Table of Contents

Through the Looking Glass: Emotional Abuse, Self-Blame and Their Relationship with Temperament and Depression in Adolescents .............................................................. 1
  Castilho, P.
  Marques, C.
  Matos, A. P.
  Arnarson, E.
  Craighead, W. E.

Pre-task Planning Time and EFL Learners’ Written Performance with a Focus on Gender ................................................................................................................................. 16
  Morteza Abdi
  Sonya Khoshmod

Students’ Perceptions on the Effectiveness of Using Edmodo in EFL Classes .................. 23
  Houda Salim Al-Ruheili
  Asiya Abdallah Al-Saidi

Conceptual Framework of Integrated Sustainable Homestay in Malaysia .......................... 34
  Aziz Amin
  Yahaya Ibrahim
  Hawa Husna
  Mohd Shaladdin Muda

The Woman Angle: A Feminist Reading of Ngugi’s Matigari ........................................ 40
  Ade Adejumo

Alternative Punishments in Criminal Offences: Issues and Challenges in Shariah Courts in Malaysia ........................................................................................................... 45
  Jasri Jamal
  Hasnizam Hasyim
  Nor Aziah Awal
  Mohd Azam Sharif

Proactive Intervention Techniques for Handling Emotional Intelligence during Teaching at Higher Education Levels .................................................................................................. 50
  Sufiana Khatoon

Insights into Turkish Students’ Self-Conceptualization in Different Social Communities via Kinetic Drawings ....................................................................................... 64
  Iryna Sekret

The Chitty Malay Language .................................................................................................. 65
  Nurul Huda Binti Hamzah

Application of Concordances in ELT Classroom: Implications & Concerns .................. 66
  Mahshad Tasnimi
  Khaleel Bataineh
A Review of Malaysia’s Private Sector Services Retirement and Pension System.............. 74
Kamal Halili Hassan
Fariza Ahmad
Rohani Abdul Rahim
Tengku Noor Azira Tengka Zainuddin
Rooshida Merican A R Merican

Analysis of the New Foreign Politics of Russia: Its Status and Role in the International Arena ................................................................. 81
Zhamilya Kaparova

Concepts of Man and Happiness in the Classical Philosophy ............................................. 85
Hojjatollah Raftari
Yadollah Maleki

Herzberg’s Two-Factor Theory of Motivation: Empirical Evidence from the Arabian Gulf ................................................................. 95
Alexandre A. Bachkirov
Awatif Said Al Awfi
Fatma Tawfiq Al Hasni
Amal Rashid Said Al Mamari

The Contemporary Ideological conflicts between Islam and the Western World ................. 96
Tijani Abdulwahab

Iran, Political Islam, and Democracy ................................................................................. 108
Mahdieh Aghazadeh

© Copyright by Author(s)
Abstract

Background: Temperament plays an important role in the development and maintenance of adolescent psychopathology, particularly in depression. The temperament dimensions of negative or positive emotionality are associated with depression in childhood, adolescence, and in adult life. Early traumatic experiences, such as emotional abuse, constitute risk factors for the development of negative cognitive styles and depressive symptoms. The use of dysfunctional regulation strategies (e.g., self-blame) seems to be a significant factor in the onset and exacerbation of depressive symptoms in multiple samples. Nevertheless, the contribution of these variables for the maintenance of depression remains inadequately studied. Objectives: The present study explored the mediator role of early emotional traumatic experiences and self-blame in the relationship between negative emotionality trait and depressive symptoms in an adolescent sample. Method: A sample of 2318 adolescents from a general community population completed several self-report questionnaires measuring depressive symptomatology (CDI), adolescent temperament (EATQ-R Short Form), early emotional traumatic experiences (CTQ-SF), and emotional regulation strategies (CERQ). Results: Results revealed that early emotional traumatic experiences and self-blame mediated the relationship between negative emotionality and depressive symptoms. Nevertheless, the negative emotionality trait is still directly associated with depressive symptoms. These data seem to suggest that adolescents with negative emotionality trait that recall early traumatic experiences and tend to self-blame are more vulnerable to depression. Conclusions: Some important clinical implications should be addressed. Treatment should include therapeutic strategies focused on self-blame and early traumatic experiences (emotional abuse) in order to diminish negative affect. Cognitive contextual approaches seem appropriate.

Keywords: negative emotionality, emotional abuse, self-blame, depressive symptoms, adolescence

Introduction

Depression in adolescence

Depression is a common, debilitating and chronic mental health problem. Recent data regarding prevalence, severity, and comorbidity of adolescent clinical depression are provided by the National Comorbidity Study Adolescent Supplement (NCS-A; Avenevoli, Swendsen, He, Burstein, & Merikangas, 2015). Based on interview data with adolescents aged 13–18, lifetime and 1-year prevalence of Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) were 11.0% and 7.5%, respectively; for severe MDD, rates were 3.0% and 2.3%. MDD becomes increasingly more prevalent across adolescence and is one of the most potent risk factors for suicidality (Lewinsohn, Rohde, & Seeley, 1994), and
approximately 5-10% of depressed adolescents commit suicide within 15 years of their first MDD episode (Weissman et al., 1999).

In fact, the transition into adolescence is often accompanied by increases in negative affect and depressive symptoms (Cole et al., 2002; Hyde, Mezulis, & Abramson, 2008; Nolen-Hoeksema & Girgus, 1994). Depressive disorder during adolescence modifies the normal development and impairs several life domains of teens. Data from longitudinal studies demonstrate that depressed adolescents still report the impairment in social, family and academic functioning in adulthood (Reinherz et al., 2012).

The onset of depression occurs early in life, between 13-15 years of age (Arnarson & Craighead, 2009; Seeley, Rohde, Lewinsohn, & Clarke, 2002), and has high rates of comorbidity with other psychiatric disorders, such as anxiety disorders (Garber, 2006). Although there are no differences in the gender ratio of depression during childhood, a gender difference begins to emerge during mid-adolescence (Hankin et al., 1998; Hilt & Nolen-Hoeksema, 2014). Beginning in adolescence, girls experience an increase in depression-related symptoms (e.g., rumination, feelings of hopelessness) relative to their male counterparts; after 15, girls are twice as likely as boys to have experienced an episode of clinical depression (Cyranowski, Frank, Young, & Shear, 2000). Nolen-Hoeksema and Girgus (1994) and this gender difference continues into adulthood (Rohde et al., 2013). Thus, for girls, the transition into adolescence is a vulnerable period for the development of depression.

Nolen-Hoeksema and Hilt (2009) propose an integrated biopsychosocial model suggesting that adolescents at greater risk of developing depression have risk factors including genetic, neurobiological and psychosocial vulnerabilities. Empirical research has highlighted several risk factors for development of depression in adolescence, such as previous depressive episodes, anxiety disorders, loss of a parent, trauma, and parental depression (Dobson & Dozois, 2008). Self-consciousness and self-critical thinking increase during the transition into adolescence, and they are related to depression (Rudolph, Hammen, & Daly, 2006). Indeed, individuals who share a specific emotional disposition characterized by harsh self-criticism and a negative attributional style may be most susceptible to develop depressive symptoms in adolescence.
Temperament

According to Rothbart and Bates (2006) temperament consists in emotional reactivity patterns, with a biological basis, characterized by stability, and it can be influenced by environmental experiences and heredity. Temperament has been conceptualized according to two domains: positive emotionality and negative emotionality. Positive emotionality refers to sensitivity to reward cues, involvement, adventurousness, behavioral activation, and sociability. Negative emotionality is characterized by sensitivity to negative stimuli, anxiety, sadness, anger, irritability, and negative mood reactivity (Dougherty, Klein, Durbin, Hayden, & Olino, 2010; Garber, 2006). The majority of studies based on the relationship between temperament and depression have exclusively focused on the reactive aspects of temperament. Some of these studies refer to the tripartite model of anxiety and depression (Clark & Watson, 1991), in which anxiety and depression are associated with high levels of negative affectivity.

Predominant temperament models have proposed that negative emotionality constitutes a potent affective temperamental risk to depression. Davies and Windle (2001) characterized difficult temperament as a pattern of inflexibility, low positive mood, withdrawal, and poor concentration; several studies stressed the association between this temperament pattern and depressive symptoms (Dougherty et al., 2010). Moreover, Clark, Watson, and Mineka (1994) have developed the tripartite model which posits that lower positive emotionality specifically predisposes to depression, although negative emotionality non-specifically predisposes to a variety of forms of psychopathology. In this sense, several studies reported the relationship of depression with low levels of positive emotionality and high levels of negative emotionality. Also, they emphasized the prospective character of positive and negative emotionality in the development of depression in adults (Durbin & Shafir, 2008).

Trauma

Approximately two-thirds of children and adolescents will experience at least one traumatic event, creating a critical need to identify effective child trauma interventions. Research has shown that the exposure to traumatic experiences, such as physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect in childhood is associated with the development of psychological problems in adolescents and adults (Bernstein et al., 2003). In line with MacMillan et al. (2001) individuals who experienced abuse in childhood are three to four times more likely to develop depression over their lifespan.

Unlike physical or sexual abuse, diverse studies have suggested that emotional abuse makes a specific contribution for the development of a cognitive vulnerability to depression because the abuser has an impact for the development of child’s negative cognition (Courtney, Kushwaha, & Johnson, 2008; Rose & Abramson, 1992). Courtney et al. (2008) conducted a longitudinal study that corroborated the finding that traumatic experiences are a significant predictor of depressive symptoms, and over time adolescents who report emotional abuse are more likely to experience hopelessness and depressive symptoms. Children that experienced severe and chronic abuse tend to create negative self-images and interpret the abuse directed toward the self, doing self-blame attributions (Alloy, Zhu, & Abramson, 2003; Harter, 2012; Klein, Torpey, & Bufferd, 2008).

The growing body of evidence has studied emotional abuse as a direct predictor of depressive symptomatology and not as a mediator. Nevertheless, the processes by which trauma experiences lead to depression remain unclear (Paredes & Calvete, 2014).

Emotion regulation skills

Adolescence is an important period for the development of increasingly complex emotion regulation skills. The adolescents’ incapacity to solve their developmental tasks leads to the assimilation of maladaptive strategies and psychopathology in the future. Thus, the development of adaptive coping strategies is crucial to future adjustment in adulthood (Nolen-Hoeksema, 2012; Öngen, 2010). Impaired emotion regulation leads to mental illnesses often expressed in adolescence (Pitskel, Bolling, Kaiser, Crowley, & Pelphrey, 2011).
Emotion regulation is assumed as an important factor in determining well-being or successful functioning (Cicchetti, Ackerman, & Izard, 1995). Thompson (1994) postulates emotion regulation as extrinsic and intrinsic processes to monitor, evaluate, and modify emotional reactions to accomplish certain individual goals. On the other hand, Gross (1998), defines emotion regulation as the “processes by which individuals influence which emotions they have, when they have them, and how they experience and express these emotions” (p. 275). Despite multiple definitions, all recognize the ability of adaptive human functioning to coordinate the action of emotional systems with the environment (Durbin & Shafir, 2008). Each emotion regulation strategy adopted by the adolescent brings a different implication for well-being, and some regulation strategies are more adaptive than others (Gross & John, 2003).

Several studies have emphasized gender differences in the use of coping emotion regulation strategies (Öngen, 2010). Although the divergence of empirical evidence for the use of some emotion regulation strategies regarding gender, studies have consistently found that adolescent girls tend to report more rumination than boys (Nolen-Hoecksema, 2012; Zimmermann & Iwanski, 2014). Studies have found that the use of emotional and thought suppression, rumination, self-blame and catastrophizing could lead to depression, whereas willingness to self-disclose negative emotions and positive reappraisal are associated with no history of depression (Garnefski & Kraaij, 2006; Öngen, 2010; Rude & McCarthy, 2003). Crow, Cross, Powers and Bradley (2014) suggested that emotion regulation problems are possible mediator between emotional abuse and later depression. It is assumed that when young individuals are exposed to emotional abuse, they become emotionally dysregulated and consequently become more predisposed to psychopathology (Compas, Jaser, & Benson, 2008; Hilt & Nolen-Hoecksema, 2009; Silk, Steinberg, & Morris, 2003).

Depression has been consistently related to rumination, self-blaming and catastrophizing (maladaptive strategies) and inversely related to positive reappraisal (adaptive strategy) (Garnefski, Boon, & Kraaij, 2003; Garnefski & Kraaij, 2006; Garnefski, Kraaij, & Spinhoven, 2001).

**Aims**

This study with adolescents aimed to explore how negative emotionality, memories of emotional abuse, and self-blame are linked to depression. Given that negative emotionality can be linked to depressive symptoms, we sought to examine the indirect effects of temperament on depression, through emotional abuse and self-blame. It was expected that higher levels negative emotionality would be associated with higher levels depressive symptoms, which would be associated with high emotional abuse, which, in turn, would be associated with cognitions of self-blame.

Thus, the three investigated hypotheses were (Figure 1): a) the effect of the negative emotionality on depressive symptomatology is mediated by emotional abuse experience; b) the effect of the negative emotionality on depressive symptomatology is mediated by self-blame; c) emotional abuse and self-blame as mediators in the relationship between negative emotionality and depressive symptomatology.
Method

Participants

The participants of this study were recruited as a part of a Portuguese Project: “Prevention of depression in Portuguese adolescents: Study of the efficacy of an intervention with adolescents and parents”. The sample included 2318 adolescents from the general population, in which were 880 boys (38%) and 1438 were girls (62%), ranged from 13 and 15 years of age ($M = 13.90; SD = 1.32$), and attending the 8th and 9th grades in public schools. We did not find significant differences between genders on age ($t_{(2302)} = .689, p = .491$).

Procedure

Permission to conduct the study was obtained from national entities that regulate scientific research. Schools were contacted in order to request their participation. After their approval, authorization was also obtained from students and their parents. Anonymity was ensured to the participants as well as confidentiality of the data. After obtaining all permission required, the research protocol was applied in classrooms before any psychological intervention. Subjects that did not complete the entire assessment protocol were excluded from the study. The project from which this investigation was taken aims to prevent the first major depressive episode that usually happens at 15 years old. Therefore only subjects between 13 and 15 years old were targeted.

Measures

Temperament

*Early Adolescent Temperament Questionnaire-Revised Short Form* (EATQ-R Short Form, Ellis & Rothbart, 2001; Portuguese Version: Matos & Paiva, 2009). The EATQ-R Short Form is a revised version of the Early Adolescent Temperament Questionnaire (Capaldi & Rothbart, 1992). It comprises 65 items that assess 12 aspects of children temperament (activation control, affiliation, attention, fear, frustration, high-intensity pleasure, inhibitory control, perceptual sensitivity, pleasure sensitivity, shyness, aggression and depressive mood). Participants rated items on 1 (almost always untrue about you) to 5 (almost always true about you). To illustrate, some questions of this questionnaire: “If I'm mad at somebody, I tend to say things that I know will hurt their feelings”, “It often takes very little to make me feel like crying”, “I get frightened riding with a person who likes to speed”, “I get sad when a lot of things are going wrong”. Ellis e Rothbart (2001) reported a Cronbach’s coefficient alpha ranging from .65 to .82 for the 12 temperament scales.
Trauma

Childhood Trauma Questionnaire-Short Form (CTQ-SF, Bernstein et al., 2003; Portuguese version: Matos & Pereira, 2012). The CTQ-SF is a 28-item questionnaire that assesses emotional physical and sexual abuse and emotional and physical neglect in childhood. Item responses are scored in a 5-point Likert scale, with higher scores indicating higher levels of childhood abuse/neglect. To illustrate, some questions of this questionnaire: “People in my family called me things like “stupid”, “lazy”, or ugly””, “I thought that my parents wished I had never been born”, “People in my family said hurtful or insulting things to me”. Bernstein et al. (2003) reported good internal consistency reliability for each of the CTQ-SF scales: Emotional Abuse = .87, Physical Abuse = .83, Sexual Abuse = .92; Physical Neglect = .61, and Emotional Neglect = .91.

Emotion regulation

Cognitive Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (CERQ, Garnefski, et al., 2001; Portuguese version: Matos & Serra, 2009). The CERQ is a self-report questionnaire that assesses specific cognitive emotional regulation strategies experienced by the adolescents when facing negative life events. Participants rated 36-statements on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (almost never) to 5 (almost always). To illustrate, some questions of this questionnaire: “I feel that I am the one to blame for it”, “I feel that I am the one who is responsible for what has happened”, “I think about the mistakes I have made in this matter”. The CERQ has 9 subscales that match 9 cognitive emotional regulation strategies: self-blame, rumination, catastrophizing, other-blame, acceptance, positive reappraisal, refocus on planning, putting into perspective, positive refocusing. Garnefski et. al (2001) obtained alpha coefficients ranging from .68 to .83.

Depressive symptomatology

Children’s Depression Inventory (CDI, Kovacs, 1985; Portuguese version: Marujo, 1994). The CDI is a 27-item self-report measure that assesses 2-week of depressive symptoms in 7 to 17 year-old children. It has three answering options that range from 0 (no problem) to 2 (severe problem) and the total score can reach 54 points. Kovacs (1985) found good psychometric qualities in this inventory, with excellent internal consistency (Cronbach’s alpha coefficients ranging .83 to .94). In the Portuguese version (Marujo, 1994) a unifactorial structure was found, with an alpha coefficient of .80 for the total scale.

Results

Data analysis

All analyses were conducted using PASW (Predictive Analytics Software), version 18 (SPSS Inc., Chicago, IL, USA) for PCs. Gender differences were tested using independent t-test. Pearson correlation coefficients were performed to explore the relationship between predictor variables, outcome variables, and the mediators (Cohen, Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2003; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Cohen’s guidelines (1988) were used for describing the effect sizes of reported correlations (i.e. small for correlations around .10, medium for those near .30, and large for correlations at .50 or higher). Significance was set at the .05 level. Mediation models were tested through PROCESS (Hayes, 2013), a computational tool for path analysis-based moderation and mediation analysis. Using this SPSS macro, serial multiple mediation models (“model 6” in Hayes, 2013) with two mediator variables were estimated. A bootstrapping procedure, using 5000 resamples, was used to assess unconditional indirect effects. Bootstrapping is a nonparametric resampling procedure that is recommended for testing indirect effects, as it does not require the assumption of normality of the sampling distribution (Hayes, 2013). This procedure creates 95% bias-corrected and accelerated confidence intervals (BCa CIs) of the indirect effects, with an indirect effect considered to be significantly different from zero if zero is not contained within the lower and upper CIs.
Preliminary data analyses

Preliminary data analyses were conducted to examine the violation of tests’ assumptions. An inspection of the values of skewness and kurtosis did not reveal serious biases (Skewness values < 3 and Kurtosis values < 10; Kline, 2005). The analysis of the outliers was conducted through the graphic representation of the results (box plot). Furthermore, a series of tests were conducted to examine the suitability of the current data for regression analyses. Analysis of residuals scatter plots showed that the residuals were normally distributed, had linearity and homoscedasticity. Also, the independence of the errors was analyzed and validated through graphic analysis and the value of Durbin–Watson (values ranged between 1.756 and 2.006). Regarding multicollinearity or singularity amongst the variables, Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values indicated the absence of β estimation problems (VIF < 5). Overall, these results suggest that these data are adequate for regression analyses.

Descriptives

The means, standard deviations and Cronbach’s alphas for all variables used are presented on Table 1. All scales showed reasonable to good internal consistencies (Pestana & Gageiro, 2005). The internal consistencies obtained in this study were in line with original versions of scales (Bernstein et al., 2003; Garnefski et al., 2001; Kovacs, 1985).

Table 1. Means, standard deviations and Cronbach’s Alpha for EATQ-R, CTQ-SF, CERQ and CDI

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>α</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EATQ-R-Short Form</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Emotionality</td>
<td>14.34</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>0.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTQ-SF</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Abuse</td>
<td>6.83</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CERQ</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-blame</td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>0.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDI</td>
<td>11.38</td>
<td>7.11</td>
<td>0.90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: EATQ-R Short Form: Early Adolescent Temperament Questionnaire-Revised Short Form; CTQ-SF: Childhood Trauma Questionnaire-Short Form; CERQ: Cognitive Emotion Regulation Questionnaire; CDI: Children’s Depression Inventory.

Gender differences were tested and significant differences were found in all variables, with girls scoring significantly higher than boys (Table 2). Adolescent girls, compared to adolescent boys, showed higher mean scores in temperament, recall of emotional abuse, self-blame, and depressive symptoms.
Table 2.
Student’s t-test differences between males and females for EATQ-R, CTQ-SF, CERQ and CDI

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negative Emotionality (EATQ-R Short Form)</td>
<td>76.68</td>
<td>15.02</td>
<td>83.35</td>
<td>15.34</td>
<td>-10.25</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Abuse (CTQ-SF)</td>
<td>6.58</td>
<td>2.51</td>
<td>6.95</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>-3.22</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-blame (CERQ)</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>-6.09</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depressive Symptomatology (CDI)</td>
<td>9.24</td>
<td>6.14</td>
<td>12.39</td>
<td>7.85</td>
<td>-10.79</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: EATQ-R = Early Adolescent Temperament Questionnaire-Revised Short Form; CTQ-SF = Childhood Trauma Questionnaire-Short Form; CERQ = Cognitive Emotion Regulation Questionnaire; CDI = Children’s Depression Inventory.

Correlational analyses

Pearson correlation coefficients were performed to explore the association between temperament, memories of emotional abuse, self-blame, and depressive symptomatology (Table 3). Positive and low to moderate correlations were obtained. It was found that negative emotionality is associated with traumatic experiences of emotional abuse, self-blame and depression. Memories of emotional abuse were related to self-blame and depression and finally, self-blame was also correlated with depression.

Table 3.
Pearson correlation coefficients between EATQ-R, CTQ-SF, CERQ and CDI

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Negative Emotionality (EATQ-R Short Form)</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Emotional Abuse (CTQ-SF)</td>
<td>.38**</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Self-blame (CERQ)</td>
<td>.49**</td>
<td>.33**</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Depressive Symptomatology (CDI)</td>
<td>.57**</td>
<td>.47**</td>
<td>.53**</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: EATQ-R = Early Adolescent Temperament Questionnaire-Revised Short Form; CTQ-SF = Childhood Trauma Questionnaire-Short Form; CERQ = Cognitive Emotion Regulation Questionnaire; CDI = Children’s Depression Inventory. **p < .01
Mediation Analysis

To test the indirect effect of negative emotionality on depressive symptomatology through traumatic experiences of emotional abuse and self-blame, serial multiple mediation models were estimated. The effects of the IV on the proposed Ms (paths a1 and a2), the effects of M1 and M2 on the DV partialling out the effect of IV and the other M variable (paths b1 and b2), the direct effect of IV on DV after controlling for M1 and M2 (path c’), and the total effect of IV on DV (path c) are presented in Figure 2. Gender was entered as covariate.

Figure 2. Mediator effect of emotional abuse and self-blame in the relationship between temperament and depressive symptomatology.

***p < .001

The model accounted for 47% of the explained variance in depression. A significant specific indirect effect of negative emotionality on depression through traumatic experiences of emotional abuse and self-blame was found (a1a3b2 = .11, LLCI = .09, ULCI = .13), which means that adolescents who have a tendency to react with negative emotionality to events show more depressive symptoms as a result of experiences of being abused by their family, which in turn are associated with self-blame cognitions. A significant indirect effect was also found concerning to the association of negative emotionality and depression through traumatic experiences of emotional abuse (a2b2 = .05, LLCI = .04, ULCI = .06). The results show that self-blame cognitions mediate the relation between negative emotionality and depression (a1b1 = .01, LLCI = .01, ULCI = .012). Additionally, a significant direct effect of negative emotionality on depression was observed, after partialling out both traumatic experiences of emotional abuse and self-blame (c’ = .15, p < .001). Finally, the mediation showed that being a girl is a risk factor.
Discussion

Adolescence is a developmental period of change, significantly marked by emotional and relational difficulties, in which depression and anxiety play a prominent role (Angold & Rutter, 1992; Cole et al., 2002; Fleming, Offord, & Boyle, 1989; Kashany & Orvaschel, 1990).

The vulnerability felt by adolescents for emotional problems may be related to the variety of physiological, psychological, relational and environmental changes that characterize this transitional period. Adolescence involves the development and strengthening of the self-concept, the accumulation of life experiences and the learning of social problem solving skills (Conway & Haque, 1999; Habermas & Bluck, 2000). Multivariate empirical approaches to the assessment of adolescent psychopathology, including depression in particularly, have shown that aspects of depression are associated with many other problems. Depression stands out among the psychological problems of adolescence, both for its impact on adjustment during the adolescent years and its long-term effects on adult psychological functioning. Individual differences in temperament are potential factors of vulnerability to mood disorders. Despite temperament being a risk factor for general psychopathology, it may function in any of several specific ways having a direct or indirect effect on psychopathology.

Notwithstanding the various empirical and theoretical arguments and studies, in diverse samples (mostly in adults), the exploration and evaluation of certain psychological processes for depression in adolescence remains inadequately studied. Therefore, the present study aimed at investigating the relation between negative emotionality, memories of emotional abuse, self-blame and depressive symptoms. We hypothesized that emotional abuse and self-blame would mediate the relationship between negative emotionality and depression, in a sample of Portuguese adolescents. Consistent with prior research (Courtney et al., 2008; Garnefski & Kraaij, 2006), correlation analyses showed that negative emotionality, emotional abuse experiences with family and self-blame were associated with depression. Thus, adolescents who are more prone to react to events in a negative way (e.g., discomfort, fear, anger, sadness, and low soothability) revealed more memories of being emotionally abused by their family, more self-blame, and more depressive symptoms. These findings are in line with prior research demonstrating that temperamental trait of negative emotionality is positively related with depressive symptoms, increasing the risk for depression, along with the risk for other emotional and behavioral problems (Anthony, Lonigan, Hooe, & Phillips, 2002; Chorpita, 2002; Masi et al., 2003; Phillips, Lonigan, Driscoll, & Hooe, 2002). The literature also suggests that traumatic experiences of emotional abuse constitute risk factor for the development of cognitive styles and depressive symptoms in adolescence (Alloy et al., 2003; Harter, 2012; Klein et al., 2008).

The propensity to experience high levels of negative affect, and concomitantly low levels of positive emotion, map directly onto the dysphoric and anhedonic symptoms of depression (Compas, Connor-Smith, & Jaser, 2004). Moreover, there is also evidence that the effects of temperament on depression may be mediated by other factors, including cognitive and contextual variables. Rudolph et al. (2006) suggested that self-consciousness and self-critical thinking increase during the transition into adolescence, and are related to depression. Individuals who share a specific emotional disposition characterized by harsh self-criticism and self-blame and a negative attributional style may be most susceptible to developing depressive symptoms in adolescence. In addition, the effect of specific parenting behaviors on depression depends on the temperament and gender of the child (Oldehinkel et al., 2006). Children with high negative affectivity may have greater difficulty modulating emotional arousal in an adaptive fashion.

As expected, analyses revealed that girls reported higher values in the variables under study than boys. Thus, girls showed higher levels in negative emotionality, emotional abuse experiences, self-blame and depressive symptoms than boys. These findings corroborate previously empirical results suggesting that girls are more vulnerable to depression, have a tendency to feel discomfort, fear, anger, sadness, and low soothability and are more self-critical (Cunha, M., Matos, M., Faria, D., & Zagalo, S., 2012; Hankin, 2008; Hankin & Abramson, 2002; Lang, Ferdinand, & Verhulst, 2007;
Nevertheless, there remains the question of the role of memories of emotional abuse and self-blame on the relationship between negative emotionality and depressive symptoms. This study tested a mediator model in which we examined whether temperament had impact in depression through their effect upon emotional abuse and self-blame cognitions. Consistent with our prediction, results indicated that the impact of the temperamental tendency to react with negative emotionality in depression is operated through emotional abuse and self-blame (when the gender effect is controlled). It seems that adolescents with negative emotionality present depressive symptoms as a result of higher levels of emotional abuse experiences, which, in turn, are associated with high self-blame cognitions. In other words, to experience emotional abuse (with a critical tone) and to cope with negative affect associated with self-attributions of blame can increase the risk for adolescents with negative emotionality of having depressive symptoms. Finally, being an adolescent girl appears to be a risk factor.

Despite the interesting results in this study, this was a limited exploration of the relationships between temperament, emotional abuse, self-blame and depression, in adolescence. The study is cross-sectional and correlational, so causal conclusions cannot be reached. Methods for the measurement of temperament (and the other variables) also need to be expanded beyond paper-and-pencil inventories. In fact, these findings warrant replication and further testing using more rigorous multi-informant, prospective longitudinal research designs. In this sense, it would have been important the use and application of structured diagnostic interviews to assess current or lifetime history of depressive disorders.

Clinical implications

The study does provide some potential clinical implications. Intervention protocols for adolescents in risk for depression might focus on softening negative self-blame as a strategy of dysfunctional emotional regulation (maintenance factor of depressive humor), and promoting the use of other functional strategies. These findings are consistent with the notion that endorsing a more adaptive strategy, may buffer against the potential long-term negative outcomes associated with emotional abuse. An approach focused on acceptance and compassion (e.g. Compassion Focused Therapy) can be useful to diminish self-blame and depression.

In sum, the results of this study are encouraging and indicate that this is a valuable direction for future research on the emotional life of adolescents and the emergence of depressive symptoms. Understanding the ways in which mediators interact with each other and with depression is crucial to identify causal relationships. This can be done with longitudinal designs. These findings emphasize the importance of early identification of children and adolescents having elevated risk for future depression and promote the development and greater availability of prevention strategies.

References


Matos, A.P., & Pereira, A. R. (2012). Análise de algumas propriedades psicométricas do Questionário de Trauma na Infância (CTQ), em adolescentes portugueses [Analysis of some psychometric properties of the Childhood Trauma Questionnaire (CTQ) in Portuguese adolescents, Unpublished manuscript].


Pre-task Planning Time and EFL Learners’ Written Performance with a Focus on Gender

Morteza Abdi, Islamic Azad University, Iran
Sonya Khoshmod, Payame Noor University, Iran

Abstract

Task planning, over the past decade or so, has witnessed a great deal of consideration among theorists, researchers, and practitioners within task-based language teaching and learning. Accordingly, the current study aims to explore the effect of pre-task planning time and gender on EFL learners’ writing performance in terms of syntactic accuracy and grammatical complexity. A descriptive writing task was assigned to both groups of the study to collect the data. The learners’ written outputs were quantified and measured through a couple of Independent Samples t-Tests as the statistical analyses. The findings revealed statistically significant differences in the written performance of both male and female groups with respect to planned and unplanned conditions. The results of the study suggested some rewarding pedagogical implications in terms of task planning and individual differences for the researchers, materials developers, and language educators within SLA and EFL contexts.

