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Full Length Research Paper

Teacher-student relationships from the teachers' point of view at Makkah primary schools in Saudi Arabia

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The purpose of the present study was to investigate teacher-student relationships from the teachers' point of view at Makkah public primary schools in Saudi Arabia. This study adopted a survey research design in which questionnaire was the main data collection instrument. Study participants comprised 152 primary school teachers in Saudi Arabia. The result of the study reveals that the level of teacher-student relationships is high. In general, findings show that teachers at Makkah public primary schools have positive views of their relationships with students. Additionally, the study found that while there were no significant differences among participants according to gender, academic qualification and years of experiences, there were significant differences according to teaching minor. Implications from this study have been drawn for teachers, for students, for policy makers and for those involved in future research.

Keywords: Teacher-student relationships, teachers' point of view, public primary schools.

INTRODUCTION

Teaching is a people profession that demands a large proportion of time being devoted to personal interaction. Positive teacher-student relationships are believed to be necessary for effective teaching and learning to take place. Effective teachers are those who, in addition to being skilled at teaching, are attuned to the human dimension of classroom life and can foster positive relationships with their students (McInerney & McInerney, 2006; Sztejnberg, Brok, & Hurek, 2004).

Positive teacher-student relationships are characterised by mutual acceptance, understanding, warmth, closeness, trust, respect, care and cooperation. The success of any interpersonal relationship is dependent to a large extent upon input from both parties. In the classroom setting, it is the teacher who has the opportunity, and indeed, the responsibility, to initiate positive interpersonal relationships. The teacher who is pro-active in demonstrating acceptance, understanding, warmth, closeness, trust, respect, care and cooperation towards his or her students not only works at initiating positive teacher-student relationships, but also increases the likelihood of building strong relationships that will endure over time(Krause, Bochner, & Duchesne, 2006; Noddings, 2005).

Teacher-student relationships are important for many reasons. Teacher-student relationships greatly influence a student's ability to adjust to school, to do well at school, and to relate to peers (Gablinske, 2014; Leitão, 2007). Teacher-students relationships have an impact on classroom management and affect learning progress (Azevedo, Dias, Salgado, Guimarães, Lima, Barbosa, 2012; Klem & Connell, 2004). From a developmental perspective, the establishment of a positive teacher-student relationship aids a student's cognitive, social and emotional growth and enhances their mental well-being (Alersan, 2015; Al-Khazalah, 2012; Al-Nahari, 2004; Showaihat, 2007). Stable teacher-student relationships impact positively on a student's developing sense of self

and promote resiliency in them. Furthermore, the benefits of positive teacher-student relationships extend to teachers, contributing to an improved sense of job satisfaction.

There is a great deal of literature that provides substantial evidence that strong relationships between teachers and students are essential components to the healthy academic development of all students in schools (Al-Nahari, 2004; Eccles & Wigfield, 2002; Al-Khazalah, 2012; Gablinske, 2014; Leitão, 2007). This body of literature involves several genres of research that have been conducted over the past three decades investigating the interactions between teachers and their students and what effect those interactions have on instructional aspect. There is credible evidence that the nature and quality of teachers' interactions with children has a significant effect on their learning (Guo, Piasta, Justice, & Kaderavek, 2010; Showaihat, 2007; Alersan, 2015; Howes, Burchinal, Pianta, Bryant, Early, Clifford, & Oscar, 2008; Pianta, Barnett, Burchinal, & Thornburg, 2009).

Hamre, Pianta, Burchinal, Field, Crouch, owner, Howes, LaParo, & Little (2012) posit that teachers need to be actively engaged in interactions with children in order for learning to occur. Educators, psychologists, social constructivists, and sociologists have all contributed to the growing interest in targeting interventions toward improvements in the quality of teachers' interactions with children.

Constructivist Framework

A constructivist approach to learning sees the learning environment as a mini-society, a community of learners engaged in activity, discourse, interpretation, justification, and reflection. While constructivist theory of education indicates that knowledge is constructed individually by the student that learning occurs in a social environment with experiences that have been carefully constructed by the teacher. In biological theorists' terms, there is an active interplay of the surround (environment) to evolution and to learning. The constructivist teacher encourages a consideration of others' points of views and a mutual respect, allowing the development of independent and creative thinking. From a constructivist perspective, meaning is understood to be the result of individuals setting up relationships, reflecting on their actions, and modeling and constructing explanations (Fosnot, 2005).

Contemporary theorists and researchers' beliefs have shifted from isolated student mastery of concepts to ideas that real learning is about interaction, growth, and development. New information from the realm of cognitive science tells us that students learn through progressive structuring and restructuring of knowledge experience, that deep conceptual learning is about structural shifts in cognition; without exchange with the environment, entropy would result. That knowledge is actively constructed is a pervasive tenet of constructivist thinking. The way a teacher listens and talks to children helps them become learners who think critically and deeply about what they read and write (Fosnot, 2005).

