

The Influence of Teachers' Teaching Styles on Junior High School Students Learning Engagement

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Abstract:

In the 21st century, the field of education has undergone significant changes. With the continuous development of curriculum reform, teacher training, and educational evaluation systems, improving the overall level of education has become a common goal of society, schools, and parents. In practice, teachers' educational styles significantly impact junior high school students' learning engagement and are crucial for enhancing their educational outcomes. This study summarizes the connotation and classification of teaching styles and learning engagement based on existing literature. Research indicates that teaching style has multiple influences on middle school students' learning engagement. Teachers' expectations influence the teacher-student relationship, which indirectly promotes students' emotional engagement at a psychological level. Furthermore, the continuous optimization of teaching styles in dynamic learning environments further enhances middle school students' learning engagement.

Keywords: Teaching style; Learning engagement; Influence

1. Introduction

As a key element in practical teaching, teachers play a vital role in junior high school students' academic performance and adolescent development. Students' learning engagement is influenced by teaching styles and the teacher's approach to teacher-student communication, a concern of great interest to parents and schools. The new curriculum reform emphasises a "student-centered" teaching concept that respects students' principal roles and advocates for a learning mode that encourages students to think critically, ask

questions actively, and explore independently. In this new context, teachers face significant challenges in education and teaching.

According to existing research in educational psychology, teachers' teaching styles profoundly affect students' learning engagement, such as junior high school students' learning motivation, behavior, and effectiveness. Students' sense of belonging and self-efficacy is largely influenced by varying teaching styles. Additionally, teacher styles indirectly affect learning engagement by shaping the classroom

atmosphere, teacher-student relationships, and peer interactions.

Teaching style is a stable component of a teacher's personal structure, influenced by their characteristics, professional skills, and teaching experience [1]. Grigorenko et al. classified teaching styles into seven categories: legislative, executive, judgmental, holistic, local, radical, and conservative [2]. Different teaching styles can engage various types of students to varying degrees, encouraging active participation in classroom activities and stimulating creativity [3]. Sternberg and Grigorenko noted that one significant reason for studying teaching styles is their predictive power regarding students' academic achievement [4]. Teachers' teaching styles affect students' adaptability, including their academic achievement, attitudes towards learning, and teacher-student relationships [5,6]. The teacher-student relationship is central to education and directly influences educational outcomes. A positive teacher-student relationship not only facilitates the successful completion of teaching tasks but also enables both teachers and students to realise their life's meaning and value through communication [7].

Western scholars hold differing views and classifications regarding student engagement. In the early 21st century, Kuhn introduced the concept of "learning engagement". Fredricks suggested that in the learning process, students perceive knowledge input, emotional input, and behavioural input as mutually reinforcing and indispensable, with these positive psychological states collectively enhancing learning performance and achievement. Here, "learning engagement" refers to students' positive mental states during the learning process, which promote their performance and achievement [8]. Behavioral engagement indicates the frequency of students' involvement in learning and school activities, primarily reflected in-class participation, study habits, and learning motivation. Emotional engagement encompasses psychological responses to learning tasks, teacher-student interactions, and the school environment, including interest, pleasure, and value experiences. Cognitive engagement relates to the extent of change in students' individual psychology throughout the learning process and the strategies they employ [9].

After reviewing the literature, the author found that previous studies on teaching style and students' learning engagement rarely combined these two areas or deeply examined the influence of teachers' teaching styles on junior high school students' learning engagement. This study focuses on middle school students as the research subject, significantly expanding the scope of research on teaching styles and promoting students' learning engagement and overall development. Teachers can utilise the findings to enhance classroom management strategies and encourage

active student participation and input.

It is evident that teachers' teaching styles exert multiple influences on learning engagement, facilitating students' engagement through the teacher-student relationship. Additionally, teachers' conscious adjustments to their teaching styles play a crucial role.