Keywords: pre-task planning, gender, accuracy, complexity, task, descriptive writing

Introduction

Since the introduction of Task-based Language Teaching (TBLT) as a communicative movement into the field, a number of novel concepts have been proposed to facilitate the essential processes in Second Language Acquisition (SLA). One of the popular notions among the other factors has been the planning task prior or during a specific task performance. Pre-task planning time (PTP), particularly, has preoccupied the minds of a number of researchers (e.g., Ellis, 2003; 2005; Ellis & Yuan, 2004; Tavakoli & Skehan, 2005; Yuan & Ellis, 2003) and educators in the field. The underlying rationale is that human mind is limited in its processing of linguistic information; therefore second language (L2) learners should be provided with opportunities to overcome the limited attentional resources (Skehan, 1998; VanPatten, 2002). Furthermore, it is assumed that L2 learners’ limited capacity of attention compels them to make choices. That is, learners tend to prioritize one aspect of language production, such as accuracy, over another, such as complexity or fluency (Foster & Skehan, 1999; Skehan, 1998). PTP time, therefore, was proposed as a solution to compensate for the limited attentional resources.

Planning and its types

Ellis (2005) in his seminal work on planning discusses two principle types of planning: PTP and within-task planning. While the former is further divided into rehearsal and strategic planning, the latter is categorized into pressured and unpressured. Furthermore, both pre-task and within-task planning can be classified as unguided planning (learners receive no more instruction on what and how of planning a task) and guided planning (learners can be given specific recommendations on what and how to plan). Eventually, the guided planning is further divided into detailed or undetailed planning.
Planning, accuracy, fluency, and complexity

Quite a number of attempts (e.g., Foster, 2001; Iwashita, Elder, and McNamara, 2001; Kawauchi, 2005; Sangarun, 2001) have been exercised into the role and impact of planning on the three dimensions of L2 learners’ oral and written performance. The studies, however, demonstrate mixed findings as to the positive effects of planning on the three dimensions of accuracy, fluency, and complexity. Ellis (2004) argues that these mixed findings are due to learners’ difference in their proficiency level, different task types and particular grammatical features used in the studies.

Literature review

With the advent of TBLT, the field of language learning and teaching has experienced a lot of theoretical contributions. Accordingly, the enthusiastic researchers have made a wide range of attempts to explore the potential insights that TBLT can provide them for a better understanding of the processes that L2 learners follow in learning a given language. To repeat, PTP has witnessed great attention from SLA researchers. The conducted studies have primarily concentrated their focus on either oral (e.g., Abdi, Eslami & Zahedi, 2012; Birjandi & Alipour, 2010; Shafaei, Salimi & Talebi, 2013) or written performances (e.g., Alavi & Ashari Tabar, 2012; Bagheridoust & Fakoor, 2013; Meraji, 2011; Rahimpour & Safarie, 2011) of L2 learners with respect to the related dimensions of language production when provided with planning time. In addition, the studies have examined the effect of planning time with respect to various task types (e.g., Asgarikia, 2014; Ashari Tabar & Alavi, 2013) in foreign language learners’ (EFL) written and oral performances.

The reported studies lend support to the effectiveness of different types of planning time in L2 and EFL settings. Although the impact and role of planning times and conditions have been thoroughly explored and discussed in relation to a wide range of factors, little attempt has been made to investigate its impact and contributing features with respect to individual differences, such as gender. Since planning time can serve differently and probably contradictory between EFL male and female learners, its exploration can promise fruitful findings in the field. Therefore, the current study was designed to answer the following research questions.

Research questions

R.Q. 1. Does PTP time influence the syntactic accuracy of EFL male and female learners’ written outputs?

R.Q. 2. Does PTP time influence the grammatical complexity of EFL male and female learners’ written outputs?

R.Q. 3. Are there any significant differences between male and female learners’ writing performances in terms of syntactic accuracy and complexity in planning condition?
Methodology

Participants

Sixty upper-intermediate learners of English language from an Iranian language institute in Tabriz participated in our study. The participants were equally divided into either male or female group who had been selected based on their performance on a proficiency test. The passing score was 70 out of 100. They ranged between 18-26 with the Turkish and Persian as their native languages. The participants were attending the evening conversation courses two sessions a week and did not have any particular exposure to English language outside the classroom.

Instruments

Three major instruments were utilized in our study to operationalize the intended purposes. That is, we employed the following data collection techniques which are explicated below:

Proficiency test

This study was conducted with 60 EFL learners chosen from among 100 learners based on their proficiency scores. The proficiency test PET (Cambridge Preliminary English Test) was administered to make sure as to the homogeneity of the two groups in terms of their level of proficiency. The test included two parts, namely, a reading-writing part and a listening part.

Essay composition

The participants of the study were required to compose two descriptive essays on two different assigned topics. That is, for their first essay, both male and female groups were required to compose a descriptive essay of 200 words length within 20 minutes. Immediately after the introduction to the task and topic, the participants composed a descriptive essay without any planning time prior to composition. The assigned topic was: describe one of the places that you have visited recently.

For the second essay, however, another descriptive topic was assigned to both groups of the study. They were required to compose an essay of the same length within 20 minutes but were provided with ten minutes of planning time to plan for a descriptive topic prior to the composition. The participants were asked to describe the trip they had taken with their family or friends.

Procedure

Our study was conducted with 60 EFL learners of English who sat for the PET exam one week prior to the composition of essays. To achieve the intended purposes, attempts were made to compare the effects of pre-task planning between the male and female groups as well as its impact in planning and no-planning conditions. For this to happen, the participants sat for two different sessions during which they composed two descriptive essays within the standards established. For the first essay, the two groups were provided with no planning time while they composed their second essay under planning condition with ten minutes of time available for planning. Following the data collection, the composed essays were quantified and then submitted to statistical analyses. A couple of Independent Samples t-tests were run to reveal the potential differences between the two groups of the study with respect to the syntactic accuracy and complexity of their written outputs.

Variables measurement

Collecting the data, the two groups’ written compositions were coded for T-units. A T-unit, according to Ramirez (2000), is an independent clause along with all subordinate clauses attached to or embedded in it. The written essays were compared and measured according to the syntactic accuracy.
and grammatical complexity. The measurement of each dimension of writing performance is explicated below:

Syntactic accuracy (SA): Wolfe-Quintero, Inagaki & Kim (1998) define accuracy as the degree of divergence from a particular norm which can be conceived of as errors. Following them, we counted the number of errors and then we divided the number of errors to the number of T-units. However, errors of punctuation, capitalization, lexical choice, and spelling of any type were excluded unless they impeded the intended meaning. In this measure, therefore, the lower the number, the higher the accuracy would be.

Grammatical complexity (GC): To measure the complexity of learners' writing performance, the number of dependent clauses per T-unit was used in this study (Wolfe-Quintero, et al., 1998). To calculate this, the number of embedded clauses was initially counted, and then the total number of all embedded clauses was divided to the number of T-units.

Data analysis and results

PTP time and SA

The first research question sought to investigate if PTP time influences the SA of EFL male and female learners’ written outputs. Independent Samples t-tests were run to compare the existing differences.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics and Independent Samples t-tests for the SA – Male and Female Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups / Conditions</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std.</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df.</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male Unplanned</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>0.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male Planned</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Unplanned</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Planned</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As illustrated by Table 1, the mean scores for the Male group are 0.42 and 0.39 in the unplanned and planned conditions respectively. With respect to accuracy dimension of written performance, the lower the score, the higher the accuracy. Although the male group performed accurately in the planned condition, their written performance did not differ significantly in comparison with their performance in the unplanned condition (p= 0.52).

For the female group, the mean scores in the unplanned and planned conditions are 0.60 and 0.49 respectively. That is to say, the female group was more accurate in the planned condition and the statistical difference between the two conditions of planning was significant (p= 0.00).
PTP time and GC

The second research question addressed whether PTP time influences the GC of EFL male and female learners’ written outputs. Another Independent Samples t-test was run to gain insight into the effectiveness of PTP time between the two groups. Table 2 indicates the results.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics and Independent Samples t-tests for the GA – Male and Female Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups / Conditions</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std.</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df.</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male Unplanned</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>-2.42</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planned</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Unplanned</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>-0.94</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>0.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planned</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The mean scores for the male group are 0.52 for the unplanned and 0.61 for the planned conditions. For the complexity, the higher the score, the higher the complexity. Therefore, the male participants were more complex in their writing performance in the planned condition. In addition, their written output differed significantly in comparison with their performance in the unplanned condition (p=0.01).

Similarly, the participants in the female group were more complex in the planned condition (mean score= 0.55) rather than in the unplanned condition (mean score= 0.51). Their written performance, however, did differ significantly in the two conditions (p= 0.34).

PTP time, gender, SA and GC

With respect to the third research question, an attempt was made to realize whether there are any significant differences between male and female learners’ writing performances in terms of SA and GC in the planning condition. Table 3 illustrates the obtained findings for the impact of PTP between the groups of the study in terms of SA and GC.

Table 3: One-Way ANOVA for the SA, GC, and Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df.</th>
<th>Mean Squares</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accuracy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>0.129</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.129</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>1.601</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1.730</td>
<td>59</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complexity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.054</td>
<td>0.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>1.680</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>0.029</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1.734</td>
<td>59</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown by the results of ANOVA, the two groups of the study differed significantly with respect to SA (p=0.03) while there was no statistical significant difference in terms of GC (p= 0.17). That is to
say. The male and female groups displayed significantly different performances with respect to SA but not for GC as a result of the PTP time. Therefore, the two groups of the study performed significantly different only in terms of SA in the planning condition.

**Discussion and conclusion**

The present study sought to explore the role and impact of PTP time on EFL upper-intermediate learners’ written output in terms of SA and GC with a central focus between male and female learners. It was assumed that L2 learners possess limited capacities of attention and hence they make choices when attending to two simultaneous aspects of language. That is, they often tend to pay attention to meaning rather than form when performing a task. To trade-off this, planning time was proposed to compensate for their limited attentional resources.

Employing a range of measures, our study revealed remarkable findings with respect to the SA and GC of male and female learners in their written output. The first research question addressed the impact of PTP time on the SA of male and female learners in the planning conditions. The results suggest that when both male and female learners are provided with the PTP time prior to the task performance, they tend to perform more accurately rather than in no-planning condition. While the difference between the no-planning and planning conditions was statistically significant for the female group, the male group did not manifest a significantly different performance when given planning time. This can be explained in terms of the individual differences that EFL learners bring with them to the learning settings and hence this leads to a different performance in their written outputs. The EFL female learners tend to be more accurate than their male counterparts in the planning condition.

The second research question investigated the GC of participants in the planning condition. The findings, as with SA, revealed that both male and female learners displayed a more complex performance in the planning conditions when compared with the no-planning performances. Unlike SA, GC was higher in the male group and the difference was statistically significant. It can be suggested that EFL female learners’ performance is less complex in the planning condition.

In addition to the within-group differences, one-way ANOVA was conducted to realize whether the PTP can have a significant effect between the SA and GC of both male and female learners. The results suggested that the two groups of the study performed significantly different with respect to SA in the planning conditions. The findings, however, did not reveal any significant difference in terms of the GC between the two groups.

In a nutshell, PTP does have a positive effect on the two dimensions of SA and GC when EFL learners are provided with it prior to their task performance. The facilitative role of PTP, however, tends to be different for male and female learners in the writing process. Male learners perform less accurately than female learners, but they tend to write a more complex essay than female ones in the planning conditions. This can be explained in terms of individual differences which learners bring to the educational settings and the essential attention which researchers and educators should pay when theorizing and designing tasks for productive skills.

**References**


Ellis, R. (Eds.). (2005), Planning and Task Performance in a Second Language (pp. 3-34). Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company


Students' Perceptions on the Effectiveness of Using Edmodo in EFL Classes

Houda Salim Al-Ruheili, Sohar College of Applied Sciences, Sultanate of Oman
Asiya Abdallah Al-Saidi, Sohar College of Applied Sciences, Sultanate of Oman

Abstract

Nowadays, many social learning environments and educational tools are available on the internet for free for both teachers and students. Edmodo is one of them; it is being used widely by many higher education institutions around the world. However, there is still a limited research on its effectiveness on enhancing students' learning experiences in the Sultanate of Oman. Thus, this research paper focuses on our experience of using Edmodo with students at Sohar College of Applied Sciences (CAS-Sohar). It aims at exploring their perceptions on the usefulness and the challenges of integrating Edmodo into English classes. A questionnaire was conducted with 50 foundation year students, and the findings in general revealed very positive results. Using Edmodo has raised their motivation level to participate and engage in different types of activities inside and outside the classrooms. Not only that, but also it has empowered them to be autonomous and to take more responsibility of their own learning. This research paper is an attempt to open the door for further research on this area within the Omani context.

Keywords: Edmodo, perceptions, usefulness, challenges, EFL

Introduction

The 21st century education exceeded the classroom boundaries; with the emergence of the World-Wide Web, many social learning environments and educational tools has existed online and has become of easy access to both teachers and their students. Integrating one of these tools into everyday teaching and learning has become a requirement of this century education. Among many of them, Edmodo has been ranked as one of the top learning tools by five hundred plus professionals from 48 countries around the world (Enriquez, 2014). It is being used on a daily basis by more than fifty million teachers and students around the world (Edmodo Website, 2015). Recent studies in different educational contexts have proven its effectiveness as an aid to complement face-to-face classroom interactions (Al-Saïd, 2015; Al-Kathiri, 2015; Enriquez, 2014). Nevertheless, in the Omani context, Edmodo is little known, and is not widely used at higher educational institutions to effectively assist everyday class teaching. Therefore, this study aims at reporting students' perceptions on utilizing Edmodo as a complement to English as a foreign language (EFL) classes at Sohar College of Applied Sciences.

Background to the context

Sohar College of Applied Sciences (CAS-Sohar) is one of the six colleges under the umbrella of the Ministry of Higher Education in Oman; it grants Bachelor degrees in Engineering and Information Technology (Ministry of Higher Education, 2014). Students at CAS Colleges have to study English language courses as part of their foundation year. They also take English for Specific Purposes (ESP) courses during their first and second year of study at the colleges. In 2006, The Ministry of Higher Education has purchased an E-learning platform named Blackboard (Bb). Since then, all faculty members and students at CAS colleges are encouraged to utilize its e-tools to pursue the current trend of integrating technology into teaching (Al-Naabi, & Gattoufi, 2007). With the rapid growth and popularity of social learning environments and educational tools, teachers at CAS colleges continuously attempt to integrate technology to enhance their everyday teaching practices.

© Copyright by Author(s)
Literature review

This section highlights some research findings of the benefits of integrating technology into EFL classes. Then, it introduces Edmodo as an effective educational tool to enhance students’ learning processes. Next, it draws on the literature on the advantages and the challenges of using Edmodo as a complement to traditional EFL classes.

Integrating technology into EFL

Technology has become a constructive tool that plays a substantial role in enhancing the educational practices of teachers and their students. It has crossed the traditional classroom walls to virtually involve students in various tasks and interactions within digital communities. This part of the literature draws briefly on course management systems (CMS), social networks and mobile applications as they are among the most popular and commonly used technological tools in the field of education.

To begin with, a course management system (CMS) is a framework with a set of tools which allows the creation of online courses (Meerts, 2003). Usually, higher education institutions tend to adopt a course management system to complement and support traditional teaching. To illustrate, Blackboard (Bb) is adopted at Colleges of Applied Sciences; it has several features and e-learning tasks including uploading course materials and assignments, assessments, announcements, quizzes, surveys, grade books, attendance, and a build-in plagiarism checker called SafeAssign (Gattoufi, 2011). The literature in this area has proved that the successful implementation of CMS has a positive impact on EFL courses in terms of gradually shifting students to a more student-centered learning involvement (Robertson, 2008).

Secondly, social networking is a service that enables users to interact with each other, share information and construct an active continuous virtual community through the creation of system profiles and online groups (Brooke, 2013). According to Al-Mukhaini, Al-Qayoudhi, and Al-Badi (2014), if you are not involved in social networking, then you are not alive. It is believed that the idea of utilizing social networking within educational contexts can be traced to Siemens (2004) and Downes’ (2007) Connectivism Theory where social learning is integrated with social media technologies (Al-Kathiri, 2015). This means learning and constructing knowledge occur by engaging in social interactions and discussions. By considering the research literature on this area, a substantial number of studies exploring the effective role of using social networking on empowering EFL learning have shown positive results including enhancing students’ knowledge construction, participation, motivation, and autonomous learning (Al – Mukhaini, Al - Qayoudhi & Al – Badi, 2014; Brooke, 2013).

Thirdly, mobile learning (m-learning) is a recent learning technology that permits the use of mobile devices such as smart phones, PADs and handheld computers for educational purposes (Al-Said, 2015). These devices provide ongoing, informal, spontaneous learning opportunities (Kukulska-Hulme et al, 2011). In this regard, a number of studies have affirmed the beneficial role of M-learning to enhance students’ learning experiences (Kukulska-Hulme and Traxler, 2005, Mehdipour and Zerehkafi, 2013).

Edmodo and its features

Among many available technological educational tools, Edmodo has recently become very popular; it is a private micro-blogging service available at www.edmodo.com which provides a free and secure learning platform (The Edmodo Teacher Guide, n.d). In other words, it is a social media platform often described as a Facebook for education (Enriquez, 2014). It looks similar to Facebook, but is much more private and safer for a learning environment in terms of allowing only teachers to create and manage accounts, and only their students, who receive a group code and register in the group, can
access and join the group (Majid, 2011). This service is accessible through an application on any mobile devices with internet capabilities. Via Edmodo, teachers can send out quizzes and assignments, give feedback, receive complete assignments, assign grades, store and share content, maintain a class calendar, conduct polls and send alters to individual students or to the entire class (The Edmodo Teacher Guide, n.d). Not only that, but it also offers parent accounts through which parents can obviously follow their students’ progressed (Majid, 2011). Considering all its features, Edmodo, if adopted successfully, is a great complement to traditional face-to-face classroom teaching because it seems to be a three-in-one application; it combines all the features of course management systems (CMS), social networks and mobile learning.

**Students’ perceptions of using Edmodo in EFL classes**

Since Edmodo has been recently implemented as a supplementary tool in EFL classes within various educational contexts, a number of studies have examined its effectiveness from students’ point of view. They all have reported positive results (Al-Khathiri, 2011; Al-Said, 2015; Enriquez, 2014; Majid, 2011; Thongmak, 2013).

Al-Khathiri (2015) conducted an experimental study with 42 Saudi EFL female students. They were divided into two groups; the experimental group had Edmodo as a complementary tool to their English classes for a period of six weeks. In contrast, the control group had traditional teaching only. Her findings, drawn from two questionnaires, revealed that using Edmodo has remarkably raised students’ motivation level towards learning English. “The chat features of Edmodo allow students to broaden both the type and the amount of their communication offering them opportunities to increase their confidence and motivation” (P.198). Not only this, but also using Edmodo has fostered autonomous and self-directed learning as students receive instant comments and reviews on their posts which assists them in constructing new knowledge (Al-Khathiri, 2015). Within the same context, Al-Said (2015) supported her findings by indicating that Edmodo as a mobile phone application contributed in increasing effective communication and engagement between the students and their teacher at the right time. These findings were driven from a questionnaire completed by 27 university students who experienced using Edmodo application during a whole semester. Likewise, a big scale study affirmed a considerable number of benefits of using Edmodo in EFL classes (Enriquez, 2014). He explored the perceptions of 200 students through a distributed questionnaire plus focus group interviews with 35 students. The findings significantly revealed that Edmodo is viewed as an effective social media application that can “improve their (students) learning through an active participation in online discussions and tasks” (Enriquez, 2014, p. 5). In addition, he highlighted that being able to constantly access the course materials as well as to contact the teacher are among the main perceived advantages. Thongmak (2013) and Majid’s (2011) studies echoed the same positive results.

Despite the above mentioned advantages, implementing Edmodo, as any other technological tools, encounters some challenges. One of these challenges is low internet speed and internet connection problems as highlighted by Al-Khathiri (2015) and Enriquez (2014). Another challenge of using Edmodo as a mobile application is the small-sized screen of the phones which makes it difficult for students to view all the course materials on the phone (Al-Khathiri, 2015). This finding supports earlier claims on considering the small-sized screen as a barrier to implement mobile learning (Addison, 2011; Saleem, 2011). However, Al-Said’s (2015) findings contradict with this claim as the participants of his study do not view the small-sized screen as a barrier.
Significance of the study

As Blackboard has been implemented at Colleges of Applied Sciences in the Sultanate of Oman, teachers conducted studies to evaluate its effectiveness in enhancing teaching and learning processes. Gattoufi (2011) conducted a study within CAS-Sohar context examining its effectiveness. He asserted its efficient use for both teachers and students especially when it comes to sharing course materials and uploading assignments. However, his case study highlighted two main drawbacks of using Blackboard as a course management system (CMS). Firstly, Bb is not available all the time as losing connections with the main server frequently occurs. Secondly, it has management restrictions as only administrators at the Ministry of Higher education can add new courses to the system. Subsequent to Gattoufi (2011), Al-Bulushi and Al-Shehhi (2015) conducted another study investigating the real practices of using Blackboard by CAS-Sohar teachers. It revealed that Blackboard has a positive impact on enhancing teaching quality in general. “Although the faculty members (teachers) have emphasized that Blackboard has a positive impact on enhancing teaching quality, most of them have stated that not using the Blackboard will not affect the educational process” as they can find other alternatives when Blackboard is not available (Bulushi & Al-Shehhi, 2015, p.8). Thus, to overcome the weaknesses of using Blackboard and to contribute in providing other alternatives to effectively integrate technology into teaching at CAS-Sohar, we implemented Edmodo during a fourteen week semester to supplement English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classes.

Research questions

The current study aims at exploring the perceptions of CAS-Sohar students on the effectiveness of using Edmodo in EFL classes. Specifically, it seeks to answer the following two research questions:

1. What are the advantages of using Edmodo as a supplementary tool for EFL classes?
2. What are the challenges of using Edmodo as a supplementary tool for EFL classes?

Methodology

Participants

The participants of this study were foundation year students at CAS-Sohar. They were all Omani aged between 18-20 years old. The sample included 50 students from three different EFL classes enrolled during the academic year 2014/15.

Research methods

A questionnaire was distributed to 50 students to gather the required data. It has four sections (see Appendix 1). The first section explores the students’ basic bio-data including the age and the gender, while the second part is a five-point Likert Scale. It has 12 statements aiming at investigating students’ perceptions toward the advantages and the challenges of using Edmodo. To support the quantitative data collected from section 2, section 3 gives students space to add more perceived advantages and challenges. Finally, the last section asks students to give a summative evaluation of the effectiveness of using Edmodo in EFL classes within a scale out of 10.

Procedures

At the beginning of the semester, we created three Edmodo groups for our EFL foundation classes at CAS-Sohar. Then, we introduced Edmodo to our students and asked them to download the free Edmodo application on their mobile phones. They signed up by using the group code given by the teacher. They experienced using Edmodo on a daily basis in terms of viewing course materials and announcements, involving in classroom activities, having online discussions, contrasting knowledge,
and being constantly in contact with the teacher and their peers. At the end of the semester, they were given a questionnaire to explore their perceptions on the effectiveness of using Edmodo.

Findings and discussion

This section presents the findings and the discussion of the current study. The data drawn from the closed-questions of the questionnaire were analyzed by using an Excel spreadsheet. Then, the analysis of the data was categorised into main themes which were driven based on the research questions and the reviewed literature. The first section shows the general students’ perceptions on viewing Edmodo as a useful and effective application used in EFL classes. The second section sheds light on the students’ perceived advantages of integrating Edmodo in EFL classes. The challenges of using Edmodo as a complement tool to traditional EFL classes, as viewed by students, are presented in the third section.

Perceptions of students toward using Edmodo in EFL classes

Figure 1 below illustrates the students’ beliefs on the usefulness of Edmodo application to improve students’ learning. It can be obviously seen that the majority of them (N: 40) agree and strongly agree that “Edmodo is a useful application that improves students’ learning”, while only one student disagrees with this notion. Similarly, the highest number of students gave 8 out of 10 as a rate for the effectiveness of using Edmodo in EFL classes as shown in Figure 2 below. In particular, noticeable percentages of the students believe that Edmodo can be effective both during the class time as well as outside the class according to the results driven from statements 8 (36%) and 9 (44%).

These findings generally reveal that the students hold positive perceptions toward the usefulness and the effectiveness of using Edmodo in EFL classes to enhance their learning practices. These positive perceptions of students build on what has been discovered by Al-Khathiri (2015), AlSaid (2015), Enriquez (2014), Majid (2011), and Thongmak (2013) about the effectiveness of using Edmodo.
Advantages of using Edmodo in EFL classes

Table 1: The advantages of using Edmodo in EFL classes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q. Statements</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 Using Edmodo enhances my learning motivation.</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Edmodo allows me to easily interact/participate with my classmates and teacher.</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Edmodo allows me to easily access the reference materials on the course provided by the teacher.</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 I find it effective to use the direct messages on Edmodo to ask my teacher for assistance in my studying. Edmodo creates a friendly learning atmosphere between the group members.</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above table shows the results of five questionnaire items which are related to the advantages of using Edmodo in EFL classes. Generally, the majority of students believe on the power of Edmodo in motivating them to learn English and engaging them to participate, scoring 61% and 72% respectively. This is due to the features of Edmodo such as the online discussions and chatting that can create a friendly stress-free learning atmosphere. Particularly, most students do not feel afraid of making mistakes within Edmodo group tasks as they feel that all the members are as a unity constructing a sharing knowledge. In this respect, it can be said that Edmodo is an appropriate environment for shy students, in particular, to express and share their interests. Moreover, students find Edmodo as a factor that could build and strengthen the relationships between the Edmodo group members including the teacher. All of these findings support the Connectivism Theory which affirms the role of belonging to a digital community in motivating and engaging students (Siemens, 2004; Downes, 2007).

In addition, students agree that integrating Edmodo gives them an easy access to the course materials at anytime and anywhere (42%). Not only having access to the course materials but also constantly contacting their teacher by sending direct messages via the application can assists them in their learning processes (50%). What can be drawn from these results is that Edmodo can play a significant role in encouraging students to take more responsibilities for their own learning and to be
autonomous learners. The students’ autonomous learning can be achieved through the continuous exposure to vivid interactions and intensive connection within the Edmodo virtual environment at anytime and anywhere. More importantly, most students nowadays are fascinated of using social networking applications, and they constantly and independently access and participate on them via their own mobile device.

All the above mentioned findings correlate with the findings of some recent studies conducted by Al-Khathiri (2015), and Enriquez (2014) as shown earlier in the literature part.

**Challenges of using Edmodo in EFL classes**

![Figure 3: Challenges of using Edmodo in EFL classes](image)

Figure 3 above shows that statement 11 of the questionnaire “Facing internet connection problems while using Edmodo is one of its implementation challenges” score 68% of both students’ agreement and strong agreement. This means that the internet connection obstacles are considered as one of the main challenges of using Edmodo. This can be due to the fact that there is no available college Wi-Fi for students; instead they have to use their own network data on their mobile phones. Based on these findings, the low speed internet and connection problems tend to be one of the major challenges of using Edmodo among students at CAS-Sohar. This supports earlier results found by Al-Khathiri (2015) and Enriquez (2014) as they conclude that internet connection problems are viewed as a main challenge of using Edmodo because some students could be left behind on the activities posted on Edmodo.

On the contrary, Figure 4 below illustrates that handling the small-sized screen of the phone while using Edmodo does not seem to be a considerable barrier for students because only 6% of them agree and strongly agree with statement 12 in the questionnaire which is “The small-sized screen causes me difficulty while using Edmodo”. In contrast, 44% of them disagree with it, whereas, 42% of the students express neutral view regarding this concept. These figures make it clear that a considerable percentage of the students do not perceive the small-sized screen as a barrier of using Edmodo. In other words the small size of the phone screen does not negatively affect learning. An earlier researcher (AlSaid, 2015) has already affirmed the similar findings. This is despite of the claim of other researchers (Addison, 2011; Al-Khathiri, 2015; Saleem, 2011) who indicated that the small-sized screen can be as a challenge of using mobile learning.
Another barrier of using Edmodo has been drawn from the data gathered from the open-ended question in section 3 of the questionnaire. This barrier is facing a difficulty in understanding and following the procedure of Edmodo, specifically on how to send private messages to the teacher. Nonetheless, this was only encountered by a few students. In this regard, parallel findings have been discovered by Enriquez (2014) conforming that following the Edmodo procedures can be a challenge for some the students.

Conclusion

In brief, this research paper has explored students’ perceptions on the usefulness and the challenges of using Edmodo in EFL classes at Sohar College of Applied Sciences. Generally, the findings of the study are highly positive and they stress out that Edmodo has effectively enhanced and enriched students’ learning experiences. It has raised their motivation level to participate and to engage in different types of activities inside and outside the classrooms. More importantly, it has assisted them to be independent and to be responsible of their own learning. It is worth mentioning that facing network connection problems was one of the main challenges of implementing Edmodo as a complement to traditional EFL classes. Therefore, it is recommended that free Wi-Fi service at the college campus should be provided to all students. In respect to the study limitations, not all the features of Edmodo have been utilized while implementing Edmodo. For instance, assignments and grades tools were not used because students have to submit their assignments through Blackboard. Lastly, one limited study is not enough, and more studies should be conducted examining all features of Edmodo within the Omani context. This will lead to establish valuable literature on this area so that collaborative improvement actions can take place when utilizing Edmodo by its stakeholders to purposefully achieve its educational targets.

References


Appendix: 1

Questionnaire

Recently, Edmodo application has been used in different teaching contexts. Obtaining feedback from students is vital to improve its implementation. Therefore, we are conducting a study on the “students’ perceptions on the effectiveness of using Edmodo in EFL classes”. Let your voice be heard. We would appreciate your taking the time to complete the following questionnaire. Your responses are voluntary and will be confidential. Responses will not be identified by individual. All responses will be compiled together and analyzed as a group.
Section 1: Put √ in the correct box below

1. What is your gender? (Please tick one box only)
   □□Male □□Female
2. I am ………………….years old.

Section 2: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Edmodo is a useful application that improves students’ learning.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Using Edmodo enhances my learning motivation.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Edmodo allows me to easily interact/participate with my classmates and teacher in group tasks and other course activities.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Edmodo allows me to easily access the reference materials on the course provided by the teacher.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I find it effective to use the direct messages on Edmodo to ask my teacher for assistance in my studying.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Edmodo creates a friendly learning atmosphere between the group members.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>I feel afraid of making language mistakes in group discussion tasks.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Edmodo is effective during class time.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Using Edmodo outside the class time is effective.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Using Edmodo is boring.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Facing internet connection problems while using Edmodo is one of its implementation challenges.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>The small-sized screen causes me difficulty while using Edmodo.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Section 3: What are other advantages and challenges of using Edmodo in EFL classes?

