which showed that gender wise and location wise teachers didn't clearly express their idea to students.

Pearson co-relation of both principals and students' responses $r = .405$ and $.321$ at 0.05 level ($P < 0.05$) with location and students' marks, which reveals that there is significantly correlation in teachers' express and students understanding.

Results conclude that majority of the teachers cannot express their ideas clearly



Vol. 3 No. 2 (February) (2025)

to students which are significant for students’ academic achievement. Hence, the statement, “Expression of teachers’ ideas,” is negatively accepted.

Table 2: Teachers’ Listening to Students’ Responses

Respondent	Gender	G χ^2	L χ^2	r Value	Sig
Principals	Male	3.408	4.261	.579	.000
	Female				
Students	Male	3.573	7.979	.316	.000
	Female				

df = 4, *significant at 0.05 level

Table 2 shows that the χ^2 value of principals gender wise and location wise are 3.408 and 4.261 at 0.05 level ($P < 0.05$) which are less than the tabulated value that is 9.49; thus, the results are insignificant, and showed that majority of the respondents did not agree with the statement, While, the χ^2 value of students gender wise and location wise are 3.573 and 7.979 at 0.05 level ($P < 0.05$) which are less than the table value of 9.49; thus the results are insignificant, which showed that gender wise and location wise teachers didn’t listen to students responses properly.

Pearson co-relation of both principals and students’ responses $r = .579$ and $.316$ at 0.05 level ($P < 0.05$) with location and students’ marks, which reveals that there is significantly correlation in students responses and teachers permissive style.

Results conclude that majority of the teachers did not listen to students’ responses properly, which have high co-relation with their understanding and academic achievement. Hence, the statement, “Teachers’ listening to students’ responses,” is negatively accepted.

Table 3: Teachers Speak Gently to Students

Respondent	Gender	G χ^2	L χ^2	r Value	Sig
Principals	Male	3.294	1.211	.570	.000
	Female				
Students	Male	3.843	2.415	.441	.000
	Female				

df = 4, *significant at 0.05 level

Table 3 shows that the χ^2 value of principals gender wise and location wise are 3.294 and 1.211 at 0.05 level ($P < 0.05$) which are less than the tabulated value that is 9.49; thus, the results are insignificant, and showed that majority of the respondents did not agreed with the statement, While, the χ^2 value of students gender wise and location wise are 3.843 and 2.415 at 0.05 level ($P < 0.05$) which are less than the table value of 9.49; thus the results are insignificant, which showed that gender wise and location wise respondents disagreed with the statement.

Pearson co-relation of both principals and students’ responses $r = .570$ and $.441$ at 0.05 level ($P < 0.05$) with location and students’ marks, which reveals that there is significantly correlation in teachers’ and students polite speaking.



Vol. 3 No. 2 (February) (2025)

Results conclude that besides, high co-relation among teachers’ polite communication and students’ academic achievement majority of the respondents disagreed that teachers use polite language in the class. Hence, the statement, “Teachers speak gently to students,” is negatively accepted.

Table 4: Teachers’ Reaction at Students’ Responses

Respondent	Gender	G χ^2	L χ^2	r Value	Sig
Principals	Male	5.608	.549	.509	.000
	Female				
Students	Male	18.936	16.444	.486	.000
	Female				

df = 4, *significant at 0.05 level

Table 4 shows that the χ^2 value of principals gender wise and location wise are 5.608 and .549 at 0.05 level ($P < 0.05$) which are less than the tabulated value that is 9.49; thus, the results are insignificant, and showed that majority of the respondents did not agreed with the statement, While, the χ^2 value of students gender wise and location wise are 18.936 and 16.444 at 0.05 level ($P < 0.05$) which are greater than the table value of 9.49; thus the results are significant, which showed that gender wise and location wise teachers react on students responses properly and accordingly.

Pearson co-relation of both principals and students’ responses $r = .509$ and $.486$ at 0.05 level ($P < 0.05$) with location and students’ marks, which reveals that there is significantly correlation in students’ response and teachers’ reaction.

Results conclude that majority of the teachers’ give a productive response on the responses of their students at classroom situation, which have direct impact on their academic achievement. Hence, the statement, “Teachers’ reaction at students’ responses,” is accepted.

Table 5: Encouragement of Students to Overcome their Problems

Respondent	Gender	G χ^2	L χ^2	r Value	Sig
Principals	Male	3.697	.572	.494	.000
	Female				
Students	Male	10.783	9.833	.404	.000
	Female				

df = 4, *significant at 0.05 level

Table 5 shows that the χ^2 value of principals gender wise and location wise are 3.697 and .572 at 0.05 level ($P < 0.05$) which are less than the tabulated value that is 9.49; thus, the results are insignificant, and showed that majority of the respondents did not agreed with the statement, While, the χ^2 value of students gender wise and location wise are 10.783 and 9.933 at 0.05 level ($P < 0.05$) which are greater than the table value of 9.49; thus the results are significant, which showed that gender wise and location wise teachers encourage and motivate



Vol. 3 No. 2 (February) (2025)

students in their studies.