Constructivist theorists DeVries & Zan (2005) shows that the preoccupation in most schools with subject matter content has led to a situation in which affective development is negatively influenced. Ironically, they say this one-sided preoccupation has created a situation in which intellectual development does not flourish either – they contend that in order to foster intellectual development, a certain kind of interpersonal framework must be created.

Bruner (1977) write the process of education requires that schools must also contribute to the social and emotional development of the child if they are to fulfill their function of education. Bruner develops four themes he considers essential to the process of learning – one of them relates to stimulating the desire to learn, creating interest in the subject being taught, and what he terms "intellectual excitement". He suggests studying the methods used by 'successful' teachers as a way of determining effective practices.

Historical Context

In 1840, Mann showed that the aptness to teach involves the power of perceiving how far a scholar understands the subject matter to be learned and what, in the natural order is the next step to take. According to him, the teacher must be intuitive and lead the minds of his pupils to discover what they need to know and then supply them with what they require.

Dewey (1938) said that as an educator, you need to be able to discern what attitudes are conducive to continued growth and what are detrimental, and use that relational knowledge to build worthwhile educational experiences for students. He writes that teachers are the agents through which knowledge and skills are communicated and rules of conduct enforced and, as such, it is the duty of the teacher to know how to utilize the surroundings, physical and social, so as to extract from them all that they have to contribute to building up worthwhile educational experiences. He says that all human experience is ultimately social: that it involves contact and communication.

Vygotsky (1978) believed that higher mental functioning is socially formed and culturally transmitted. Cognitive development is mediated through language dialogues between one who knows (teacher) and one who is learning (student). Vygotsky posits that the instructional message gradually moves from teacher-student dialogue to inner speech where it organizes the student's thought and becomes an internal mental function. A skillful teacher could shape a student's thinking process through

purposeful. According to Vygotsky, learning awakens a variety of internal development processes that are able to operate only when a child is interacting with people in his environment and in cooperation with his peers. Vygotsky viewed tests as an inadequate measurement of a child's learning capability; he thought the progress in concept formation achieved by a child through interaction with an adult was a much more viable way to determine the capabilities of learners.

In his seminal study, Jackson (1968) studied life in classrooms and determined that there is a social intimacy in schools that is unmatched elsewhere in our society. According to Jackson, the teacher is charged with managing the flow of the classroom dialogue. In elementary classrooms, he shows that teachers can engage in as many as one thousand interpersonal exchanges a day. That being the case, the study of those interpersonal exchanges could yield important information regarding the learning that results from those interactions.

Perspectives on Teacher-Student Relationships

There is a diverse range of perspectives in the area of interactions between teachers and students that have been researched over the past few decades; however, they share several core principles.

Educators Investigate

Downey (2008) conducted a study synthesizing educational research on factors that affect academic success. The rationale for the study was to examine classroom practices that made a difference for all students, but in particular, for students at risk for academic failure. What was determined was that a teacher's personal interaction with his/her students made a significant difference. The recommendations from Downey's analysis were that students need teachers to build strong interpersonal relationships with them, focusing on strengths of the students while maintaining high and realistic expectations for success. These interactive relationships should be based on respect, trust, caring, and cohesiveness.

Ravitch (2010) writes that the goal of education is not to produce higher test scores, but to educate children to become responsible people with well-developed minds and good character. She says that accountability as it is now is not helping our schools because its measures are too narrow and imprecise, and its consequences too severe.

Langer (1997) writes if the source of information is someone we respect, we are more likely to be influenced and retain the information than if we view the source as untrustworthy. Initial gathering of information relies on the source of the information. When we have learned information mindfully, we remain open to ways in which information may differ in various situations. In effect, by building solid relationships with students, teachers are creating discriminating, as well as lifelong learners. Although, over time, the source of the information may be forgotten, the information received is retained.

Cazden (2001) states that children's intellectual functioning, at school, as at home, is intimately related to the social relationships in which it becomes embedded. Familiarity facilitates responsiveness which plays an important part in learning. Cazden believes in the importance of creating a learning environment that incorporates building an affective interpersonal relationship with students. Creating a learning environment that all the stakeholders are invested in will have a positive impact on the learning that will take place.

Marzano (2003) suggests a useful question for anyone wishing to understand factors that improve student achievement is to ask what influence an individual teacher has on a student apart from what the school does. He indicates that all researchers agree that the impact of decisions made by an individual teacher is far greater than the impact of decisions made at the school level. Marzano writes the core of effective teacher-student relationships is a healthy balance between dominance and cooperation. Showing interest in students as individuals has a positive impact on their learning according to Marzano. McCombs & Whisler (1997) posit that the need for the teacher to show a personal interest in their students is vital to their learning.