(Advantages): ……………………………………………………………………………………………
(Challenges): ……………………………………………………………………………………………

Section 4: How would you rate the effectiveness of this application out of 10?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Conceptual Framework of Integrated Sustainable Homestay in Malaysia

Aziz Amin, Universiti Sultan Zainal Mohd Abidin, Malaysia
Yahaya Ibrahim, Universiti Sultan Zainal Mohd Abidin, Malaysia
Hawa Husna, Universiti Sultan Zainal Mohd Abidin, Malaysia
Mohd Shaladdin Muda, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, Malaysia

Abstract

A Model of Integrated Rural Tourism plays significant roles to sustain the Community Based Homestay in Malaysia. The Integrated Rural Tourism took account various resources (cultural, social, environment and economy) to integrate into various stakeholders in order to promote Homestay development. Thus, this paper will discuss the concept of Integrated Rural Tourism and Model of Integrated Rural Tourism that will be useful to long term sustainability of Community Based Tourism.

Keywords: integrated rural tourism, homestay, rural tourism, community based tourism

Tourism Industry

The tourism industry is a rapid growing industry and contributes to the economic enhancement as well as development of a country. According to World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), tourism industry is a fundamental contributor towards economy recovery by generation billions of dollars in exports and creating millions jobs. The international tourist arrival reached 1,138 million in 2014 while Asia and the Pacific regions increased in tourist arrival from 13 million to 263 million. For year 2015, UNWTO forecasts international tourist arrivals to grow between 3% and 4% and growth is expected to be stronger in Asia and the Pacific and followed by other regions. Tourism industry development is a high priority agenda for nations and communities everywhere. Thus, it is essentially an economic endeavor which generates social capital as a competitive advantage (Brida et al., 2010).

Yusof et al. (2010) stated that tourism industry was not regarded as an important economic activity in Malaysia up until the 1970s, but recently the tourism sector has ranked second in generating foreign exchange after the oil and gas industry. The World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), declared Malaysia as a destination full of unrealized potential with the main strength as the availability of a vast range of diverse attractions to suit all tastes and relatively affordable prices. As such, Malaysia had increased the tourism promotions, arranged various programs and events, as well as diversified and upgraded the tourism-related facilities. Tourism Malaysia set a national mission to achieve the National Key Economic Areas goal of 36 million tourist arrivals and RM168 billion in tourist receipts by 2020 (Tourism Malaysia, 2014).

In order to encourage tourism expansion and development towards a greater sustainability, Malaysia Government has allocated RM 316 million for tourism industry. The successful initiatives to promote Visit Malaysia 2014 campaign has lead Ministry of Tourism and Culture to designated year 2015 as Malaysia Year of Festival. Thus, it will be great opportunity for Malaysia with multicultural society, historical background and attractions to promote Community Based Tourism especially for homestay programs which offer tourist to interact, gain knowledge, and experience the life style and culture of the host family as well as the local community. In addition, Malaysia's strong positioning as the 10th Most Visited Country in the world in 2012, 2nd Most Visited Country in Asia Pacific and listing by Lonely Planet as one of the top 10 destinations to visit in 2014 are all factors that will increase tourist arrival in year 2015 (Tourism Malaysia, 2014)
Community Based Tourism – Homestay Program

Community Based Tourism can be delineated as a form of tourism `where the local community has substantial control over, and involvement in, its development and management, and a major proportion of the benefits remains within the community (Razzaq et al., 2013). Community based tourism is a form of rural tourism that has increasingly been accepted in most developing countries as a strategy towards poverty reduction (Goodwin, 2006). According to Murphy (1985), the concept of Community Based Tourism has emerged in response to the negative impact of mass tourism that took place during the early stages of tourism development; particularly towards local people. Attributable to the potential of Community Based Tourism towards community development, many rural communities have turned to tourism as a way of diversifying their economy activities (Briedenhann & Wickens, 2004; Mair, 2006). Community-based tourism (CBT) is promoted as a strategy to foster community development in developing countries, as a means of both poverty reduction and community development. CBT is also ‘gaining popularity’ in fostering positive environmental and social impacts (Baktygulov & Raeva, 2010).

Malaysian homestay is a type of community based tourism that employs a somewhat different concept than homestay tourism in other region. Located mostly in rural areas, the homestay is the location where the tourist will reside, have meals and be entertained by the cultural performances and traditional activities of the host and participating villagers (Aminudin and Jamal, 2006). Lynch, McIntosh and Tucker (2009) characterized homestay as the buying and selling of more than “just a bed” where the host would consider hosting as a lifestyle choice. The term “home-stay” refers to utilizing privately owned residential housings in conjunction with local humanities, natural landscapes, environmental resources, as well as agricultural, forestry, fishing, and hunting industries to provide travelers with a place to stay in the country (Chang, Jiang & Lan, 2009).

Integrated Rural Tourism

An integrated approach to rural tourism is increasingly important in line with developments in the tourism sector worldwide. Integrated rural tourism has various interpretations and dimensions according to different situations. In general, Integrated Rural Tourism can be defined as the potential of tourism to preserve the rural environment and as tourism that is explicitly related to the economic, social, cultural, natural and human structures of the environment where it is developed. In practical terms, it refers to tourism that has clear connections to local resources, products and inhabitants (Jenkins & Oliver, 2001; Oliver & Jenkins, 2003; Saxena et al., 2007). Its main objective is to promote environmental, economic, and socio cultural sustainability in tourism and to empower local people, given that the decision and action power stems from the inhabitants of the area (Cawley & Gillmor, 2008).

The interdependence of components in Integrated Rural Tourism is multi-dimensional, intended to promote the development of tourism on the strength of local resources – historical, cultural, landscape-based – and the interplay between individual personalities and networks of exchange. Hence, the destination’s specificities are able to compete globally (Saxena & Ilbery, 2010). The framework of Intergrated Rural Tourism has been proposed by scholar to overcome the problems between rural tourism, rurality and tourism (Saxena, 2007).

In changing the trends in tourism demand, the notion of Integrated Rural Tourism is intended to open up practical ways of thinking about improving linkages between tourism and local and regional resources, activities, products and communities (Saxena, Clark, Oliver & Ilbery, 2007). The notion of integration provides a means of thinking about ways of bringing diverse actors, networks and resources together more successfully into networks of cooperation and collaboration (Saxena, 2005). Integrated Rural Tourism concept aim to capture the type of tourism that elevates link with economic, social, cultural, natural and human resources in the localities where rural tourism activities take place. However, the absence of an integrative framework for managing this diversity of stakeholders and structures has been identified as a weakness in developing the rural tourism. (Mitchell & Eagles,
Therefore, developing model of Integrated Rural Tourism will enhance rural tourism that contains various stakeholders such as tour operators, business owner, host community members and agencies.

The proposed Model of Integrated Rural Tourism is adapted from Saxena (2007) in her Model of Integrated Rural Tourism which are constructed by seven different dimensions: networking; scale; endogeneity; sustainability; embeddedness; complementarity; and empowerment. The dimension of networking, embeddedness and empowerment are in relationship to promote local participation in managing cultural and economic resources. This model emphasize that these seven dimension will centralize the role of local actors and communities in rural transformations by highlighting the local needs, benefits and control in rural development. Perhaps, this model will be useful to integrate into local rural settings without compromising the rural characteristics of the environment, communities and ways of living (Saarinen & Lenao, 2014).

Besides that, the conceptual Model of Integrated Rural Tourism is also adopted from (Cawley and Gilmor, 2008) model. They suggest seven features as being characteristic of integration in the domain of rural tourism: an ethos of promoting multidimensional sustainability, the empowerment of local people, endogenous ownership and resource use, complementarity to other economic sector and activities, appropriate scale of development, networking among stakeholder and embeddedness in local system. When dealing with rural tourism development, the real challenges is to balance the various priorities in appropriate way because it involve with various stakeholders. Cawley and Gilmor (2008) emphasized that this model will be useful to be operated to various level of stakeholder in the industry. Effective networking and appropriate local embeddedness will be instrumental to achieve the overall strategy of sustainability.

Source: Saxena (2007)
The purpose of the conceptual framework based on the model Cawley M & Gillmor DA (2007) as modified from the original model by Jengkens T and Olver (2001). This model consists of indicators such as local leadership, government support, organizational culture, branding, environment, socio-economic, organizational capability and community participation.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Cawley and Gilmor (2008), Model of Integrated Rural Tourism.
Conclusion

The objective of the development of the homestay program in the rural areas is to increase the quality of life and to enhance the revenue among the local community. The current issues of the homestay program now is how to sustain the homestay program in the future. Thus the proposed conceptual framework of integrated sustainable homestay based on the previous literature and theoretical which are includes the inclusive variables such as organizational culture, branding, environment, socio economic, organizational capacity, community participation, local leadership and government support will create a new integrated indicators of sustainable homestay program in Malaysia.

References


The Woman Angle: A Feminist Reading of Ngugi’s Matigari

Ade Adejumo, Nigeria

Abstract

This paper is a critical dilation of the role of women within the context of revolutionary actions. Ngugi’s eponymous novel, Matigari provides the literary platform of analytical engagement in which the woman shatters the “myth of weaker vessel” by volunteering to provide the much needed critical spine on which rests the successful execution of the protagonist’s redemptive mission.

Introduction

The prescriptive tendency of the literary socialist realism insists that “Literature must be tendentious, party minded, optimistic and heroic” (Terry Eagleton, 1992:38) defines the compass of committed literature. It is a literary tradition that is openly committed to and placed at the service of the proletariat. This is a literary engagement which questions the glaring injustice inherent in most capitalist socio-economic arrangements where the working masses are callously exploited and their rights trampled upon. This pro-Leninist literary stance is found in the heart of most protest literatures which Terry Eagleton (1992:40) dubs “an openly class-partisan literature.”

Though oppression and exploitation of the masses are gender blind as both men and women are victims of rapacious insensitivity of the bourgeois greed, most revolutionary literatures in their character depiction have placed the men at the centre of the struggles against injustice, while the women are either silent or remain passive at the background quietly chewing the cud of their bitterness against the system. At best, they are only portrayed as lending occasional helping hands to the revolutionary heroes (almost invariably men) to whom the struggle arena supposedly belongs. This macho-centric assumption is aptly described by Obodimma Oha (1999:1) as follows;

Significations of a Geographical area as masculine are based on the presupposition in patriarchal rhetoric that the feminine / maternal is located within the (imagined) territory of the father. Such significations often conduce to the demonstrations of (physical) resistance...

Soungoriously marooned in a landscape chocked with air of patriarchal aristocracy, the woman, irrespective of her heroic credential, is only seen and treated as a sub-hero only conceded to her by the grace of the “super hero” who almost invariably is the man. Such masculine arrogance is under reference when Ajayi T.Ebunolu (2009:216) offers that “Female characters created by male writers in fiction act within the framework of their traditional roles as wife and mother...”

This restrictive tendency inherent in most African cultures is sometimes carried over to fictional African writings where women are portrayed, as heroes in the kitchen rather than being in the forefront of revolutionary actions. It is in the recognition of the need to break this culturally erected barrier of sex-sired restriction imposed on the women that has produced some African writings by male African writers who have deliberately created heroic female figures in their works. Attesting to this, Ajayi (2009:217) offers;

Some male writers... do develop female characters to reflect the functional mainstream of social-political economic relevance in the society.

Our aim in this research is to further explore how this effort is sustained by NgugiWaThiongo in his novel, Matigari. In doing so, we focus on the heroic and daring escapades of Guthera, the most...
important female character, without whose critical interventions, the revolutionary quest of the central character, Matigari, would not have been achieved.

A Synoptic account of the Novel

Matigari is woven around the fictional hero, Matigari, who emerged from the Kenyan struggle for independence. He is cast in a messianic image who, having survived the fierce independence struggle, emerges on the streets of post-independent Kenya in peaceful search of his family. This search brought him face to face with the sad realities of the “new” Kenya where the lots of the ordinary man have taken a nose dive for the worse. Hunger, deprivation and unemployment have become the order of the day. His children and wife symbolized by the scavenging kids and prostituting women have collectively been emiserated beyond all levels of human decency and dignity. In short, the essence of their (i.e the patriots) struggles and vision of a new Kenya have gone unrealized. The new African leaders are now in league with the supposedly displaced colonial masters (the writes) in the exploitative enterprise to which the people have been subjected.

This state of affairs in the post independent Kenya now foists a fresh responsibility on the old man, Matigari ma Njiruungi, to mobilize, once again, the suffering masses of independent Kenya against their new exploiters. The story is propelled by the heroे’s (Matigari’s) search for the “Truth and Justice.” Thus the narrative assumes the character of a journey throughout the country in search for the answer to the critical question of where to find truth and justice. In the course of this, he comes across various spectrum of people who he tries to recruit into the struggle. Unfortunately, virtually all of them could not summon the requisite moral courage to openly join Matigari in this important struggle. The much needed support is provided by a female character-Guthera- a woman, prostitute and orphan with whom he teamed up to execute the struggle. Having won the woman to his side, Matigari realizes the centrality of the women to the struggle at hand, a fact which he summarized as follows:

Indeed, women were the corner-stones of the home. How foolish of me not to have thought of it! I should have started looking for women... women are the ones who uphold the flame of continuity and change in the homestead. (Matigari, p.27)

With this, Ngugi deliberately imbues the woman with the moving spirit of a super hero who not only braves the wicked odds created by the operators of the neo-colonial system, but also openly identifies with Matigari without minding the obvious danger to her life.

In profiling the crucial essence of a hero, a writer offers;

Heroes are people who transform compassion (a personal virtue) into heroic action (a civic virtue) in doing so; they put their best selves forward in service to humanity. A hero is an individual or a network of people that take action on behalf of others in need, or defense of integrity or a moral cause (raproject:2015)

We can conveniently submit that Guthera successfully shatters the “docile-say-yes” image of the woman as a weaker sex lacking completely the revolutionary initiative for a popular struggle. The recognition of the self-immolation and rare audacity of her actions in the novel is the author’s creative acknowledge of the capacity of the women as equal stakeholders in the business of the quest for a revolutionary reclamation of the stolen patrimony of the masses of the African nations. This tallies with RemiAkujobi’s (19….: 94) definition of womanism as referring to “someone who is outrageous, audacious, courageous, willful and responsible.” All these qualities are possessed by our female hero in appreciative quality and quantity.

Our first contact with Guthera in the novel is at the restaurant / bar where Matigari and Muriuki (the boy) had gone to take some refreshments. Here, we are informed that she has been trying to evade some policemen who had been stalking her, apparently for sexual exploitation. This first fleeting
encounter affords us a useful insight into her psychological make-up as a strong-willed individual. Though a conditional prostitute, she, vowed never to have anything to do with the police for the betrayal and tragic violence her family had received in the hand of a police officer in the past. To her though very poor and desperately in need of money, she will never touch money from a police officer, for as she puts it, “…cops’ money stinks of blood… I’d rather beg for a beer even from a total stranger- like that man over there.” (p.28) this resolution led her to the near death encounter with the police from which Matigari saved her. Reminiscent of the swearing an allegiance oath, Guthera in appreciation of Matigari’s Messianic intervention, declares in an apologetic tone;

I don’t know who you are … but I beg you to forgive me for all the things that I said to you earlier on. I will never forget what you have just done for me as long as I live. p. 33 (My emphasis)

For our heroine (Guthera), this is a point of no return, a passionate commitment to the ideal of the struggle and an uncommon loyalty to the essence of redemptive struggle against the police which represent the repressive arm of the neo-colonial Kenya. From this point, the narrative assumes a different dimension as dictated by Guthera’s strategic interventions without which Matigari’s mission would have been tragically aborted. These interventions provide insights into the heroic make-up of this fictional but admirable female figure.

Guthera and the Growth of the Matigarian Myth

The Matigarian myth is akin to the odyssean escapade in Homer’s narrative. King Odysseus in the narrative is presented as a hero who, after his successful exploits in the city state of Troy had to undergo some excruciating experiences in the hands of his adversaries in his bid to find his way back home i.e Ithaca. On his return, he is able to defect his enemies and regain his kingdom and his wife. With these exploits, Odysseus becomes mythologized and is seen in a godlike manner. The Odyssean narrative has a lot of correspondences with Matigari’s experiences in the novel. For example, like Odysseus, Matigari experienced a long stay in the bush away from home. He only returned home after defeating the setter and his collaborators in a war of liberation. On his return, he is seen as a figure from Kenya’s historical past. He is revered and treated with utmost respect. Some even see him in a Christ-like light, to some, he is the resurrected Christ. His person defies concrete description in people’s discussions. To some, he is a dwarf, to others, he is a giant who is imbued with the ability to disappear and appear at will.

One can conveniently argue that without Guthera’s interventions, the Matigarian Myth which eventually emerged from the nationalistic escapades of the hero would not have been possible. For example, when Matigari was thrown into the prison, Guthera broke her life-long vow not to have anything doing with the corps. She had to offer herself to the officer in charge to be able to effect a surreptitious freeing of the old man from the cell. This singular act further enhanced the growth of the Matigarian myth which further enhances the status of the protagonist thus assisting the execution of the struggle. Immediately after being miraculously let out of the cell through Guthera’s clever manipulation, we are informed; “from that night, Matigari’s fame spread over the country. He became a legend. He became a dream.” (p. 66)

Thus, through Guthera’s heroism, Matigari (the protagonist) is transformed into a super human hero who has come back to liberate the people from the yoke of oppression. To some, he is a dwarf who is also capable of instant transformation into a giant. He cannot even be held in detention as he is capable of effecting a mysterious opening of the prison doors. This protean and magical essence in people’s estimate is to further assist Matigari in the successful execution of his mission. The uncommon display of commitment by Guthera thus becomes a propelling force which continues to drive Matigari inspite of the frustrations received from people with whom he comes into contact. The author testifies to this when he allows us a peep into matigari’s mind regarding Guthera’s contribution to the struggle. He offers;
As he recalled how Guthera had given herself as a sacrificial lamb for his salvation, a sharp pain stabbed his heart, and he felt tears sting his eyelids. (p.88)

It is instructive to note that the protagonist, throughout the narrative, does not receive such sacrificial input from any other character inspite of the multiplicity of men with whom Matigari comes into contact.

Guthera’s heroism is further highlighted by the fact that where men, flatly succumb to the crippling fear unleashed on the country by the government, and as a result will not have anything to do with Matigari, this courageous woman’s resolve, remains unbroken. For example, when Matigari visits the teacher is his quest for Justice and Truth, out of fear the teacher (a man), interjects; What? Change? Revolution? Are you one of those radicals who talk about revolution? I think that it’s better that you leave. I don’t want your radicalism to rub off on me. Revolution is leprosy… (p. 91)

On the contrary, while the teacher fears being seen with Matigari, because of the obvious danger such association poses, Guthera follows him about, albeit keeping some strategic distance for her to be able to lend helping hands whenever Matigari runs into trouble. This is attested to by Matigari himself in one of his discussions with Guthera and the boy, Muriuki, where he acknowledges the crucial essence of her assistance to and association with him in the struggle;

...where did that kind of thinking land me? First in prison, then in the mental hospital. If it were not for the two of you, where would I be today? Still in prison, or in a mental hospital. (p.138)

Thus, we have a graphic demonstration of the woman taking up the challenge of not only identifying with the driving spirit of the struggle, she also provides helping hands through daring espionage to lift the protagonist out of trouble. This she does, even when men like the teacher have succumbed to the grip of emasculating fear. Where then lies the superiority claim of men when it comes to popular struggles?

The ability to stick to the principled path of conviction in pursuit of a popular struggle even in the face of threat to one’s life is the central essence in the profile of the hero’s character. Knowing fully that Matigari’s decision to openly confront the oppressive system personified by Robert Williams (the settler) and John Boy junior (the black collaborators) and engage them in armed struggles, might come with tragic consequences, Guthera decides to go with the old man. This, she sums up as follows;

“I will come too… one can die only once, and it is better to die in pursuit of what is right” (p.139).

Thus, we see this inspiring female hero, rather than choose to go back to easy life of prostitution and continuous commodification of her virtue like the others, decides to pay the supreme sacrifice in the struggle for the liberation of her people. She dies with Matigari at the end of the novel, but she succeeds in writing her name on the positive side of history.

In the novel, women are depicted as equal co-carries in the oppressive burden of the sad realities of the contemporary African situation. This is succinctly summarized in Muriuki’s response to Matgari’s interrogative interjection “so women now work in bars” (p.25) she provides a confirmatory elucidation of the situation;

“women work everywhere;... they sweep the factories, cut grain in the fields, pick tea, coffee and pyrethrum and clean all the shine from the smelly drains and gutters.” (p.25)

This paints the image of long suffering and rugged distance runners in the race of survival in hostile environment. It puts to lie, the male-driven theory of women as weaker vessel actively promoted by the phallocentric imagination of masculine arrogance.
The birth of commitment to popular struggle must of necessity follow certain normative patterns. These are what we term the three platforms of being:

- The fool’s paradise/helpless despondency
- The tearing of veil/discovery of self
- The resolution/concrete definition

Guthera, though a prostitute by condition, had been living in the fool’s paradise like many others in her situation, thinking that there is no alternative to the kind of life that the social order has imposed on them. To them, the best is to use their body to get what they need. At this stage, Guthera sees herself as a pleasure provider in exchange for money. This comes out in her first encounter with Matigari where she shamelessly advertises herself to the old man;

Don’t be mean! Aren’t you going to offer me anything to drink? Or how much do you want to pay for a little pleasure? Pleasures are very expensive, you know. But at this time of the month, the prices are usually low. (My emphasis) (p.28.)

The above represents the worst debasement of woman who is treated as a commercial item. The worst aspect of it is that she also sees herself as such. This is the condition of our female hero and all others victims of oppressive misrule which most African nations have been reduced to.

The next stage is that of self-realization leading to the tearing of the veil of despondency. At the nudge of the agent of change, here provided by Matigari, Guthera comes into the full realization of her being. This she sums up as follows;

... I have not been satisfied with the kind of life. I have been leading. You see, my entire life has been dominated by men, be they my father in heaven, my father on earth, the priest, or all the men who have bought my body and turned me into their mattresses. (My emphasis) (p.140.)

Guthera on this sudden realization passes a damning self-judgment when she blurts out; “the life I have been leading is not that of a human being. It has been more like that of an animal.” (p.140)

After the veil tearing experience, the most important question is how do I change the situation and the system that creates and perpetuate it? This is what defines the hero and sets her apart from the passive others. Guthera completes the process by choosing the path of liberation struggle, not for her benefit alone, but those of others in the same basket with her. She nudes other women into consciousness of necessity for action in the face of the daunting challenges to which they are daily exposed. According to her, “there is no woman who does not really know the pressures that we women live under.” (p.140) having come to this realization, what is needed is concrete action. Guthera once again spells out the manifesto for the liberation of the oppressed especially the women. She offers;

Once a person knows, what does she do about it? Or is knowing just good in itself? Is it enough for me just to say that now I know? I want to do something to change whether it is that makes peoples live like animals, especially women... from now on. I want to be among the vanguard.I shall never be left behind again. (p.140)

Conclusion

One central thesis of our argument here is that there is no gene in the biological make-up of the woman that makes her amenable to inhuman condition or unjust situation to make her silent in the face of grueling deprivation. She, just like her male counterpart is naturally endowed with the faulty of revolt against unpleasant condition. Also, there is no masculine gene that automatically qualifies a man for heroic actions.
It is in this light that we hold up Ngugi’s central female hero in Matigari as an exemplary character whose positive activism and heroic escapades as a worthy example for the African women. It is a clarion call by the author on African women to break the myth of the ‘weaker vessel’ and rise to the challenges of nation building in the contemporary African Affairs. Such activism can be replicated in politics, professions, and even at the home front. It is by such unity of sexes against retrogressive forces that will guarantee the birth of new and saner human communities since injustice has no gender; the forces against it must be equally gender-blind.

African writers are also encouraged to follow the footsteps of Ngugi in the creation of more heroic as a platform for women mobilization towards positive actions.

For us, the novel is an affirmation of the fact that he challenges of induced poverty, deprivation and general insecurity which most African nation contend with at the moment is conquerable if we are united in spite of differences in our physiological make-up. Since women and the children are likely to be more affected by the effects of bad governance, they should be ready to rise up and take their destinies in their own hands through direct involvement in popular struggles as exemplified by Guthera in Ngugi’s Matigari. The beauty of the implied thesis of the novel is that war on oppression can be won by active collaboration of men and women not a divisive confrontation between the sexes as demonstrated by Matigari and Guthera.

References


Akujobi, Remi (200…) “Re-evaluating Female Inferiority: The Image of Woman in Habila’s Waiting for an Angel and Agary’s yellow yellow” in Alxorede,Y.O.O. and Asinyanbole, A.A. (eds) Gender Theories and Polemics (A critical source book)


**Alternative Punishments in Criminal Offences: Issues and Challenges in Shariah Courts in Malaysia**

*Jasri Jamal, The National University of Malaysia, Malaysia*
*Hasnizam Hasyim, The National University of Malaysia, Malaysia*
*Nor Aziah Awal, The National University of Malaysia, Malaysia*
*Mohd Azam Sharif, The National University of Malaysia, Malaysia*

**Abstract**

Implementation of alternative punishment other than imprisonment, fines and strokes is not something new in other countries such as United States, United Kingdom, New Zealand, Singapore, Brunei, Japan, the Netherlands and South Africa. In Malaysia, the punishment was introduced in 2007 such as
community services, paroles, bond and detain the offender in shelter. However, the practice of this kinds of alternative punishment in the Shari’ah Court still long debate among shari’ah law scholars in Malaysia. Shari’ah Court in Malaysia under section 2 of the Shari’ah Courts (Criminal Jurisdiction) Act 1965 amended in 1984 only provide power to the Shari’ah Court for sentencing three years in prison or a fine of RM5000 or 6 strokes or a combination of the penalties. Most the shari’ah offender will put into imprisonment and mix around with other detainees. Alternative punishment means the Court has a power to sentence offenders apart from the punishment provided. Among others is replacing the penalty or additional penalty, to commit convicted person to rehabilitation centers and to command for good behavior for young offenders) and first-time offenders in Shari’ah Court. Therefore, the research aims to solve this problems and to develop a module of alternative to shar’iah offenders that(to be) to be implemented a better way in the shari’ah legal system in Malaysia in order to uphold justice and ensure that the sentence to be executed really meets the objectives of the purpose of the shari’ah law.

Key words: alternative punishment, Shari’ah Court, Malaysia

Introduction

Malaysia has two judicial system that pass sentences to the offender which are the Civil Court and the Syariah Court. The Civil Court was established under the jurisdiction of the Federation which applies to all people. It has a very wide jurisdiction that allows the court to pass death sentence. Meanwhile, the Shariah Court was established under the jurisdiction of the State. As an addition to that, it also invested with jurisdiction over persons professing the religion of Islam. Its jurisdiction only covers Islamic family matters and a few Shariah criminal matters as provided in the Shariah Court (Criminal Jurisdiction) Act 1965 amendment 1984 provided that such jurisdiction shall be exercised in respect of any offence punishable with imprisonment for three years, six strokes of whipping and fine of RM5000 or any combination thereof (Ahmad Mohamed Ibrahim, 1997). Both of the Civil Court and Shariah Court have different criminal laws and criminal procedure laws. However, the civil law and shariah law offenders who are sentenced to imprisonment will be kept in the same prison as provided in Item, Ninth Schedule of the Federal Constitution. This will cause new problems due to all civil and shariah offenders will be kept in the same place in spite of the fact that punishments for shariah offender are more to Islamic religion offences. In this writing, we will see how far the efficiency of the punishment of imprisoning the shariah offender does and suggest the alternative punishments for them other than what has been already provided so they will be placed in rehabilitation centres and come back to the society as a better person instead of being placed in the prison.

Purpose and objective

The main purpose of the punishment imposed on the shariah offender is intended as retaliation for their mistakes. A person who has committed an offence shall be sentenced to a fair punishment as equal to the kind of offence that has been committed by them (Ahmad Ibrahim et. al, 1999). This is according to the Quran in verse 38 of surah al-Maidah.

Other than that, it is to deter the offender from doing the same offence in the future. However, the main purpose of punishment is to retaliate, repentance by not committing other offences and obey to the command of Allah and His Messenger. Do these purposes can be achieved if the whole Shariah offender in Malaysia will be imprisoned in the same place as the other heavy offences offender? Or is there any alternative provision for the present and future shariah offenders to recover by other alternative methods?

Alternate punishments of the Shariah Court in Malaysia
Shariah Court was established by Item 1, Ninth Schedule List II- State List of the Malaysian Federal Constitution (Farid Sufian Shuaib, 2008). The punishments relating to the offences which was specified in the Shariah Court Act (Criminal Jurisdiction) 1965 amendment 1984 providing the punishments of fine up to RM 5000, imprisonment of not more than three years and whipping of not exceeding six strokes. Practically, the trend used in the Shariah Court would make fine as the main punishment, it is rarely for imprisonment and whipping to be enforced, and if they were imposed, the offender will appeal so the court would replace them. Fine punishments do not give awareness and consciousness towards the shariah offender. The society are suggesting that the Shariah Court judge to pass imprisonment and whipping as punishments but the judges seems to be reluctant due to the provision stated in the Shariah Criminal Law that starts with fine punishments. As for example, section 14 of the Shariah Criminal Offences (Federal Territories) Act 1997:

Any male person, being baligh, who fails to perform the Friday prayers in a mosque within his kariah for three consecutive weeks without uzur sharie or without any reasonable cause shall be guilty of an offence and shall on conviction be liable to a fine not exceeding one thousand ringgit or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months or to both.

By looking at these issues, it is recommended for shariah offenders to be sentenced to alternative punishments (Jamal Jasri et.al, 2014). Alternative punishment by means of replacing the punishment, as an alternative to the existing punishment provided for certain offences. The alternative punishment will be passed when it is fair to decide that the replacing punishment can be an expedient solution for the said offender.

Imprisonment would surely give a negative impact and affects the life of the offender especially for youthful offenders/teenagers. Therefore, alternative punishment can be more suitable and effective. As there are no shariah prisons, there is a perception among the public that shariah offenders will be mixed with various categories of prisoners in jail. This will cause a negative impact towards shariah offender.

There are two sections in the Shariah Court that mention about optional punishments involving young offenders and first offender as provided by the law. While alternative punishment is given to the Shariah Court to commit the convicted person to an approved rehabilitation centre as stated in the provision below.

Jurisdiction of the Shariah Court regarding rehabilitation order:

i. Replace punishment or extend punishment;

ii. Power of the court to commit convicted person to an approved rehabilitation centre under section 55 of the Shariah Criminal Offences (Federal Territories) Act 197 (Act 559);

iii. Order to be of good behaviour section 128 Shariah Criminal Procedure (Federal Territories) Act 1997 (Act 559)(youthful offender);

iv. Order to be of good behaviour section 129 Act 560 (first offender).

