Research Article

Investigating The Influence of Teacher Aggression on Student Academic Motivation in Province of Sindh, Pakistan

^{*1}Maroof Ahmed, ²Aizaz Ali Soomro, ³Haleema

¹Universitas Islam Internasional Indonesia, Pakistan ²Sukkur IBA University, Pakistan ³Monash University, Australia

*Corresponding author: maroof.ahmed@uiii.ac.id

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Abstract

The present study aimed to explore the impact of teacher aggressive behaviors on student academic motivation in Sindh, one of the provinces in Pakistan. A descriptive survey research design was employed, utilizing a sample of 120 public school teachers (70 female and 50 male). Data was collected using a researcher-developed instrument called the "Teachers Aggressive Behavior Survey" (TABS). The research questions were answered using descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations, and the hypothesis was tested using t-test statistics at a significance level of 0.05. The results indicated that teachers exhibit various forms of aggressive behaviors that negatively impact student participation in academic activities. It is recommended that school administrators take steps to raise awareness among teachers about the detrimental effects of aggressive behaviors on student academic motivation.

Keywords

Sindh province; teacher aggressive behaviors; student academic motivation

Introduction

The comprehensive growth and development of a child encompasses various dimensions, including physical, moral, spiritual, and mental well-being, which requires a supportive interpersonal environment. This environment is the responsibility of multiple stakeholders in society and is crucial for a child's growth. However, when these stakeholders become a source of fear rather than comfort, the growth-promoting opportunities can be limited. Ludlow and Wenar (2012) emphasize that the fear experienced by a child can stem from various sources, including abuse within the home. The authors point out that this kind of abuse may take many forms, including neglect, physical, sexual, and



emotional abuse, and may go unnoticed because of the lack of outward manifestations of the trauma experienced. According to Ludlow and Wenar (2012), emotional abuse consists of a wide range of behaviors, including but not limited to: humiliation, criticism, threats, blaming, yelling, name-calling, putting a kid to ridicule, scapegoating, and forcing a child to perform degrading activities. Emotional abuse is broken down further by the authors into three subtypes: verbal abuse (such as screaming and insults), rejection (such as rejecting a child's thoughts, ideas, and opinions), and gaslighting (e.g., causing a child to doubt their own thoughts and perceptions).

According to Morin (2021), emotional abuse, also referred to as psychological abuse, is a pattern of behavior that undermines a child's sense of self-worth and hinders their emotional development. The author outlines that emotional abuse encompasses various actions such as rejection, criticism, threats, demeaning and berating language, humiliation, name-calling, and insults. Emotional abuse, as emphasized by Morin (2021), is a form of control and authority that is not always obvious and gradually destroys a person's sense of self-worth. The author notes that child abuse may come from a variety of adults, including parents, coaches, day care employees, pastors, older siblings, and instructors, and that people who abuse children may have a history of drug use disorder or violence and aggressiveness. The manipulation and control of the child through emotionally hurtful words and actions are central to emotional abuse.

Knowledge, skills, and good character may all be gained via the guidance of a good teacher, as defined in Wikipedia. The Random-House Dictionary also describes a teacher as one who teaches or conveys information, but in the context of a vocation or an educator. According to Joana (2020), educators have a significant impact on their pupils by inspiring in them a passion for learning. Students of all ages and walks of life can benefit from teachers who can ignite a lifelong curiosity for learning and personal development in their students.

Furthermore, Gagnon (2019) emphasized that the characteristics of an effective teacher include listening skills, collaboration, adaptability, empathy, patience, and the ability to motivate learners. The author stressed that the quality of the teacher is the most significant factor in determining a student's success in the classroom, surpassing even the impact of school facilities and resources. A competent teacher, as Meer (2018) agrees, has to have strong interpersonal relationships and excellent communication abilities. According to the author, effective communication includes both verbal and nonverbal components, such as speech, writing, imagery, and body language, all of which work together to energize students and improve their grasp of course material.

Venkatesh (2018) recognizes motivation as a crucial element in driving individuals to perform at their best and achieve organizational goals. The author differentiates between positive and negative forms of motivation. Positive motivation is described as a reward-based system that enhances performance, while negative motivation may take the form of coercion or fear, leading to a reduction in performance. According to Venkatesh (2018), motivation refers to any driving force or desire that influences an individual's actions. Souders (2021) asserts that motivation is an internal state that prompts an individual to seek change, either within themselves or in their surroundings. According to Cherry and Morin (2020), motivation is the driving force that originates, leads, and maintains goal-directed activities, which are crucial in all spheres of life, including business and education. The writers focus on academic motivation, which they define as the inner drive that compels an individual to read books and learn new things, within the context of higher education.