Sociologists Investigate

Crosnoe, Johnson, & Elder (2004) researched the effect 'alienation' of youths from the school community had on their academic and behavioral performance in school. They contend that students' alienation contributes to academic problems which lead to problems on a societal level. They stress the need to consider more social aspects of schooling such as the relationship that teachers build with their students. They studied whether an affective dimension of teacher-student relationships predicts academic progress and behavior problems. In a longitudinal study of adolescents in grades 7 – 12 it was revealed that positive teacher-student relationships were associated with better student outcomes both academically and behaviorally. Crosnoe et al. concluded that students who had more positive views of their teachers did better and had fewer problems in school. They consider good student-teacher relationships to be a resource to schools and the students and should be promoted as such. Facilitating interpersonal relations, from a sociological viewpoint, is important to keeping students committed to the educational process.

Psychologists Investigate

Sarason (1999) looks at teaching as a performing art, and discusses the art of teaching and the role that teacher interaction plays in creating a productive learning environment. He posits that, post - World War II, when training teachers, education has increasingly focused on subject matter to the detriment of pedagogy –the obligation of the teacher to know who the learner is and make the subject matter interesting, motivating, and compelling for their students. Sarason contends that there are three overarching features for productive learning; the first is recognizing and respecting the individuality of the learner. The second is for the teacher to know the subject matter sufficiently to be able to determine when the learner may have difficulty and be able to intercede to prevent the difficulty from happening. The third tenet is that the teacher is constantly looking for ways to engage and stimulate the learner so he/she wants to learn.

Eccles & Wigfield (2002) investigated motivational beliefs and values that guide a student's learning process. They define motivation as the study of action; in particular, they focus on achievement motivation. They posit that people have expectations about success as well as values and reasons for doing an activity. There is an expectation for success and a sense of control over outcomes that are related beliefs that motivate individuals when completing tasks – especially challenging tasks. This sense of self efficacy is strong in some people but weak in others.

As reported by Eccles and Wigfield (2002), not knowing the cause of one's successes and failures undermines one's motivation to work on associated tasks. They determine that having a strong sense of control and confidence over your outcomes leads to success. Hamre and Pianta (2006) also investigated the importance of teacher–student relationships. They posit that positive relationships between teacher and student serve as a resource to students as it helps maintain their engagement in academic pursuits. This extended engagement leads to better grades.

For younger children, Birch & Ladd (1998) concluded that children who did not have a good relationship with their teacher exhibited less classroom participation and achievement. These negative relationships continued to affect the quality of the students' relationships in first and second grade. Poor teacher-student relationships were considered a predictor of sustained academic problems and an indicator of future school difficulties. These findings indicated the importance of teachers building solid relationships as they have a direct impact on academic achievement for years to come.

Hamre et.al (2012) suggest that schools actively encourage staff members to engage with their students and learn about students' outside interests so staff can connect with them on a more personal level. Hamre & Pianta's contention is that a strong teacher-student relationship is essential for success in school and because of this, ways to build good solid teacher- student relationships should be explicitly targeted in school intervention plans. These strong and supportive relationships allow students to feel competent to make greater academic gains.

Student Perspectives

Baker (1999) reported that at risk students often report feeling alienated and disenfranchised from the culture of school. He posits that because elementary students spend such significant amounts of time with one teacher, the opportunity to build relationships between students and teachers is enhanced at this level. Baker surmises that students who have dropped out of school seem not to have the social connectedness with adults at school that could function as a protective factor in the face of academic or life stressors. She concludes that students' interactions with teachers and the quality of the interactions are potential influences on school performance. Although Baker's study focused on students who were at risk for failure or behavior problems, her findings could also transfer to the school performance of any student.

Wubbels & Brekelmans (2005) also conducted a study that showed that students' perceptions of teacher influence were related to cognitive outcomes. The higher a teacher was perceived on the influence dimension, (an interpersonal perception profile), the higher the outcomes of students on a physics test. In their study, teacher influence was the most important variable at the class level. They reported that the more teachers were perceived by their students as cooperative, the higher the students' scores were on cognitive tests.

The Present Study

Past researches on teacher-student relationships, inside and outside kingdom of Saudi Arabia, haves focused heavily on learning and instructional aspects of the relationship, and largely ignored both the aspects of guiding student's behavior and the social and emotional aspects of teacher-student relationships (Hallam, 2009; Al-Nahari, 2004; Al-Khazalah, 2012; Showaihat, 2007; Alersan, 2015; Gablinske, 2014; Leitão, 2007).

The present study, which takes place across Makkah public primary schools in Saudi Arabia, helps to address this gap in the research by addressing all aspects of the teacher-student relationship from the literature and exploring these in more detail with data collected in Makkah public primary schools in Saudi Arabia. The three key aspects of the teacher-student relationship that have been identified for inclusion in the present study are

aspects of instructional interaction, aspects of improving student's behavior, and the social and emotional aspects. Therefore, it is important to determine the level of teacher-student relationships in all aspects at Makkah public primary schools in Saudi Arabia. Thus, this study has the following research questions:

1) What is the level of teacher-student relationships from the teachers' point of view at Makkah public primary schools in Saudi Arabia?
2) Are there any statistically significant differences in the level of teacher-student relationships among participants can be attributed to gender?
3) Are there any statistically significant differences in the level of teacher-student relationships among participants can be attributed to academic qualification?
4) Are there any statistically significant differences in the level of teacher-student relationships among participants can be attributed to teaching minor?
5) Are there any statistically significant differences in the level of teacher-student relationships among participants can be attributed to years of experiences?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The current study was quantitative in which sample survey research design was used. The researcher chose this method because survey research is useful in describing the characteristics of a large population; very large samples are feasible, making the results statistically significant even when analyzing multiple variables.