In conclusion, alternative punishments are provided only to the youthful offender ageing 10-16 years old and first offender whereby the alternative punishment (bond of good behaviour) considered as more expedient.

**Implementation of alternative punishments for Shariah Offenders**

Most of the punishments of imprisonment sentenced by the Shariah Court are short in time. The existing period for rehabilitation program for prisoners in jail is not parallel to the imprisonment period sentenced by the Shariah court. For example, is the module of halaqah and community therapy. The period of Modul Pesalah Shariah rehabilitation program that is being developed also time consuming almost two years.

Under section 55, regarding power of the Court to commit convicted person to an approved rehabilitation centre is:
Where the Court has convicted any person of an offence under Part II or under section 7, 8, 9 or 31, such Court may, in lieu of or in addition to any punishment specified for such offence, order any such person to be committed to an approved rehabilitation centre to undergo such counselling or rehabilitation for any period not exceeding six months as may be specified in the order; but where any sentence of imprisonment is imposed together with the counselling or rehabilitation the period thereof shall not in the aggregate exceed three years.

Meanwhile section 56 relating to the power of the Court to commit convicted female offender to an approved home.

Where the Court has convicted any female person of an offence under Part IV, such Court may, in lieu of or in addition to any punishment specified for such offence, order any such person to be committed to an approved home for such period not exceeding six months as may be specified in such order; but where any sentence of imprisonment is imposed together with such committal the period thereof shall not in the aggregate exceed three years.

The provision is limited to moral offences only.

*Alternative module for Shariah crime*

What kind of readjustment modules used in purpose of implementing the alternative sentence these days? Precisely, it is fair enough for the shariah convicts to join relevant modules out of the prison if they have completed certain readjustment modules behind bars. Currently, the Prison Department of Malaysia is promoting special modules for the shariah convicts. There should be distinctions between the moral and faith convicts’ modules. Other factors taken into consideration include age, religion back ground, and education. (Siti Zubaidah, 2015).

*In-prison module*

This module would be managed by current Religion Section or the special unit aligned to it. The operational modus applied is by isolating the shariah and short-term convict. In addition to that, there is no need for the special block for the number of those shariah convicts is not as much as the civils. Meanwhile, the teachers are ones from Malaysia Islamic Development Department (MIDD) and the State Islamic Department (SID).

The suggested improvisation on shariah convict modules are such as those that follow.

1. Faith amendment so one will re-adhere Allah’s law.
2. Lack of religious education as a source of shariah crime.
3. Improvising the recovery program so it meets the demand of target area (shariah convicts).
4. Convicts recovery process should focus more on the faith and moral amendment input.
5. Duration of 7-30 days.

2. Sharing knowledge (5-10 hours)
   a. Man-Allah relationship and the aim of living.
   b. Getting to know the Messengers.
3. Theory and Practical on praying (10-20 hours)
   a. A religion pillar.
   b. The very first deed to be reviewed.
   c. Correcting the prayers.
4. Quran as friend (5-10 hours)
   a. Quran recitation.
b. Lesson on the translation for certain verses. (i.e. al-Taubah)
5. Moral knowledge and interacting with the environment (5-10 hours)
6. The minimum module (7 days)
7. The middle module (14 days)
8. The maximum module (implementation of 30 days)

The suggested modules at Baitul Ehsan are as below;

“The modules are there, it’s just that they are not remarkable enough” (Ustaz Izhar Ismail- Authority)
- The moral convict
- The faith convict
  a) Women specialized
  b) Moral violation

The highest rated case would be the out of wedlock pregnancy and most are sent by the family (willingly).

Location: Sabak Bernam
Baitul Ehsan Fixed Orders 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cases</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cases</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>660</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cases</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total intake of Baitul Ehsan Women’s Shelter, Selangor Islamic Religious Council.

**Conclusion**

The alternative sentence may be an option to Shariah Court in getting those convicts back on track. A comprehensive research is indeed needed in regard to the implementation of alternative sentence for the shariah convicts. Also, it is a need to have numbers of readjustment modules in pair to the wrongdoing categories and parallel to the recovery period decided. The facilities, modules, capacities and the readiness are already prepared by Prime Minister Department. Other things needed are such new inputs and the improvisation of current modules. Once the shariah prison is instituted to Prime Minister Department, it becomes a mainstream and by means of that, it is in the federation. This is much benefited the religion itself for such good governance would skyrocketed uplift the image of Islam.
Proactive Intervention Techniques for Handling Emotional Intelligence during Teaching at Higher Education Levels

Sufiana Khatoon, National University of Modern languages (NUML), Pakistan

Abstract

The purpose of the present paper was to assess the role of teachers’ awareness about importance of emotional intelligence, causes of students’ emotional disorder and intervention techniques for handling emotional intelligence in classroom environment for effective teaching. Effective teaching is associated with positive emotions on behalf of the teacher because teaching itself is an emotional activity. Effective teaching occurs when the teacher has sensitive ability towards understanding and interpreting of inner feelings, emotions and desires of students from indirect signals and communication. Major intervention techniques are understand and interpret students, feelings and emotions, motivate students towards achieving their goals of learning through various motivational techniques despite failure of their efforts, enable students to regulate and use their feelings and emotions and direct them towards achieving their learning targets. The teacher should interpret emotions of students in such a way that if the teacher was in the student place then what he/she was feeling. Teaching learning process does not bring its fruits until and unless there is respectful relationship between the teacher and students and where the teacher understands and recognizes his/her students’ emotions and feelings.

Keywords: emotional intelligence, guidelines, strategies, teachers competence, students, higher education

What is emotional intelligence?

Emotional intelligence (EI=Emotional quotient EQ) is and an ability to recognize, exercise, understand, and manage one’s own and other emotions in positive ways so as to get release stress, communicate well in order to overcome and resolve challenges. Emotional intelligence has an important role in our in different phases of our daily life. Emotional intelligence has more important role to play in our life than intelligence quotient.

According to Daniel Goleman (1998: 317) emotional intelligence is an ability to recognize one’s own and others’ feelings in order to motivate one’s self and be able to manage one’s emotions in order to maintain good relationships.

It was E.L. Thorndike’s concept of social intelligence in 1920 that laid down the foundations of emotional intelligence (EI). Later on in 1990 Peter Salovey and John Mayer introduced the term EI. However, Darwin is considered as the first author who talked about EI. Darwin explained EI as the most adaptable quality. Salovey and Mayer (1990) describe emotional intelligence as a set of four skills that involves the competence of a person to perceive, use, understand and manage one’s own and others’ feelings and emotions, so as to categorize them and to exercise this information to guide one’s own thinking and actions. It was Daniel Goleman, who really popularized the term emotional intelligence in his books. Goleman’s (1998) concept of emotional intelligence comprises four main constructs of EI. Daniel Goleman (1996) describes five elements of emotional intelligence that are needed for us to be emotionally intelligent. They are:
- Self-awareness (to be able to recognize and interpret our feelings)
- Motivation (to be able to keep ourselves motivated despite failures)
- Self-regulation (to be able to feel our own emotions successfully)
- Empathy (to be able to read and interpret emotions of others, feeling other emotion in such a way that if we were in their place what we were feeling then)
- Adeptness in relationships (to be able to feel others’ emotions in building relationship with them).

Effective teaching is associated with positive emotions on behalf of the teacher because teaching itself is an emotional activity. Hence effective teaching learning process involves emotional understanding. Therefore, it can be said that effective teaching occurs when the teacher has sensitive ability towards understanding and interpreting of inner feelings, emotions and desires of students from indirect signals and communication. As Hayes (2006) remarks that successful teaching requires not only command over subject knowledge and appropriate teaching methods, but in addition it requires affective skills.

In today’s classroom every teacher has to face problems of emotional disorder in the class and frequency of this emotional disorder behaviour has increased at university level where due to certain reasons some students are of generally found in each class who are emotionally instable. Concept of this emotionally instable or emotional disorder may be different in various contexts.

Development of EI can help students to adopt the requirements of the environment of the institution. The devotion to develop students’ emotional intelligence can have positive impact of students’ performance at campus as well as in their future workplace life where they can prove themselves as emotionally stable workers.

Emotional intelligence (EI) plays an importance role during teaching learning process. Teacher and students are the two major characters in teaching learning process. Therefore, EI of the teacher and students both have an important role. However, the teacher being the senior person in teaching learning process has very important responsibility relating to students’ emotional intelligence. It means that the teacher should have ability to recognize and positively respond to is/her own and students’ feelings in classroom in order to perform the assigned responsibilities effectively and utilize students’ emotions for creating interest and motivation in his subject.

“Effective classroom environment helps students to understand and overcome their emotional problems rather than to repeat them” (Jones and et al. 2004).

Bar-On (2004) is of the opinion that emotional intelligence and its competencies can be developed, changed and improved during throughout an individual’s life through training and remedial programs as well as curative techniques. Being teachers, our major objective is to enhance the academic and social development of all students.

Carson (1996) observes that ‘the single quality (as reflected in her study from alumni responses) that was the most frequently associated with effective teachers was a special attitude toward and relationship with students. Kaufman (2001) observes that professionals can recognize and execute remedial learning environment in classroom to minimize behavioral problems of students.

Operational Definition: In the present study EI is described as the capacity and skill of an individual to recognize, interpret and manage one’s own emotions and others’ emotions in such a way to motivate one and others for achieving desired goals. In current study Goleman’s five competencies of emotional intelligence self-awareness, self-motivation, self-regulation, empathy, and adeptness in relationships were taken as theoretical framework of the study. In present research teacher effectiveness is taken as teacher’s characteristic and ability to understand, interpret and manage his/her own and students’ emotions during teaching learning process in such a way so as to lead the targeted objectives.
Research Problem

The aim of present article is to analyze role of teacher and students’ emotional intelligence (EI) during teaching learning process at higher education level. It further aims to suggest some guidelines for handling emotional intelligence during teaching learning process at higher education or effective teaching. To create relevancy of higher education with society Kuh, (1996) suggests that institutions of higher education must help students make meaning of the knowledge acquired through academic pursuits and integrate in class experience with the students’ extensive and more comprehensive socio-cultural experience.

Objectives of the study

The study was carried out to achieve the following objectives:

- To study the role of teachers’ awareness about importance of emotional intelligence during teaching learning process;
- To discover the causes of students’ emotional disorder at higher education level
- To analyze intervention techniques for handling and interpreting emotional intelligence in classroom environment for effective teaching.

Research Questions

In order to direct and achieve the objectives of current study following research questions were posed and it was decided to find out answer to these questions from review of related available literature:

What is the role of teacher’s awareness about the importance emotional intelligence during teaching learning process?

What are the generally considered the major causes of students’ emotional disorders?

What are effective intervention techniques or handling and interpreting emotional intelligence in classroom environment for effective teaching?

Procedure of the Study

The present study was a desk review and theoretical analysis of the literature available on the topic of the article. In addition to this researcher’s personal experiences regarding emotional intelligence at higher education level further provided a base for the current research. Based on her experiences researcher with claims that emotional problems exist in each and every classroom and without understanding emotional problems, the teacher cannot perform his/her function of teaching effectively. In order to make teaching effective, the teachers needs to consider and interpret emotions of him/ her and of students during teaching learning process. In order to achieve the target objectives of the study, the researcher studied thoroughly the available literature in shape of books, reference material, and research articles, national and international documents to find out the answer to research questions of the current study. Therefore, for the present study this related literature was the population. In order to provide exact answer to research questions raised in the beginning, the researcher presented related literature by providing answer to each research questions of the study. The researcher selected researches that were related to the objectives of the present study.

Objective no. 1: To study the importance of teachers’ emotional intelligence during teaching learning process.

Research Question: What is the role of teacher’s and students’ emotional intelligence during teaching learning process?
Emotions are generally described as non-intellectual feelings that are beyond our control. They are described as composite conditions of mind and body. Actually, emotions are the reactions to situations that need to be managed and directed. In recent times we observe support for providing students safe and stable learning environment so as to make them feel safe and perform better academically. Teachers who are emotionally competent and stable, they set supportive tone of classroom by winning trust of their students, planning their lessons that according to students’ abilities, establishing and implementing behavioral guidelines for students in such a way that promotes intrinsic motivation among students for learning.

The result of effective teaching is effective learning. Therefore, effective teaching and effective learning are the two important factors of successful educational process. It is observed that teachers of higher education level, generally, give importance to only successful presentation of the content material in front of their students. They express their expertise in their specific subject area by using various pedagogy skills. However, Mortiboys (2005) criticizes that emotional intelligence of students which is the most important component of teaching learning process is not given due attention. An effective teacher is familiar with the role of EI and gives important to EI of students by creating a learning environment that promotes positive and active involvement of students in order to motivate them for learning.

La Paro & Pianta, (2003) remarks that the best quality of classroom environment that where there is low level conflicts and disruptive behavior. The teaching learning process is going on smoothly from one type of activity to another. The atmosphere is appropriate for expressions of emotions, respectful communication, the interest and focus in on learning task, and the teacher is supportive and responsive to individual differences and students’ individual needs.

In classroom environment these are teachers who frequently suspect and detect about students emotional disturbance. Teachers can notice students’ continuing problems of interpersonal relationships (www.nichcy.org).

Caruso & Salovey, (2004) observe that although there has been significant focus on the potential of emotional intelligence and its utility for managers but, there has been less focus on the role of emotional intelligence in other professions like teaching. It is surprising because emotions are innate to teaching because teaching is considered one of the most stressful occupations (Johnson et al., 2005).

Emotional disturbances can affect various aspects that are directly relating to students’ learning like lack of concentration and resilience, time management pressures and multiple tasks, interacting with others, reacting to feedback, reacting to change, and such students generally remain calm under stress. These conditions have side effects that can impact on students’ learning (www.nichcy.org).

Teachers are often faced with disobedient students and situations that can force them to lose their temper.

However Brooks (1996) remarks that it is teacher’s empathy and emotional ability can help teacher to work more effectively with angry and resistant students. The teachers should understand and recognize students; burden of work that may lead to misbehavior and should have ability adopt strategies that can make these students less angry and resistant.

The teachers should realize the fact that emotions affect understanding and comprehension of taught concepts. As Dalgleish (2004) comments that researches have shown that emotions can activate and inspire the brain for better recalling. Therefore, it is the duty of teachers to understand the emotions of the students and act accordingly and should create a positive learning environment and motivate students for better performance because how a person learns is as important as what he/she learns.
Guidelines for Teachers for Building Positive and Reliable Relationship with Students of Higher education Level

Positive and reliable relationships with students is key to success for effective teaching and as well as for positive emotional development of students. Students need a comfortable, safe, caring, respectful and reliable learning environment which is not possible without building positive relationships with students. Such environment provides students opportunities to develop and practice their emotional competencies.

Some examples of positive and reliable behaviour of a teacher include:

- The teacher shows respect and gives value students’ cultural and language backgrounds;
- The teacher models the polite use of language and encourages students to imitate his/her own behaviour;
- The teacher encourages empathic thinking with questions such as, “Why do realize that he is having pain in his stomach”?;
- The teacher promotes students’ confidence and development of new skills by engaging them in problem solving, for example by asking, “Can you think of a way to help you remember to wait for your turn?”; and attending to signs of personal trauma and providing additional support to students who are experiencing unusual stress in their lives. www.tkcalifornia.org.

Mortiboys, (2005) observes that teachers with high EI competencies are found positive, resilient, collaborative, confident, trustworthy, open, sociable and passionate. Goleman’s (1995, 2005) research suggests that teachers become more effective when they are aware of the influence of emotional intelligence on learning and behaviour.

The teachers’ sensitivity towards students’ needs helps them feel safe and sound and confident. For example, asking questions to help students find a solution to a social conflict helps them develop problem-solving skills. Reading a story and engaging students in a conversation about a socially challenging situation can also serve as a lesson in handling social problems as well as in literacy www.tkcalifornia.org.

Goleman (2001) speculates that every individual has some inborn with a general emotional intelligence that determines their talent for learning emotional competencies. These competencies are not inborn talents; rather these are learned abilities that must be developed to achieve exceptional performance of individuals. Effective teaching is not possible without giving consideration to one’ own emotions and of students’ emotions and feeling during teaching learning process. The same thought has been described by Haskett (2003) who found a significant association between specific EI competencies, and behaviors of effective teaching at higher education level.

Schneider, (1998) observes that generally in classroom teachers meet with students who engage in behaviors that are troublesome for teaching learning process…… Recently teachers have complained about more threatening behaviors, including annoyance, threats, physical or verbal attacks, and “hijacking” classrooms.

Objective no. 2: To discover the causes of students’ emotional disorder at higher education level

Research Questions

What are the generally considered the major causes emotional disorders of students? There cannot be any single cause of students’ emotional problems or emotional disturbances. However, it is not appreciable to just describe a behaviour as disrupt or emotional without conclusion and identifying emotional responses, and appreciate the effect of the behavior’s consequences. Therefore, it is
essential to consider variety of causes that could contribute to emotional or disruptive behavior in the classroom. This investigation can help teacher to select the most appropriate solution. Although the teacher cannot have control over these causes, however, understanding important causes can help him/her to plan the policy for guidance and counseling of emotional problems of students. Some important causes that literature describes are given below:

1. In class some students are found emotionally disturbed and they affect the teaching learning process through their various activities. Obviously we have to realize the factors that are linked with emotionally disturbed behavior of students in classroom. This realization helps teacher in devising intervention efforts for providing emotionally disturbed students comfort. There have been many paradigms that explain reasons of students’ emotional problems/disturbances. As the scientific and technology are advancing rapidly, therefore, researchers conclude that emotional disorders of students is a very complex area and any single domain or paradigm cannot explain its reasons. We cannot attribute emotional problems of students to merely biology, the environment, or the family background. There may be multiple causes of the emotional problems of students, especially at higher education level like biological, cognitive, environmental, familial, and hereditary and socio-cultural causes.

2. Coie, Miller-Johnson, & Bagwell (2000) have described the causes of risk factors of students’ emotional behavior into the following categories:
   (a) Constitutional factors (e.g., influences, prenatal/birth complications);
   (b) Family factors (e.g., poverty, abuse, conflict);
   (c) Emotional and interpersonal factors (e.g., low self-esteem, difficult temperament, peer rejection);
   (d) Intellectual and academic factors (e.g., below average intelligence, learning disability);
   (e) Ecological factors (e.g., neighborhood disorganization, racial injustice);
   (f) Non-normative stressful life events (e.g., early death of a parent, outbreak of war, other traumatic events).

3. It is observed that adult learners sometimes become use to some addicted medicines that cause for bringing change in their behavior and therefore, they alter their behavior in many ways. This is the point that teachers need to search out about whether the misbehaved or emotionally instable student is addicted to some drug, etc.

4. A student with a mild closed head brain injury may feel difficulty by focusing on studied concepts. Therefore, they are stressed. Some students may have life-threatening diseases like cancer, AIDS, diabetes, or constant pain, perhaps from injuries or arthritis. Such students can behave eccentricity and can sometimes lose temper. Some diseases can effect in sleep disorder which can lead a student to fall asleep in class.

5. Some students may have depression problems relating to their personal life, especially “love failure cases”. Such types of students blame society and its values for failure of their love. They become pessimistic and want to revenge upon their failure.

**Objective no. 3: To analyze intervention techniques for handling and interpreting emotional intelligence in classroom environment for effective teaching.**

**Research Question:** What are intervention techniques for handling and interpreting emotional intelligence in classroom environment for effective teaching? Whether can we measure teacher’s effectiveness through his behavior towards dealing with students’ emotional disorders? It means to explore how the teacher’s is self-awareness about his/her own behavior regarding students, his/her self-management about controlling his/her feelings and emotions in response to students’ behaviour, how much teacher has social awareness about understanding students’ emotional disorders and concerns, and how much teacher has understanding of maintaining good relationship with emotionally disorder students and inspiring these students towards learning.

Perry, & Ball (2007) claim that enhancing teacher’s EI may increase efficacy and consequently supports in improving students achievement. They further advocate a well-developed EI intervention
program for faculty members to enhance teacher effectiveness and, which consequently enables teachers to guide their students about how to manage stress and anxiety in order to achieve better academic results. Knowledge of emotional intelligence further assist individuals in their work performance by enabling them to regulate their emotions and to cope effectively with stress, perform well even under pressure, and adjust themselves to any type of organizational change. Understanding and interpreting emotions, further contribute to helping people to identify and interpret their emotional cues that inform us how to control and regulate ourselves.

6. Jhaa, and Singh (2012) found significant positive relationship of teachers emotional intelligence and their teaching efficacy. Therefore, the teacher effectiveness was found correlated with high EI score. Teacher’ emotional competence the most important variable in creating a emotionally safe learning environment in the classroom where students develop emotionally and academically. It is also very important factor how the teacher handles with his/her own emotions, particularly in situations of negative emotions. Finally we can conclude that an effective and successful teacher is one who can handle his or her negative feelings in a genuine, real and healthy way www.eqi.org.

7. Martin Henley and Nicholas Long (2003) teachers and caregivers suggest they should use the following strategies to help students overcome their emotional barriers to learning:

- Making learning relevant to their life;
- Helping students in establishing positive relationships with their fellows
- Teaching students behavior management skills;
- Guiding students about how to identify and deal with depression;
- Supporting activities that foster feelings of competence, support social relationships, and strengthen self-efficacy;
- Helping students in coping with stress; and

8. Mortiboys (2005) remarks that when learners recognize the teacher shows care and respect towards them, then they take the harshness of the teacher in a positive manner and try to go after the instruction given by the teacher.

9. Kaufman (2001) comments that professionals can recognize and can implement classroom conditions that make behavioral difficulties less likely to occur. Jones et al. (2004) accentuate that in order to build a positive classroom climate; the classroom must have an attractive curriculum, curriculum change for students facing academic difficulties.

10. Researchers identify effective interventions to promote a positive learning environment, free from violence and disruptive behavior. A recent and popular paradigm is called positive behavior support (PBS). PBS refers to the application of positive behavioral interventions and systems to achieve socially important behavior change (Sugai, Sprague, Horner, & Walker, 2002). PBS emphasizes protective and positive approaches for addressing emotional behavior problems instead of emphasizing traditional reluctant measures. Another intervention is called Comprehensive Classroom Management (CCM) introduced by Jones and Jones (2004) which emphasizes the importance of positive teacher-student and peer relationships in managing student behavior. “The specific function of teaching is to deliver and develop understanding among the students” (Malik and Zaman, (2012).

11. The components of this intervention are:
   a) Development of general behavior standards in the classroom
   b) Development of clear classroom procedures and rules
   c) Systematic rules and procedures dealing with violations of classroom rules
   d) The designing of individual behavior change plans for students with significant behavioral difficulties. This paradigm centers round instructional excellence, active student involvement in creating and learning classroom, developing problem-solving skills, and creating a community of caring and support.

© Copyright by Author(s)
The teacher should teach and train students that there is a link between emotions, thought, and action and emotions can be managed normalized and control emotions to certain degree. Teachers need to recognize the important of emotions in learning process and they should be make familiar with the fact that emotions affect learning process learning involves thinking and thinking process is influenced by emotional state of an individual. Therefore, teachers need to recognize the importance and role of their own and of students’ emotion during teaching learning process. Boekaerts, (1993) mentions that students learn and achieve more successfully when they feel that they are secure, happy, and excited about the subject matter being presented in the class.

**Intervention techniques for self-awareness:** Self-awareness is the ability to recognize one’s own feelings. The ability to understand one’s own emotions is bond to having greater self-confidence. Hamacheck, (2000) concludes this understanding supports us to feel greater control over our inner life. The teacher should assist students in developing this self-confidence by training them how to recognize their thinking and feeling when they are going to make decisions. For this purpose the teacher may provide a model language self-reflection in the classroom to support students in perception, interpretation, management and expression of their emotions. These feeling and emotions may be of stress, anger, disturbance, and disappointment. Teachers can facilitate this discussion during class meetings or during one-on-one conversations with students, or as students work together in pairs and groups to get release from their emotions how to deal appropriately with their emotions. Teachers can arrange discussion during class or can arrange one-on-one conversations with students, or as students work together in pairs and groups. The teacher can give them reflective activity of journal writing for supporting them to recognize and classify complex feelings. These type of intervention can develop students’ emotions intelligence, which as a result will improve their learning achievement. As it has been observed that academic achievement as well emotional intelligence can be developed overtime. Finally, such interventions can help teachers to understand the nature of emotions of their students and then they can adopt strategies for handling these emotions.

**Intervention techniques for managing emotions:** A person who is emotionally intelligence (has ability to recognize, interpret, and his/her own and manage others’ emotions) can well manage emotions. Students will sometimes be irritated or worried when something in learning becomes difficult for them to understand. It is observed that generally teachers do not try to abolish this dissatisfaction in the classroom to manage students’ feelings. In such situation conflict is expected in the classroom. So teachers can minimize such conflicts by recognizing importance of students’ feelings about their learning difficulties and should help students in learning tasks to resolute their dissatisfaction calmly. Students can be trained in how to practice patience with themselves, with each other and to develop determination and skills to work through conflicts and dissatisfaction. According to Goleman, (1995) managing emotions comprise the ability to transmit disrupting desires and to “elude” negative tempers. Students can be trained in how to effectively manage their anger, and how effectively work cooperatively with others.

**Intervention techniques for managing self-motivation:** Goleman, (1995) mentions that self-motivation is an ability to produce feelings of passion, enthusiasm, confidence, and perseverance, especially at the moment of impediment. Motivation plays significant role in learning process and is a strong inner force in pursuing and achieving goals. Students who are positive motivate themselves for success. Yet if a student fails in achieving his/her learning goal, in such situation the students’ needs to calm himself and think through productive strategies for trying again to achieve success. Self-motivation is a tool for having a sense of mastery over one’s emotions. Students who are self-motivated have a strong drive to keep learning and a positive self-concept. Self-concept is an individual’s awareness and recognition about him/herself what he/she is (Malik and Malik, 2012). Teachers can influence students’ self-motivation in certain ways. Teacher can promote students self-motivation by assuring them that their goal is achievable and by making them to value their efforts the goal in attainment of their goals. Teachers can motivate students by developing attractive lessons that connect to students’ real lives and assist students in achieving success. Students become are more creative when they are self-motivated and teacher involve them learning.
**Interventions techniques for empathy:** Goleman, (1995) describes empathy as the ability to recognize emotions in others and to have sympathy when others react emotionally. For introducing productive environment in the classroom, the teacher should promote interaction in the class. This interaction can be promoted by being aware of our own feelings, as well as of students’ feelings. Therefore, empathy is the basic requirement for conflict resolution and for solving problems of students. For these purpose teachers can design activities for students for understanding different stand points of a problem and taking the responsibility for their own actions. For example, teachers can make students sympathize with the student who is experiencing difficult time. Teachers can foster empathy by making students to realize what kind of feelings they had when they experienced the same situation of dissatisfaction.

**Interventions techniques for handling social relationships:** Being aware of emotions of our self and of other and then managing these emotions, self-motivation, and having empathy feelings for others are all component of social skills and relationships. According to Morrison, (2008) as cited in Fernandez (2011), “Learning is cultivated by trusted relationships”. Asher & Rose, (1997) mention that positive social relationships associated with positive academic achievement. Teachers can facilitate positive interactions by encouraging a commitment to working as a group member and valuing each other’s efforts by being caring about others, and showing appreciation for work of team members (Preskill & Torres, 1999). Roeser, Eccles, & Sameroff, (2000) opine that researchers find that students’ emotional and academic performance improves when teachers support students’ competence with care and respectful manners. Teachers can foster positive relationships with by listening them carefully, and by positively responding to their needs and feelings. You can remind everyone of the rules. Most important support and desirable behavior that the teacher can depict is to console them in their hour of distress and disappointment and try to understand the nature of their grievances during teaching learning process.

Teachers need to create transformative learning environment (TLE) in the class. Bagheridoust, E., & Zarbaﬁan, A. (2013) mention following features of a TLE as given by Nelson’s and Low (2005):

1. develops positive, healthy, productive and effective relationships between teacher and students;
2. Solves problems and provide opportunities for good choices/decisions;
3. Helps in producing healthy and successful outcomes;
4. Directs towards achieving self-goals;
5. Provides opportunities for planning for changes when needed;
6. Demands teachers and students to act wisely and responsibly.

The teacher can prepare and can place lists of offensive and non-offensive words that are prohibited in the class. These lists can be send to students’ parents. Train students for understanding, interpreting and expression of their emotions. Guide students in sharing feelings with others. Provide them feedback on their behaviour. Provide them scenario for display of strong emotion through role play. Determine if you or your students need for professional assistance. If some misbehavior of misconduct happens in the class, then try to draw conclusion for this happening and find out the reasons of students’ emotional disturbance. If emotionally disorder happens in the class, do not shout or run after it, rather be calm and cool like professionals. Reflect on happening and plan future strategy for dealing with such situation. Practice self-control over your feelings about destructive behavior by stopping and thinking before acting, take deep breathing and express self-using “I-statements”, “I feel angry when you will not share with me”.

First of all make a list of characteristics of each student in your classroom so that you could be able to categorize the nature of disturbed emotional students in your class and can suggest and act upon curable measures for eradication of emotional disorders/ problems in your students. We are aware of this fact that academic life is full of pressure of assignments and exams. Our students in higher education class often are engaged in jobs to meet their educational expenses and to support their
families. These types of students are often under pressure of job and of their study. In these situations we have to realize their difficulties and have to understand their emotions and feelings by providing them respectful and caring learning environment for them.

Being teachers of higher education level, it is our top priority responsibility to realize students’ difficulties associated with temperature of the classroom (too hot and too cold) as well as seats that we provide them. At the same time we have to consider their physical needs like thirst, hunger, diseases, etc. Sometimes we thoroughly ignore students’ physical needs and as well as classroom temperature and nature of seats on which students are sitting for a long time. In current era our generation has a tragedy of hearing loss due to excessive use of headphones and listening of loud music. It is a fact that our current generation is at danger of loss of hearing due to exposure to headphones and loud concerts. Large classrooms may be especially frustrating for these students, where they realize hearing problems. Our teachers generally give less important to vision and hearing of students during teaching which is responsible for creating miscommunication and resultantly it increases chances of mistrust between teacher and students.

