

Teachers' Perception of the Relationship between the Characters of Role Players in Schools and the Level of Culture of Teaching and Learning

Muhammad Faizal Bin Ghani
Masoumeh Pourrajab

Abstract— The aim of this paper is to investigate the relationship between the characters of role players and level of Culture of Teaching and Learning (COTL) in schools. Additionally, the paper aims to identify the level of COTL in schools based on teachers' perception. Data were collected from 280 teachers in secondary schools in Lorestan Province, Iran. To achieve these aims, the researchers conducted a research survey to determine the level of COTL, and applied multivariate regression analysis to investigate the relationship between the characters of role players and COTL. The findings of this study showed that, the level of COTL is high and also there is a positive and moderate relationship between the characters of principals, teachers, students, and parents and COTL. The teachers in this study pointed out that the character of students had a more important role for COTL. The study identifies some useful point for teaches to be more effective on the level of COTL.

Keywords— Characters of role players, Culture of Teaching and Learning (COTL), Teaching and Learning (T&L), Principals, Teachers, and Iran

I. Introduction

As Van Deventer and Kruger (2003) mention, the culture of teaching and learning (COTL) includes the attitudes of principals, teachers, students, and parents (role players) towards teaching and learning (T&L) as well as the quality of management in T&L process in school. COTL is characterized by an attractive classroom climate, teachers who are committed to students' involvement in T&L activities, the prevalence of order and discipline, a good relationship between the students and the staff of school, effective management, and teams working in the school and classroom. Schools with COTL have well maintained and safe T&L facilities and their principals and teachers maintain high professional standards (Rampa, 2004).

Muhammad Faizal Bin Ghani/Associate Professor
University of Malaya (UM)
Malaysia
mdfaizal@um.edu.my

Masoumeh Pourrajab/ Postdoctoral Fellow Researcher
University of Malaya (UM)
Malaysia
mpourajab@gmail.com

In COTL, the task of each role player is clear. Creating a quality culture in schools is one of the tasks of a principal (Oakland, 2003), and Bond (2001) believes that inspiration, support, sustenance, promotion, and improvement of a culture of performance excellence are the responsibility of principals. One of the teachers' tasks is to teach effectively. Teachers must make an effort to create a positive environment in the classroom for their students so that they can learn effectively (Valli & Chambliss, 2007). They should know both their students and their needs. In this way, the students are respected, understood, and recognized by teachers for what they are. Strategies such as learning tools and methodologies to create opportunities for students to improve their skills by practicing collaborative are the result of a conducive environment (Rampa, 2004).

Students are considered the main customers in COTL (Silins & Murray-Harvey, 2000). Consequently, students' self-concept is valued as an element that facilitates the attainment of outcomes related to academic achievement. There is evidence to show that the school experiences of students shape their future perspective and has an impact on their learning (Silins & Murray-Harvey, 2000). Therefore, a positive attitude and a sense of quality achievement among students play a crucial role in improving school performance. Such quality may also be enhanced through school community involvement. Students must know how they should learn. Therefore, students themselves, rather than curriculum planners, administrators, and policy makers in education and teachers, should find out what students study, because "learning never involves the absorption of informational aspects from outside the learner" (Thomas, 2012).

In spite of being hard to detect or even unrecognized, parents' contribution to the quality of T&L also play a significant role in COTL (Cronje, Jacobs, & Murdoch, 2002). In order to sustain COTL, parents should engage students during the teachers' absence by helping them practicing some skills like reading, writing, checking, and revising their homework. Additionally parents may contribute in administrative duties like completing stock lists, setting budgets, and filling out forms like applications for excursions, and fundraising. It is necessary to involve parents in the education of their children as full partners (Rampa, 2004). Brannon (2008) believes that parents are primary teachers of their children; they are responsible for the care, development and education of their children. However, they may not have

time, knowledge or training to provide all that to their children. Schools are therefore established for planned and specialized T&L.

COTL in Iran refers to some factors like school climate (safe and secure environments), and the attitude of principals, teachers, students and parents toward the T&L process. Other factors include new teaching techniques, the responsibility and commitment of principals and teachers, involvement of teachers, students, and parents in school decision making, ensuring the availability of stationery, books, laboratories, and library, as well as creating a culture of punctuality at school. In this study, COTL refers to the principals and teachers' view of the process of T&L and of the school environment.

The effect of character of principals, teachers, students, and parents on the level of COTL is not clear in Iranian schools, especially in the province of Lorestan, in spite of great attempts to clarify them. Therefore, this area is still open for more research and this study tries to identify the level of implementation of COTL in schools and also determine the relationship between the characters of role players in school and the level of COTL.

II. Methodology

This research was carried out in secondary schools in Lorestan province, Iran. This study tries to answer two research questions. First: what is the level of COTL in schools? And second: is there any significant relationship between the characters of role players and COTL based on teachers' perception?