Participants

The population in this study consisted of all public primary schools' teachers at Makkah in Saudi Arabia during the academic year of 2014-2015. The participants of the study comprised 152 primary school teachers in Saudi Arabia. Table 1 shows characteristics of the participants.

Instrumentation

A questionnaire, developed by the researcher after an extensive review of the literature, was the main instrument used for the collection of data for the study. It divided into two major sections. Section one requested demographics information about the public primary schools' teachers at Makkah in Saudi Arabia. The other section includes 54 close-ended items, which were divided into three domains (aspects of instructional interaction, aspects of improving students' behavior, and social and emotional aspects). These items were rated on five-point Likert-type scales (from strongly agree to strongly disagree). The questionnaire was given to a panel of 18 university professors at Saudi Arabia and Egypt from different educational specializations including educational foundations, curriculum and instruction, and evaluation and measurement. The purpose of this was to check the clarity of items, its relevance to the domain and the scale as a whole. All comments and points of view were taken into consideration and some items were modified, changed, or deleted after a deep discussion with each one of the faculty members. After putting the reviewers' remarks, the final version consisted of 50 items distributed over three domains (13-item in the aspects of instructional interaction, 17-item in the aspects of improving student's behavior, and 20-item in the social and emotional aspects). The construct validity was measured in which a group of 30 teachers, apart from the study sample, participated in the pilot study. The correlation coefficient was calculated among the domains. The values of Person correlation coefficients ranged from (0.69) to (0.78). All the coefficients were significant at (α= 0.05). Moreover, reliability for the current questionnaire was assessed using the 30 public primary schools' teachers at Makkah. The Cronbach's alpha reliability was 0.92. The reliability in all domains and as the whole scale was high.

Data analysis

The researcher distributed the questionnaire to public primary schools ' teachers at Makkah in Saudi Arabia enrolled in the General Administration of Education at Makkah in the schools' locations after obtaining permission from the General Administration of Education at Makkah. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, such as means and standard deviations. In addition, T-test and (ANOVA) were used to find out whether the differences in the mean scores of teachers in groups were statistically significant ($\alpha \leq .05$). In order to understand the results of the current study, it was important to set specific cut points to interpret the participants' total scores. It should be noted that the researcher used the response scale of each item that ranged from 1 to 5 to determine these cut points according to the following manner: (1- 2.33 = low), from (2.34 - 3.67 = moderate), and from (3.68 - 5.00 = high levels).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data that obtained from questionnaire were presented, discussed and analyzed using SPSS software package for educational studies in order to answer the research questions. This is done under five themes as follows:

Table 1 Participant characteristics

Variable	Levels of variable	N	%
Gender	Male	78	51.31
	female	74	48.69
Academic qualification	Diploma	13	8.55
	Bachelor	83	54.60
	Diploma after bachelor	38	25.00
	Master or above	18	11.84
Teaching minor	Islamic studies	63	41.45
	Arabic language	39	25.66
	Mathematics	29	19.08
	Sciences	21	13.81
Years of experiences	Less than 5 years	28	18.42
	From 5 to 10 years	48	31.58
	More than 10 years	76	50.00
Total		152	100

Table 2 Descriptive statistics for teachers' views

Domain	M	SD	Rank
Instructional interaction	4.13	0.48	1
Improving student's behavior	4.06	0.50	2
Social and emotional aspects	4.00	0.70	3
Total	4.06	0.46	-

Table 3 Descriptive statistics for the items of "instructional interaction domain"

No.	Item	M	SD	Rank
29	I listen carefully to all questions asked by the students.	4.30	0.56	1
7	I encourage ideas that students present.	4.25	0.69	2
18	When I lecture, I am interested to ask more questions.	4.23	0.70	3
16	I am interested to the reactions of students in the class room.	4.20	0.62	4
12	I explain to the students the appropriate way to deal with the subject matter.	4.20	0.70	5
22	I rephrase a question posed by one of the students.	4.19	0.70	6
3	I show the basic concepts at the beginning of presenting course topics.	4.13	0.66	7
50	I ask students open questions that may drive them to prepare and research.	4.13	0.77	8
38	I use a correct language with the students.	4.09	0.69	9
46	I reduce material requirements for some reasons that are not academic.	4.09	0.70	10
43	I arrange students' ideas to be associated with educational objectives.	4.08	0.68	11
41	I present lessons in a different way to what is specified in the plan of study.	4.08	0.76	12
35	I direct students to subdue the knowledge provided to critical thinking.	4.01	0.83	13
Total		4.13	0.48	-

Research Question 1:

To answer the first research question, the means and standard deviations were calculated for the total scores of each domain and were ranked according to their mean values.