Pearson co-relation of both principals and students’ responses $r = .494$ and $.404$ at 0.05 level ($P < 0.05$) with location and students’ marks, which reveals that there is significantly correlation in teachers’ encouragement and the problems of students studies.

Results conclude that majority of the teachers motivate and encourage students in their studies, which have positive impact on their studies. Hence, the statement, “Encouragement of students to overcome their problems,” is accepted.

Table 6: Teachers’ Patience with Students

Respondent	Gender	$G \chi^2$	$L \chi^2$	r Value	Sig
Principals	Male	2.386	1.058	.655	.000
	Female				
Students	Male	2.386	3.713	.431	.000
	Female				

df = 4, *significant at 0.05 level

Table 6 shows that the χ^2 value of principals gender wise and location wise are 2.386 and 1.058 at 0.05 level ($P < 0.05$) which are less than the tabulated value that is 9.49; thus, the results are insignificant, and showed that majority of the respondents did not agreed with the statement, While, the χ^2 value of students gender wise and location wise are 2.386 and 3.713 at 0.05 level ($P < 0.05$) which are less than the table value of 9.49; thus the results are insignificant, which showed that gender wise and location wise teachers didn’t patiently deals students affairs in the class.

Pearson co-relation of both principals and students’ responses $r = .655$ and $.431$ at 0.05 level ($P < 0.05$) with location and students’ marks, which reveals that there is significantly correlation in teachers patience and students’ academic achievement.

Results conclude that majority of the teachers were found who did not deals students patiently in the class, which have negative impact of the academic achievements of students. Hence, the statement, “Teachers’ patience with students,” is negatively accepted.

Table 7: Teachers’ Eye Contact with Students

Respondent	Gender	$G \chi^2$	$L \chi^2$	r Value	Sig
Principals	Male	3.849	1.087	.456	.000
	Female				
Students	Male	13.051	11.073	.453	.000
	Female				

df = 4, *significant at 0.05 level

Table 7 shows that the χ^2 value of principals gender wise and location wise are 3.849 and 1.087 at 0.05 level ($P < 0.05$) which are less than the tabulated value



Vol. 3 No. 2 (February) (2025)

that is 9.49; thus, the results are insignificant, and showed that majority of the respondents did not agreed with the statement, While, the χ^2 value of students gender wise and location wise are 13.051 and 11.073 at 0.05 level ($P < 0.05$) which are greater than the table value of 9.49; thus the results are significant, which showed that gender wise and location wise teachers have direct eye contact with students while communicating with them.

Pearson co-relation of both principals and students' responses $r = .456$ and $.453$ at 0.05 level ($P < 0.05$) with location and students' marks, which reveals that there is significantly correlation between teachers eye contact and students' academic achievement.

Results conclude that majority of the teachers while communicating to the students had direct eye contact with them which increase their confidence and understanding and as a result contribute to the academic achievement of students. Hence, the statement, "Teachers' eye contact with students," is accepted.

Table 8: Teachers' Interest in Students' Responses

Respondent	Gender	$G \chi^2$	$L \chi^2$	r Value	Sig
Principals	Male	9.492	2.409	.355	.006
	Female				
Students	Male	15.670	17.143	.607	.000
	Female				

df = 4, *significant at 0.05 level

Table 8 shows that the χ^2 value of principals gender wise and location wise are 9.492 and 4.409 at 0.05 level ($P < 0.05$) which are less than the tabulated value that is 9.49; thus, the results are insignificant, and showed that majority of the respondents did not agreed with the statement, While, the χ^2 value of students gender wise and location wise are 15.670 and 17.143 at 0.05 level ($P < 0.05$) which are greater than the table value of 9.49; thus the results are insignificant, which showed that gender wise and location wise teachers take enough interest in students responses.

Pearson co-relation of both principals and students' responses $r = .355$ and $.607$ at 0.05 level ($P < 0.05$) with location and students' marks, which reveals that there is significantly correlation in students responses and teachers interests.

Results conclude that majority of the teachers take more interest in students' responses, which have high co-relation with their understanding and academic achievement. Hence, the statement, "Teachers' interest in students' responses," is accepted.

