

A study on the perception of secondary level students on teaching styles in geography

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Abstract

The purpose of the study is to find out the perceptions of secondary level students on Authoritative and Facilitator teaching styles in Geography. The sample included 100 secondary students of class nine in West Bengal. The study used a survey type research design.

The findings from this study led to the following conclusions:

- 1) Students of secondary school level perceive that Authoritative teaching style is a predominant style in teaching Geography.
- 2) Students of secondary school level perceive that Facilitator teaching style is a negligible style in teaching Geography.

Keywords: secondary level students, authoritative teaching style, facilitator teaching style

1. Introduction

Teaching strategies and techniques are significant predictors of students' achievements. A number of instructional techniques are followed by the teachers in the class. Some techniques appeal to the students more than the others and have therefore proved more effective. Teaching is a useful means for the transmission and sharing of knowledge but it does not always result in learning. Effective teaching requires flexibility, creativity and responsibility in order to provide an instructional environment able to respond to the learner's individual needs (Tulbure, 2012) [12] and attainment of good academic achievement and educational outcomes (Fayombo, 2014) [5]. Teaching style is defined in various ways by different people. Galton *et al.* (1980) [6] referred teaching style as a set of teaching tactics. Mosston (1966) [11] analysed teaching styles and behaviours based on the interactions between teachers and students. One important dimension of teaching style is the extent to which the students are given opportunity to participate actively in the class instead of listening passively to the lectures. The present study investigates the perception of students on two teaching styles in Geography-Authoritative and Facilitator.

Authoritative teaching style refers to a teacher-centered teaching style, where the teacher is responsible for providing and controlling the flow of the content and the students are expected to receive the content. Building teacher-student relationships or relationship among the students are not important in this type of teaching style. Student participation is also found to be less in this type of teaching style.

Facilitator teaching style tends to focus on activities. This teaching style focuses on student-centered learning where the students are responsible for taking the initiative of meeting the demands of various learning tasks. In this type the teachers design learning situations and activities that require student processing and application of course content in creative and innovative ways.

1.1 Need for the Study

A number of research studies have been conducted to examine students' perceptions of teaching styles with a view to enable

the educators to make adjustments in teaching. Several research studies have been conducted to determine if there are differences between teachers' and students' perceptions of teaching styles. McCollin (2000) [10] investigated instructors' teaching styles and teaching styles perceived by students. The result indicated a significant difference between instructors' self-perceived teaching styles and students' perceptions of teaching styles. In another study, Kulinna, Cothran, and Zhu (2000) [9] also examined teachers' perceived teaching styles. The researchers compared the results of their study with those of Cothran, Kulinna, and Ward (2000) [3]. The study revealed that teachers' and students' perceptions of teaching styles differed significantly. Hughes (2009) [7] also researched on the relationships between teaching styles perceived by students and teaching styles adopted by instructors. The results showed a significant difference among the students about perceptions of teaching styles. The results also revealed that students felt they learned better when instructors employed a teaching style that was more interactive than when instructors adopted a conventional lecture style. In a study conducted by Norzila, Fauziah, and Parilah (2007) [12], it was found that there was no gender differences in students' preferred and perceived teaching styles. Chen (2008) [2] showed that there were significant differences between students' perceived teaching styles and their academic achievement.

Since teaching style is an important predictor of student achievement, it is important to know about the perception of the students on teaching styles. Much research has been devoted to teaching styles in higher education but no research has been found, however, concerning secondary school students' perceptions of their teacher's teaching styles in Geography. Therefore, the present study aims at finding out the perception of students on two types of teaching styles – Authoritative and Facilitator.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

This study investigates the perception of the secondary level students on Authoritative and Facilitator teaching styles in Geography. The study would help the educators to understand the perception of the students in Authoritative and Facilitator

teaching styles in Geography and create an awareness about perception of these two teaching styles among students.

1.3 Research Question

What is the perception of the secondary level students on Authoritative and Facilitator teaching styles in Geography?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The proposed study seeks to find out the perception of students on teaching style in Geography with reference to:

- a) Authoritative teaching style
- b) Facilitator teaching style.

2. Delimitation of the Study

The study was limited to 100 students of class 9 from 7 secondary schools of West Bengal.

3. Methodology

The present study was a descriptive research based on survey. A complete list of students of the given schools was collected which has been used as the sampling scheme. 100 students

were then selected randomly from 7 schools of West Bengal using simple random sampling without replacement sampling scheme. This has ensured that the sampled students represent the population under consideration faithfully. A questionnaire consisting of 32 questions were developed by the researcher. The questionnaire consisted of three options i.e. agree, undecided and disagree against authoritative and facilitator teaching styles. The content validity was ensured by the incorporation of suggestions of professors in Education, and Geography teachers in schools and in training colleges. The reliability of the tool was calculated by using test-retest method, which was found 0.74 with 15 days gap. The data was analysed by using percentage and qualitative description.

3.1 Analysis and interpretation

The objective of the study is to find out the perception of students on Authoritative and Facilitator teaching styles in Geography. For this, the investigator collected data from students by using questionnaire on perception of these two teaching styles. The responses of students on these two teaching styles are presented in the following table.