2. Multiple Influences of Teachers' Teaching Style on Junior High School Students Learning Engagement

2.1 Teacher Support Affects Students' Learning Motivation

Teachers' autonomous support significantly influences students, including their teaching methods and motivational strategies. Research by Reeve et al. demonstrates that self-supporting teachers can meet students' basic needs, thereby stimulating their intrinsic motivation and learning engagement [10]. Supportive teacher behaviors, such as encouragement, affirmation, and positive feedback, enhance students' interest in learning and their enjoyment of the educational experience, thereby improving their learning engagement. Teachers' philosophies, experiences, and cognitions also significantly impact students' cognitive input. A radical teaching style that effectively stimulates students' curiosity and thirst for knowledge can enhance their participation and motivation.

Teachers' teaching styles are crucial factors affecting students' motivation. For example, teachers with a sense of humor and approachability can ignite students' enthusiasm for learning. Concurrently, independent support and structured teaching styles can influence students' engagement by meeting their basic psychological needs. Conversely, teachers' high expectations can stimulate students' potential and boost their confidence and motivation, while neglect or low expectations may diminish students' motivation to learn.

2.2 Teaching Strategies Promote Students' Learning Involvement

The teacher's teaching strategy is an integral part of their style, manifesting through actual teaching activities. Teachers can set reasonable learning goals, provide timely feedback, and foster a positive classroom atmosphere that encourages student participation and collaboration, all of which stimulate the learning motivation of junior students. Engaging and challenging teaching strategies collectively influence the learning engagement of junior high school students. Engaging teaching strategies capture students' interest and emotional involvement, enhancing learning

engagement, while challenging strategies promote deeper learning and cognitive engagement by increasing the difficulty and breadth of academic content.

Teachers can assist students in modifying their behavior through self-management strategies. This includes teaching the principles and skills for behavior adjustment, guiding students to develop rational self-management plans, facilitating self-decision-making and self-direction, and helping them implement and refine these plans. Through this process, teachers can motivate students and foster independent learning. In practical teaching implementation, teachers should design appropriate curriculum content based on fundamental principles of educational psychology and the characteristics of students' learning psychology. Furthermore, effective classroom management can create a positive learning environment, providing more learning opportunities and enhancing students' self-management abilities.

2.3 The Role of Teachers' Expectations and Teacher-student Relationships

2.3.1 Teacher emotion indirectly affects learning engagement

Teachers' emotional support primarily refers to their ability to foster a positive atmosphere in classroom interactions, sensitively respond to learning needs, provide feedback, and attend to students' perspectives. It encompasses three dimensions: positive atmosphere, sensitivity, and freedom [11]. Teachers' emotional support is a key factor influencing students' emotional involvement.

Teachers' emotions, wisdom, and personality, alongside students' perceptions of them, are manifested through teaching styles, significantly impacting the teacher-student relationship. These elements collectively shape the interaction patterns and relationship quality between teachers and students, allowing students to feel psychologically supported and, thus, more engaged in learning. Moreover, a strong teacher-student relationship can provide a safe and supportive learning environment. Enhancing students' emotional engagement requires active interaction and communication between teachers and students. Additionally, the teacher-student relationship may indirectly influence learning engagement by affecting students' basic psychological needs.

A teacher with high emotional sensitivity can promptly identify students' learning and growth needs, offering reasonable and appropriate guidance and support, which elicits effective psychological and emotional responses. Conversely, a lack of emotional support from teachers may lead learners to feel isolated, resulting in learning burnout. Research indicates that the positive atmosphere

created by teachers, along with their sensitivity and attention to learners' viewpoints, constitutes the three key dimensions of teachers' emotional support. The significance and feedback regarding students' emotional experiences are crucial factors in enhancing their learning engagement and academic achievement.

