Exploring Students' Perceptions of Teaching Methods: A Case Study of Government Girls High School Gulhar, Kotli Azad Jammu and Kashmir

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ABSTRACT

This study explored students' perceptions of teaching methods at the elementary level in Government Girls High School, Gulhar, Kotli, Azad Jammu and Kashmir. The main objective was to examine how students of grade six perceive the teaching approaches practiced in their classrooms. All students of the selected grade were included in the study, making the sample universal in nature. This was an action research where data was collected through a questionnaire and analyzed using the simple percentage method to find out the students' perceptions regarding teaching methodology. The findings emphasize that for effective teaching, a teacher must adopt or use real-life examples in lessons, encourage students' active participation, and promote student-teacher interaction. This study recommended that teachers should regularly take feedback from students. This feedback will help teachers improve their teaching methods and create a better environment for learners.

Key words: Student perception, teaching methods, elementary education, action research, student engagement, instructional strategies, collaborative learning, Government Girls High School Gulhar, Kotli AJ&K

INTRODUCTION

For the effectiveness of teaching , field specific knowledge, teaching practices and individual characteristics plays a big role .The emphasis of Huang et al .(2010) is neither on mastering the language nor on techniques rather teachers should come up with unique approaches , uniformity , interaction based approach that acts as reliable source for the students. In the same way , the link between techniques used by the teachers and students ' approach towards learning is explored by Abiola (2013).This shows that the progress of the students depend on teaching method of teachers and their attitudes. The personality of teachers reflects in how they interact with learners.

The research of Liu et al. (2013) shows that the personality traits of teacher including tolerance,equality , kindness and passion have a great impact on their performance.Moreover ,to meet the goals, besides personality and techniques ,having enough school facilities is also crucial . According to Bulut et al. (2002), the more learners will be given the choice to express their ideas, the more they will reflect on learning experiences while connecting it to the real life situations. Sekuler (1990) defines the perception as the idea shaped by experience or context based on how they view the reality.When the good facilities will be given, it will provide more room for learning and student's engagement will also be fostered.

Incontrast to it, according to Ohakamike - Obeka (2016), if the facilities will not be given the students' performance will be effected negatively.

Teaching styles also play a crucial role in shaping learning experiences. Nurudeen and Usman (2010) describe teaching style as the set of activities and personal behaviors teachers adopt to facilitate classroom interaction and reduce student boredom. Nir (2001) adds that teachers often teach in ways that reflect their own learning styles, integrating strategies that once benefited them. This interactive dimension between teacher and student is widely regarded as essential for effective learning. Nevertheless, scholars continue to debate the value of lecture-based methods in higher education. Al-Modhefer and Roe (2009) highlight the ongoing discussion on whether lectures remain the most effective medium of instruction, while Williams (as cited in Fry, Smith, & Schilling, 2003) argues that large class sizes and limited resources often compel teachers to rely on lectures. Alternative facilitative approaches, such as small group work, can enhance engagement but demand more supervision and flexibility from teachers.

Active participation, creativity, and critical thinking are fostered through student-centered methods such as discussions and demonstrations. Ramadhan and Surya (2017) note that student participation in interactive activities enhances cognitive and creative abilities, while demonstrations, though effective for practical learning, must be concise and focused. Larsen-Freeman (2000) highlights the importance of language use in the classroom, as it enables students to practice and internalize the target language. Grammar, in particular, is central to language acquisition since it provides the structural system of communication; Schneider et al. (2002) argue that grammar cannot be neglected because it regulates learners' language development.

Recent studies continue to validate the effectiveness of interactive and discussion-based teaching approaches. Ardeleanu (2019) found that small group discussions foster attention, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities. Similarly, Agba, Agba, and Chukwurah (2021) demonstrated that discussion methods are more effective than traditional lectures, particularly in enhancing learners' intellectual and practical skills.

Taking together, the literature shows that student learning is shaped not only by teacher strategies and personality but also by school facilities and the opportunities students have to express their perceptions. Despite this understanding, there is still a need for context-specific research to explore how students themselves perceive the teaching methods employed in their schools. This study, therefore, investigates students' perceptions of teaching methods at the elementary level in Government Girls High School Gulhar, Kotli, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, with the aim of identifying the factors that contribute to effective teaching and learning in this context.

Statement of Problem

The quality of teaching at the elementary level plays a decisive role in shaping students' learning outcomes, yet in many government schools, including those in Azad Jammu and Kashmir, teaching practices remain largely traditional and teacher centered. Research has shown that students' attitudes and performance are closely linked to the methods, strategies, and personality traits of teachers, as well as the availability of school facilities. However, despite this evidence, little attention has been given to understanding how students themselves perceive the teaching methods used in their classrooms. In the context of Government Girls High School Gulhar, Kotli AJ&K, where resources are limited and conventional lecture-based approaches dominate, it is particularly important to examine students' perceptions in order to evaluate whether existing practices meet their learning needs. Without such insights, efforts to improve instructional quality may remain ineffective, as they fail to incorporate the voices of learners who are directly affected by teaching practices. This study, therefore, seeks to address this gap by exploring the perceptions of grade six students toward the teaching methods employed in their

school, with the aim of identifying strengths, weaknesses, and possible directions for improvement in classroom instruction.