The populations of this study were 206 secondary schools with 1354 teachers. To determine the sample size the Cochran (1977) formula was employed. A total of 40 schools and 280 teachers were selected by using the random sampling method.

The instrument used in the study was the 4-point Likert scale questionnaire which was prepared by Rampa (2004). This questionnaire consists of 70 items. Cronbach's alpha value was 0.919 and this showed that the questionnaire has an excellent reliability (George & Mallery, 2001). Descriptive statistics was used to describe the level of COTL in schools. Multivariate regression analysis was conducted to determine the extent of the relationship between the two variables of characters of role players and COTL.

III. Findings

A. Demography Findings

The participants of this study included 147 (52.5%) female teachers and 133 (47.5%) male teachers. The majority of teachers in this study had between 11 and 20 years experience (54.3%).

B. The level of COTL among teachers

Table 1 presents the teachers' view on COTL. From 13 items listed, eight items are rated as high, five items as medium, and none as low score.

Table 1: Teachers' opinions regarding level of COTL

| Subject | Mean | SD | Level | Rank |
|---|-------------|------------|-------------|------|
| Employing team and group work in class | 3.45 | .67 | High | 1 |
| Healthy school environments | 3.33 | .60 | High | 2 |
| Secure school environments | 3.31 | .63 | High | 3 |
| In-service training of educators | 3.27 | .77 | High | 4 |
| Using correct evaluation methods | 3.16 | .75 | High | 5 |
| Training teachers before teaching | 3.11 | .71 | High | 6 |
| Using problem solving in T&L | 3.04 | .73 | High | 7 |
| Using brainstorming in T&L | 3.03 | .74 | High | 8 |
| Using student-oriented system | 2.95 | .78 | Medium | 9 |
| Teachers empowerment with skills | 2.81 | .90 | Medium | 10 |
| Modelling on successful schools | 2.76 | .93 | Medium | 11 |
| Clearly defined guidelines | 2.76 | .80 | Medium | 11 |
| Deal with uncertainties of teacher redeployment | 2.59 | 1.03 | Medium | 12 |
| Overall | 3.04 | .77 | High | |

Note: Low (1.00 < M ≤ 2.00), Medium (2.01 < M ≤ 3.00), High (3.01 < M ≤ 4.00)

The highest score effort is 'employing team and group work in class' (mean=3.45; SD=.67). The lowest item with a medium score is 'deal with uncertainties regarding redeployment of teachers' (mean=2.59; SD=1.03).

Overall, the effort to improve COTL by schools in Lorestan province is high (mean=3.04; SD=.77). These data indicate that the teachers feel that schools in Lorestan have made great efforts in improving COTL. From Table 1, we can see that some efforts such as student-oriented system, empowerment of teachers, school benchmarking, professional guidelines, and redeployment of teachers need more attention based on teachers' views.

C. The relationship between the characters of role player and COTL

Multivariate regression analysis was used to investigate the relationship between the characters of role player (explanatory variable) and COTL (dependent variable). As discussed earlier, role players are principals, teachers, students, and parents. In this study, B₁, B₂, B₃, and B₄ are serially used for the characters of principals, teachers, students and parents, and B₅ is for COTL.

As can be seen from Table 2, a multiple correlation coefficient (R) is 0.401, which means that there is a positive and moderately strong relationship (Lodico, Spaulding, & Voegtle, 2006) between the characters of role players and COTL.

Table 2: The relationship between the dependent variable and the set of predictors

| R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|--|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| .401 | .161 | .149 | .504 |
| a. Predictors: (Constant), B ₄ , B ₂ , B ₁ , B ₃ | | | |
| b. Dependent Variable: B ₅ | | | |

The derived multiple coefficient of determination (R^2) is 0.161, which means that 16.1% of variations in the dependent variable are explained by the set of predictors. This also means that the accuracy of the variables of characters of principals, teachers, students and parents in improving COTL is 16.1%. The overall regression model is significant even at the 0.01 level ($p=0.000$) with F-ratio of 13.188 (see Table 3).

Table 3: ANOVA result based on teachers' view

| | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|--|----------------|-----|-------------|--------|-------------------|
| Regression | 13.402 | 4 | 3.350 | 13.188 | .000 ^a |
| Residual | 69.866 | 275 | .254 | | |
| Total | 83.268 | 279 | | | |
| a. Predictors: (Constant), B ₄ , B ₂ , B ₁ , B ₃ | | | | | |
| b. Dependent Variable: B ₅ | | | | | |

Table 4: Estimates of Coefficients for COTL based on teachers' view

| | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|------|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| Constant | 1.933 | .208 | | 9.288 | .000 |
| B ₁ | .082 | .057 | .094 | 1.455 | .147 |
| B ₂ | .151 | .060 | .160 | 2.532 | .012 |
| B ₃ | .189 | .056 | .210 | 3.371 | .001 |
| B ₄ | .077 | .052 | .091 | 1.477 | .141 |
| a. Dependent Variable: B ₅ | | | | | |