As shown in the table 2, the level of teacher-student relationships is high from the teachers' point of view at Makkah public primary schools in Saudi Arabia (mean = 4.06 and standard deviation = 0.46). In general, this finding shows that participants have positive views of their relationships with students. Though the score of the three domains is high, the domain of instructional interaction has achieved slightly better results with mean of (4.13) with standard deviation (0.48). On the other hand, the domain of social and emotional aspects has the lowest mean of (4.00) with standard deviation (0.70). These findings may be due to the Islamic values' influences upon teachers in Makkah. They should, according to Islamic values, serve as role models to their students by putting on a good and exemplary character so that students would went to study the course. Islamic teachers must develop the potential of the individual in a holistic, balanced and integrated manner, encompassing the intellectual, spiritual, emotional and physical aspects in order to create a balanced and harmonious human being with high moral standards. This finding is consistent with research showing that level of teacher-

Table 4 Descriptive statistics for the items of "improving student's behavior domain"

No.	Item	M	SD	Rank
37	I explain, at the beginning of the term, the expected roles of students.	4.33	0.66	1
48	I push my students to positive behaviors.	4.32	0.64	2
9	I offer alternatives to the unacceptable behavior committed by students.	4.24	0.66	3
45	I encourage all students to participate more effectively in our activities.	4.19	0.67	4
17	I reject negative behaviors committed by a student, not the student himself.	4.18	0.65	5
40	I show the reasons for rejecting a negative behavior.	4.14	0.74	6
25	I keep a healthy relationship between me and students.	4.14	0.64	7
28	I positively treat the failure of the students at any task.	4.10	0.71	8
33	I stay away from actions that provoke my students.	4.08	0.72	9
1	I illustrate reasons for a praise given to any student.	4.07	0.75	10
20	I tolerate negative behavior with simple effect.	4.07	0.73	11
39	I push students to commitment by the ethics of our society.	4.06	0.70	12
42	I understand the differences in students' behavior.	4.04	0.67	13
44	I am sensitive to the needs of students.	4.03	0.77	14
15	I direct students to the appropriate methods to offer suggestions.	4.01	0.78	15
47	I appreciate the former experiences of my students.	3.95	0.66	16
5	I discuss students' experiences positively.	3.9	0.77	17
Total		4.06	0.50	

Table 5 Descriptive statistics for the items of "social and emotional aspects domain"

No.	Item	M	SD	Rank
10	Regardless any cultural or religious background, I equally deal with students.	4.29	0.74	1
49	I help students achieve their educational goals.	4.24	0.70	2
26	I give students opportunities to express themselves.	4.22	0.75	3
8	I accept new ideas that students introduce.	4.18	0.69	4
2	My relationship with students depends on mutual trust.	4.17	0.75	5
31	I provide a real atmosphere characterized by effectiveness.	4.15	0.77	6
13	I run conversations with students about respect for others.	4.13	0.74	7
14	I allow all students to communicate with me outside the classroom.	4.09	0.79	8
32	I allow students to introduce ideas in the course material.	4.08	0.69	9
21	I allow students to enter the classroom after the starting the lesson.	4.08	0.77	10
23	I collaborate with students to find solutions to their personal problems.	4.07	0.69	11
24	I allow a bit of fun in the classroom.	4.07	0.80	12
6	I provide interpretations on different topics in the course material.	4.05	0.78	13
27	I am keen to give an atmosphere of affection with the students.	4.03	0.79	14
30	I show flexibility in determining examination dates.	4.02	0.80	15
11	I understand the students' problems in a satisfactory manner.	4.01	0.71	16
19	I take into account differences in formatting social relation with students.	3.97	0.68	17
34	I am characterized by patient in my dealings with students.	3.87	0.72	18
36	I keep relation with students even after their success in the final exam.	3.87	0.82	19
4	I sit with students at the break.	3.84	0.95	20
Total		4.00	0.70	

student relationships at university context in Saudi Arabia was (4.21); which is at a very high level (Alersan, 2015). On the other hand, this finding is contradicts other research showing that the level of teacher-student relationships was in moderate level with a mean value of (2.65) at Western-Badia Schools in Mafraq Governorate in Jordan (Al-Khazalah, 2012). Table 3 reveals the means and standard deviation for the items of instructional interaction domain.