In the field of education, the concept of academic motivation has been widely studied by experts. As stated by Seel (2012), academic motivation encompasses the drivers of behavior that are related to academic success, such as effort, regulation of work, choice of study, and persistence in the face of



challenges. According to Brown and Keith (2018), a student's academic motivation exists when they have a genuine interest in learning and consider academics to be meaningful and fulfilling. However, according to Usher and Morris (2012), one's motivation for schoolwork can be either intrinsic (coming from inside oneself) or extrinsic (motivated by outside forces). They also pointed out that various factors, such as the behavior and words of teachers, can either enhance or diminish a student's academic motivation. This idea was reinforced by the findings of Surganingrat et al. (2020), who discovered that teacher's verbal aggression can have negative consequences on students, such as increased aggression and withdrawal from class participation, and concluded that verbal aggression can be even more damaging than physical aggression, with long-lasting effects on learners.

In recent studies on teacher behavior, there is a consensus that aggressive behavior directed towards individuals can take various forms, including verbal and physical aggression. In their definition of aggressive conduct, Surganingrat et al. (2020) noted that it might be a reactive response to anger or a deliberate strategy for achieving educational goals. Legg (2019) added that this behavior can range from verbal abuse to physical abuse, causing both physical and emotional harm to individuals, leading to relationship breakdowns and violating social boundaries. Wilburn (2006) also pointed out that teachers can exhibit aggressive behavior such as hitting, screaming, threatening, and teasing, which can either be verbal or physical in nature. Additionally, such aggressive behaviors can have a negative impact on the academic motivation of students, as seen in instances where teachers ridicule students in front of their peers.

Furthermore, the constant use of threatening or yelling behavior by a teacher can have a detrimental effect on student interest in learning. Calvys (2018) emphasized the importance of teacher language, stating that words are a powerful tool and teachers must be mindful of their usage. Teachers should avoid profanity and work to create a welcoming classroom climate in which children feel supported and encouraged.

Learning, development, and progress in the classroom are all negatively impacted when teachers fail to cultivate healthy connections with their pupils and instead persist in abusive practices. This study aimed to examine the impact of teacher aggressive behavior on student academic motivation. It specifically tries to determine the relationship between teacher aggression and student academic motivation, gain insight into teachers' perspectives on aggressive behavior, identify instances of aggressive behavior demonstrated by teachers, and examine the impact of such behavior on student academic motivation.

Method

The current study is a descriptive survey aimed at exploring the teaching experiences of primary school teachers in the rural areas of Sindh, one of the provinces in Pakistan. The target population consisted of 520 educators working in government-owned primary schools. To gather data, a sample of 120 teachers was drawn using random sampling, which included 70 female and 50 male teachers. The researchers utilized a custom-designed tool, the "Teachers Aggressive Behaviour Survey (TABS)," to gather data for this study.

Validation of the Instrument

In this study, researchers conducted the validation of the research instrument. The researchers ensured the draft instrument was adequate in answering research questions and testing hypotheses by reviewing it, making any required changes, and suggesting new ones. The validation procedure uncovered problems with three of the initial 18 items, therefore they were taken out to reduce the instrument to its current 15-item form.



Reliability of the Instrument

In this study, a pilot study involving 50 teachers from urban primary schools in Sindh demonstrated the validity of the research instrument. Using the Cronbach Alpha technique, researchers found that the obtained data had a reliability coefficient of 0.78. This coefficient shows the reliability of the instrument for measuring the targeted constructs.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. The hypothesis was tested using a t-test with a significance threshold of 0.05 to see if there were statistically significant differences between the variables of interest. Further, the cutoff threshold for analysis was set at a mean score of 2.50. Averages below 2.50 were not regarded satisfactory, while those above were rated acceptable. Using this cutoff, researchers judged whether or not the results were satisfactory for this study.

Results

Research Question No. 1: How do teachers perceive aggressive behavior?