Conclusion

Emotionally Stable Learning Environment for Teachers and for Students
- Teacher can create an environment that is full of respect. Respect for the teacher, respect for students and respect for classroom rules.
- Acknowledge students’ all sorts of diversity and have respect for each type of diversity of students. The teacher should never humiliate any culture, nation or religion. Make sure that your students do have regard for diverse cultures or nationalities present/ exist in the class.
- For emotionally disordered students individualized intervention program is the best solution. It is the first and the foremost duty of the teacher to try to understand the causes of emotional behaviour of the students in the class. For this purpose the teacher can try to win trust of students. If students believe that the teacher is sincere and he/she is well wisher of the students, then definitely, students would easily share their problems and difficulties with the teacher.
- Teachers may be trained in how to resolve students’ conflict and emotional problems through resolution through individual and group discussion. The training can empower teachers to deal effectively with basic management of behavioral issues.
- A genuine care and concern for the welfare of every student and his or her learning needs is required for building trust on the teacher and is responsible for producing effective teaching learning environment.

Discussion and conclusion

It is obvious that in order to produce effective teaching learning environment, it is essential to recognize students’ feelings and emotions and interpret these emotion and feeling in such a way to enhance their motivation for learning and achieving their goals. The major causes of students’ emotionally disorders at higher education level are biological, environmental, cognitive, familial (e.g., poverty, abuse, conflict);, and hereditary and socio-cultural, constitutional factors (e.g., influences, prenatal/birth complications), emotional and interpersonal (e.g., low self-esteem, difficult temperament, peer rejection), intellectual and academic factors (e.g., below average intelligence, learning disability), (e.g., neighborhood disorganization, racial injustice), non-normative stressful life events (e.g., early death of a parent, outbreak of war, other traumatic events), brain injuries or some other physical diseases. It is necessary for effective teaching learning to comfort students from their emotional disorders. For this purpose teachers may adopt various intervention techniques like developing positive relationship between teacher- students
By considering their emotions and feelings, providing emotionally safe learning environment where students develop emotionally and academically, by making learning relevant to their life and the most important thing is how the teacher handles with his/her own emotions, particularly in situations of negative emotions. The teacher can help students in establishing positive relationships with their fellows, teaching students behaviour management skills, guiding students about how to identify and deal with depression, supporting activities that foster feelings of competence, support social relationships, and strengthen self-efficacy, helping students in coping with stress; and instilling in them hope for the best. As it is a fact that when learners recognize that the teacher shows care and respect towards them they realize their worth and are motivated towards learning. The teacher can develop general behavior standards and rules in the classroom and can facilitate this discussion during class meetings or during one-on-one conversations with students, or as students work together in pairs and groups to get release from their emotions how to deal appropriately with their emotions. Teacher can promote students self-motivation by assuring them that their goal is achievable and by making them to value their efforts the goal in attainment of their goals.

The teacher should not get frustrated if some students are not participating in learning process or are not learning material quickly. Therefore, the teacher needs to be honest towards his/her mistakes. If teacher is unable to provide answer to question raise by students, it is better to apologize and honestly tell them that you do not know and will provide as soon as you will get. The teacher can ask them to research and find answer to the question.
Recommendations

1. Teachers of higher education level can provide specific practical training in how to deal with students having emotional disorders.

2. The researcher had certain constraints. For example, the present study was written during summer vacation and universities were off for teachers and students. Therefore, teachers and students were not available. Consequently, the study was based on analysis of related literature to find out answers to research questions. There is need to conduct empirical study by collecting data from teachers and students on the same topic and area.

3. The teacher can develop general behavior standards and rules in the classroom and can facilitate this discussion during class meetings or during one-on-one conversations with students, or as students work together in pairs and groups to get release from their emotions how to deal appropriately with their emotions. Teacher can promote students self-motivation by assuring them that their goal is achievable and by making them to value their efforts in attainment of their goals.

4. Teachers can make students sympathize with the student who is experiencing difficult time. Teachers can foster empathy by making students to realize what kind of feelings they had when they experienced the same situation of dissatisfaction as “Learning is cultivated by trusted relationships”.

5. The teacher may give importance to recognize all variety of diversity (like race, religion or gender) and disabilities (e.g., physical or learning) in your classroom as well as different learning strategies. The teacher can develop guidelines/rules for students regarding their emotional behaviour.

References


Bar-On (2004) stated, “Emotional intelligence and emotional skills develop over time, change throughout life, and can be improved through training and remedial programs as well as therapeutic techniques” (p. 15).

Bousted Mary Dr (n.d). An Intelligent Look at Emotional Intelligence. A publication commissioned by the Association of Teachers and Lecturers from Guy Claxton, Professor of the Learning Sciences, University of Bristol


Christensen Bill and et. al. (2005). Teaching Students with Severe Emotional and Behavioral Disorders: Best Practices Guide to Intervention. A joint venture with the Clover Park School
District, Child Study and Treatment Center and Seattle University School of Education Copyright © January 2005


Websites visited:

http://repository.upenn.edu/dissertations/AAI3310476
Insights into Turkish Students’ Self-Conceptualization in Different Social Communities via Kinetic Drawings

Iryna Sekret, Zirve University, Turkey

Abstract

As it is known one’s self-concept can be defined as a collection of one’s beliefs about oneself that includes in a most general sense his/her way and quality of life, gender, social and cultural identity. Self-concept is made up of one's self-schemas, and interacts with self-esteem, self-knowledge, and the social self to form the self as whole.

In this respect awareness of one’s self-concept is of significant importance for gaining his/her self-efficacy in different social contexts, managing interactions in communities, and bringing all the social roles the person has to fulfill under the umbrella of his/her self.

The aim of the current study is to get insights into the students’ self-conceptualization in such social environments as “Family”, “Friends”, “School” via kinetic drawings. The target group of the research comprises students of different age groups in Turkey.

The application of the projective technique that implied analysis of the students’ drawings allowed eliciting data on roles and statuses the students perform when being in family, among friends, and at school.

The data obtained from the analysis of the drawings were supported by individual interviews and observations over the students’ behavior in the formal / informal learning setting and interactions.

The results of the research can be applied for further studies in the area of educational psychology, referring to the correlation of the learners’ academic performance with their self-conceptualization of themselves’ well-being in different social communities.
The Chitty Malay Language

Nurul Huda Binti Hamzah, University of Newcastle, United Kingdom

Abstract

This research is a unique effort and experience of investigating aspects of language use among a community of Chitty, in the context of Gajah Berang Village in Melaka Bandar Bersejarah (Malacca the Historical Town). This community exists circa 15 Century after the arrival of the Hindu merchants from the Coromandel Coast in Southern India (Asmah Haji Omar (2004), in particular the Tamils and gave rise to the Chitty community through inter-marriage between the group and the local Malay women, Chinese, Javanese, and Bataks, creating a unique new culture. Since then, the Chitty community inclines to adopt Malay culture, and went through assimilation and amalgamation experienced by these peoples over the years had cause them no longer maintain their culture. Shift not only occurred on the cultural aspects, but the language aspect also exhibits the same condition. This study is to explore the current ecology of Chitty Malay Language (CML) among this minority community in Malaysia. It also explores the functions of Chitty and attempts to describe the current state of language through the formal and informal analysis, for instances, the speech in use, at levels of both grammar and discourse. This is largely an ethnographic study; a survey and unstructured interviews will be conducted through qualitative methods between the researcher and the Chitty informants.

Findings and propositions will be presented based on patterns of behaviour observed formally and informally during the stay in Gajah Berang Village, Melaka during the period of 2013 and 2014. This research aims to highlight the questions posed in recent research, related to language maintenance and adaptation; to explore relevant theoretical and methodological underpinnings; and to discuss the research rationale.
Application of Concordances in ELT Classroom: Implications & Concerns

Mahshad Tasnimi, North Tehran Branch, Islamic Azad University, Iran
Khaleel Bataineh, Irbid National University, Jordan

Abstract

As an established fact, corpus-based studies are of paramount value to shed some light on the qualitative and quantitative linguistic analysis whose extension is getting prevalent in the realm of language learning and teaching especially by making grammar subservient to lexis. Concordance as a vibrant technique for corpus-based studies elucidates some of the previously-ignored features of language learning which have colossal implications for language teaching. This study accentuates on this technique and delves extensively into myriad of applications of ELT situation and its associated prerequisites and conditions. It is done via providing tangible procedure-based strategies and analyzing pitfalls attributed to concordance applications through which the language learning is thought to be facilitated and teachers paves the way for achieving the intended objectives.

Keywords: Concordance, Corpus Linguistics, Corpus Analysis, Data Driven Learning

Application of concordances in ELT classroom: implications and concerns

Nowadays, the computer analysis of corpora is considered as a valuable tool in language teaching. Willis (1998) asserts that “the study of language is often corpus based” (p. 44) and that corpora provides a picture of language helping us describe the grammar and lexis of the language.

“Corpus is a body of written text or transcribed speech which can serve as a basis for linguistic analysis and description” (Kennedy, 1998, p. 1). Hyland (2006) defines a corpus as “a collection of naturally occurring texts used for linguistic study” (p. 58). He adds that corpus does not present new theories about language, but it can provide fresh insights on features of language use. He asserts that corpus is “more reliable guide to what language is like than human intuition” (p. 58). Corpus actually provides an evidence-based approach to language teaching and learning.

In the past the term corpus was associated with a body of work of for example an author. However, since the advent of computers large amount of texts can be stored and analyzed using special user-friendly software (O’Keeffe, McCarty, and Carter, 2007). Biber, Conrad and Reppen (1998, as cited in O’Keeffe, McCarty, and Carter, 2007, p.1) point out that corpus is “a principled collection of texts available for qualitative and quantitative analysis”.

Corpora have been used for different purposes. Some are intended for linguistic research and descriptive purposes. Other corpora have been designed for more specialized purposes such as preparing a dictionary or discovering which words or meanings are most frequently used by a special group of people (e.g., workers in the oil industry). Furthermore, a corpus can be analyzed and compared with other corpora to study variation to show how often and where particular phonology, lexical, grammatical, discoursal or pragmatic features occur (Kenedy, 1998).

Fox (1998) adds that corpora allow researchers to analyze not only how language is being used at the present time but how it was used at particular times in the past.
The first generation of computer-readable corpora was set up in 1960s. This corpus consists of around one million words of written American English. It was named The Brown Corpus because it was prepared at Brown University in the USA by W. Nelson Francis. Such corpus now seems very small and can easily be handled by PCs (Fox, 1998; Stubbs, 1996). Nowadays, one of the best known corpora is the Bank of English with almost 450 million words (2002) which provided the basis for the Collins COBUILD English Dictionary. (Jiezhi & Jianhua, 2009; Ooi, 2001; Willis, 1998).

**Corpus linguistics**

Over the last three decades the compilation and analysis of corpora stored as computerized data has led to a new discipline known as corpus linguistics (Kenedy, 1998).

Corpus linguistics refers to “the study of language on the basis of textual or acoustic (speech) corpora which almost always involves the computer in some phase of storage, processing and analysis of this data” (Ooi, 2001). Kenedy (1998) introduces corpus linguistics as follows.

Corpus linguistics, like all linguistics, is concerned primarily with the description and explanation of the nature, structure and use of language and languages and with particular matters such as language acquisition, variation and change. Corpus linguistics has nevertheless developed something of a life of its own within linguistics, with a tendency sometimes to focus on lexis and lexical grammar rather than pure syntax”. (p. 8)

Kennedy adds that corpus linguistics is not a new branch of linguistics. It is actually descriptive linguistics aided by new technology.

**Corpus analysis in ELT**

One of the most innovative outcomes of the corpus revolution has been the use of corpus-based description in language teaching and learning. From the 1920s, there was a tradition of word counting in texts to discover the most frequent and the most pedagogically useful words and grammatical structures for language teaching purposes (Kennedy, 1998). According to Hyland (2006), frequency is central to corpus studies describing “the commonest used of the commonest words” (p. 59). The assumption is that if something happens often enough in the past, it is likely to occur in the future too. Therefore, predicting and categorizing the domain under study will be feasible.

To analyze a corpus, researchers have developed systems and software for the automatic analysis of texts in terms of grammar and meaning. The most basic format used in displaying information about the linguistic elements in a corpus is listing and counting. The lists produced by software are of different kinds ranging from simple wordlists, to more sophisticated analysis (Kennedy, 1998).

Kennedy (1998) states that corpus-based studies have repeatedly shown that the normal use of language includes “considerable use of recurrent prefabricated constructions” (p. 270). Due to these studies, the boundary between lexis and grammar has become much less clear. As a result, the focus of language teaching has shifted away from principled ways of learning vocabulary and grammar to learning how to do things with words. This has led to a “pedagogical emphasis on messages and the messengers rather than the linguistic system which carries them” (p. 281). Furthermore, the central role of the language teacher has shifted from being a source of knowledge to an organizer of tasks.

Howatt and Widdowson (2004) add that corpus findings have found their ways to teaching materials shifting the focus of pedagogical attention from grammatical to lexical features. They maintain that findings of corpus analysis demonstrated the “primacy of lexis as a determining factor in the patterning of usage” (p. 359) and that grammatical regularities are dependent on the lexis they are associated with. They conclude that these findings which suggest “grammar is subservient to lexis” (p. 359) have brought new insights into the nature of language in use.
Concordancers

Fox (1998) asserts that corpus analysis has shown that there are many common features that native speakers use, but non-native speakers do not typically pay attention to. Therefore, teachers should teach students many strategies for coping. Some of these strategies could be developed through the use of concordancers.

Concordancer is an important tool (software) in corpus linguistics which can find every occurrence of a particular word or phrase. This idea is not new and many researchers over the years have manually concordanced the Christian Bible, for example, finding and recording every example of certain words. With a computer, we can now search millions of words in seconds. The search word or phrase is often referred to as the key word or node and concordance lines are usually presented with the key word/phrase in the centre of the line with seven or eight words presented at either side. These are known as Key-Word-In-Context displays (or KWIC concordances) (O’Keeffe, McCarty, and Carter, 2007). Concordance lines are usually scanned vertically (see Figure 1). Beatty (2003) defines a concordancer as

A tool that looks at individual words (nodes) or groups of words and lists them with their immediate contexts; usually the seven or eight words that come before and after but in some cases the entire sentence for each word. The term for describing this approach is key word in context (KWIC). (p. 60)

**Figure 1**: Concordance lines for *way* (O’Keeffe, McCarty, and Carter, 2007, p. 9)

Concordancing or processing natural language by computers is still in its early stages. It comes under the umbrella term of artificial intelligence (Ahmad, Corbett, Rogers, & Sussex, 1985). Concordancing dates back to middle Ages and the first known complete concordance was that of the Latin Bible comprising the words in Bible and the location of texts where they can be found (Lamy & Mortensen, 2012).

According to Davies (2015), concordancers are used extensively for creating glossaries and dictionaries. They are also considered as valuable tools for language teachers. Willis (2004) asserts that by language concordancing “we can make discoveries about grammar that we had never noticed before” (p. 104). For instance, he exemplifies that it was a revolution for him knowing that the word ‘would’ to express past habit is more common in spoken language than ‘used to’.

**Implications and applications of corpus analysis in ELT**

For applied linguists concerned with language teaching, not only a corpus can be used as a source of authentic text to which learners might be exposed, but also “the corpus can be analyzed to discover the relative weight which might be given to lexical or grammatical items and processes in curricula and teaching materials” (Kennedy, 1998, p. 269).

The information on the distribution of the elements and processes of a language can influence the content of language teaching by affecting “selection of what to teach, the sequencing of pedagogy,
and the weight given to items or parts of the language being taught, thus contributing directly to the content of instruction” (p. 281).

Corpus analysis and concordancing have application to the language classroom and are now being used in ELT materials because they can provide many examples of patterns of use (O’Keeffe, McCarty, and Carter, 2007). Johns (1986, as cited in Kenning & Kenning, 1990) identifies three potential sets of users for concordancing programs: the linguistic researcher, the language teacher, and the language learner. Beatty (2003) adds that a teacher can collect a set of student assignments and analyze examples of learners’ language looking for typical error patterns. The errors can then be used as a basis for the development of learning materials. In addition, a teacher may look through established corpora by native speakers to find and present some patterns to learners as examples or adapt them into exercises. On the other hand, learners can be trained how to use concordancers. By doing so, learners become their own researchers finding examples and developing their own rules for language learning. This approach is called Data Driven Learning (DDL) by Tim John.

Data Driven Learning (DDL) is an inductive approach to learning in which learners acquire an understanding of language patterns and rules by becoming more involved researching corpora, usually through the use of a computer-based concordancing program. Instead of studying patterns and rules, learners naturally internalize them. This approach can stimulate learners’ interest in language and give them a sense of empowerment and responsibility for their own language education. (Beatty, 2003, p. 61)

O’Keeffe, McCarty, and Carter (2007) add that this approach leads to forming generalizations. They cite Johns (2002) who saw DDL “as a process which ‘confront(s) the learner as directly as possible with the data’, ‘to make the learner a linguistic researcher’ where ‘every student is Sherlock Holmes’” (p. 24)

Jiezhi and Jianhua (2009) maintain that in a classroom, a corpus and a concordancer can be used mainly

- to discover and determine meanings of words and phrases;
- to identify useful phrases and unfamiliar collocations;
- to analyze usage and determine the context;
- to discriminate words with similar meanings;
- to examine word order;
- to encourage questions and generate discussion. (p. 3)

Lamy and Mortensen (2012) recommend teachers to make use of the following exercises

- Students can work out rules of grammar or usage and lexical features for themselves by searching for key words in context. Depending on their level, they can be invited to question some of the rules, based on their observation of patterns in authentic language.
- Students can be more active in their vocabulary learning: depending on their level, they can be invited to discover new meanings, to observe habitual collocations, to relate words to syntax, or to be critical of dictionary entries.
- Students can be invited to reflect on language use in general, based on their own explorations of a corpus of data, thus turning themselves into budding researchers. (p. 6)

Classroom applications of concordancers are numerous. In what follows ten practical examples taken from Lamy and Mortensen (2012) are presented. However, before applying them, students have to first get familiar with inductive reasoning.

Activity 1: Make students familiar with the physical appearance of a KWIC. This activity is useful for complete beginners. One can try similar exercises with words that have dual meanings or different meanings.

Activity 2: Raise students’ awareness of stylistic differences between different positions of a word (e.g., therefore). By doing so, they’ll get to know where they should put the word.
Activity 3: Get the students to derive a rule (by induction). For instance, the determiner ‘many’ can only be followed by plural nouns or ‘news’ is only followed by singular verb.
Activity 4: Sensitize students to the differences between two languages’ false-friends – in this case English and Farsi – such as (sand –شن). Here, focus their attention on countable and uncountable nouns.
Activity 5: Make the learners aware of the similarity between two languages; for instance, the use of ‘that clause’ in English and Farsi.
Activity 6: Raise students’ cultural awareness and help them reflect on the habits of that culture; for example, drinking tea or coffee.
Activity 7: Sensitize students to changes in language use, such as analysis – analyses / parenthesis – parentheses.
Activity 8: Teach the use of prepositions.
Activity 9: Teach the syntax of adverbs.
Activity 10: Make students’ own writings as the corpus to make them aware of their errors or the lack of variety in their writings.

Fox (1998) also provides some activities for using concordancers in the classroom. Since concordance lines do not show whole sentences; Fox believes that, learners may first get confused. Therefore, teachers should spend some time getting them used to looking at concordancers.

To deal with pragmatic aspect of language, advanced students could be given some concordance lines and asked in groups to work out the ways in which a particular pragmatic word (e.g., actually) is being used. Of course, there are probably no right answers, but Fox asserts that, this activity leads to interesting discussions.

Yet, another activity is building exercises around a single set or sets of concordance lines and asking students to analyse a key word (e.g., pat) by answering a set of questions (see Figure 2).
Figure 2. Concordance lines for pat with some exercises for analyzing the word (Fox, 1998, p.38)

To do this exercise, it is important to make it clear to students that first they should skim the lines quickly to get a feel for the word and then go back and look more carefully at how the key word is used.

Since phrasal verbs are considered as a problem for all learners of English, as an activity, students can be given a number of phrasal verbs with a particular preposition, say ‘down’ and be asked to pick out the ones which have a common semantic thread.

As homework, Fox suggests that students can be asked to collect all the examples of a high frequent word (e.g., give). He recommends this activity for all levels of students.

In what follows merits and concerns of using concordancers in ELT classrooms are explained.

Merits:

- Introducing corpora and concordancing programs in ELT make the old, spoon-feeding and rote learning pattern replaced by a new one that promotes discovery learning. In doing so, students will change from passive recipients to active ones and the teacher would act as a research facilitator rather than a transmitter of knowledge (Jiezhi and Jianhua, 2009).

- Learners find concordancing activities fun and amusing (Lamy and Mortenson, 2012).
• Using computers as a powerful hypothesis-testing device helps “learners remember the knowledge which they have formulated themselves rather formulations which have been imposed on them” (Lamy and Mortenson, 2012, p. 16). Therefore, each learner is a researcher.

• Learners are provided with “relevant, authentic, and interesting examples as opposed to made-up traditional ‘grammar examples’” (Lamy and Mortenson, 2012, p. 11).

• Data Driven Learning can facilitate the development of learner autonomy (O’Keeffe, McCarty, and Carter, 2007).

• Using concordancers help learner become more aware of language and pay more attention to forms rather than simply use them. This noticing help learners reflect on further occurrences of language items that have been made salient through concordancing. There is likelihood that this awareness will increase proficiency (Fox, 1998; Lamy and Mortenson, 2012).

• Analysis activities based on concordance lines can be used as consciousness-raising activities (see Ellis, 2003), providing learners with opportunities to discover language before expecting them to produce it. Furthermore, they help learners note the gap between their use of a word and the way(s) native speakers use it (Fox, 98; Willis, 1998)

• Analyzing data through concordancing help learners develop their analytical skills (Fox, 1998).

• Not only learners but also teachers are likely to gain from concordancers enriching their own view of language (Willis, 1998).

• Working directly from the data is ideal for mixed level classes because it allows learners to work at their own level and in their own ways. (Willis, 1998)

Concerns

• Majority of students are not familiar with concordancers (Lamy and Mortenson, 2012).

• Introducing corpora into the classroom changes the method of teaching, making the process unpredictable. Therefore, teachers must be ready to deal with any problem that may pop up (Jiezhi and Jianhua, 2009).

• A corpus may be too large to manage. In order to avoid being drowned in the data, teachers should take into account the size of the corpus (Jiezhi and Jianhua, 2009).

Conclusion

Few language learners have enough time and resources to read natural texts. For instance, in many foreign language learning environments, most English language teachers and students encounter the shortage of authentic English language texts. Data Driven Learning may shorten the learning process by providing a rich source of context. Concordance is one of the most well-known techniques applied in this area. Concordance has plethora of advantages such as enhancing inductive learning, fostering natural internalization of language patterns, and encouraging learners’ motivations. However, the use of concordancers in the classroom is in its infancy. Therefore as Kennedy (1998) asserts excessive claims should not be made about concordancing. There is no guarantee that working with data which has not been pre-analyzed by grammarians is definitely a virtue for a language learner. All in all, it can be seen as an interesting supplementary teaching technique to be beneficiary for learners and learners, both.
References


A Review of Malaysia’s Private Sector Services
Retirement and Pension System

Kamal Halili Hassan, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Malaysia
Fariza Ahmad, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Malaysia
Rohani Abdul Rahim, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Malaysia
Tengku Noor Azira Tengku Zainuddin, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Malaysia
Rooshida Merican A R Merican, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Malaysia

Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to discuss the retirement and pension system or scheme in the private sector services in Malaysia. The pension system of the private sector is made through compulsory contribution under the Employees’ Provident Fund Act 1991 where employers and employees have to contribute a certain percentage of the employees’ monthly salary to the Employee Provident Fund (EPF). Thus, the private sector workers’ savings for their retirement are in their EPF and they are entitled to withdraw part of their savings during pre-retirement and full withdrawal at the age of 55 years old. This research shows that a large number of retirees spend their EPF money within 3 years of their retirement. Many of the retirees also have to continue working to sustain their life during retirement. This paper covers legal issues on retirement and pension schemes in the private sector as well as awareness connected to retirement scheme or plan among workers and retirees in Malaysia. The methodology used in this research is quantitative where data will be presented based on a survey conducted in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor, Malaysia. The study also found that there is mixed support for a proposed legislation to establish fixed monthly pension scheme to be paid during retirement in the private sector.

Keywords: Malaysia, pension system, private sector, employee, legislation

Introduction

A retirement scheme for the Malaysian private sector attracted an interesting debate recently since the Employee Provident Fund (EPF) mooted a proposal to raise the age for the withdrawal of workers’ EPF savings to 60. A survey on the EPF website to gauge the response to this revealed that an overwhelming majority were against the proposal and preferred that the age limit remain at 55. This situation actually underlies the lingering issue of a pension scheme in the private sector in Malaysia which has not undergone any change for a long time. There is also the question of whether the Malaysian public is confident that a public body like the EPF can provide a better scheme which would benefit depositors in the long run. The feedback from the survey showed that depositors would prefer withdrawing all their money and to spend and invest it by themselves. However, research shows that most depositors spent all their EPF money within 3 years of withdrawal (Suhaimi Abd Samad et al., 2012) and were forced to continue working during their retirement to sustain their living standards (Siti Zaharah Jamaluddin & Foo Yuen Wah, 2013). Despite the recent phenomenon of distrusting the EPF, this study will analyse and put forward suggestions for a better scheme for private sector employees. The proposal will incorporate a scheme for withdrawal in stages of EPF depositor’s funds where later withdrawals after the age of 55 years will attract a higher profit or dividend. However, based on the feedback received from the EPF survey this
scheme cannot be made compulsory at this juncture. A monthly pension scheme for certain categories of private sector retirees is also proposed.

**Methodology**

Using both qualitative and quantitative methods, this study discusses the pension law for private sector employees and the feedback obtained on the proposed pension scheme. In legal research, the qualitative method takes the form of discussions and analysis of the law itself based on statutes, cases, articles, books and other official documents. Actually it is somewhat misleading to distinguish between primary and secondary materials in legal research where what looks like secondary materials to the other social science research disciplines are primary sources in legal research. For example, statutes and reported case-law are primary sources in legal research although they are published by a third party. For the quantitative method in this study, a questionnaire was distributed to 400 respondents in Selangor and Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Many private sector employees work in both areas of research and it is argued that the chosen areas are representative of the private sector employment setting in Malaysia. Details on the demography of the respondents are stated below.

**Current Legislation**

The pension system for private sector employees consists of social security and social insurance programs, with the former covering social security retirement benefits (Saidatulakmal Mohd, 2013). The financial resources of private sector employees come from compulsory installment or lump-sum monthly contributions by employees and their employers to the EPF (Section 55 of the Employees Provident Fund Act, 1991). A certain percentage of the employees’ monthly income as prescribed by the Act is allotted for this purpose and it is an offence under the law for employers not to remit the money to the EPF. Such savings made for employees/depositors during their working life can be withdrawn when they reached 55. Thereafter private sector employees have to manage their funds during retirement. Unlike public/government sector employees who receive a monthly pension, workers in the private sector do not enjoy such benefit. Also, unlike public employees who continue receiving free health services from government hospitals, private sector counterparts do not enjoy such services. This is the predicament that many of the latter, especially those from the lower income brackets, face during their retirement as the cost of health services is high and increasing.

The EPF was launched in 1951 as a mandatory savings scheme for old age and it allows early withdrawals for housing, health care and education purposes. It is a trust fund and its concept is really simple being defined as contribution plan based on contributions by employers and employees (Benjamin Chan et al., 2010). This mandatory savings plan is administered by the Employees Provident Fund (EPF) and covers more than half of the labour force in Malaysia; however, according to researchers these savings are inadequate and inequitable (Mukul G. Asher & Azad Singh Bali, 2010) for the employees’ retirement years. Depositors only earn about 4-6% of yearly dividends despite the huge sums of money collected by the EPF. Another study by Mazlynda Md Yusuf et al. (2014) noted that the EPF is a Defined Contribution Pension Plan and the total volume of savings in the fund is dependent on the amounts contributed by employees and employers. The current contribution rate is listed out in the Third Schedule (11% and 13 %) and for those whose monthly salary is RM20,000 or above the contribution rates are 11% and 12% of the employee’s salary to be remitted by the employer to EPF.
The EPF Act 1991 (Act 452) is to provide for the law relating to a scheme of savings for employees' retirement and the management of the savings for retirement purposes. For the purposes of managing the fund and carrying it into effect, the Act established a body corporate called the "Employees Provident Fund Board". All contributions required to be made under this Act, money earned by carrying out any project, scheme or enterprise financed from the Fund must be paid into the Employee Provident Fund. The Board invests the money contributed to the fund and also can grant loans or buy shares in any approved companies. The Board can also invest or re-invest at least 50% of the money belonging to the Fund and invest or reinvest during any one year, in securities issued by the Government of Malaysia. At or after the end of the financial year, the Board must declare a rate of dividend in respect of that year, being not less than 2.5% per annum (Mohd Syahrir et al., 2011).

The Employees’ Social Security Act 1969 is another legislation providing for pension to insured employees but it is only applicable to those suffering from some invalidity. In addition, the Act also provides for various benefits to employees for disablement or other sickness due to an employment injury. This Act is not in the strictest sense a form of safety net legislation for general pensioners but only for insured employees suffering from occupational mishaps.

**Literature Review**

Various literatures have dealt with issues concerning the retirement for employees and retirees in private sector employment. Most centre on issues of saving awareness and knowledge among them but there is not much direct attention to the legal aspects of retirement legislation or pension systems. In their article titled “The future of the Malaysian older employees: An Exploratory study” Benjamin Chan et al., 2010 note that most respondents were still at work; however factors like compulsory retirement, lack of skills, health reasons and family responsibilities might contribute to work accessibility barriers among older Malaysians. Meanwhile, some of them continued to work due to financial needs while only a small fraction did so due to a sense of self-achievement and fulfilment. The study was based on 1178 male and 1149 female respondents aged between 55 and 75.

Mazlynda et al (2014) in “Pre-retirement withdrawal in EPF: An Exploratory study in Malaysia” found that with pre-retirement withdrawals, women are unlikely to maintain their standard of living under the present retirement scheme due to low replacement rates as well as face higher risk of poverty compared to men. The implementation of pre-retirement withdrawal exposes women to a higher risk of poverty in old age. The focus of their research is on the adequacy of the retirement income for retirees in Malaysia based on the current retirement benefit schemes in Malaysia.

A study by M.Krishnamoorthy (2012) titled “A study on the retirement planning behaviour of working Individuals in Malaysia” notes that different age groups of working individuals have different perspectives toward retirement planning behaviour. The younger generation of working individuals (26-35 years) had better perceptions toward the retirement planning and were not worried about retirement. Thus, early planning for retirement may bring advantages and benefits and enable them to retire to pursue other goals and dreams as their employment and financial planning time-frames are longer.