In Table 3 above, the respondents' decisions show that instructional interaction domain is high. It has the highest mean of (4.13) with standard deviation (0.48). The highest mean value was item (29) which states "I listen carefully to all questions asked by the students." (mean= 4.30 with standard deviation= 0.56). On the other hand, item (35) "I direct students to subdue the knowledge provided to critical thinking" received the lowest mean of (4.01) with standard deviation (0.83). In general, data from this domain revealed a positive relationship between teachers and their students at Makkah public primary schools. This means that teachers at Makkah public primary schools play a positive role in promoting instructional interaction with their student. This study supports the notion that the impact of the behavior of the

Table 6 Descriptive statistics and T- test for gender

Domain	Gender	Sample	M	SD	(T) value	Sig.
Instructional interactions	Male	78	53.51	6.02	0.29	0.77
	Female	74	53.81	6.46		
Social and emotional aspects	Male	78	69.54	7.69	0.85	0.40
	Female	74	68.38	9.15		
improving student's behavior	Male	78	79.88	16.57	0.11	0.91
	Female	74	80.14	10.92		
Total	Male	78	202.94	25.12	0.15	0.88
	Female	74	202.32	24.70		

Table 7 Descriptive statistics for academic qualification

Domain	Academic qualification	Sample	M	SD
Instructional interactions	Diploma	13	51.23	5.69
	Bachelor	83	53.25	6.38
	Diploma after bachelor	38	54.63	6.15
	Master or above	18	55.22	5.64
	Total	152	53.66	6.22
Social and emotional aspects	Diploma	13	66.08	7.61
	Bachelor	83	69.14	8.85
	Diploma after bachelor	38	69.50	7.06
	Master or above	18	69.17	9.79
	Total	152	68.97	8.42
Improving student's behavior	Diploma	13	78.38	10.24
	Bachelor	83	79.83	14.25
	Diploma after bachelor	38	80.45	16.40
	Master or above	18	81.06	10.58
	Total	152	80.01	14.06
Total	Diploma	13	195.69	22.19
	Bachelor	83	202.23	25.71
	Bachelor & Diploma	38	204.58	24.77
	Master & Ph. D	18	205.44	23.52
	Total	152	202.64	24.83

Table 8 One-way ANOVA for academic qualification

Domain	Sources of variance	Sum of Squares	D.F.	Mean Squares	F	Sig.
Instructional interactions	Between groups	170.26	3	56.75	1.48	0.20
	Within groups	5669.95	148	38.31		
Social and emotional aspects	Between groups	122.71	3	40.90	0.57	0.64
	Within groups	10591.19	148	71.56		
Improving student's behavior	Between groups	63.94	3	21.31	0.11	0.96
	Within groups	29769.05	148	201.14		
Total	Between groups	925.97	3	308.66	0.50	0.69
	Within groups	92193.13	148	622.93		

teacher highlights the importance of introducing good educational practices that promote skills in students. This concern can be achieved through curricular infusion of learning strategies in the different disciplines that make up the academic curriculum as well as through programs specifically implemented in the schools for this purpose (Azevedo, et.al, 2012). This finding is congruent with research showing that a positive instructional interaction between teachers and students at secondary schools of Sabia in Saudi Arabia. (Al-Nahari, 2004).Table 4 shows

Table 9 Descriptive statistics for teaching minor

Domain	Teaching minor	Sample	M	SD
Instructional interactions	Islamic studies	63	54.71	5.61
	Arabic language	39	54.46	6.82
	Mathematics	29	52.97	5.75
	Science	21	49.95	6.32
	Total	152	53.66	6.22
Social and emotional aspects	Islamic studies	63	69.97	8.02
	Arabic language	39	69.44	9.23
	Mathematics	29	69.28	7.90
	Science	21	64.71	8.01
	Total	152	68.97	8.42
Improving student's behavior	Islamic studies	63	81.10	14.41
	Arabic language	39	80.15	16.49
	Mathematics	29	81.21	10.09
	Science	21	74.81	12.45
	Total	152	80.01	14.06
Total	Islamic studies	63	205.78	23.94
	Arabic language	39	204.05	27.38
	Mathematics	29	203.45	22.25
	Science	21	189.48	23.32
	Total	152	202.64	24.83

Table 10 One-way ANOVA for teaching minor

Domain	Sources of variance	Sum of Squares	D.F.	Mean Squares	F	Sig.
Instructional interactions	Between groups	397.74	3	132.58	*3.61	0.01
	Within groups	5442.47	148	36.77		
Social and emotional aspects	Between groups	454.29	3	151.43	2.18	0.09
	Within groups	10259.61	148	69.32		
Improving student's behavior	Between groups	684.49	3	228.16	1.16	0.33
	Within groups	29148.50	148	196.95		
Total	Between groups	4355.90	3	1451.97	2.50	0.07
	Within groups	88763.20	148	599.75		

** Significant at 0.05 level.*

Table 11 The Scheffe' test

Levels of variable	Islamic studies	Arabic language	Mathematics	Sciences
Islamic studies	-	0.25	1.75	*4.76
Arabic language	-	-	1.50	*4.51
Mathematics	-	-	-	3.01

** Significant at 0.05 level.*

the means and standard deviation for the items of improving student's behavior domain.