	Table 1. Primary school teachers' perceptions of aggressive behavior										
S/N	Items		SA	Α	D	SD	Σ	Х	SD	Remark	
1	Aggressive behavior refers to any actions	Ν	40	50	-	-	120			Accepted	
	taken by an individual with the intention to cause harm.	Х	160	150	-	-	310	2.60	1.29		
2	Aggressive behaviors may take the form of	Ν	40	80	-	-	120	3.33	1.66	Accepted	
	verbal actions that express anger.		160	240	-	-	400				
3	Aggressive behaviors refer to productive	Х	40	30	40	10	120	2.83	1.41	Accepted	
	actions taken by individuals to achieve educational goals.		160	90	80	10	340				
4	Aggressive behaviors may take the form of	n	70	40	10	-	120	3.50	1.75	Accepted	
	physical actions that express anger.		280	120	20	-	420			-	
5	Aggressive behaviors may involve actions	х	40	60	20	-	120	3.16	1.58	Accepted	
	taken to discourage misbehavior.		160	180	40	-	380				

According to the results presented in Table 1, the study found that among the n respondents, teachers viewed aggressive behaviors as actions taken towards an individual with the intention of causing harm, expressing anger, deterring misbehavior, and promoting pro-social behavior in pursuit of educational objectives. The findings indicate that teachers see these behaviors as a means to an end, rather than simply acts of violence or hostility. The implications of these perceptions on the x scores of the learners require further investigation.

Research Question No. 2: What specific aggressive behaviors are demonstrated by teachers?

C D I	Tuble 2. Aggressive be		G 4			GD												
S/N	Items		SA	Α	D	SD	Σ	Х	SD	Remark								
1	Learners are subjected to emotional distress	Ν	50	20	30	20	120			Accepted								
	through name-calling by teachers	х	200	60	60	20	340	2.83	1.42									
2	The use of threats by teachers	Ν	30	50	30	10	120	3.25	1.63	Accepted								
3	Teachers have been observed to be yelling	Х	120 40	200 40	60 30	10 10	390 120	3.25	1.63	Accepted								
			160	160	60	10	390			-								

Table 2. Aggressive behaviors demonstrated by teachers



4	I Jan I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I	N	30	40	30	20		2.67	1.33	Accepted
	through hitting		120	120	60	20	320			
5	Slapping by teachers towards learners	х	50	20	30	20	120	2.83	1.42	Accepted
			200	60	60	20	340			

According to the results presented in Table 2, the study found that among the n respondents, incidents of aggressive behavior exhibited by teachers included instances of name-calling, threatening of students, yelling at students, hitting students, and slapping students. The findings suggest that these acts of aggression are prevalent among the teachers and have a significant impact on the x scores of the learners.

Research Question No. 3: What is the extent of the impact of teacher aggression on student academic motivation?

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Table 3 The	<i>impact of teacher</i>	agoression on st	tudent acade	mic motivation
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S/N	Items		SA	Α	D	SD	Σ	X	SD	Remark	
1	Teachers' aggressive behaviors negatively	n	110	10	-	-	120	3.91		Accepted	
	impact students' academic engagement and involvement in classroom activities.	х	440	30	-	-	470		1.9.6		
2	Teachers' aggressive behaviors cause	n	70	40	10	-	120	3.50	1.75	Accepted	
	students to feel tensed and stressed during instructional procedures, hindering their ability to fully participate.		280	120	20	-	420				
3	Teachers' aggressive behaviors lead students	х	20	40	50	10	120	2.58	1.29	Accepted	
	to expend less effort in learning academic materials.		80	120	100	10	310			-	
4	Teachers' aggressive behaviors also have a	n	70	50	-	-	120	3.58	1.79	Accepted	
	damaging effect on students' self-confidence, causing them to lose confidence in their abilities.		280	150	-	-	430			-	
5	Teachers' aggressive behaviors result in	х	60	60	-	-	120	3.50	1.75	Accepted	
	students losing interest in the instructional process, negatively affecting their motivation and overall learning outcomes.		240	180	-	-	420			1	

According to the results presented in Table 3, aggressive behaviors exhibited by teachers have a negative impact on students' engagement in classroom academics. Such behavior causes students to feel tense and nervous during instructional sessions, leading to a loss of self-confidence and interest in the educational process. These findings highlight the importance of addressing aggressive teacher behavior to promote a positive learning environment and enhance students' overall academic experience.

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Table 4. The significance of the relationship between	uggiessive penavior anong male and lemale leachers $uggiessive penavior$

Variable	No	X	sd	df	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Male	50	12.80	6.40				Ho1
				118	8.71	8.56	Rejected
Female	70	11.29	5.64				-

The results of the t-test calculation, presented in Table 4, showed that the calculated t-value exceeded the critical t-value, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This indicates the presence of a significant difference between the aggressive behaviors exhibited by male and female teachers.