Table 4 shows the parameter estimates of the regression, which represent the regression coefficients or slope of each predictor variable. The t statistics indicate the significance of the constant and each of the parameter estimates. The regression model has a constant of 1.933 and is significant at the 0.05 level ($p=0.000$). Parameter estimates for characters of principals, teachers, students and parents are .082, .151, .189 and .077 respectively. The t statistics provide the significance of each parameter estimates. The character of students is the most significant explanatory variable in predicting COTL in teachers' opinion. The significant level of 0.001 for this variable indicates only 0.01% error. Teachers' character is a significant predictor at the 0.05 level ($p=0.012$) while principals' and parents' character are not significant at all ($p=0.147$ and 0.141). The derived model is:

$$COTL = 1.93 + 0.08*B_1 + 0.15*B_2 + 0.19*B_3 + 0.08*B_4 \quad (1)$$

So COTL, with regard to teachers' opinion, has a positive correlation with characters of principals (B₁), characters of

teachers (B₂), characters of students (B₃) and characters of parents (B₄).

The prediction equation of perceived COTL is as follows:

$$Y = b_0 + B_3(X_3) + B_2(X_2) + e \quad (2)$$

$$COTL = 1.93 + 0.19(\text{characters of students}) + 0.15(\text{characters of teachers}) + e \quad (3)$$

The prediction equation depicts the overall contribution of two out of four characters of role players including teachers and students in predicting COTL in Iranian secondary schools based on teachers' views.

The perceived COTL model is presented in Figure 1. The model indicates that the remaining dimensions (characters of principals and parents) are not significant predictors of perceived COTL based on teachers' opinion.

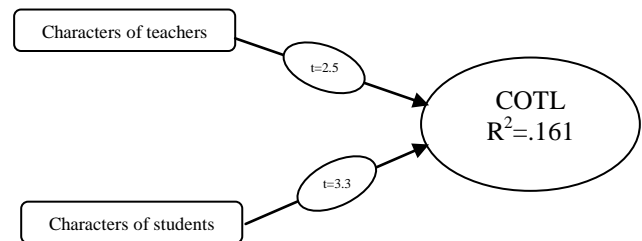


Figure 1: Perceived COTL model based on teachers' view

It can be concluded that, from teachers' perception, there is a positive moderately strong relationship ($R=.40$) between the characters of principals, teachers, students, and parents and COTL. This means that teachers believed that character of role players can increase the level of COTL and the characters of students and teachers have a more important role to play in COTL; these are followed by characters of principals and parents respectively. All characteristics of role players have a positive relationship with COTL.

iv. Results and Discussion

The findings show that there is a moderately strong relationship ($R=0.40$) between the characters of principals, teachers, students, and parents and COTL. The characters of students and teachers have a more important role for COTL; this is followed by characters of principals and parents respectively. All characteristics of role players have a positive relationship with COTL.

Teachers are available for students throughout their academic journey. They provide a reliable and consistent presence in the daily school life of a student. The role of teachers should be: to bear the responsibility of shaping the students' learning and, through them, the potential of the human resource as they contribute to competitiveness in today's globally environment. They can apply some fundamental elements effectively to teaching in ways that facilitate student motivation, involvement, effort, learning, and performance (Babbar, 1995). Also, the teacher must be well

prepared, have a strong interest in teaching, be enthusiastic about what he or she teaches and want the student to learn, put in the best effort, be knowledgeable, pay attention to detail, have students participate and, most of all, show respect for the students so as to motivate and involve them (Babbar, 1995). But the school principal is the person who is accountable for ensuring that all students have access to a high quality education (Pacis & Weegar, 2011).

Students grow from the overall learning experience, adopt and operationalize that which is taught. Moreover, the concepts of team work (which also includes the teacher as a team member), participation, and the desire to make a real difference through sincere commitment are all communicated and impressed on the student through the teaching objective (Babbar, 1995). Parents also are more supportive of teachers when behavior issues arise when they feel well-informed and understand the purpose for the class rules and consequences. Communication empowers parents to be partners and to help prevent behavior problems before they begin (Diana Brannon, 2008). Teachers are satisfied with their relationships with the students, and their principal, but they are not satisfied with relations with the parents (Konidari & Abernot, 2006).

Rampa (2010) in his study found that teachers indicated that they were willing to be assisted in improving their teaching. However, they did not have the capacity to deal with such established cultures.

v. Conclusion

This research paper tries to determine the relationship between the characters of role players in school and level of COTL. As the general findings, the level of COTL was high in Iranian secondary schools based on teachers' perceptions.

A moderately strong relationship between characters of role players and COTL proved the positive effect of role players on COTL. Based on teachers' opinions, the character of students has a more important role for COTL. Here, students are perceived as customers of the modern educational system. There is therefore a need to give students what they need and what they respect. They expect useful lessons and practices, as well as opportunities to add value to their education. Such added value primarily consists of adequate preparation for the final exam, which needs good and knowledgeable teachers.

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