A Study on the Role of Family Communication Patterns on Slow Learners' Academic Achievement in the City of Bandar Abbas

Fatemeh Khani[*1], Maryam Sadeghi Fard[2], Reza Boroomand[2]

1. Department of Psychology, Bandar Abbas Branch, Islamic Azad University, Bandar Abbas, Iran
2. Hormozgan University, Bandar Abbas, Iran

A B S T R A C T

This study aims to investigate the role of family communication patterns on the slow learners' academic achievement in the city of Bandar Abbas. For this purpose, 175 boy and girl slow learners were selected by simple random sampling method and the questionnaire of family communication patterns (Koerner and Fitzpatrick, 2002) was used in order to collect the data. The results of research hypotheses analysis indicate that among communication patterns conformity and conversation have a positive correlation with slow learners' academic achievement. Regression analysis results show that the communication patterns can predict slow learners' academic achievement at $P < .001$. Among these communication patterns, conversation communication pattern can predict academic achievement at $P < .001$.

Keywords: Communication Patterns, Academic Achievement, Slow Learners.

INTRODUCTION

Family provides the first seed of personal growth development and the foundation of human character. In the family, the child learns language, acquires moral values, perceives social relationships with others and learns moral principles. Family is considered as a filter for beliefs, values and attitudes related to the culture of a society, and it offers them to the child with a dedicated and optional style. Doubtlessly, it can be said that the character, attitudes, socioeconomic class, religion, characteristics, family relative dependences, education and gender of family parents will effect on how to provide values and moral measures to children[1].

Family can be considered as a social system or as a part of a larger community. Family is associated with social organizations and institutions such as schools, market and community on one hand and on the other hand it involves members of the family. Therefore, the person's society and family are related to

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each other in the form of a system. If family fulfills its basic tasks completely, the society will continue its life with more strength and the family system prepares the person for entering the community and social system[2]. Communication is the biggest determinant of the person's type of behavior with others and her/himself. Communication is similar to a sketch by which one measures others value level and it is all the ways of information exchange between people and how to make sense of the information[3].

Interactions between parents and children are considered as the basis of child's emotional development and these interactions show up at all stages of her/his life. Among the most important stages is adolescence[4]. This period is a stressful stage for parents and teen. The parents' influence on the passage of this stage and its normal changes development is very important[5, 6]. The significant point regard to the communication is that everyone interprets the world in her/his opinion and has her/his own inference and judgment in this case. These perceptions and understandings affect the feelings, beliefs and behaviors and sometimes lead to the collapse of the relationship or conflict of personalities.

There are several evidence confirming the relationship between factors related to the family and children's compatibility or its components (for example, Jones & Prinz[7], Therese and Solberg[8], Fouladchang[9]). Some researchers believe that patterns of communication between family members are more important for children's compatibility[10, 11]. Family communication patterns mean the manner of interaction between family members in order to reach shared ideas and how decisions are made by family[10].

Two infrastructural dimensions of conversation orientation and conformity orientation were identified in the family communication patterns. Conversation orientation is defined as the extent that families provide the conditions in which all family members are encouraged to freely and easily engage in discussion about a wide range of topics[11]. Conformity orientation is the extent to which families emphasize the conditions of similar attitudes, values and beliefs. The combination of these two dimensions forms four family relationships schema[10], which are called Family Communication Patterns. Each model describes a particular type of family. These four types of pattern are the result of four types of families from a combination of high or low situations on the continuums of two dimensions of conversation orientation and conformity orientation and include: consensual family, pluralistic family, protective family and laissez-faire family.

Academic achievement is of the variables that account for a large number of educational researches. Among the factors affecting it, educational environment, personality traits, and family environment can be referred to. Thus, specialized groups and psychologists always emphasize on reviewing various educational aspects[4].

Therefore, in this study the researcher attempts to specify the role of family communication patterns in the slow learners' education of Bandar Abbas primary school in the academic year 2014-2015.

METHODOLOGY

The present research is a descriptive – correlational study. In this type of study, the relationship between variables is analyzed based on research objective. The target population for the study is all primary schools in which there are slow learner students whose statistics in the academic year 2014-2015 have been 320 students. The research sample consists of 175 slow learner students of primary schools in Bandar Abbas. This number is determined using Morgan table. Due to the fact that the Department of Education has listed the names and total number of slow-learning students (320 students) based on the foundations of the primary grade and delivered to the researcher, therefore, accessing the way of listing the population, we used simple random sampling to determine the population volume. **Family Communication Patterns Questionnaire (Koerner and Fitzpatrick[11]):** This scale consists of 26 items and has been prepared by Fitzpatrick and Ritchie (1994), to measure the dimensions of family communication patterns or in other words conversation and conformity orientation dimensions[10]. This tool, which is a self-evaluation scale made by Koerner and Fitzpatrick[11], measures the agreement or disagreement degree of the respondents in a 5 – degree range in the field of family communications. The Koerner and Fitzpatrick believe that, due to the fact that this tool has considered all the behaviors related to both the conversation and the conformity situations, it has good content validity. This is obvious as the mean of Cronbach's alpha is obtained 0.89 (0.92 to 0.84 range) for conversation and 0.79 (0.84 to 0.73 range) for conformity in five studies and the test reliability coefficient, through retest method, is close to 0.99 for conversation situation and 0.73 to 0.93 for conformity situation[11]. Conversation situation subscale, compared with conformity situation subscales, has always shown greater reliability. In addition, The reliability of the conversation orientation subscale is obtained 0.90 and the reliability of the conformity orientation subscale is obtained 0.91 that is completely consistent with those reported by manufacturers.