Kevin Caraher (2000) wrote an important piece on “Issues in incomes provision for the elderly in Malaysia” and suggested that (i) lump sum payments do not represent the best option for income security into old age; (ii) increased accessibility to funds prior to retirement through dedicated separate accounts lessens the ability of the EPF to act as a reliable source of income for the elderly;
and (iii) current arrangements are inadequate to meet the needs of an increasingly elderly population leaving them more vulnerable to the socially exclusive aspects of poverty in old age.

The study by Kevin Caraher is related to this research as it focuses on the adequacy or otherwise of the EPF system as a main source for sustainable retirement income.

Findings

A total of 400 respondents comprising 193 (48.25%) males and 207 (51.74%) females living and working in Kuala Lumpur and the state of Selangor, Malaysia participated in this study. The majority of private sector employees in Malaysia work in this area and their participation could be considered representative of the whole country. The respondents employed as professionals and managerial totalled 115 (31.3%), technicians and associate professionals 28 (7.0%), workers employed in services and sales 77 (19.3%), workers in agriculture and fisheries 1 (0.3%), crafts and other related works 3 (0.8%), clerks 99 (24.8%), factory operators 39 (9.8%), and others 28 (7.7%). In terms of sector, the largest number of respondents was from services (275 or 68.8%) while manufacturing had 60 (15.0%), construction 43 (10.8%), mining 17 (4.3%), and agriculture 5 (1.3%). For ethnic groups, most respondents (297 or 74.3%) were Malays, followed by Chinese 73 (18.3%), Indian 26 (6.5%), and others 4 (1.0%). The largest group of respondents had a secondary education 149 (37.3.1%) followed by first degree holders 116 (29.0%), Diploma holder 90 (22.5%), Master and PhD holders 38 (9.5%) while 3 (0.8%) were without any formal education. This demography is in line with a previous study by Nurasyikin (2012) who noted that “the results of logistic regression indicated the perceived importance of financial advisor, perceived financial risk tolerance, perceived plan design, age, gender, and marital status as the significant predictors of individuals’ likelihood to invest part of their retirement savings in the unit trusts”.

The findings of this study are shown in Table 1 and 2.

Table 1- Retirement Scheme: EPF and Private Pension Scheme Funds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEMS</th>
<th>MIN</th>
<th>Not Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The practice of paying out full EPF savings upon retirement to the contributors should be continued</td>
<td>4.44</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. It is better to pay EPF savings by monthly installment to the contributors after retirement</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Half of the EPF savings to be paid in lump sum and another half to be paid monthly after retirement</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The employees’ EPF monthly contribution rate is burdensome</td>
<td>2.87</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The EPF monthly contribution rate should be increased</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The EPF saving is insufficient to support private sector employees during retirement</td>
<td>3.84</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. My EPF savings are sufficient to support my family and my expenditure during retirement</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Private sector employees must have other financial resources besides EPF savings for retirement</td>
<td>4.84</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. The government must enact legislation to make it compulsory for all private sector employees/retirees, irrespective of their amount of salary, to participate in the private retirement scheme</td>
<td>4.46</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. The government must enact legislation to make it compulsory for private sector employees/retirees earning salary amounting to RM5,000 and below</td>
<td>4.55</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>335</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
to participate in the private retirement scheme

11. The private retirement scheme is required for retirement 4.64 53 346
12. Exposure for private retirement scheme should be expanded 4.97 41 359
13. Your knowledge on private retirement scheme is low 4.02 132 268
14. The private retirement scheme provides better returns/dividends compared other saving modes in financial institutions 3.93 147 253
15. My present income is insufficient to participate in the private pension scheme 3.96 146 254

Source: Original survey by this research team, 2015

Analysis

From the above data, we can safely argue that the majority of respondents agreed that EPF savings are inadequate to support private sector employees during their retirement life with 248 respondents (median 3.84) agreeing with that statement. This response relates to a general perception of EPF saving as a support for retirement, but when asked whether “my EPF savings are sufficient to support my family and my expenditure during retirement”, 228 respondents (median 3.72) agreed they were sufficient. An overwhelming majority of 359 respondents (4.84 median) agreed that “private sector employees must have other financial resources, besides EPF savings, for retirement”. The respondents also said that a private retirement scheme is a good step for retirees with 346 (median 3.64) supporting it. However, the majority of the respondents admitted that their knowledge of and exposure to private retirement schemes among private sector employees is very low with a total of 359 (median 4.97) agreeing that such exposure should be expanded. 268 respondents (median 4.02) responded that their knowledge on private retirement scheme is low. The findings are in line with a study by Jee Yoong Folk et al., (2012) on “Financial literacy key to retirement planning in Malaysia” which revealed “that some mediating effect existed between financial learning and behavioural assessment of personal finance, and that the older age groups had mediating effect on the relationship between financial learning and subjective perception of satisfaction with personal finance”. A study by Nurul Shahnaz and Tabiani (2013) echoed the same results stating that, “Overall, financial literacy is an important determinant of individual savings and financial literacy is defined as individuals’ knowledge about basic and advanced financial topics”.

Table 2: Private Pension Scheme Providers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of provider</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Aminvestment Management</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Public Mutual</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Cimb-Principal Asset Management</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. AIA Pension</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Manulife Asset Management</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Kenanga Investor Bhd</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. RHB Asset Management</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Affin Hwang Asset</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Reasons for Not Participating in the Private Pension Scheme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons for not participating</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Current income is only sufficient for basic needs</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Currently, several private retirement schemes are in operation as shown in Table 2. Many workers do not participate in them (see Table 3) with the majority (113) admitting having no knowledge and exposure about the schemes. Research shows that most retirees had used up their EPF savings within 3-4 years of withdrawing them (Suhaimi Abd Samad et al., 2012; Siti Zaharah Jamaluddin & Foo Yuen Wah, 2013). However, when asked whether they preferred the current practice of full EPF saving withdrawal upon retirement respondents answered in the affirmative with 294 (median 4.44) agreeing to question 1 in Table 1. However 211 (median 3.71) agreed that “it is better to pay EPF saving by monthly instalment to the contributors after retirement”. This is in line with the response by 291 participants (median 4.33) who agreed that half of the EPF savings should be paid in a lump sum and the balance in monthly instalments after retirement. It can be argued that although the depositors/employees agreed that they would want to withdraw all their EPF savings, they also acknowledged that such savings are insufficient for their retirement and would prefer some kind of assistance from the EPF or the government. However, the EPF scheme allowing depositors to fully withdraw their savings at the age of 55 years old is still practised and consequently all depositors make full withdrawal.

Suggestions and Conclusion

1. EPF depositors should be allowed to make withdrawal in stages from age 55 years and thereafter a higher dividend should be given to the balances still in the fund. The longer the money is left in the fund, the higher the dividends payout.
2. Tax exemption to employers participating in such a scheme.
3. The government to assist financially and match depositors’ EPF savings after the age of 55 years.
4. Wide publicity for private retirement schemes and a higher tax exemption to both employees and employers participating in such schemes.

It can be concluded that many retirees, especially those from the lower income brackets, face hard times and many are forced to continue working to sustain their life in old age. The dilemma of many depositors is that they want to fully withdraw their EPF savings upon retirement but at the same time hope for access to a pension scheme akin to that enjoyed by public sector employees. An amendment to the existing EPF Act or a new legislation for a private pension scheme is needed if the above suggestions are to be adopted by the government.

Acknowledgments

The authors would like to record their appreciation to Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia for providing research grant, No. ETP-2013-029.

References


© Copyright by Author(s)


Analysis of the New Foreign Politics of Russia: Its Status and Role in the International Arena

Zhamilya Kaparova, Nazarbayev University, Kazakhstan

Analysis of the new foreign politics of Russia: its status and role in the international arena. Russia is a country who in the past was one of the significant powers in the bipolar world. It has been more than twenty years since the Soviet Union collapsed, almost the same period after the Soviet troops left Afghanistan and the Berlin Wall fell. Russia as a major part of the strong empire failed in the Cold War, since it was broken up. Initially, when the USSR broke down, the Russian economy shrank almost by half; the political situation was tough, since there was instability between relations of the executive and the legislature. Previously, the Soviet Union provided people with the good basic condition of life, high level of employability and distribution of the social safety nets. Those conditions were not similar to the Yeltsin period and resulted in unstable policy, the population recognized how corruptive and non-transparent the system was. With the coming of the new president, Vladimir Putin, marketization reforms and the rise of energy prices helped to sustain growth. Also, during his first term he mostly concentrated on the social and economic issues, achieved some influence in foreign policy and importance of the executive branch. Russian Federation is a revisionist power since it acts according to the methods of a revisionist state and then I will explain why the Russian federation is a part of instability, but not the single source of it and that the Second Cold War could be avoided by cooperation between them. All of this argument will be supported from the examples of US and Russia relations, Russian relations with NATO and other Former Soviet Countries.

Russia is a revisionist state and it uses the methods of revisionist power. One of the key features of the revisionist state is the enlargement of the territory by annexing and invading space, which is not the most important for great-competitors. Usually, it uses some diplomatic arguments in order to explain its action of invasion, for example, the revisionist state could say that it seeks to defend the interests of the ethnicity outside its borders. It wants to be in charge of the ‘games’ and have a great influence on neighboring countries.

As it was said previously, during the 1990s Russia lost it status of strong power. There was a great dissatisfaction in the minds of people, during the Soviet era they were proud of being Soviet people and then, when it collapsed they lost all of it. And now, Russians also want to repeat their highest peak of global influence as it was during the USSR existence. Russian elite wants to create their own type of governance, that is not similar to Western and to show to the world that they are better off without a Western model of democracy. The current president, Vladimir Putin said that the breakdown of the USSR was a catastrophic disaster. Moreover, in one of his interview Putin claimed that it is not Russia who is located between the West and the East, it is the West and the East, who are standing on both sides of Russia. Recent years, Putin’s popularity skyrocketed due to the strong influence of mass-media and national aspirations. People still want to be proud of its great power and want to rewrite their superpower status.

---

4 Leon Neyfakh ,“Putin’s long game? Meet the Eurasian Union”, March 9, 2014
When we make a closer look to the West and Russia relations, we can see that Russia is still wants to revise the bipolar world and high status on the international arena. Russia sees the American unipolarism as a threat and US views Russia as 20th century thinker. After the Cold War ended, US thought that Russia will adhere to the Western-style policy, but Russia was not going to implement democratic approach instead it wanted co-chairmanship. Moscow did not want to play a game dictated by the West, namely by the United States. When the terrorist attack happened on the September 11, Russia was first to speak with Bush about cooperation in combatting the terrorism. Both of them started to collaborate on the post-Soviet problematic issues and despite the fact that Russia was resistant toward creation of military bases in Central Asian countries it was inevitable. It occurred since Russia saw more gains in uniting in ‘in the war on terror and hoped to achieve its goal in international politics. In contrast, the United States pushed Russia toward the development of domestic reforms and it was only willing to have relations with Russia about the region of the Commonwealth of Independent States’. US sees Russia as only regional power so it did not want to see it as the international leader. It could be noticed that Russia wanted to return to the bipolar or create multipolar hegemony by willing to cooperate and simultaneously convince others to follow Russian rules. However, the West ignored the Russian ambitions due to its weak domestic situation and not satisfying the Western standards of liberal state.

Russia as a revisionist state focuses mostly on the influence over neighboring countries. The Russian foreign policy is mostly concentrates on the post-Soviet countries, most of which are belong to the Commonwealth of Independent States. CIS became a high priority of Russian multivectoral foreign policy. Earlier, Russia was objected to align with the US on common global problems as terrorist attacks and to be recognized as a great power by them. However, Western countries see Russia as an only regional superpower, and then Moscow redefined its foreign policy. Russia is objected to be confirmed in the political reliability of the CIS countries, especially Central Asian, by using energy sources as a weapon to play with. Central Asia remains to be the region of interest due to its geostrategic location, trade and cultural opportunities. Russian big company Lukoil is manipulating the major Kazakhstani pipeline and controls the essential amount of onshore and offshore projects in the Caspian Sea. In the Uzbekistan, Russian companies are highly engaged in the production of gas and comprise more than twenty percent of the country’s gas production. Moreover, in order to ensure its loyalty in this region, Russia created several types of unions as the Custom Union and the Eurasian Development Bank. Russia began to expand its influence on the former Soviet countries, especially after the Ukrainian crisis. Putin with the main players as Belarus and Kazakhstan joined into the economic union called the Eurasian Union. Some experts claim that behind the economic cooperation, there is a possibility of using this union as a main geopolitical key in the arms of Putin. In my opinion, even if this assumption is mistaken due to other members are not willing to pull out their sovereignty, Russia as the biggest player is having much influence on policies of these countries. Moreover, it is tending to dominate and dictate some choices in the trade sector, for instance, as it was trying to restrict the trade between Kazakhstan and Belarus with Ukraine. In part with this, Moscow intensified its aid to the least-developed countries of CA. For instance, Kyrgyzstan received from Russia about $25 million. So, we can see that Russia has a great interest towards its former-Soviet and border countires.

Annexing one part of the land or invade sovereign country is a method of revisionist power, which Russia also uses. The Crimean crisis also gives us a good example, when the state annexes the region, which is not on the top priority of the superpowers. By defending Crimean peninsula using force the West could lose much than gain. These characteristics are in consistency with the features of revisionist state: Russia

---

7 Leon Neyfakh ,"Putin’s long game? Meet the Eurasian Union", March 9, 2014
wants to revise its essential role in the world, relates to Western political approach with skepticism and have a desire to force others to act according to Russian’s own policy. Its politics toward neighboring countries, exactly FSU states, could also reflect the features of revisionism, when it ignores the border state’s own interests and policy.

The Russian Federation is one of the sources of instability in the international order, however the West and NATO alliance are also part of the insecurity. Usually mistrust and different goals between Russia and the West resulted in negative consequences in the international order. The real NATO-Russia relations were seen during the Kosovo war, where the huge amount of people died and left without shelter. According to the “Founding Act in May 1997” two sides agreed on peaceful ways in order to resolve disputes and not even try to establish a nuclear weapons station in the new countries. When the NATO intervened and bombed Serbia, for the Russians it was the sign about NATO as an aggressive union. It became viewed as an organization which was not going to cooperate and to follow UN mandate.  

The Kosovo crisis was regarded for the Russian Federation as a threat to instability in terms of igniting separatist groups and a classical example for NATO to interfere in other conflicts in the post-Soviet space. Thereafter, Russia changed it nuclear weapon tactical development and focused on close military connections with CIS. NATO expansion always was considered in Russia as a threat for its raising in the transnational arena. NATO began its enlargement in 1999 and declared Georgia’s and Ukraine’s future membership. The Russian Federation as a superpower in the past is sensitive to any expansion toward its border. The Georgian government, which is always show its pro-Western policy and desire to join NATO, experienced Putin’s warnings towards NATO’s expansionism toward the east. When the Georgians started to reincorporate Abkhasia and South Osetia, Russia took over these two separatist regions. It might be the pleasure for Russia to have a chance to act as it claimed. Also, it was a sign for the West: not to expand, however, the West went further and it involved in the creation of crisis in the Ukraine. When the maidan happened, US ambassadors helped to choose the pro-Western politician to the position of the prime minister. In response to this situation, Putin annexed crime in order to prevent Black Sea Fleet and restrict further NATO’s enlargement. The inability of the West to understand Russian policy and ignorance of its strategic interest lead to this crisis. Russia violated the international law by invasion to the sovereign country and it could explain its action. It is not going to follow it if such organization as NATO violate international law and US’s ignorance of UN treaty in their two decade military actions. As I said before mistrust and the unwillingness to resolve problems are the main causes of the crises in the world. Russia’s unpredictability, high ambitions which are not supported by strong domestic conditions and American exceptionalism are the sources of the international disorder.

The New Cold War could be avoided if both sides would be willing to cooperate on global issues, like terrorism, and cooperation on the Ukrainian issue. As the Ukrainian crisis showed the lowest point of the West-Russia relations, the resolution of it will result in escaping the possibility of the new Cold War. Firstly, both sides should recognize lessons during the Cold War. Mistrust and misperceptions were the main causes of weak relations, for example, NATO expansion and EU missile defense system were considered by Moscow as a direct threat. From the original Cold War both sides should understand that actions from each side are lead to the critical situation, there is no only side who is guilty. For instance, in the Ukrainian crisis fast decision about new presidential elections was done by the West, while Russia used this opportunity for its own superpower’s goals. The crisis in Ukraine was fostered by the Russian

unwillingness to recognize, as it is a revisionist state, that former-Soviet countries could have their own path of policy. The American government is blind to the Russian security threat and misunderstands that even sanctions will not make the Russia to alter its decision. In contrast, it will promote further aggression toward the West. The Ukrainian government’s mismanagement and flirting with West and Russia brought to such situation. The state, which situates between two big players should manner more carefully. Although the Russian Federation has no state ideology, the measures toward Ukraine, particularly Crimea, should be implemented in order to prevent the further possibility of the New Cold War. In order to reach the goal of the stability in Ukraine US and Russia should agree on a free referendum in Crimea. If the population chooses one of the sides, both of them should accept it. Moreover, Ukraine should become as a buffer state and not select the pro-Western or pro-Russian state. NATO and other security councils could make the difference in these issues. NATO should limit its expansionism and mostly focus on the regions of its first priority, radical terrorism. Other councils as UN council and OSCE should be more engaged in this region. In addition to this, both sides should clearly understand what they may lose if would be involved in the Second Cold War. West and Russia should take into consideration the country, China, with its growing economy and big population. With the Chinese rapid growth US could lose the worldwide influence, while Russia could miss its Central Asian region. They also should collaborate in order to prevent the radical-Islam terrorist growth. The West and Russia were one of the targets for the terrorist’ groups, so they need to find this problem as a common one. Russia will also lose significantly in terms of its domestic stability, now, it need to be more focused on modernizing its economy, technology and institutions.

To sum up all of this, I could say that Russia with its revisionist strategies; like the annexation of the peninsula, willingness to dictate the rules and dominate the border countries, is the one of the sources of instability in the international order. Now, its main region of interest is FSU countries, namely those who are in the CIS. This should not be ignored by the NATO and West, they should understand and were warned that any enlargement toward Russian borders would mean as a threat to Russia. Russian’s nationalism or high ambitions and US unwillingness to cooperate create instability in the world affairs. So, the New Cold War could be avoided by combatting the common problems and respecting to the both side’s interest.

Reference list:
8. Wright, Thomas.“China and Russia vs. America: Great-Power Revisionism Is Back”.

12 Legvold, Robert. "Managing the New Cold War." Foreign Affairs 93, no. 4 (2014):.
Concepts of Man and Happiness in the Classical Philosophy

Hojjatollah Raftari, Khoramabad Branch, Islamic Azad University, Iran
Yadollah Maleki, Khoramabad Branch, Islamic Azad University, Iran

Abstract

Concepts of man and his happiness are the main concerns of ethics, philosophy, theology and many other branches of humanities. Different classical thinkers have defined man differently, and their definitions of man’s happiness are, therefore, variegated. Man is looking for happiness although he doesn’t know what it is. The present essay deals with the opinions of classical thinkers on man and his happiness, and in particular, it discusses the viewpoints of Aristotle as a Western classical philosopher, and those of Mullah Sadra as a well-known Muslim philosopher. Components of happiness according to these celebrated history-making theoreticians have been concisely analyzed. Moreover, the present essay discusses the following questions: What is man’s happiness? Is it real? Is it something belonging to this world, or is it a Hereafter concept? Is it natural, or else, artificial? Is it innate, or else, acquired?

Keywords: Man, Happiness, Islam, Aristotle, Mullah Sadra

Introduction

What is man? What is happiness? What is it that philosophers, theoreticians, theologians, ethicists, and others set out to analyze? The question is a particularly difficult one since, as we shall see later in this essay, different thinkers have defined man and his happiness differently. However, the monotheistic religions give a lofty status to man. According to Zoroastrianism, man is a creature created by Goodness. Therefore, he has been shaped into a good creature by the hands of his creator. He has been vested with freedom and power of choosing. He is able to choose any path he desires. In Judaism and Christianity, man is a creature that can choose between good and evil. He may decide to be godly or ungodly, and his salvation depends on this freedom. Man is a special creature that God created by His own hands. “And Jehovah God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul” [1] (Genesis 2: 7). Although he is not as great as God, man has dominion over other creatures. “Thou makest him to have dominion over the works of Thy hand; Thou hast put all things under his feet.” [1] (Psalms 8:6)

According to Judaism and Christianity, in short, man has the capacity to attain the highest station of living, although he has also the capacity of injustice and abomination. [1] (Proverbs 29: 22 ff)

As for the Greeks, although Professor Bruno Snell concludes that ancient Greeks possessed no conscious idea of a unified human self as there is no word for such a concept in their writings [2], Socrates was interested in man’s virtues and his happiness, and Aristotle says that Socrates focused on ethical matters and ethical virtues [3]. The Holy Koran, to be sure, gives us contradictory definitions of man, indicating that man is potentially angelic, godly, and at the same time, ungodly, and ungrateful. This shows that man has the power to choose between good and evil. If he serves God out of devotion, he can find happiness.
God honors man and prefers him to His other creations [4] (Sura 17: Verse 70). However, if man serves Satan, God's archenemy, he shall be away from happiness. [4] (Sura 36: Verse 60, 61, and 62)

Among the sophists, Protagoras believed that man is the criterion or the standard for everything: He is the standard for the things that exist, and the standard for the things that do not exist; For Plato, the soul is the most valuable possession of man. In his prayers, Plato says, O my beloved God, let me experience the inward beauty [5]. According to Plato, the highest good, or happiness, of man includes the knowledge of God. However, happiness should be obtained through the pursuit of virtue, which is possible only if man tries to become similar to God.

To this end, we should become similar to God, as far as possible. It means that we should become just and honest through the assistance of wisdom. Anyone who desires to be loved by God, he should become similar to Him, as far as possible. Plato’s ideal man is the person who seeks the entire wisdom since wisdom comes from the Heaven, and therefore, it never loses its strength. According to Aristotle, however, man's happiness comes from his thinking, and from his ideas. Copplestone reports that Aristotle gives various arguments that the highest happiness is the thinking, and that reason is man's greatest faculty, and that meditation is the greatest activity of the mind, and that happiness depends on the employment of the mind [6]. In other words, only through the application of the mind in the noblest issues can man find his happiness. To Aristotle, therefore, the highest mode of knowledge is God.

Therefore, man has got a high status in the Greek philosophy. According to the Greek philosophers, and specifically according to Aristotle, man's status is high, and his station is defined in terms of his meditation on God. Aristotle considers happiness as something related to the inner states of thought, or the spirit. Moreover, Aristotle considers virtue as something leading to the achievement of balance. In other words, he considers virtue as a mediator for the creation of equilibrium among different aspects of human behavior and living.

**Man according to Islam**

Muslim philosophers define life on the basis of the Koran. They resort to the holy book to see whether the life is meaningful, goal-oriented, or else, futile. `...What, did you think that We created you only for sport, ..` [4] (Sura 23: 115) This rhetorical question in the Holy Koran states that God's deeds are wisely devised and that His actions are goal-oriented, and meaningful. Farabi believes that society is necessary for the perfection. He is, therefore, under the influence of Plato and Aristotle. The ultimate goal towards which Farabi is walking is, indeed, the achievement of happiness. In his book, The Acquisition of Happiness, Farabi lists four components of prosperity in this world and in the Hereafter, as follows: 1.Theoretical virtues 2. Virtues of thought 3. Ethical virtues 4. Practical Device [7]. Elsewhere, he says that the main goal of ethics is the acquisition of happiness. For him, the ultimate perfection is the good, and that happiness is the highest good. The more man tries to reach the good, the more he gains happiness [8].

In Chapter 22 of The Fosus, Farabi says that the owner of self is the human character, and that it is a faculty by which he perceives, understands, and utters the words from the universe of Amr, a word with various meanings such as command, thing, abstract, and existence, among others. He then adds that man consists of two essences:

One essence from the world of creation, which is the world of tangibles, and one essence from the world of Amr, which is the world of reasonables, since your spirit comes from the command [i.e.the Amr] of your Lord, and your body comes from the creation of your Lord.
In terms of transcendental experience, Farabi believes that man deserves the status of soul at peace and the Holy Faculty, when the soul at peace is capable of access to the Truth and the knowledge of Almighty. Once man reaches this station, he will behold the truth in everything. At this spiritual perfection, man gains access to the Holy faculty, and he becomes worthy of prophethood. Then, he beholds God's New Angels, and he is able to hear God's word [9].

Another Muslim thinker, Avicenna believes in the process of perfection for creatures and in the ascending arc from inanimates to vegetables and animates and Jinn and humans in the form of an evolutionary process. He believes that man is located on the last point of life perfection in the material world, who possesses every accomplishment found among the lower creatures, in addition to a thinking faculty, or as he terms it, a thinking soul when the thinking soul comes to existence in him, and after the serene temperament is added to the soul, the Holy spirit, or as he terms it, the Pure Reason, comes to existence. Then, man goes the path of evolution again in order to make the soul more transparent. At this stage, forms of knowledge separate from the Active Mind, creating a degree of perfection experienced by Elders and prophets without a message from God.

After this stage, as his perfection increases, man reaches the station of Active Mind, and he receives messages from God. If man transcends in the station of messengers, he will reach the station of Pure Angels and Active Minds. In the station of Pure Minds, there are, of course, different degrees. These degrees can be materialized for man, ranging from mere materiality to pure spirituality. Any person may attain one of the degrees of humanity, depending on his capability and aspiration, or depending on a Favor from God [10].

Mullah Sadra defines true happiness as the union of the communicating soul with the common sense. He believes that the intellectual happiness and the spiritual pleasure on the basis of Hereafter are the most transcendental pleasures. In terms of ontology, and in the universe of being, the status of man experiences a descending and an ascending curve in the system of creation. In order to explain this, Mullah Sadra says that the Bounty from God the Almighty is sent down first to the world of Reason, and then, to the world of Ideas, and then, to the world of Nature, and that the evolutionary movement leads from the world of Nature to the world of Ideas, and from the world of Ideas to the world of Reason.

According to Mullah Sadra, man is at the top of the world of Amr, because the countenance of man consists of the final degree of perfection in the carnal universe and the first degree of the spiritual metaphysical universe. Mullah Sadra, in a different context, says that the human soul experiences an herbal degree of existential perfection while it is in the mother womb, because the embryo is potentially herbal and actually animal. When it is born, the soul is promoted to the degree of an animal. When it reaches the stage of puberty, the soul of man is actually a human animal and potentially a sensual human. Then, the soul of man perceives the objects with its thoughts. With his practical reason, man performs actions before he reaches the spiritual puberty. At this stage, the moral behavior is internalized. This stage is experienced, more often than not, at the age of forty. At this stage, humans are actually sensual and potentially angelic, or else, demonic. Man's value status is determined at this stage. In his book, The Asfar, Mullah Sadra outlines the evolutionary trend of perfection for the existence from the inanimates to the humans, saying that vegetables have got a superfluous state when they are compared to inanimates. The vegetables, in turn, have different degrees, such plants as olives or palm trees being similar to animals in terms of their ways of living, for example, in their manner of production and reproduction of fruits and in their manner of survival, coming down to the lowest degree of animals such as insects or flies; Animals, in turn, are composed of different degrees: the highest degrees belong to the primates that imitate many actions of man. This is the ultimate status for the animalistic perfection, and the beginning of human movement, a horizon indicating the vestiges of reason and discrimination and the use of tools. The hierarchy ends in humanity.
At this stage, the movement culminates in the acquisition of knowledge, because some faculties, some internalizations, and some Divine Favors have been given to man, enabling him to go through the human virtues.

This is man's philosophical station. Now, if man tries to acquire human virtues and the intellectual erudition, he will have the transcendental experience; here, he can hope to enter the world of Angels, or even the Near-stationed Angels. This is the highest status of man as a human, or in the nature of a human. When man achieves this virtue of perfection, thereby reaching the highest station of humanity, the Divine Light will shine on him, and he will become a Divine Sage receiving the Lord's inspirations; In other words, he will become a prophet who receives God's revelations. Then, he will be the mediator between the people of heaven and the people of earth [11].

Man and his happiness according to non-religious viewpoints

Some philosophers have presented a hedonistic interpretation, and some others have interpreted man's happiness in terms of internal virtues.

Hedonists believe that happiness, the desirable good, is experienced through the sensual pleasures including joy, craving, carelessness, etc, since they are the components of happiness.

Pre-Aristotelian philosophers believe that happiness can only be found in the perfection of soul. They maintain that happiness is the realization of such virtues as wisdom, courage, chastity, justice, and so forth, within the soul [12].

Aristotle considers happiness as the virtuous living, or as the activities in accordance with virtues, or in accordance with the highest virtue, i.e, the theoretical wisdom [13].

In the field of ethics, Aristotle is extremely teleological. He believes that each action of man is, indeed, a step in the direction of a single purpose. This purpose is the ultimate good, and the highest good, or rather, the very good itself. In other words, happiness is good in nature, and that it is innately good. Humans have been created in a way that they seek happiness. Aristotle also says that happiness, as the final goal, has two characteristics: First, it is innately perfect and impeccable. Second, it is unique and for itself. It is sought not for anything else, since it is reasonable to seek a thing for the sake of happiness, and to seek happiness for the sake of itself, we must have the rationale for the belief that there is no good thing than happiness; otherwise, why shouldn’t another good be the ultimate purpose, besides happiness? [14]

Aristotle gives a criterion by which happiness can be understood. He explains that if something, say X, is good, and we call it happiness, but later, we learn that there is something else, say Y, which is also good in a way that X + Y is better than X, it will be clear that X is not the happiness[15]. This criterion for happiness does not specify the nature and the type of life that brings about happiness. Aristotle takes happiness as the virtuous life or as the activities in accordance with virtues or as the greatest virtue, i.e, the theoretical wisdom [16].

In many respects, Muslim philosophers' interpretations of happiness are consistent with Aristotle's interpretation, although there are differences in their analyses of happiness, which stem from religious influence.

Due to the relationship between happiness and the spiritual transcendence, philosophers usually try to first explicate the spirit, or soul, and its capabilities. In order to understand happiness, it is necessary to understand the soul, and thereby the mankind, so that the key to happiness, or prosperity, as Muslims call it, can be understood, since the soul is indeed the key to happiness, and the means by which man is able to acquire virtues, and since it is the internalized reservoir of human higher values [17].
Aristotle maintains that there are two kinds of virtue: rational virtues and moral virtues. Rational virtues include practical wisdom or reason, and moral virtues include justice, freedom, bravery, courage, and so forth. They need to be guided by the practical reason. He concludes that happiness is a durable or permanent action in accordance with both moral and rational virtues. Accordingly, the virtue lies somewhere between these two extremes.