For the domain improving student's behavior, the highest mean value was item (37) "I explain at the beginning of the term the expected roles of students" (mean= 4.33 with standard deviation= 0.66). On contrary, item (5) "I discuss students' experiences positively" received the least mean of (3.9) with standard deviation (0.77). In general, the responses showed that improving student's behavior at Makkah public primary schools in Saudi Arabia is high (mean= 4.06 with standard deviation= 0.50). Improving students' behaviour at school has been a key priority for the Saudi Arabia government since the mid-2010s. A number of initiatives have been developed to this end including the Primary Behaviour which took place from 2011 to 2014. This finding contradicts other research showing that improving student's behavior is still stands as a marginal role for secondary schools' teaches at Sabia in Saudi Arabia (Al-Nahari, 2004). Table 5 reveals the means and standard deviation for the items of social and emotional aspects domain.

Table 12 Descriptive statistics for years of experiences

Domain	Years of experiences	Sample	M	SD
Instructional interactions	Less than 5 years	28	52.18	6.10
	From 5 to 10 years	48	53.31	6.12
	More than 10 years	76	54.42	6.29
	Total	152	53.66	6.22
Social and emotional aspects	Less than 5 years	28	67.32	9.33
	From 5 to 10 years	48	68.92	8.63
	More than 10 years	76	69.62	7.96
	Total	152	68.97	8.42
Improving student's behavior	Less than 5 years	28	75.86	18.29
	From 5 to 10 years	48	80.50	15.64
	More than 10 years	76	81.22	10.77
	Total	152	80.01	14.06
Total	Less than 5 years	28	195.36	27.92
	From 5 to 10 years	48	202.73	25.64
	More than 10 years	76	205.26	22.85
	Total	152	202.64	24.83

Table 13 One-way ANOVA for years of experiences

Domain	Sources of variance	Sum of Squares	D.F.	Mean Squares	F	Sig.
Instructional interactions	Between groups	111.26	2	55.63	1.45	0.24
	Within groups	5728.95	149	38.45		
Social and emotional aspects	Between groups	108.19	2	54.09	0.76	0.47
	Within groups	10605.71	149	71.18		
Improving student's behavior	Between groups	606.37	2	303.18	1.55	0.22
	Within groups	29226.63	149	196.15		
Total	Between groups	2008.45	2	1004.23	1.64	0.20
	Within groups	91110.64	149	611.48		

It can be noted from the above table 5 that the domain social and emotional aspects receives the lowest mean value of (4.00) with standard deviation (00.70). Item (10) which reports "Regardless any cultural or religious background, I equally deal with students" has the highest mean value of (4.29) with standard deviation (0.74). Whereas, item (4) "I sit with students at the break" got the lowest mean of (3.84) with standard deviation (0.95). In general, data from social and emotional aspects of the study revealed a positive relationship between teachers and their students at Makkah public primary schools. This finding contradicts other research showing while school teachers were generally focusing on the instructional aspects, they do not pay the same attention to the social and emotional aspects (Leitão, and Waugh, 2007; Hallam, 2009). The current study supports the notion that stable teacher-student relationships impact positively on a student's developing sense of self and promote resiliency in them (Pianta, 2009, Baker, 1999).

Research Question 2:

To answer the second question, the mean and standard deviation were used for the three domains and the overall scale due to gender. In order to investigate the significance of gender over the three dimensions, T- test was conducted in Table 6 as follows:

As seen from table 6, there were no statistically significant differences among participants in the three domains of teacher-student relationships can be attributed to gender. This means that male and female teachers at Makkah public primary schools have the same perceptions and attitudes towards their relationships with student. The reason for this may be due to that the sample of the research are working in the same schools, and subjected to the same experiences. This finding is consistent with research showing that gender differences in teacher-student relationships do not persist (Al-Khazalah, 2012). On the other hand, this

finding contradicts other research showing statistically significant differences at (a =0.05) were found that could be due to gender in favor of females teachers regarding teacher-student relationships (Alersan, 2015).

Research Question 3:

The mean and standard deviation were employed for the three scale domains according to academic qualification in order to answer the third question as indicated in table 7.

Table 7 indicates that there were differences between the means due to academic qualification in the level of teacher-student relationships from the teachers' point of view at Makkah public primary schools. In order to investigate the significance of academic qualification over the three dimensions, one-way ANOVA was conducted as shown in table 8.

The table 8 shows that there were no statistically significant differences over the three domains of teacher-student relationships can be attributed to academic qualification. The reason for this may be due to that the sample of the research are receiving the same in-service training and supervising at Makkah public primary schools in Saudi Arabia, regardless of their academic background (diploma, bachelor, diploma after bachelor, master or above). This finding contradicts other research showing that academic qualification differences in teacher-student relationships persist even with receiving the same in-service training and supervising (Al-Khazalah, 2012).

Research Question 4:

To answer the fourth question, the mean and standard deviation were used for the three domains and the overall scale according to teaching minor as follows:

As noted from table 9, there were differences between the means due to academic qualification in the level of teacher-student relationships from the respondents' point of view. In order to investigate the significance of teaching minor over the three dimensions, one-way ANOVA was conducted as shown in table 10.