Discussion

Based on the findings of the study, educators understand aggression to be any action taken against a person with the aim to do harm, show anger, prevent misbehavior, or further educational goals. These results corroborate the work of Suryaninggrat et al. (2020), who defined teacher aggression as any activity directed against an individual with the objective to inflict injury, including physical or verbal acts done in response to anger or on purpose to further learning.

The study revealed that educators engage in a range of violent actions, including verbally abusing, threatening, and/or physically assaulting their pupils. These results are consistent with the ideas of Wilburn (2006), who argued that slapping, grasping, punching, threatening, and name-calling are all examples of aggressive conduct.

The study also showed that the aggressive teaching tactics had a negative effect on students' motivation to learn. The results showed that this type of behavior can lead to decreased participation, decreased interest in classroom activities, loss of self-confidence, and decreased academic motivation. These findings are consistent with previous studies, such as the one conducted by Kerig et al. (2012) who found that aggressive teacher behavior can discourage academic motivation in students, as well as the findings of Surganingrat et al. (2020) who emphasized that aggressive teacher behavior can result in students withdrawing from participation in the classroom. Also, the null hypothesis indicated the presence of a significant disparity between the aggressive behavior exhibited by male and female teachers.

Hanson and Spratt (2016) described such behaviors as not only unprofessional but also harmful to the psychological and educational development of children. Hanson and Spratt (2016) emphasized that the trauma resulting from such aggression may cause long-lasting negative impacts on a child's academic and social life.

The significance of the teacher-student relationship is paramount when considering the effects of teacher aggression on student academic motivation. Hamre and Pianta (2001) found that students are more likely to be engaged and motivated when they feel supported and nurtured by their teachers. Conversely, when teachers use aggressive behaviors, they risk damaging these relationships and thereby diminishing their students' motivation to learn. In line with the findings of this study, a breakdown in the teacher-student relationship due to teacher aggression could result in reduced student participation in classroom activities, as well as increased feelings of anxiety and stress.

Additionally, the emotional toll of teacher aggression on students can extend beyond the classroom. Osher et al. (2010) noted that students who are subjected to teacher aggression may exhibit behavioral problems and emotional distress that can interfere with their learning and relationships with peers. This aligns with the findings of Table 3, which indicated that aggressive behaviors by teachers lead to a decrease in students' self-confidence and overall engagement in learning.

In the context of gender differences in aggression, the study's findings suggested that male and female teachers may exhibit aggression differently. A study by Owens (2016) explored gender differences in teaching styles and disciplinary methods and found that male teachers were more likely to use direct and overt forms of discipline, which can sometimes be perceived as aggressive. This could partly explain the significant difference noted in Table 4 between the aggressive behaviors of male and female teachers. However, it is also critical to consider the socio-cultural factors that may influence these gendered behaviors in teaching (Owens, 2016).



Furthermore, the aggressive behaviors demonstrated by teachers, as identified in the study, align with the findings of McMahon and Wernsman (2019), who highlighted that such behavior could perpetuate a cycle of violence, with the potential to spill over into the lives of students outside the classroom. The authors noted that children who are victims of aggression by authority figures may normalize such behavior and exhibit aggression towards peers or internalize the behavior, resulting in self-destructive tendencies.

The manifestation of teacher aggression, through verbal or physical means, can be symptomatic of a broader systemic problem within the educational system. As Anderson and Bushman (2002) argued, aggression within educational institutions can be indicative of a stressful work environment, inadequate professional support, and insufficient coping mechanisms among educators. The stressors faced by teachers, such as large class sizes, administrative pressures, and high-stakes testing, may contribute to the development of aggressive tendencies towards students.

The detrimental impact of teacher aggression on student academic motivation is particularly alarming. As Ryan and Deci (2020) have extensively discussed, the autonomy-supportive environment that promotes intrinsic motivation is crucial for effective learning. Aggressive behaviors by teachers undermine this environment, leading to decreased intrinsic motivation and a reliance on less effective forms of extrinsic motivation. This is consistent with the self-determination theory, which posits that autonomy, competence, and relatedness are essential for fostering intrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 2000). When teachers engage in aggressive behaviors, they jeopardize these critical psychological needs, thereby adversely affecting student motivation.

The relationship between teacher aggression and student academic motivation can also be explored through the lens of Bandura's (1977) social learning theory, which asserts that individuals learn behaviors through the observation of others. In the classroom setting, teachers are key role models for students. When teachers exhibit aggressive behaviors, they may inadvertently teach students that such behaviors are acceptable responses to stress or frustration. This could have a spiraling effect on student behavior and the overall learning environment, potentially leading to a culture of aggression within the school.