Table 9: Teachers Refrain Students to Finish

Respondent	Gender	$G \chi^2$	$L \chi^2$	r Value	Sig
Principals	Male	10.777	.658	.097	.250
	Female				
Students	Male	13.008	16.158	.048	.203
	Female				



Vol. 3 No. 2 (February) (2025)

df = 4, *significant at 0.05 level

Table 9 shows that the χ^2 value of principals gender wise and location wise are 10.777 and .658 at 0.05 level ($P < 0.05$) which are less than the tabulated value that is 9.49; thus, the results are insignificant, and showed that majority of the respondents did not agreed with the statement, While, the χ^2 value of students gender wise and location wise are 13.008 and 16.158 at 0.05 level ($P < 0.05$) which are greater than the table value of 9.49; thus the results are insignificant, which showed that gender wise and location wise teachers refrain students to finish their response.

Pearson co-relation of both principals and students' responses $r = .097$ and $.048$ at 0.05 level ($P < 0.05$) with location and students' marks, which reveals that there is no significantly correlation in teachers' stopping students before they finish to end their argument regarding some phenomena which have no significant effect on the academic achievement of students. Hence, the statement, "Teacher refrain students to finish," is negatively accepted.

Table 10: Teachers' Disagreements with Students

Respondent	Gender	$G \chi^2$	$L \chi^2$	r	Sig
Principals	Male	3.218	1.944	.444	.001
	Female				
Students	Male	18.538	14.463	.120	.019
	Female				

df = 4, *significant at 0.05 level

Table 10 shows that the χ^2 value of principals gender wise and location wise are 3.218 and 1.944 at 0.05 level ($P < 0.05$) which are less than the tabulated value that is 9.49; thus, the results are insignificant, and showed that majority of the respondents did not agreed with the statement, While, the χ^2 value of students gender wise and location wise are 18.538 and 4.463 at 0.05 level ($P < 0.05$) which are greater than the table value of 9.49; thus the results are significant, which showed that gender wise and location wise teachers avoid expressing disagreement with their students that they might not get angry.

Pearson co-relation of both principals and students' responses $r = .444$ and $.120$ at 0.05 level ($P < 0.05$) with location and students' marks, which reveals that there is significantly correlation in teachers relaxes for the sake of agreement and students' academic achievements.

As a whole the results showed that majority of the teachers avoid expressing disagreement with their students that they might not get angry, which contribute for the emotional development of students. Hence, the statement, "teachers' disagreements with students," is accepted.

Findings

1. Majority of the teachers cannot express their ideas clearly to students which are significant for students' academic achievement.



Vol. 3 No. 2 (February) (2025)

2. Majority of the teachers did not listen students responses properly, which have high co-relation with their understanding and academic achievement.
3. There is high co-relation among teacher polite communication and students' academic achievement, majority of the respondents disagreed that teachers use polite language in the class.
4. Majority of the teachers give a productive response on the responses of their students at classroom situation, which have direct impact on their academic achievement.
5. Majority of the teachers motivate and encourage students in their studies, which have positive impact on their studies.
6. Majority of the teachers were found who did not deal students patiently in the class, which have negative impact on the academic achievements of students.
7. Majority of the teachers while communicating to students have direct eye contact with them which increase their confidence and understanding and as a result contribute to the academic achievement of students.
8. Majority of the teachers take more interest in students responses, which have high co-relation with their understanding and academic achievement.
9. There is no significant correlation in teachers' stopping students' views before they finish their argument regarding some phenomena, which have no significant effect on the academic achievement of students.
10. Majority of the teachers avoid expressing disagreement with their students that they might not get angry, which contribute for the emotional development of students.

Conclusions

From the above findings of the study, following conclusions were made;

1. It was concluded that most of the teachers unable to express their ideas clearly which negatively affect the students' academic achievement
2. It was concluded that majority of the teachers did not listen students responses properly. They use impolite language while communicating to students in the class, which badly affect students' academic achievement.
3. Most of the teachers have the lack of tolerance. They did not deal students patiently in the class which negatively affect the students' academic achievement.
4. Majority of the teachers have direct eye contact with their students which increase their confidence and understanding and as a result contribute to the academic achievement of students.
5. It was concluded that majority of the teachers have no soft tone of communication which is a cultural flaw that degrade students, and negatively affect them in their studies.

Recommendations

1. It is unethical not to listen ones' view point on a particular idea, and it is therefore recommended that such training program should be introduced for teachers which would help them to understand/listen to the students' grievances and would bring teachers and students in close interaction with



Vol. 3 No. 2 (February) (2025)

each other that will not only help them to understand students properly but will contribute for students emotional, psychological and intellectual development.

2. Teachers' aggressive attitude in communicating students, negatively influence their own personality as well as students communication skills. It is therefore recommended that teacher may communicate in a well social and polite manner with students which will further contribute in the social development and academic achievement of students.
3. The present study only targeted the secondary school teachers' communication skill in the class; therefore it is recommended for the future researchers to study private secondary school teachers' communication skill, elementary school teachers' communication skill to get a complete picture regarding teacher communication skill.

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