RESULTS

First hypothesis: there is a correlation between conformity communication pattern and slow learners' academic achievement.

Table 1. Simple correlation coefficients between conformity communication pattern and academic achievement

Communication Pattern	Academic Achievement	
	Correlation Coefficient	Significance Level
Conformity	0.18	0.01

In table 1 simple correlation coefficients between conformity communication pattern and academic achievement is presented. As you can see the correlation

coefficient between these two variables equals 0.18, that is significant at the level of P <0.01.

Second hypothesis: there is a correlation between conversation communication pattern and slow learners' academic achievement.

Table 2. Simple correlation coefficients between conversation communication pattern and academic achievement

Communication Pattern	Academic Achievement	
	Correlation Coefficient	Significance Level
Conversation	0.33	0.001

In Table 2 simple correlation coefficients between conversation communication pattern and academic achievement is presented. As you can see the correlation coefficient between these two variables equals 0.33, that is statistically significant at the level of P <0.001 significant. The remarkable thing is that the relationship between conversation communication pattern and academic achievement is stronger and higher than the relationship between conformity communication pattern and academic achievement. Therefore, in families with conversation communication pattern, the slow learners' academic achievement is more and better.

Third hypothesis: there is a multiple correlation between communication patterns and slow learners' academic achievement.

Table 3. Simultaneous regression model summary to predict academic achievement based on the communication patterns

Predictor Variables	Correlation Coefficient (R)	Determination Coefficient (R^2)	Adjusted Determination Coefficient
Communication Patterns	0.34	0.12	0.11

Based on the observations of Table 3, it is determined that multiple correlation between communication patterns and academic achievement is equal to 0.34 and its adjusted determination coefficient is equal to 0.12. In other words 11% of the variance of the variable of academic achievement is explained by different communication patterns.

Table 4. Summary of the ANOVA results to predict the variable of academic achievement based on communication patterns

Enter Model	Model Index	Sum of Squares	Freedom Degree	Mean Square	F Value	Significance Level
Communication Patterns	Regression Effect	48.04	2	24.02	11.21	0.001
	Residual	368.39	172	2.14		
	Total	416.43	174			

Analysis of Variance Table 4 shows that the present regression model is statistically significant. In other words, the significance of the regression model confirms the linear relationship between variables. This table shows that the communication patterns variable with the value F =11.21, is significant at Alpha level of p<0.001.

Table 5. Simultaneous regression equation coefficients, communication patterns

Model	Non-Standard Coefficients		β Standard Value	T Value	Significance Level
	B Value	Standard Deviation			
Intercept	18.76	0.86		21.75	0.001
Conversation	0.05	0.01	0.36	4.08	0.001
Conformity	0.01	0.02	0.04	0.51	0.60

Table of regression equation coefficients shows the share of each of the predictor variables in the criterion variable changes. Among the communication patterns, conversation pattern is significant with the beta 0.36 and t=4.08 at the level of P <0.001 and can predict students' academic achievement. However, the communication pattern of conformity with the beta 0.04 at p=0.60 is not significant and cannot predict slow learners' academic achievement.

CONCLUSION

Results of the first hypothesis analysis indicate that there is a significant positive relationship between the communication pattern of conformity and slow learning students' academic achievement. This means that families where there is conformity communication pattern between its members and slow learner children, finally affect the academic achievement of children and lead to the progress of these students in this regard. Because in these investigations it is indicated separately and certainly that students who generally establish more family interactions than others, have better academic achievement than the other slow learner students. To explain this hypothesis it can be said that in families with communication pattern of conformity, slow learner students try to make their own attitudes similar to that of the whole family. They generally try to emphasize the values and beliefs prevalent in the family and move forward fit to maintaining these values as much as possible, and relatively show good progress in their work in school.

The results of the second hypothesis analysis show that there is a significant positive relationship between the communication pattern of conversation and slow learning students' academic achievement. This means that families where there is conversation communication pattern between its members and slow learner children, finally affect the academic achievement of children and lead to the progress of these students in this regard. The remarkable thing is that the

correlation coefficient between conversation communication pattern and academic achievement is stronger and higher than the correlation coefficient between conformity communication pattern and academic achievement. Therefore, in families with conversation communication pattern, the slow learners' academic achievement in schools is more and better.

It has been found in all these studies that families with conversation communication pattern have better performance and their students have better psychological and physical freedom and performance in school. In order to explain this issue, it can be mentioned that families with conversation communication pattern provide conditions where all family members are encouraged to freely engage in discussion about a wide range of subjects. Therefore, slow learner students in these families have high performance freedom and try to participate in exchanges without any stress. They also participate in class discussions and group discussions and exhibit performance and academic achievement better than those in other families.

Results of simultaneous regression analysis in order to respond the third hypothesis show that among family communication patterns, conversation communication pattern has the ability to predict academic achievement of slow learner students. However, conformity communication pattern cannot predict these students' academic achievement.

However, there is no internal investigation that evaluated this issue in order to predict the academic achievement of slow learners. In these foreign researches conversation communication pattern has prediction capability much more than conformity model and in the majority of the studies, it is the only predictor variable. To explain the hypothesis it can be stated that in these families (conversation communication pattern) students have more freedom to participate in discussions and the children are less expected to make their beliefs and values close to the values of their parents. Thus, in these families, a kind of democracy is dominant that makes the children of these families enjoy some sort of positive emotions and cheerfulness and subsequently in schools they act based on family pattern and show better academic achievement.

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