Aristotle holds that pleasure is not the ultimate purpose, i.e., happiness. He explains that pleasure functions as a prerequisite to happiness. He reminds us that a prerequisite to something is not the same as the thing itself. The value of pleasure depends on the practical value of pleasure, and not every pleasure causes a single feeling. Each pleasure evokes a specific feeling. Aristotle believes that some pleasures are evil, which bring about evil. A life on the basis of pleasures, in which reason does not play a leading role, is not appropriate for a reasonable creature [18].

**Definition of happiness**

In order to define happiness, we have to first understand life since happiness is a function of life... Ethical systems can fall into two main categories: 1. Ethical systems focusing on this world 2. Ethical systems focusing on the Hereafter. In other words, there are two distinct ethical systems: earthly systems, and heavenly systems. The first systems focus on happiness, and life in this world, and the second systems see the present life as a preamble to the life hereafter. According to the Earthly ethics, which emerged when Bacon and Descartes presented their ideas in the modern era, happiness in this world is the goal [19].

Concerning the nature of happiness, Aristotle says that every science, or rather, every knowledge focuses on a sort of utility, or goodness. Goodness is the purpose or goal of every action. Now, there are different actions, and hence different goals. Since some actions are subordinate to some others, and since some actions include some others, the purposes of actions are overlapping. Therefore, there is a range of purposes and goals which go on endlessly. For this reason, man's actions will be in vain. Therefore, this range has to end in a certain purpose, which is man's highest good. Man's highest good, as the highest purpose, is the theme of politics, because the science of politics focuses on man's highest good, as the true happiness [20].

Concerning the union of ethics and politics, as a single science responsible for studying the nature of happiness, Aristotle maintains that every mode of knowledge as a rational action or movement focuses on life, and that ethics and politics are no exceptions. Ethics and politics are the same. However, it is called ethics when it focuses on the good of individuals, and it is called politics when it focuses on the good of society. The good which is studied by this union, i.e. the highest good, is happiness. Concerning what happiness is, and what man must do in order to prosper, Aristotle inductively states that everyone agrees that happiness is man's highest good, yet they disagree about the whatness of happiness: some people think that happiness consists of the pursuit of pleasure, others think that it consists of wealth, and of nobility, and some others think that happiness comes from good health [21].

**Definition and classification of virtues according to Aristotle**

Virtue is an internalization that makes man good, and makes his actions good. This can happen when man's actions and interactions are within limits.

Aristotle first divides virtue into two types: rational virtue and ethical virtue.

**Rational virtue:** This type of virtue comes about through learning. It needs time and experience to develop.
**Ethical virtue:** This type of virtue is the result of habits. It does not result from nature, because no natural creature may have acquired a habit contrary to their nature. Naturally, we have the capability to nurture our virtues, yet it is through habits that we may be able to make them perfect. At first, we have our natural abilities potentially, but we can actualize them later through our actions. Aristotle believes that virtue is an internalization of good deeds, thereby changing man into righteousness, so that his actions and interactions will be within limits [22].

Although being within limits is a virtue, and going to extremes is evil, not every action (and every interaction) can be judged on the basis of limits. For example, actions such as treason, shamelessness, rancor, murder, etc. are always considered as evil or corruption; we can not consider any moderation for such actions.

Aristotle's theory of being within limits can be easily questioned. For example, one can say that the extreme point of learning is the knowledge of indefiniteness, and the opposite extreme is utter ignorance. Therefore, how can we find any moderation or limits for knowledge? Moreover, can we say that the indefinite knowledge is bad, because it is going to extremes?

In addition to setting standards for virtues, Aristotle has also studied such ethical concepts as courage, bravery, chastity, generosity, bounty, etc. as well as the opposites of these concepts, as follows:

Bravery lies between the extremes of boldness and fear, generosity is between wastefulness and stinginess. Between the extremes of boasting and shyness lies truthfulness. Modesty lies between baseness and arrogance. Receptiveness is between funniness and sternness. Flexibility lies between the extremes of surrender and despotism. Dignity is between ambition and lowness, and so forth [23].

Aristotle believes that happiness and virtue are not the same. There is, rather, a causal relationship between them. In other words, they are causes and effects: virtues cause happiness; through practicing in accordance with virtues, one will reach happiness [24].

**Characteristics of happiness according to Aristotle**

Aristotle believes that happiness has two main characteristics: First, happiness is innately desirable. In other words, we seek happiness for the sake of happiness. Second, happiness is independently good by itself. In other words, happiness does not need any entity or force. This utter independence is but pure perfection. Therefore, man's happiness is instinctly desired by him, and it is innately independent. Accordingly, happiness is the One God, and not other truths. The prosperous man is moving towards the pure reason. In other words, the closer to God, the closer to happiness.

Aristotle maintains that every sensual and/or rational virtue aims at preparing man to achieve the status of thoughtfulness which is, indeed, the action of God. By thinking, man tries to be similar to the essence of God who is the Absolute Thinking [25].

Aristotle says that thinking is the differentiating element that separates man from other animals, a fact that causes him to survive because man's material elements are mortal. It is the happiness of man’s soul that makes him immortal, and he must be good-doing, and indifferent to the worldly matters in order to achieve happiness [26].
Definition of happiness according to Mullah Sadra

Mullah Sadra defines the happiness of something as the perfection of that thing. Iniquity is against happiness because the being is altogether good and the non-being is absolutely evil. The perfection of any being is its good, and the degeneration of any being is its evil. The perception of perfection causes pleasure, and the perception of shortcoming or degeneration causes pain and iniquity [27].

On happiness, Mullah Sadrah says: Until adherence of soul to senses stops, wayfaring will not happen. Wayfaring is movement towards God after the soul is separated from the senses and from the sensibles. Life will materialize in this world only if one's body is wholesome, and one's seed is permanent, and one's species deserves life [28].

In the works of philosophers, the perfection of a faculty is the same as its pleasure. Since, on the other hand, the pleasure of every faculty has been considered to result from the perception of pleasant circumstances of that faculty, the happiness of any faculty, consequently, means the perception of pleasant circumstances of that faculty. Avicenna defines pleasure as the perception of good and getting access to the good which is considered to be perfection and good for the perceptor [29].

Sadra also defines the happiness of any faculty as the perception of pleasant circumstances of that faculty. Since there are different degrees, or stations, for the perceptions of truths for the preceptor, there are also different degrees and stations for different preceptors of being. Their mastery of perception indicates the existence of the first truth as well as the existence of sensibles.

As the existence of a thing is pleasant for itself, the cause of a thing is the provider of its essence and perfection.

In his book *The Divine Evidence*, Mullah Sadra says: sages all agree that pleasure, goodness, prosperity, happiness, etc. of each one of the sensual faculties result from the perception of something congenial to one's nature or tastes or moods, and that one's pains, evil, and dissatisfaction result from the perception of something undesirable to his nature. For example, the pleasure of senses is a perception congenial to our essence. Admittedly, although all of the sensual faculties have the same perceptions, they are different in terms of their degrees of perceptions.

Accordingly, a sensual faculty with a stronger existence, and with a perfection congenial to its necessity, will have a more powerful perception. Therefore, we should not limit the pleasure in this world to the pleasure among the beasts, such as drinking, eating, and mating, lest we should say that the spiritual minds or the transcendental entities or those stationed near to His Presence, that are abstract from matter and bodily instruments, lack pleasure, hence-happiness[30].

In order to attain the higher universe of heavens, the soul has to cut off his attachment to the body and remove the veil of attachment to anything. The soul has to promote his thinking so that he can attain the higher universe.

Therefore, the intellectual happiness and the spiritual pleasure of Hereafter can not be compared to the sensual pleasures. The Holy Prophet has been quoted as saying: There is not pleasure, but the pleasure in the Hereafter, because the pleasure, and the life in general, in this world is transient. It is also accompanied by corruption and deterioration[31].
In the Holy Koran, quality and duration are the criteria for happiness `... and the world to come is better, and more enduring` [32] (Chapter 87, Verse 17).

Meskeway believes that the intellectual pleasures are the highest pleasures because they are original and permanent, unlike material pleasures that are superficial, impure, transient, unidimensional, and carnal. Therefore, a person is happy when his pleasures are original rather than accidental, intellectual rather than sensual, active rather than passive, pure rather than impure, deep rather than superficial, and above all, Divine rather than carnal[33].

**Components of happiness**

Wisdom is one of the components of happiness. As the perfection of any creature depends on the traits, and effects, which are specific to it, man's perfection occurs when his own potentialities develop into perfection. Man's specific trait is his power of thinking; hence wisdom. Therefore, the happy life is essentially conditioned by intellectual activities specific to man. Accordingly, man's perfection depends on his thinking and the power of his reason and perception. In this regard, as it was mentioned above, Aristotle also believes that thinking, meditation, and reason are the components of the greatest happiness [34].

According to the Koran, only one thing can bring about happiness, and that is wisdom. «…. And whoso is given the wisdom, has been given much good…» [35] (Sura 2, Verse 269). By wisdom, or knowledge, it does not merely mean the theoretical knowledge. Wisdom, rather, consists of two components: the practical aspect, and the theoretical aspect. A wise man is a person who has attained perfection both ways.

On happiness and man's true pleasure, Mullah Sadra says: This will be materialized when he attains the true perfection and the ultimate goal which is the nearness to God. Man's existential perfection occurs at two dimensions of theoretical and practical modes of wisdom; in terms of theoretical dimension of wisdom, man's existential perfection will occur when he comes to firmly believe in God, the monotheism of essence, and the Divine Epithets, when he recognizes God's magnificence, when he believes the Divine Bounty, when he moves in the direction of knowing the truths of the universe, when he removes the veils of ignorance, and when he becomes, in the final run, a universal scholar who encompasses the intellectual cosmos[36].

**Conclusion**

According to Aristotle, happiness is not the same as virtue. The relationship of virtue and happiness is that one is the first, and the other is the last. In other words, one is the cause, and the other is the effect: By acting on the basis of virtues, man attains happiness.

Aristotle believes in the innately desirable, or as he puts it, innately desirable in itself. Happiness must be innately independent, needing no other entity. Since man's happiness is innately ideal and innately independent, the true happiness is the One God, and not another truth. The happy man, therefore, is moving towards the pure reason, i.e., God the Almighty.

Like Aristotle, Avicenna believes that man's happiness is the same as the attainment of his ultimate goal and true perfection, i.e. nearness to God, or as Aristotle puts it, the Absolute Good, because there is no other perfection or good than the Divine Holy Presence. Whenever man reaches that great station, his soul will experience a happiness incomparable to any happiness.

Attainment of perfection is optional rather than innate: Each person has to attain perfection through his voluntary actions.
Through education, learning, and nurture, man is able to reach his ultimate purpose, i.e. his happiness in two dimensions of wisdom: the theoretical dimension, and the practical dimension.

If man wants to attain happiness, he must get rid of two kinds of veils: the internal veil, and the external veil. The internal veil consists of the shortcomings of soul. It can be removed in the light of Active Reason. The external veil consists of the soul's involvements with sensual faculties. If man is able to do away with these two kinds of veils, everything will be revealed to him, and everything will become apparent for him.

References

7. Black, Deborah L, Al-farabi, in seyyed Hossein Nasr and Oliver Leaman, (eds.) History of Islamic Philosophy, 1996, p.288
8. ibid., p.132
9. ibid., p.221
23. ibid., p.205
24. ibid., p.263

© Copyright by Author(s)
24. ibid., p.266
27. ibid., p.8
31. Fakhry Majid, Ethical Theories in Islam, Netherlands, Brill, 1991, p.17
Herzberg’s Two-Factor Theory of Motivation: Empirical Evidence from the Arabian Gulf

Alexandre A. Bachkirov, Sultan Qaboos University, Sultanate of Oman
Awatif Said Al Awfi, Sultan Qaboos University, Sultanate of Oman
Fatma Tawfiq Al Hasni, Sultan Qaboos University, Sultanate of Oman
Amal Rashid Said Al Mamari, Sultan Qaboos University, Sultanate of Oman

Abstract

The purpose of this qualitative research was to explore whether Herzberg’s two factor theory of motivation applies to the work context in the Arabian Gulf. Ten practicing managers of different job levels, industries, and sectors in Oman’s Muscat metropolitan area participated in in-depth interviews. The semi-structured format of the interviews facilitated consistency and flexibility in the data collection. The interviews were digitally recorded, transcribed verbatim and scrutinized to determine emergent themes. Overall, the analysis of the interview data revealed support for Herzberg’s two factor theory. At the same time, it emerged that cultural characteristics of the research context – collectivism, high power distance, high uncertainty avoidance, and moderate masculinity – influence the structure of motivating and demotivating factors. This suggests that caution must be exercised when transferring management theories across cultures. The study discusses managerial implications for motivating employees.

Keywords: Herzberg’s two-factor theory, field survey
The Contemporary Ideological conflicts between Islam and the Western World

*Tijani Abdulwahab, Ladoke Akintola University of Technology, Nigeria*

**Abstract**

The world contemporary history is witnessing a global ideological conflict between Islam and the Western world. This conflict has translated into deadly military confrontations across the globe; with its attendant human tragedies such as widespread destruction of lives and infrastructure, and displacement of hundreds of thousands of people. It has also led to the disrespect and threatening of national sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Using the Marxian theory of imperialism, I have attempted an historical understanding of this conflict. The theory of historical materialism has been useful in explaining the attempt to dominate the world by the western capitalist world that constitutes the global army of western liberal democracy on one hand, and the contemporary Islamic revivalist movement on the other.

This work ultimately discovered that:

(i) The ideological conflict is due to the fundamental differences between Islam and the western ideology;
(ii) The conflict could be resolved if the two ideological worlds could eschew imperialistic tendencies;
(iii) There could be mutual understanding and mutual accommodation between the two worlds if mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity can be established.

**Keywords**: conflict, ideology, Islam, Western World, imperialism.

The contemporary ideological conflicts between the west and the Islamic world have taken a global dimension. The entire Muslim world is in turmoil and serious crises that consume life massively on daily basis. We may ask why is the Muslim world in such a perilous state? What is it that has gone wrong in the Muslim world? Quixotic attempts have been made by writers to explain the causes of these conflicts, many attribute these conflicts to terrorism, and others attribute the conflicts to religious extremism, while others believe they are due to a wave of democratic movements across the globe.

Often human beings opt for scapegoats in the explanation of their plights. In this case, to what extent can we blame the western allied forces especially the United States of America (USA) forces for the disorganisation of Muslim nations of Libya, Egypt, Bahrain, Yemen, Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan etc? Can we simply dismiss it as a grand conspiracy against Islam by the Western powers? Or do we make a general statement that Muslim nations are underdeveloped, backward, conservative and against modernization or modern civilization? While there may be a grain of truth in some of these statements or explanations, it shall be indeed, naive to attribute a single cause for the intractable genocide that confronts the Muslim world.
Terrorism and religious extremism or radicalism seems to be interrelated in the argument of some writers who attribute these upheavals or conflicts to these factors. For instance, Walter in his study of terror and resistance called a siege of terror assert that the terrorists are morally deprived and they rejoiced in it. He sees the abandonment of morality and human instinct as an essential element of their training. They believe the war is between faith and falsehood, between right and wrong, civilization and barbarity. Hence all tactics are justified in the defence of their believe. They have no identity other than being members of the global Muslim Ummah on behalf of which they are waging war. (Walter E.V, 1969:4). They have also been described as “disaffected young people, some barely able to know who they are or what their history is” (cited in Aborisade, O. 2005: 1).

I attempt to view these conflicts beyond these levels. Hence, I opine that these explanations are mere smokescreen for the fundamental factors that caused the conflicts. The so-called disaffected young people who barely know their identity or even the radical terrorist fighting against civilization (Modernity) are products of human society.

It is a fact that history is made by the interaction of individuals and of groups in human societies, but the role of individuals in human history should not be over-emphasized over that of the society. When we study an individual we are at the same time studying the society that produced him. We cannot limit history to the activities of man as an individual; rather, we should view the social forces that determined such activities of man as an individual. We should therefore realize that terrorism, religious extremism and democratic movements do not occur in a vacuum or by young people ‘who lost their identity’. They are products of long period of political, economic, social and religious relations between the west and the Islamic world. Hence, we should view these conflicts within the historical context.

Consequently, I view the ideological conflicts as a violent clash of civilizations which is not a spontaneous phenomenon. It is akin to what was described as a renewal of historical forces of ... a mass of religious loyalties, ethnic identity, linguistic differences, and other forms of cultural expression’ (Mittleman, 1994 : 432) or what Huntington described as a ‘clash of civilizations’ (1996). It has taken its form during a historical process along with the trend of global historical changes. The tragedy of this conflict is that it has translated into deadly military confrontations across the globe, with attendant human tragedies, such as mass killings, destruction of infrastructure and civil life on a massive scale, the displacement of hundreds of thousands of people. All these have no respect for national borders or sovereignty. We cannot overlook the fact that the historical relations that engendered these conflicts cannot be separated from the history of global capitalist imperialism.

This ideological conflict whether within a nation or on the international level to some extent stems from political domination which goes back to the era of colonization. Colonial domination had four facets. It was not limited to political domination. It included socio-cultural alienation, military occupation and lastly the main objective of colonial rule which was economic exploitation. In the same vein, the appearance of radical Islamic terrorism and extremists such as the al-Qaeda, Islamic state in Iraq and Syria, the Ansar in Algeria the Muslim brotherhood in Egypt, the Boko Haram in Nigeria etc. could be properly understood within the context of the same historical trend that engendered the ideological conflicts. In other words, these Islamic movements are forms of reactions to the globalized cultural alienation through the Information and Communication Technology, political domination through puppet regimes, economic exploitation through the colonial and neo-colonial structures and military occupation by the international army of western liberal democracy.
Therefore, in this work, I shall trace the history of these ideological conflicts, using Marxian paradigm as a method of understanding the conflict, within the context of the Marxian Conception of history. Before I go into this, I shall define the western world, the Islamic world, the Marxian conception of history and imperialism and trace the history of the relationship.

The Western World

The western world geographically covers the areas of Western Europe and North America i.e. Canada and the United States of America. Ideologically, it covers the metropolitan nations of global capitalism. This area can be conveniently referred to as the area of the origin of modernity. Hence, in this work, I shall refer to modernity as the ideology of the west or the Western world. The beginning of modernity or the historical epoch which is often referred to as the modern world can be dated to the age of “Rebirth” “renaissance” and “Reconstruction” in Europe, which was followed by the age of “Enlightenment”. The Age of Enlightenment ushered into the Industrial Revolution in Europe. All these radically brought Europe into modernity. Modernity swept through the world for the last four centuries of human history. It manifested in all spheres of societal life such as economic systems, socio-political structures, science and technology, communication, management, mentality religion, culture, philosophy, lifestyle architecture etc. All these were guided by rational and scientific approach, creating a secular world view in all spheres of life. Thus, overthrowing all theocratic world views glorifying all material progress and promoting Lasssez Faire. One of the consequences of modernity is the disengagement of the modern world from theocratic world view, Religion or the sacred had become relegated only to the sphere of private life. This is a major factor in the global ideological conflict between the Islamic world and the Western world which epitomized modernity.

However, modernity was guided by different ideological orientations. This led to the distinctive procedures and social organization between the Western World and the communist Countries. The Western World are the developed capitalist metropolis with the liberal democracy as the political superstructure whereas many Eastern or the developing countries tried the socialist system with Marxist ideologies (Matei, C. 1993). The main claim of modernization is that pre-industrial economies became industrial or modern through the development of capitalist economic system which is related to industrialization, mass-education, occupational specialization, bureaucratization, communication, institutionalization etc. This led to changes in the social, political, cultural superstructure as well as the value and belief system, personality, mentality and social consciousness (Ronald, 1 1997 : 8).

Consequently, we shall view modernity which dominates the Western World in terms of a social movement which entails industrialization, development of science and technology, colonization, globalization and the globalization of western values. Modernity brought critical developments; first it can be associated with the growth and development of industries and the social relationship that emerged from the use of machine and power in the process of production. Second, modernity led to the establishment of the capitalist system which is closely related to the development of colonial rule and neo-colonial relations. Third, modernity is linked to the creation of modern nation states. Lastly, with the emergence of industries, the capitalist system and modern nation-states, there developed the institutions of surveillance that monitor and coordinate social life through the collection and dissemination of information and the advancement in Information and Communication Technology (ICT). The impact of modernity
radically changed all facets of human life. It reshaped social relationship, as well as local, national and global relationship.

**Historical Materialism and Imperialism**

Marx spelt out the historical trend of development based on the concept of historical materialism as different stages of development of the political economy from the Communal stage, to the feudal, the capitalism, socialist and communist. Here, we are interested in the capitalist system, with its legal, social and the political superstructure. The capitalist economy also has different stages of development, ranging from the mercantilist stage, industrial capitalism, monopoly capitalist, the imperialism stage i.e. colonial and the neo-colonial stages.

When the Capitalist System developed into the imperialist stage, it became a necessity to acquire overseas colonies. This necessity was in two folds, when the need for overseas market, and sources of raw materials for the industries became competitive, it necessitated colonial domination the Arab land became western countries mandated territories, a condition that was not different from colonial domination. The conflict between the west and the Islamic world can be conveniently dated to this period.

Capitalist imperialism necessarily need to subordinate less developed economies of Asia and Africa to maintain an unequal exchange. The subordination covered wide areas, military economic, political and cultural. Hence, the military presence of the west in (Muslim Countries) Asia and Africa, the establishment of the political superstructure, the activities of the missionaries through establishment of western schools and the presence of the western multinational company.

**The Islamic World**

Historians have reconstructed the history of the decline and fall of great civilisations. Often the major causes of the decline of nations were more internal than external. The internal decay of nations forms the fertile ground for external forces to germinate and disintegrate such nations. The renowned British historian Tonybee observed in his work ‘A study of History that out of 22 civilisations that existed during recorded history, 19 declined or decayed from within (cited by Abdul Basit: 1998 : 24).

The Muslim World was exposed to modernity at a period when it was caught napping intellectually, politically and economically. This made it possible for the colonization of the Muslim world by the Western powers. The consequences of this colonial rule and neo-colonial domination with the cultural and military attack on the Islamic world forms part of the manifestation of the ideological conflict between the west and the Islamic world.

Islam is a holistic religion. It touches every aspect of existence. Islam is based on the recognition of man as a creation which depends on its creator for the fundamental principles of life although recognizing the relevance and power of reasoning. The type of dichotomy that exists in the western ideology between what is moral, spiritual or mundane or material do not exist in Islam. While the modern world is moulded on materialist doctrines, Islam, while not denying the material aspect of man, recognises both the spiritual and material parts of man. It is on this premise that we can properly understand the conflict between Islam and the modern world. The second major reason why this conflict is so pronounced since the past two decades is that modernity or which I refer to as western ideology which includes the economic, social political and moral values have become globalized due to colonial rule, neo-colonization and recently the advancement in information and communication technology (ICT).
The period between 1783 to 1948 witnessed the balkanization of the Ottoman Empire. It also witnessed the colonization of African countries by the Capitalist European Countries. This include the Muslim countries of Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Senegal etc. while the Muslim Countries of Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Turkey, Syria, Iran, Iraq, United Arab Emirate, Kuwait, and Jordan etc. became mandated territories. In this design, the missionaries, European trading companies, the military and colonial administrations worked closely.

Paul Kenedy observes that a number of factors led to the fall of the Ottoman Empire, i.e. (a) despotic rule, (b) severe orthodox attitude negating any initiatives or dissents, (c) consistently preferring conservatism to change and stifling any innovation (Abdul Basit, 1998). All these led to stagnation, isolation and decay which provided a fertile ground for the incursion of westernization of the subjugation of the economy and political power under the western capitalist system. A society that is found weak against growing forces of the new economic industrial and military power cannot eventually resist disintegration and subjugation (Abdul Basit, 1998:25).

At the end of the 16th Century, the fair missionary centre was established in Malta and it became the headquarters for further missionary activities in the empire. This was the beginning of the establishment of western culture in Muslim land by the British and French and American missionaries. The European missionaries operated under the guise of educational and scientific institution. By the 18th and 19th centuries when the Ottoman Empire declined the missionaries exploited the weakness of the state to increase their activities. In the 19th century Beirut became the centre for missionary activities.

The missionaries had two main objectives, one, to separate the Arabs from the Ottoman Empire, two, to alienate the Muslims from the Islamic bond. In 1895, the “secret association was formed in Beirut to encourage Arab nationalism. It distributed leaflets calling for political independence of the Arabs especially in Syria and Lebanon, it later spread among other Arab regions. Turkey was accused of snatching the Islamic caliphate from the Arabs, violating the Sharia and abusing the Islamic religion”. (Quoted by Thanni, A. 2008: 12).

These seeds of Arab nationalism came to fruition in 1916 when Britain ordered its stooge Sharif Hussein of Mecca to launch the Arab Revolt against the Ottoman Caliphate. This revolt was successful in separating the Arab lands from the empire and placing them under British and French mandates.

At the same time the spirit of nationalism was aroused among the Turks. The Young Turkish movement was established in 1889 on the basis of Turkish nationalism. They gained power in 1908 after outing khaleefah Abdul-Hamid II. He was succeeded by Mustafa Kemal who went on to abolish the Caliphate he was a member of the Young Turks.

Alongside the missionary activities Britain and France along with Russia began to directly colonize many parts of the Muslim world. This started during the mid eighteenth century when in 1768 Catherine III of Russia fought the Caliphate and successfully occupied the land of southern Ukraine, northern Caucasus and Crimea which became incorporated into the Russian Empire. France attacked Egypt and Britain began its occupation of North Africa. She occupied Egypt and Sudan. Gradually, the lands of the Ottoman Caliphate were receding until the end of the 1st world war when all that was left was Turkey, which was occupied by allied troops under the command of a British general.

The division of the land of the empire was a plot hatched by Britain and France in 1916 in the secret agreement known as sykes-picot agreement. This plan was negotiated between French diplomat, Francois Georges-picot and British diplomatic advisor mark sykes. Under the
agreement, Britain was allocated control of Jordan, Iraq and a small area around Haifa. France
was given the control of South-Eastern Turkey, Northern Iraq, Syria and Lebanon. The
controlling powers were left free to decide on state boundaries within these areas. In the years
preceding the destruction of the empire, Britain played the most important role in nurturing its
agent, Mustafa Kemal. Through a number of political maneuvers aided by Britain, he was able to
establish himself as an authority within Turkey.

In 1922, the Lausanne conference was organized by the British foreign secretary Lord
Curzon to discuss Turkey’s independence. Turkey at that time was under the occupation of the
allied forces with the institution of the Khilafah already eroded. During this conference Lord
Curzon stipulated four conditions prior to recognizing the independence of Turkey. These
conditions were:

(1) Total abolishment of the Khilafah (Caliphate)
(2) Expulsion of the Khilafah (Caliphate) beyond the borders
(3) Confiscation of its assets
(4) Declaration that Turkey becomes a secular state.

The success of the conference rested on the fulfilment of these four conditions. However,
even with such foreign pressure many Muslims within Turkey still cherished the idea of Khilafah
which had served Islam so well for so many centuries and found it inconceivable that it could
ever be abolished. Hence, Lord Curzon failed to secure these conditions and the conference
wound up in failure. Yet, Lord Curzon on behalf of Britain did not give up. On 3rd March 1924,
Mustafa Kemal employed forces and terrorizing his political opponents managed to push through
the Abolition bill that would lead to abolition of the institution of Khilafah officially. For the
colonialists destroying the Khilafah was not enough. They wanted to ensure that the Khilafah
could never arise again among the Muslims.

Lord Curzon said

“We must put an end to anything which brings about any Islamic Unity
between the sons of the Muslims. As we have already succeeded in finishing
off the caliphate, so we must ensure that there will never arise again unity for
the Muslims, whether it be intellectual or cultural unity”

(Quoted by Thani A. 2008:12).

Consequently, they placed a number of obstacles in the path of re-establishing the
Khilafah such as:

(1) Introducing the non-Islamic concepts in the Islamic World such as Patriotism,
nationalism, socialism and secularism and the encouragement of political movements
based on these ideas.

(2) The provision of educational curriculum set up by the colonial powers, which have
remained intact for 80 years that produced the majority of the Muslim graduates that are
westernized in the their thinking.

(3) The economic strangulation of the Muslim world by western government and companies
through neo-colonial structures such as loans, grants and neo-liberal economic policies.

(4) The deliberate division of the Muslim world around contentious borders and territories
such that Muslim world permanently be engaged in petty issues e.g. the ten years
Iran/Iraqi War.

(5) The creation of organization such as the Arab League and later the Organization of
Islamic Countries (OIC) that cannot forge any Islamic Unity. Whilst failing miserably to
solve any problem or issue.
(6) The imposition of the state of Israel, in the heart of the Muslim world that would spearhead the Western power assault upon defenceless Muslim.

(7) The use of puppets and tyrannical rulers in the Muslim countries, which oppress and torture the Muslims that oppose western ideology.

A colonialist plant has been set up to undermine Islam, to make Muslims vulnerable, to pillage their riches and to show them the way to vice by leading them to the consumption of alcohol and pork or to the addiction to gambling, thus making them a genuine consumer market. Such in fact, are the arms of the Western colonialist war, arms which must in no way be underestimated, for they are as effective as the cannon, the bomb and the airplane. These manoeuvres are not due to chance, they are linked to an authentic political policy which is directed toward Islam and the Muslim (Ghadafi, M. August 1988).

The ideological war against Islam is by no means limited to what was perceived by Gadhafi. The war as he rightly observed included the economic, political, military and the social war fronts. But we need to view it in its true form, which is a holistic, systemic inherent conflict between the Islamic ideology and the western ideology.

What then are the crises caused by the interaction between western ideology i.e. capitalism with social, economic and political features as (Western notion) of Human Rights, Lassies-faire and liberal democracy and the Islamic ideology that dictates the political economic and social principles of individual and nation according to the Shariah, i.e. the divine Laws translated in view of social, humanitarian and political expediency as well as environmental condition. Why are we having violent crises between the two societies? The reason cannot be farfetched. Capitalism is inherently imperialistic. The conflict has been ignited by colonial and neo-colonial activities of the western powers.

As observed earlier, colonialism and neo-colonialism have about four distinct features, viz: economic exploitation, military subjugation, political domination and cultural alienation. The four features are inter-related and interdependent. Capitalism as an ideology cannot survive unless it exploits the economy of the less developed societies. This started with the mercantilist stage of capitalism, when the western capitalist metropolis in Europe involved Asia and Africa in exploitative trade relationship, and it developed into the imperialist stage when it became necessary to subjugate their ‘trade’ partners militarily and to establish political control in order to facilitate the main objective of colonial rule which was economic exploitation for the survival (advanced) capitalist nations. To justify the military attacks and the political control, a ideological argument, excuse or pretence had to be put forward, such the idea of the ‘civilizing mission’ assistance of ‘primitives societies’ etc.