Table 1: Shows the responses of the students on perception of Authoritative teaching style.

S. No	Statement	Responses of the students(In Percentage)		
		Agree	Undecided	Disagree
1	The teacher does not allow us to express our views freely.	65	15	20
2	The teacher orders us to follow the books vividly.	60	5	35
3	The teacher is highly authoritative in his/her class.	75	5	20
4	The teacher follows chalk and talk method.	70	10	20
5	The teacher discourages questioning in his/her class.	70	5	25
6	The teacher provides us class notes.	60	15	25
7	The teacher expresses his/her expectations to us.	75	10	15
8	We have no participation in the class.	70	5	25

Table 1 establishes that 65% students expressed that they do not get any scope in the class to express their views freely whereas 20% students can express their views. 60% of students agreed to the fact that their teachers order them to follow the books vividly but 35% students disagreed to that. Authoritative nature of the teacher is perceived by 75% of students though 20% students did not agree to that. It is found that 70% students perceived chalk and talk teaching method against 20% students

who did not perceive that. 70% students expressed that questioning is discouraged in the class whereas 25% students found that questioning is not discouraged. 60% students were given class notes but 25% students were not given that. 75% students perceived that teachers express their expectations to the students though 15% students did not agree to that. It is found that 70% students did not have any participation in the class though 25% students did participate in the class activities.

Table 2: Shows the responses of the students on perception of Facilitator teaching style.

S. No	Statement	Responses of the students(In Percentage)		
		Agree	Undecided	Disagree
1	The teacher encourages us to innovate and use our own ideas in the Geography class.	5	15	80
2	The teacher encourages group discussion in the class.	5	5	90
3	The teacher listens to our queries.	30	5	65
4	Teacher gives us project to be done in the class.	25	10	65
5	Teacher gives us group assignments in geography on topics outside the book.	10	5	85
6	Teacher takes us for field trip.	2	15	83
7	Teacher conducts debate sessions on geography.	5	10	85
8	The teacher expects us to learn through discussion in the class.	20	5	70

Table 2 establishes that 5% students expressed perception of encouragement by the teachers to innovate their own ideas in the Geography class whereas 80% students disagreed to that. 5% students were encouraged by the teachers for group discussion in the class against 90% students. The queries of the students were attended by the teachers in 30% cases but queries of 65% students were not attended by the teachers.

25% students were given project to be done in the class though 65% students did not receive any project. 10% students were given group assignments against 85% students who were not given. 2% students were taken for field trips against 83% students who did not go for any field trip. Debate sessions were experienced by 5% students whereas 85% students did not experience that. 20% students perceived that they were

expected to learn through discussion in the class but 70% students disagreed to that.

4. Major Findings

- Majority of the Students perceived teaching style as authoritative.
- Facilitator teaching style is perceived by a small number of students.
- 65% of the students cannot express their views freely in the class, 60% students are asked by the teachers to follow the books vividly, 75% students perceive the teachers as highly authoritative in class, 70% students are taught by chalk and talk method, 70% students are discouraged to ask questions in the class, 60% students get ready class notes, in 75% cases the students were conveyed about the expectations of the teachers and 70% students have no participation in the class.
- 5% students expressed perception of encouragement by the teachers to innovate and use their own ideas in the Geography class, 5% students were encouraged by the teachers for group discussion in the class. The queries of the students were attended by the teachers in 30% cases. 25% students were given project in the class, 10% students were given group assignments. 2% students were taken for field trips. Debate sessions were experienced by 5% students, 20% students were expected to learn through discussion in the class.

5. Educational Implications and Conclusion

The present study has educational implications for teachers, teacher educators and policy makers.

It is seen that Authoritative teaching is mostly followed by the majority of teachers for teaching Geography where the predominant methods are chalk and talk and lecture. On the other hand Facilitator teaching style is being followed by a few teachers as perceived by the students.

The present study deals with secondary level students who are still in the adolescent stage. According to the psychologist Piaget (1952) ^[13] this is a distinct period of growth and development. Therefore, the class instructions should follow the developmental characteristics of adolescents (Donald Eichhorn 1966) and thus assist in the cognitive development of the students. The students at this stage favour active over passive learning experiences and interactions with peers during educational activities (Kellough & Kellough, 2008) ^[8]. Teachers need to consider the differences in intellectual development of young adolescents while planning teaching - learning experiences. To address this diversity, teachers need to follow an assortment of educational approaches and materials that are appropriate for their students' wide-ranging cognitive development. Teachers need to plan curricula around real life concepts (Kellough & Kellough, 2008) ^[8] and supply authentic educative activities (e.g., experimentation, analysis and synthesis of data) that are meaningful for young adolescents (Scales, 2010) ^[14]. The young adolescents also need to learn and engage in democratic principles (Brighton, 2007) ^[1]. Therefore, diverse learning experiences should be provided through a variety of teaching styles for optimum learning.

It is, therefore, suggested that instead of depending mainly on Authoritative teaching style, teachers should also employ Facilitator teaching style where the students get more scope to

interact in the class and discover facts for themselves. This would not only result in better learning but also meaningful learning which would lead to better intellectual development.

5. References

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