2.3.2 Good teacher-student relationship promotes learning engagement

The personality, talent, wisdom, vitality, and enthusiasm demonstrated by teachers can stimulate students' learning motivation and encourage their participation, creating a two-way emotional interaction. In this process, students successfully complete learning tasks, gaining both direct and indirect experiences that enhance their self-efficacy. During this period, a close and healthy relationship between teachers and students is established, resulting in a strong emotional connection. Coupled with a learner-centered creative learning mode, students move beyond passive acceptance of knowledge, stimulating greater initiative and creativity. By implementing a teaching philosophy that emphasises emotional support, teachers can cultivate students' intrinsic interest and thirst for knowledge, creating more opportunities for personalized learning. The teacher-student relationship can enter a virtuous cycle where mutual respect, trust, and understanding foster the holistic development of both parties. The traditional role model of teachers and students should be transcended, establishing a new, effective, and lasting relationship. Teachers, as leaders, continuously shape students' critical thinking and cognition, ultimately establishing a more equal, interactive, and cooperative relationship that enhances students' engagement and interest in the learning process.

2.4 The Dynamic Change of Teaching Style

2.4.1 Factors of dynamic change of teaching style

The dynamic change in teachers' teaching styles is a complex process influenced by numerous factors. With the advent of new educational concepts, teachers must adjust their teaching styles to align with evolving educational goals and students' needs. The accumulation of personal experiences and changes in professional growth led teachers to focus more on in-depth teaching content and innovative methods, gradually developing a more mature and personalized teaching style. Furthermore, this process is intertwined with teachers' internal psychological needs, changes in the teaching environment, and ongoing reflection and research. Ultimately, the goal is for teachers to form and optimise their teaching styles to better meet students' learning needs and facilitate their development

in critical thinking and practical skills.

2.4.2 The influence of dynamic changes in teaching style on learning engagement

It is important to note that the various factors contributing to the dynamic change in teaching styles do not exist in isolation; they often interact with teachers' educational philosophies and students' needs, jointly influencing students' learning engagement. Teaching styles evolve in response to educational reforms, teaching experiences, personal characteristics, and students' requirements. Through continuous practice, reflection, and learning, teachers enhance their teaching artistry, optimising and developing their teaching styles. For instance, knowledge of educational psychology can help teachers better understand students' learning behaviours and motivations, enabling them to adjust their teaching styles for improved effectiveness. Teachers can also consciously analyse and study their own teaching styles, enhancing their understanding of their behaviours and, subsequently, the quality of their teaching. By maintaining an open mind and continually learning, teachers can refine and optimise their teaching styles.

From a psychological perspective, an evolving teaching style addresses students' basic psychological needs, such as autonomy and a sense of competence. Students experience a knowledge acquisition journey distinct from the past, facilitating the development of a comprehensive cognitive system that influences cognitive strategies and self-regulation abilities. Students' inclination to actively explore and respond to challenges in their learning engagement plays a crucial role in regulating both teaching styles and learning engagement.

In summary, teachers' teaching styles significantly impact junior high school students' learning engagement in various ways. Teachers should recognise the importance of their teaching styles in fostering students' holistic development. The understanding that their expectations and behaviours affect students through emotional transfer can energise students and create a positive, supportive learning environment.

3. Conclusion

In conclusion, teachers' behavioural modes, interaction styles, and teaching strategies during the teaching process contribute to forming a unique teaching style, which can influence students' learning motivation, self-efficacy, and strategies, thereby affecting their learning engagement. Positive teacher-student interactions, supported by teachers' emotional investment, can enhance learning engage-

ment through various dimensions, including stimulating motivation, satisfying psychological needs, enriching emotional experiences, and promoting cognitive strategy use. Future research could further investigate the specific impacts of different teaching styles on the learning engagement of various student groups, such as those differentiated by gender, learning styles, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Additionally, exploring how to optimise teaching styles through professional development and educational training can help better meet students' learning needs. Furthermore, with advancements in educational technology, research can be expanded to examine the changes in teaching styles within digital learning environments and their effects on student engagement.

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