As teaching minor, Table 10 shows no significant differences according to social and emotional aspects, improving student's behavior and over the whole tool whereas; there were significantly differences according to instructional interactions. In order to determine where the significant differences in the means of instructional interactions' domain lie, the Scheffe' test was used to make unplanned comparisons.

As seen from table 11 and by using the Scheffe' test for the Instructional interactions' domain, we can conclude that there is a significant difference in the mean value between Islamic studies' teachers and science teachers in favor of Islamic studies' teachers. Furthermore, table 11, reveals that for the instructional interactions' domain, there is a significance difference in the mean value between Arabic language teachers and science teachers in favor of Arabic language teachers. These findings seem to be logic. Islamic studies and Arabic language courses are basic courses at Saudi public primary schools. Teachers of Islamic studies and Arabic language meet their students at class every day, and then have a stronger interaction with the students. On the other hand, science teachers meet their once or twice a week, and then have less interaction with the students. This finding contradicts other research showing teaching minor differences in teacher-student relationships do not persist at secondary schools' teaches at Sabia in Saudi Arabia (Al-Nahari , 2004).

Research Question 5:

The mean and standard deviation were employed for the three scale's domains according to teaching minor in order to answer the fifth question as shown in table 12.

Table 12 indicates that there were differences between the means to years of experiences in the level of teacher-student relationships from the participants' point of view. In order to investigate the significance of years of experiences over the three dimensions, one-way ANOVA was conducted as shown in table 13.

The table 13 shows that there were no statistically significant differences over the three domains of teacher-student relationships from the teachers' point of view at Makkah public primary schools can be attributed to years of experiences. This finding seems to be illogic. Other research shows that, on average, teachers with more than 10 years of experience are more effective than teachers with no experience, but are not much more effective than those with more 5 years of experience (Al-Khazalah, 2012). Studies have also documented some evidence that effectiveness declines after some point, particularly among high school teachers (Al-Nahari, 2004).

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

A limitation to the present study concerns the questionnaire prepared and used by the researcher; therefore, the interpretation of the results depends on the validity and reliability of the scale. Furthermore, the study was applied to a group of public primary schools' teachers at Makkah in Saudi Arabia which limits the generalization of results.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The current study contributes new knowledge to the body of information about teachers' relationships with students in public primary school classrooms in Makkah, Saudi Arabia. The results of this study have revealed that teachers at Makkah public primary schools have positive views of their relationships with students. Furthermore, the study has found while there were no significant differences among participants according to gender, academic qualification and years of experiences, there were significant differences according to teaching minor. Implications from this research may be drawn for teachers, for students, for policy makers and for those involved in future research.

For Teachers

Teachers are being encouraged to take on a more active role in promoting students' behavior, the promotion of children's emotional well-being, and to capitalise on opportunities to relate to students in positive ways (Karen, 1998). It has been suggested that teacher-student relationships can be harnessed as a preventative intervention and that positive teacher-student relationships offer protective factors for students (Pianta, 1999). For these reasons it is necessary for teachers at Makkah public primary schools to be aware of the importance of developing and maintaining positive relationships with students, and to be better equipped to identify aspects of the teacher-student relationship that need to be strengthened.

For Students

In recent years there has been a growing awareness of mental health disorders, and surveys have been used to determine the scope of the problem. The increased awareness of mental health concerns in Saudi Arabia highlights the need for strategies to be developed to address the problem. The development of positive teacher-student relationships is seen as important for promoting mental health in students (Nadel & Muir, 2005). This study contributes towards the development of strategies to promote the mental well being of Saudi students through the identification of aspects of promoting student's behavior, and the social and emotional aspects of the teacher student relationship that may be actively strengthened in order to enhance the relationships that teachers and students share.

For Policy Makers

In the push to raise teaching standards and levels of literacy and numeracy here in Saudi Arabia, policy makers must not overlook the importance of improving student's behavior as well as the social and emotional involvement of teachers and students in the teaching and learning process. In helping to maintain a balanced approach to determining the success of education system here in Saudi Arabia, it is vital that when policy makers debate National Curriculum, they must focus on strengthening academic learning alongside promoting students' behavior and social and emotional development. The teacher-student relationship must be recognised as relevant to the success of instruction and seen as a powerful resource in the classroom. Not only must our policy makers be aware of the importance of teacher-student relationships with regard to student achievement and development, but they must also be committed to supporting teachers in harnessing this resource.

For Future Research

Future studies could incorporate additional aspects that impact on the shared relationship between teachers and students. Examples include class size, length of contact between class teacher and the class, the timetabling of specialised staff, and the use of humour in the classroom. Further research in this area is needed to expand our understanding of how good teacher-student relationships can be recognised and promoted. The more that is known about how to identify and build positive teacher-student relationships, the better use can be made of this resource in our schools and in our communities.

Notes on contributor

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