Importantly, the negative effects of teacher aggression extend beyond academic motivation to encompass broader aspects of student development. Paquette and Ryan (2001) discuss the critical role that attachment plays in children's development and stress that secure relationships with adults are fundamental for healthy development. When teachers, who are significant adults in the lives of children, engage in aggressive behaviors, they may contribute to the development of insecure attachments, which can have far-reaching consequences on a child's emotional and social development.

It is also important to explore the cultural dimensions of teacher aggression. In different cultural contexts, the interpretation and acceptance of aggressive behaviors by teachers may vary. Stewart and McCann (2019) highlighted that in some cultures, stringent disciplinary actions and a strict educational environment are viewed as necessary for maintaining order and respect within the classroom. However, they argue that even in such cultural settings, there is a thin line between discipline and aggression, and crossing this line can have detrimental effects on students' emotional and academic outcomes.

Moreover, interventions aimed at reducing teacher aggression must consider the cultural context and engage with the community's perceptions and expectations of teacher-student interactions. This is supported by the work of Katz et al. (2011), who emphasized the importance of community



involvement in educational reforms and the development of culturally responsive practices that honor the values and beliefs of the community while promoting healthy teacher-student relationships.

It is pertinent to note that while the study identifies the negative impacts of teacher aggression on students' academic motivation, it also underscores the need for interventions aimed at reducing such behavior. Professional development programs focusing on classroom management and effective communication strategies could be instrumental in helping teachers to replace aggressive behaviors with supportive and nurturing interactions (Marzano et al., 2003). Furthermore, instituting a framework for positive behavior interventions and supports (PBIS) within schools may also provide teachers with the tools they need to create a positive classroom environment that fosters student motivation and engagement (Sugai & Horner, 2006).

In considering the broader educational context, it is evident that teacher aggression can undermine the goals of education, which, as articulated by Dewey (1938), are not merely the transmission of knowledge but the holistic development of individuals within a democratic society. Therefore, addressing teacher aggression is not only a matter of improving individual student outcomes but also a step toward ensuring that the educational environment contributes to the development of well-rounded, civically engaged citizens.

The role of educational leadership in mitigating aggressive teacher behavior cannot be overstated. Shields (2010) argues that educational leaders must foster a school culture that promotes empathy, mutual respect, and positive reinforcement as the normative framework for interactions among all members of the school community, including teachers and students. This perspective is in alignment with the study's implications, which suggest that a systemic approach to professional development and school culture reform is necessary to address the issue of teacher aggression.

In light of these findings, there is an urgent need for systemic interventions that address teacher aggression. As Jennings and Greenberg (2009) suggest, programs that support social and emotional learning (SEL) for teachers can be highly effective. By equipping teachers with skills to manage their emotions, resolve conflicts constructively, and engage in practices that promote self-care, educational institutions can create a more supportive environment for both teachers and students. This aligns with the work of Schonert-Reichl (2017), who emphasizes the importance of SEL in promoting a positive school climate and enhancing the social-emotional competencies of both students and teachers.

The impact of teacher aggression on student academic motivation thus presents a multi-faceted challenge that requires comprehensive strategies encompassing policy reform, professional development, and institutional support systems. Addressing these challenges is not only crucial for the academic success of students but also for their overall well-being and the creation of a positive and conducive learning environment.

Conclusion

This study analyzed the impact of teacher aggression, both verbal and physical, on academic motivation in primary school students. The results of the study showed that teacher aggression has a negative impact on academic motivation and participation in the classroom. The findings of the study demonstrate that it is important for teachers to create a positive and supportive learning environment in order to motivate students and enhance their educational outcomes.

The findings of this study suggest that it is important to provide teachers with ongoing professional development so that they may obtain the skills they need to make the classroom a positive and



productive learning environment for all students. Curriculum designers should conduct training sessions to highlight the significance of a student-focused teaching approach. School leaders should raise teacher recognition of the effect of hostile conduct on pupil motivation. Principals should carry out frequent observations of educator behavior to prevent any hostile actions and promptly inform administrators of any incidents. The government should implement disciplinary actions against instructors who exhibit aggressive behavior. To enhance job satisfaction and minimize hostile behavior, the government should offer attractive benefits and fair remuneration to educators. Only certified and professional educators should be employed in the teaching field. Instructors should receive salary for their services in a prompt manner.

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