When colonial rule became out-fashioned these activities continued in a neo-colonial form. The economy of Muslim countries continued to be exploited through unequal trade relationship, through interest ridden loan, grants and through the multi-national corporations that controls the wealth and resources of Muslim countries. The Muslim countries are among the richest oil producing countries in the world, hence the interest of the western powers in internal affairs of Muslim countries, their multi-national corporations are exploring and exploiting the oil resources of the Muslim nations. This explains why they needed puppet regimes, such as that of Sha Palavi in Iran before the Islamic revolution in 1979 that of Sadam Huissein in Iraq to serve
not only for their interest in Iraqi oil but to rib the revolution in Iran in the bud. Thus, they equipped Sadam’s military arsenal to become the fourth most powerful in the world. After using him to fight ten years of unjust war against Iran, in the interest of Israel,, for fear of attack on Israel they plotted against Iraq. In 2003 using the propaganda of Iraq having weapons of mass destruction they destroyed Iraq and continue its destruction till today. Peter (2015) rightly observed that:

Nothing is hollower than the claim that today’s drive for permanent war lacks an economic basis.

Quoting the Marxist-humanist perspective, Peter also observe that:

Imperialism is not the product of a cabal of right wing ideologies who have taken control of the Bush administration; imperialism is the expression of a determinant stage of capitalist production

This ideological conflict could thus be properly understood from its economic roots which is the inherit nature of global capitalism to dominate, “the fact that the concentration and centralization of capital has advanced so far that by now “there is no room” for even two superpowers underlines the present effort by the United States to achieve global domination through its drive for permanent war” (Peter Hudis, 2015).

The United States does not seem to be interested in territorial control of the world, unlike the classical capitalism and imperialism of the 19th and 20th centuries. Since the rise of the Neocolonist stage of capitalism in the post World War III era, “it has preferred more indirect methods of domination, by relying on local surrogates and economic compulsion” (Ibid).

It is in this line of thought that, Dunayer Skaya (1951) stated that while “Lenin emphasized the export of capital as a prime motive for imperialist expansion, the present period is quite different; The bankruptcy of capitalist production compels not the export of capital for surplus profit. It compels the dominant capitalists to seek to incorporate and submit their domination the total national capital of other nations. The smaller national capitals, such as Britain and France, continue to resist but they are steadily being forced into a situation where their capital, manpower, scientific knowledge etc. are being incorporated into the services of the United States” (Quoted by Peter, H. 2015).

It is for the same reason that the so-called war on terror was launched across the world. Al-Qaeda was a body set up by the United States of American’s Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). It was established by the CIA to fight the Soviet Union’s occupation of Afghanistan which lasted for ten years. After the defeat of the soviets in Afghanistan, like the returning African soldiers after the First and Second World War, the Al-Qaeda questioned the exploitative economic relationship between America and Saudi Arabia, especially the exploitative presence of the western oil companies. Bearing in mind the propaganda of helping Afghans to fight Soviet domination, they questioned the justification of the Western domination and exploitative presence in Arab land. And like the African soldiers they demanded for independence by requesting for the expulsion on the Americans from kingdom of Saudi Arabia. This was a watershed in the global war between the western powers and such Muslim organizations.

The balkanation of Soviet Union in early 1990s ended the cold war between the western powers especially America and the East championed by USSR. The cold war with the benefit of
hind sight protected the autonomy of the less powerful nations, who could run to either side for protection in case of threats from one of the two but the end of the cold war created the so-called ‘unipolar’ world where any nation that opposes western imperialist presence shall be terrorized fought and destroyed.

The September 11, 2001 attack on the world Trade centre and the pentagon was blamed on the Al-Qaeda. That was enough reason for America and Western powers to declare total war on all nations without any iota of evidence. For example, Pakistan was occupied as a Muslim nation that has nuclear weapons. She was occupied under the pretence of fighting terrorists. The Vice-President to Obama who was also former Chairman of United States Foreign Relations Committee, Senator Joe Biden said before the USA’s occupation of Pakistan that:

*Here you have a country that is on the edge called Pakistan, with nuclear weapons and missiles to carry them that can strike the entire portion of that world, the sub-continent, all the way to the Mediterranean (The Majilis: 1).*

Biden proposing a solution for this ‘threat’ said:

*We should be in there, we should be supplying tens of millions of dollars to build new schools to compete with the Maadrassahs, we should be in there building democratic institutions. We should be in there, and get the rests of the world in there, giving some structure to the emergence or hopefully, the re-emergence of a democratic process. But what are we doing? (The Majilis Ibid)*

We may ask, what is the relationship between Pakistan’s nuclear arsenal and the Camel Age Maadrassahs? The agenda of the western powers remains the complete westernization of the Muslim world, with the primary aim of pillaging the wealth, and the natural resources of the Muslim countries through instrument of political control, cultural alienation and military subjugation.

The Soviet Union intervention in Afghanistan in December 1979 was part of cold war and a response to fears that the United States of American could exploit the unrest in the country to establish a stronghold. However, the September 11, 2001 attacked on World Trade Centre and the Pentagon was an opportunity for the United States to occupy Afghanistan. The United State saw the country as the cradle of Islamic radicalism and the source of the attack. Secondly, Peter rightly described it as a:

*.... Goal of creating a network of what were termed forward operating bases around the world with which to contain the growing power of China, in particular. By establishing a military power in Afghanistan, the United State could also hope to move further towards an encirclement of Iran as well as keep a close eye on an Islamic radicalism in Pakistan and also, oil interests in Central Asia (Peter M. 2010: 82).*

The attack on Libya and Syria cannot be blamed on Islamic terrorist activities rather the United States of America created terrorist groups, sponsored them and assisted them militarily to topple legitimate governments and turn the countries into war zone. This was done under the pretext of supporting democracy movements. While in Bahrain and Yemen, the democracy movements were attacked by the agents of the west, supporting decadent monarchical governments in both countries.
Like the pretext of ‘the civilizing mission’ ‘democracy’ is the ideological excuse to topple governments around the world in order to install puppet regimes and to pillage their resources for the sustenance of the capitalist metropolitan economy in Europe and America.

An important weapon is this imperialist war is the western press, the unjust wars and occupation were not only justified but it assisted the creation of Islamphobia. Islamphobia has led to the creation of a picture of Muslims been extremist, murders, primitive, terrorist etc.

On the creation of Islamphobia a Computer Engineer Joe Paul Echon rightly said:

I did not care for Muslims, since the media had painted a very bad picture of them. For example, they are terrorists, if a Muslim committed a crime; the media blames all the Muslims. We are told not to cross in front of Muslims because they might kill you. We were also advised not to deal with Muslims since they are bad persons (Imtaz, A. 2001).

In the 20th Century, Governmental attacks were not limited to the presence of military forces but also in political, economic and cultural fields. The governments which posses developed technology have the world’s largest communications satellites and high-circulation publications under their control. Third world countries have no choice but to retreat before these attacking powers. Perhaps they are successful to some extent in neutralizing the western radio broadcasting within their own countries, but they cannot provide counter-influences throughout world. This has assisted the phenomenon of globalization of the western ideology.

Globalization has manifested itself in five major ways:
(i) The shortening of geographical distances;
(ii) The traversing of physical distances through manipulation of the electron;
(iii) The emergence of the world culture owing to certain universalizing factors;
(iv) The homogenization of human societies through the universal adoption of western concepts and vocabulary
(v) The manifestation in the relation of military and human warfare.

Consequently, globalization is an effective way of transmitting western civilization to the world. It is basically a western agenda on its own terms that makes the west the biggest beneficiary. Globalization happening within an unprecedented military and economic warfare, against any part of the world that resists in any way the establishment of western imperialism. We may argue that it is no sin for the west to sell out its socio-cultural and ethnical ideologies through the instrumentality of globalization.. the crucial problems with this is first, the military aspect of globalization, i.e. the activities of the western soldiers of democratic principles has led to wanton mass destruction of lives and economy of nations,, such as Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan etc. Second, the anti-terror wars, have produced terrorists and used terrorists to attack “unfriendly” nations such as Syria and Libya. Third, the west is transmitting the deplorable western values. The west has reached the highest peak of moral decadence. All sorts of vulgarities such as legalizing homosexuality, lesbianism,, pornography, prostitution etc. are been transmitted through the print and electronic media to rest of the world. Lastly, the western imperialism has rendered African and Asian economies to periphery of global capitalist economy with headquarter in Europe and America. All these facets of globalization are interrelated and interdependent. Islam has always disapproved all forms of oppression and exploitation of man by man. This definitely shall bring Islam and Muslim in conflict with western imperialistic activities. Islam do not condone immoralities such as listed above, similarly the anti-God stance
of the west, worshipping material progress, reducing morality to the level of practical utility and making material success as the criterion of good and are inimical to Islam.

Muslim that show active resistance to all these evils are often referred to by the west as fundamentalist, extremist, terrorist etc. However, certain basic aspects of modernity are in tune with the Islamic ideology, namely Advancement in Science and Technology and general modern education which has often being referred to as western education. Two, the formation of consultative and representative governments, three the establishment of international trade and commerce, exchange of ideas and knowledge that are functional. Above all, the maintenance of universal peace amongst all nations.

Speaking on Islam, Huntington observes that ‘Islamic resurgence’ did not just occur in predominantly Muslim cultures, it occurs in every country with a good sizeable Muslim Minority. He rightly views the resurgence as a wish to reassert:

\[
\text{.....an increase in Islamically oriented government, organizations, laws, banks, social welfare services and educational institutions. (Esposito cited in Huntington, 1996:10).}\]

**Conclusion**

By and large, Islam abhors exploitative economic systems and interest relations, which are based on the exploitation of man by man, thus creating man-made social imbalance. Especially the neo-liberal economic policies are viewed in Islamic lenses as extremely exploitative materialistic, fanatically secular, and immoral and evidences of the anti-God nature of the capitalist economics of western civilization (Al-Islam 1995:3). The Capitalist system of distribution of wealth, the concentration and control of the means of production by self-centred immoral ruling class to whom social welfare in the Islamic sense is non-existent, made it an opposition to the Islamic belief system which has elaborate provision for equitable distribution of wealth and social welfare. Thus most Islamic insurgents such as the Al-Qaeda, Boko Haram, Al-Ansur etc. are clamouring for the Islamic legal system. The challenge before Muslims today is how to establish peace in all Muslim countries and secondly, how to assert Islamic belief system in a non-violent manner and to resist or ward off the neo-colonial structures. The conflict could be resolved if the two ideological worlds could eschew imperialist tendencies. There could be mutual understanding and mutual accommodation between the two worlds if mutual respect for sovereignty and national integrity can be established. The need to establish a peaceful world is a matter of necessity and as a collective duty.
References


Intaz Ahmad (2001): International Muslim Youth KSA

Lemin, V.I. (1983): Imperialism the Higher Stage of Capitalism, Moscow, Progress Publishers


www.international maristhumanish.org/articles/what-is-new-in-todays-imperialism by peter-hudis (assessed 26/05/2015)
Iran, Political Islam, and Democracy

Mahdieh Aghazadeh, Istanbul Aydin University, Turkey

Abstract:

The Islam-democracy discourse is one of the very interesting topics in the political science that has been questioned by many scholars. It becomes even more attractive when the compatibility of Islam and democracy are examined under the rule of an Islamic regime. The best example of hiring political Islam can be finding in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Are political Islam and democracy compatible? This paper will answer this question by focusing on the case of Iran after the Islamic revolution. The results provided by discussing the Iranian Islamic regime system, election mechanism, and characteristics as well as studying the Iranian identity. Neither the election system nor the Iranian public opinion polls admit the existence of democracy within the Velayat-e-Faqih context.

Introduction:

Various scholars have been frequently questioned the compatibility of democracy and Islam. In one hand, some scholars, most famously Samuel P. Huntington has stated that Islam and democracy are incompatible institutions. Huntington explains that unlike Protestantism, Islam has not been hospitable to democracy. He refers to Freedom House data that none of the Muslim countries had been marked as ‘free.’ However, on the other hand, there are some Muslim intellectuals who argue Islam and democracy are compatible based upon interpretations of Quran. Muhammad Iqbal, an Indian scholar, has concluded the importance of democracy in Islam by stressing equality and brotherhood concepts in Quran. Furthermore, in her book Islam, Democracy and Religious Modernism in Iran (1953-2000): From Bazargan to Soroush, Forough Jahanbakhsh highlights the contribution of seven Iranian religious intellectuals before and after the Islamic revolution with the Islam-democracy debate. This book emphasis on the fact that democratic aspects of the theory of government were as important as its religious aspect for these intellectuals who had a very important role in the ideology of the Islamic revolution.

The adaptability of Islam and democracy has been studied by using a quantitative method as well. Mark Tessler and Ebru Altinoglu have studied the political culture in Turkey and its connection with democracy by using factor analysis. Among others, they conclude that while the majority of Turkish people are supporting democracy as a political system, but probably there is not an appropriate political culture existing to the level that would be conductive to democratic consolidation. It has been stated in the paper that “With respect to religion, it does not appear that strong Islamic attachments discourage the emergence of pro-democracy attitudes…These findings tend to support those who challenge the proposition that Islam is hostile to democracy… religiosity among Turkish Muslim is not strongly and consistently associated with anti-democratic attitudes, and similar results reported in other recent investigations lend confidence to the conclusion that Islam and democracy are not incompatible.”

Relying on Turkey’s case, one can give an example of the compatibility of Islam and democracy. While Huntington has claimed about inadaptability of Islam and democracy before, later on 1993 in his
famous book *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* he writes: “Islamic doctrine thus contains elements that may be both congenial and uncongenial to democracy. In practice, however, the only Islamic country that has sustained a fully democratic political system for any length of time is Turkey, where Mustafa Kemal Ataturk explicitly rejected Islamic concepts of society and politics and vigorously attempted to create a secular, modern, Western nation-state. And Turkey's experience with democracy has not been an unmitigated success.”

Even if the capability of Islam and democracy has examined and proved under the governance of a secular state, but one should ask the provocative question of if the ‘political Islam’ and democracy are compatible? Is Islam and democracy still adaptable when there is no separation between religion and the government and both are interwoven into each other in the system? The answers lie in those state practices where Islamic government rules. One of the best examples of practicing political Islam is the Islamic Republic of Iran. Since the Islamic revolution of 1979 in Iran, Islam has been used as the reference for state constitution and in political lives of the country. The Islamic revolution was the beginning of the fundamental changes in political, economical and cultural structure of Iran, which changed the imperial monarchy with the Islamic republic. In order to better understand the political Islam and the implications of democracy in the country, the political structure of the Islamic Republic of Iran should be analyzed.

**Khomeini's legacy: A Theocratic Regime**

On March 1979, a referendum on creating Islamic republic was held and the 98.2 percent of voters ratified the constitution, indeed on 1st of April 1979 Islamic republic was established. Ayatollah Khomeini, the Islamic revolution leader, applied *Velayat-e-Faqih* and Shi’ite Islamic ideologies into Iranian government system. In simple words, *Velayat* with the root of *Vali* in Arabic means owner and protector, and *Faqih* refers to a person who has the surpasses of knowledge of something; hence *Velayat-e-Faqih* is an expression proposed by Khomeini regarding a faithful leader and an Islamic jurist who guides the Islamic society in the absence of the Twelfth Imam.

In Shia Muslims view, following the death of profit Muhammad, his cousin and son in law, Ali ibni Abi Talib ruled the Muslim community. The Muslims leadership continued by succession to twelve Imam whom the twelfth one in absentia. In *Velayat-e-Faqih* notion, in the occultation period the leadership authority should be given to a *Vali-e-Faqih* or supreme leader to rule the Muslims. Khomeini stated that God had assigned the profit as the ruler and he obligated obedience to the Islamic ruler; referring to Quran verse: “you who have believed (god), obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you.” Hence, in the Islamic government, Supreme leader is the country’s top decision maker and Defy the leader is considered a transgression of God.

After Khomeini’s death in 1989, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei became the Iranian Supreme Leader for the rest of his life. In other words, Khamenei is the successor of the ‘Shia absent Imam’ and hence acting ‘on behalf of God.’ Specifically, Under *Velayat-e-Faqih*, Iran is a theocracy as its rulers intended to be. However, in addition to the supreme leader, there is a complex institutional leadership in the government mechanism. The answers to the question whether or not democracy can be applied under a theocratic regime lies behind understanding these mechanisms.
How the Iranian Theocratic Government works: The Structure of Power in Iran

The balance of power system of the Islamic republic consists of both elected and unelected (or indirectly elected) institutions. Elected institutions are as the Presidency, Assembly of Experts and the parliament; unelected institutions or those that have been elected indirectly through representatives of people, which are the Supreme Leader, Armed Force, and the Expediency Discernment Council. Indeed, the Guardian Council is a joint venture institute, Constituting of both elected and non-elected members. Below is a brief explanation of each institute in Iranian political system:

Unelected Institutions

- **The Supreme Leader:** The ultimate power and highest-ranking political authority belongs to supreme leader whom Designate by Assembly of Experts. He appoints the head of the judiciary, six members of the Guardian Council, the Expediency Council members, the commanders of all the armed forces, Friday prayer leaders and the head of radio and television. The supreme leader also confirms the election and decree of the president. Since the history of the Islamic republic, Iran has experienced two supreme leaders: first Ayatollah Khomeini (from 1979 revolution to his death on 1989) and second Ayatollah Khamenei (since Khomeini’s death till now).ix

- **Armed Force:** Both bodies of the Armed Force, Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) and regular forces, are under the command of the supreme leader. Since the 1979 revolution, the Guard Corps have established in order to protect and defend the new regime against the internal and external threats. According to Greg Bruno and Jayshree Bajoria, the involvement of Guard Corps had been penetrated deep into military, political and economic force since 2004.x

- **Head of Judiciary:** Iranian judiciary system is based on the Islamic law. The article 156 of constitution express that the judiciary is an independent power, which protects social and individual rights of the people and is responsible for implementation of justice in the society. Supreme leader is appointing the head of judiciary who is in power for five years.xi

- **Expediency Discernment Council:** The body has established with the order of Khomeini in 1988, with the aim of resolving disputes over parliament and the Guardian Council. Expediency Council also gives advice to the supreme leader in determining the general policies of the Islamic Republic. It has 45 members who are appointed by the leader for five years.xii

- **Guardian Council (Jointed-Appointed Institution):** Guardian Council has twelve members: six *Faqih* (theologian) appointed by the Supreme Leader and six jurists introduced by the head of the judiciary and approved by the parliament. Members are selected for a six-year period and they are responsible for monitoring legislation in parliament. The body has to be ensuring the compatibility of the legislation passed by the parliament with the criteria of Islam and the constitution; also the Interpretation of the constitution and the Election monitoring are the other duties of this vetting body.
Guardian Council has the veto right of all legislations passed by the parliament or the electoral candidates; all of which made this institution one of the key powers.xiii

**Elected Institutions**

- **The Assembly of Exports**: Assembly of Exports has three duties of select, remove and monitoring the supreme leader. It has eighty-six members who are selected by direct elections and all of them should be clerics.xiv
- **President**: After the supreme leader, the president is the second highest official ranking in Islamic Republic. He is selected by direct election for four years and can serve no more than two consecutive terms. In addition, the council of ministers members are chosen by the president and approve by the parliament. President is the head of executive power and he is responsible to ensure the implementation of the constitution. In practice; however, president power is limited by clerics and conservatives and also by the supreme leader. It is the supreme leader who makes the critical decisions in the country, and not the president.xv
- **Parliament**: The parliament or Majlis has 290 members whom are selected through a direct election for a four-year period; the Guardian Council should approve all the elected members. Each of Zoroastrians, Jewish, Armenians, Assyrian and Chaldeans (Catholic) has one member in the parliament. The main duty of the parliament is legislation; however these laws should all approved by the Guardian Council. This body have to approve the ministers chosen by the presidents and also can Summon and impeach them.xvi

**Should The State Be Based On Islamic Principles Compatible With Democracy?**

While Iranian government have all needed institutions for a democratic republic, which are independent legislative, executive, and judiciary branches, but it also includes some parallel institutions in which clergies have the task of guarding the principles of Islam. The President, 290 members of the parliament and the assembly of experts are directly elected by people. However, one the other hand, all their task is affected by the Supreme Leader and Clergies decisions. As an example, when there is an act by the President that is not pleasant with the Supreme Leader, he shows his discontent in his talks in different assemblies especially in ‘Friday Prayers’ speeches. As when he criticized Presidents Hassan Rouhani’s historic 15-minute telephone conversation with the U.S. President Barack Obama on September 28, 2013 by stating that: “I support the diplomatic initiative of the government and attach importance to its activities in this trip, however, some of what happened in the New York trip was not appropriate.”xvii

Stating such a statement by Khamenei reveal two important aspects in Iranian political system: first, the importance of Supreme Leader’s support or criticism on the work of other government institutions, and second, the fact that he interferes in almost all key issues of the government. Hence, while there is an independency among different government institutions, but they are strongly dependent to the Supreme Leader’s words and decisions. By his critics, almost all other clerics start to criticize and underline the governments operation and this is one of the important aspects of ‘limitation’ in governmental acts. Not only all the decisions and bills should be consonant with Islamic Rule, but also

© Copyright by Author(s)
with cleric’s point of view. The parallel/higher power of clerics with other governmental institutions is significant. Hence, under Iranian theocratic regime, the practical performance of all the elected bodies is limited.

Another important limitation in implementing people’s will under the Islamic government is the way they can choose the President. According to the fifth article of the constitution in the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Guardian Council has the right to pause or terminate the election and do the re-election. Also, only candidates do not oppose Islam and Islamic Government can participate in elections. The Guardian Council should approve the candidates and the Supreme Leader should approve the elected President. The example is the last round of presidency election in Iran in which the Guardian Council has disqualified Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani from standing in 2013 presidential election. Rafsanjani is one of the key actors and one of the most powerful political figures in Islamic Republic of Iran. He was the one who directed the meeting for Supreme Leader election in favor of electing Khamenei by stating a sentence from Khomeini: “We had a discussion with Imam (Khomeini). We said we do not have any suitable person to be the Supreme Leader instead of you, Imam said of course you have, Mr. Khamenei.”

However, after 2009 Iranian election protests called “Green Movement,” Rafsanjani accused as being involved in the “intrigue” because of supporting two famous faces of this movement: Mir Hossein Mousavi and Mohammad Khatami. Heidar Moslehi, Minister of the Intelligence and National Security, has been stated in this regard “we have exact information that this man (Rafsanjani) has been involved in the intrigue.” Following Rafsanjani’s disqualification for 2013 presidential election, Ali Motahhari, a Member of Parliament, said that “Guardian Council's approach was more political than legal, they brought two reasons for Mr. Rafsanjani’s disqualification which both are invalid, first his age and second participation in intrigue.”

It is important to note that constitutional and political limitations in the election system of Iran are one of the main obstacles to name the Islamic theocracy as democratic. People should choose among candidates whom are more or less alike each other. There is a great competition among candidates who all are common in their view and belief toward Velayat-e-Faqih and they must wholeheartedly support the continuation of the Islamic state. People can choose their desired President only among governmental chosen candidates. Even after Presidency, they should adhere to Supreme Leader’s and other powerful clerics words. The whole system is based as such a way that no ‘undesired’ candidate would appear at all. In addition, the constitution of Iran is based on “rule of God on People” and not the rule of people on themselves. Elected parts are under the authority of unelected bodies and they rather execute their will rather than people will.

Yet, the premium conclusion would be that the Islamic government and Political Islam are not compatible with democracy in the context of its mechanism. But, however, one can ask what if the majority of Iranians admit Velayat-e-Faqih, the sovereignty of God and the Islamic rule. Do the majority of Iranians agree with the implementation of political Islam in Iran? If yes, then still democracy can be examined under the structure of an Islamic Regime. Providing answer to this question is quite complex. First, one should be careful about if the concept of being Muslim and the concept of supporting for Velayat-e-Faqih would be the same: Are all Iranian religious people supporting the Political Islam? Second, there are some Iranians denying both Islam and Velayat-e-Faqih at the same time and they just...
refer themselves as having Iranian identity. Is there a connection between being Iranian and being Religious? A general overview of Iranian Identity would help to investigate the answer of mentioned questions.

**Islamic Identity vs. Persian Identity in Iran**

Islam has brought to Iran after Arab conquest during Umayyad caliphate (661-750 AD). In his book *The Persians: Ancient, Mediaeval and Modern Iran*, Homayoun Katouzian explains that it took around 250 years that the majority of Iranians become Muslims after Arab’s occupied Iran. However, after that Iranian had a great role in using science and literature to expand Arab civilization and Islam. Also, Iranians role in the emergence of Sufism was significant, and this was because of their rich literature. That is Iranians practiced Islam by mixing it with their own culture. Furthermore, by 1500 the Safavid dynasty established Shia branch of Islam and since then, Iranians adopted Shiite beliefs.xiii

Persian identity became mixed with Shiite beliefs during the history. Iranian identity shaped by both being Persian and being Shia Muslim. During the Pahlavi dynasty, the last monarchy in Iran, Persian identity and glamorizing the ancient kings of the old Persia was crystalized. However, after the Islamic revolution the rules and interpretation of Sharia were emphasized. There are even some examples in which Persian and Islamic values interwoven together. In the context of Iranian identity, one cannot define an exact line between being “Persian culture” or “Shia Muslim culture.” A very noteworthy example of combination of the Islamic and Persian values and culture in people’s life is the importance of the Day of Ashura, as a day for the martyrdom anniversary of Imam Husayn-ibn-Ali, the grandson of Prophet Muhammad, whom died innocently at the Battle of Karbala. Every year on this date, Iranians gather to have an elegy together. The importance of Ashura could be noticed by Khomeini’s famous quote “It is Muharram and Safar that kept Islam alive.”xiii

At the same time, the lament of innocence was a tradition existing in Persian literature. The tragedy legend of Sohrab and Rostam from the Persian epic, the book named *Shahname* of Abul-Qasim Ferdowsi (935–1020) who spent 30 years for composing his poetic book. Rostam is a warrior brave hero who has a beloved horse named Rakhsh assisting him in battles. The story of Rostam ends painfully with the death of Rostam’s son, Sohrab, Unbeknownst by his own hand. Rostam realized the truth - that Sohrab is his own son - too late; when he saw his own arm bracelet on Sohrab. Furthermore, there was a tradition among Iranians that storytellers named Naghal who were singing the stories of Shahname for the ordinary people in café’s or on the streets. Later Naghali took place with Taziye, which was a drama of the martyrs of Karbala; as well as the Rakhsh symbol was the successor by Imam Husayn horse named Zuljananah.

The examples of keeping both Persian and Muslim aspects in Iranian identity are much. Iranian New Year is still based on the ancient Persian calendar. They also still celebrate some ancient Persian ceremonies like *Shabe-e-Yalda* that is the Persian winter solstice celebration. On the other hand, they celebrate many Islamic events as well. Most Iranians are nationalistic and Islamist at the same time. According to Hossein Karimifard, the national identity of Iranians consists of three layers: pan-Iranism, Pan-Shi’ism and Modernism.xxiv But the extent of each of these elements is differing for different kind of people. Indeed, the question is if the majority of Iranians assume themselves as both Persian and religious and also if the majority of religious people support the Islamic regime?
There are some empirical research studies done in this concept. According to Mansoor Moadel, using a nationally representative sample of 2,532 adults sample in 2000 and 2,667 adult samples in 2005 in Iran shows a shift in the basis of identity from religion to a nation. Respondents were asked; “which of the following best describes you: I am an Iranian above all; I am a Muslim above all; I am a Kurd, a Turk, or other, above all?” according to this survey, the percentage of Iranians who defined themselves as “Iranian, above all” went up from 35 percent in 2000 to 42 percent in 2005. In the basis of their identity, there are more Iranians prefer the nation rather than religion.xxv

Another empirical research accomplished in this regard is the systematic analysis of support for democracy in Iran, which have been done at the basis of the same nationally representative data sample on 2005. The result shows that higher level of religiosity is providing a higher level of support for the Iranian regime and lower level of support for democracy.xxi This reveals the fact that people whom are more religious believe that they should be the obedience of the political system, because obedience of Velayat-e-Faqih is equal to the obedience of God in their point of view. In addition, the previous mentioned research already revealed that there is an increasing number of Iranians whom define themselves as more “Iranian” rather than “religious.” As a result, there are increasing numbers of Iranians being less religious, less supporting for the current regime and less believing to have democracy in their country. Hence, one can argue that because a considerable number of Iranians are not considering themselves as religious and hence not supporting their government, implementing of the political Islam would not be the demand of the majority of people. It should be noted that these researches are both based on 2005 statistics and there is strong need of updating these information. In the writer’s belief, Iran had many political, social and economic changes since 2005 and the new results would be quite interesting.

Summary and Conclusions

Although the compatibility of Islam and democracy has been proved by the case of Turkey, but the compatibility of democracy and Political Islam need more considerations. In a country like Turkey, people practice Islam under a secular government, however, in a country like Iran Islam and politics are inseparable. Under the Islamic republic’s regime, the sovereignty belongs to God and “He” and “His Profits” plus “His profit successors” are ruling the state. The whole constitution and the government system of the Iranian regime are based on Islamic rules. The Supreme Leader whom being selected indirectly by the people’s representatives (Assembly of Experts) has a great political power and the performance of all directly elected bodies is affected by his decisions and point of view. Under the Iranian theocratic regime, clerics have the main role in all political, economic and social aspects of people’s life and elected bodies function under the authority of unelected bodies. Under such a system with too many defects, democracy cannot work properly. However, the Iranian government justification is that since the Islamic republic the majority of people demanded to have Islamic Republic and because they are Shia Muslims, they admit to have “the rule of God” on their country. This paper showed the inaccuracy of such a claim by studying the Iranian culture as well as discussing two accomplished empirical data about Iranian point of view on calling themselves rather ‘Muslim’ or ‘Iranian’? The results provide the support that while even Islamic practices have interwoven with Persian culture in Iranian peoples life, but the support for Islam and hence the Islamic regime is not strong. This paper strongly suggests the updated further investigations about Iranian’s view toward Islam.


vii Holy Quran, 4:59.


ix 107th to 112th articles of constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran.


xi 156th to 174th articles of constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran.


xvi 62th to 99th articles of constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran.


xviii “Khamenei’s appointment as leader by Rafsanjani,” *YouTube*, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ce2Hwpvt9w8&t=64.

xix Green Movement refers to a political movement arose after the 2009 Iranian Presidential Election in which protests were against disputed victory of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and in support of two other
candidates, Mir Hossein Mousavi and Mehdi Karroubi.


xxiii Muharram is the first month of the Islamic calendar and the tenth day of Muharram is the day of Ashura. Safar is the second month in Islamic calendar and the 20th day of this month is the 40th day of Husayn ibn Ali martyrdom. In Muslim culture the 40th day of one’s death is important and they lament on this date.