Research Objectives

Following was the research objective of the study:

1. To examine students' perceptions of the teaching methods used at Government Girls High School Gulhar, Kotli AJ&K.

Research Questions

1. What are the perceptions of students regarding the teaching methods used at Government Girls High School Gulhar, Kotli (AJ&K)?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Concept of Perception

Teaching is widely acknowledged as a complex and demanding profession, requiring multiple skills, critical thinking, and informed decision-making. It is often described as an art, rather than a mere occupation, because it involves not only the transfer of knowledge but also the ability to inspire and engage learners. Learning, in this context, is not simply a final product but rather an active and continuous process in which learners construct, evaluate, and refine their knowledge. Learners themselves carry the responsibility for their learning—choosing what to learn, how to learn, and why to learn.

As noted by Bulut et al. (2002), learners should be encouraged to openly express their perceptions, both for their own benefit and for their teachers. Such openness enables students to reflect on the reasons for their participation in classroom activities, the ways in which these activities contribute to their learning of English, and the potential applications of these learning experiences both in academic contexts and beyond. For this reason, student perceptions are fundamental to supporting teaching and learning processes. Without student participation in classroom activities, effective and meaningful learning cannot be achieved.

Sekuler (n.d.1990) defined perception as the conscious or unconscious feelings a person (student) develops toward a particular phenomenon, whether visual or auditory, shaped by ongoing processes in the brain. In other words, perception refers to the views or opinions that individuals believe to be true. Within the teaching-learning process, student perceptions thus provide valuable insight into their experiences, attitudes, and engagement with instructional practices.

Teachers' Teaching Methods

Hasibuan (2010) stated that teaching styles encompass the attitudes, behaviors, and actions of teachers when conducting learning activities. Similarly, Nurudeen and Usman (2010) explained that teaching style represents the activities teachers employ to create interaction in the classroom and to overcome students' boredom. This includes not only their personal behaviors but also the methods and media they use to transmit and receive information from learners.

Genc and Ogan-Bekiroglu (2004) emphasized that teaching style reflects educators' consistent behaviors in the classroom, influenced by their personal qualities. Likewise, Simon and Lécuyer (2005) described teaching style as the consistent set of traits and qualities teachers exhibit across various classroom situations, even when different methods are employed. Nir (2001) further argued that teaching approaches

are often linked to how teachers themselves learn, suggesting that many educators tend to adopt strategies that align with their own learning experiences.

Lecture Method of Teaching

The lecture method remains one of the oldest and most widely used instructional strategies. In educational terms, it refers to a structured interaction where the teacher transmits information to students with the objective of delivering knowledge, generating understanding, and stimulating interest (Williams, 2002). However, while lectures can provide motivation and a synthesis of diverse viewpoints, their effectiveness has long been debated. Different researchers, such as Al-Modhefer and Roe (2009), point out that lectures can limit interactive engagement. Williams (2002) also highlights problems such as teacher bias and the passive roles often assigned to students. These criticisms show that a lecturer's skills play a more important role in teaching compared to the lecture methodology itself. In short, the issue lies less in the method of lecturing and more in the way it is delivered.

Al-Modhefer and Roe (2009) and Kochkar et al. (2000) note that the delivery of factual material defines lecture-based teaching, its suitability for large groups, and the opportunities it provides for clarification. But this method is criticized for making students passive, limiting their participation, and proving less effective as it hinders critical and analytical skills (Mechelli et al., 2004). The availability of resources and the size of student these external factors shape the choice of teaching method (Davis et al., 2003; Fry, Smith, & Schilling, 2003).

Demonstration Method of Teaching

The demonstration method focuses on the practical engagement and active participation. Basheer et al. (2016) observed that it enhances student achievement and facilitates a deeper understanding of abstract concepts by linking them with concrete examples. This method encourages group discussions, problem-solving, and knowledge-sharing, thereby improving students' reasoning, creativity, and cognitive skills. Ramadhan and Surya (2017) also highlighted its effectiveness in fostering critical thinking, provided demonstrations are concise and well-structured.

This method is useful in bridging the gap between prior knowledge and new concepts, helping learners build procedural knowledge (Gil-González et al., 2018). It has also been applied effectively in vocational training, where demonstrations provide practical exposure (Ramadhan and Surya, 2017). Furthermore, Piaget's theory of cognitive development suggests that younger children learn better through concrete experiences; demonstration methods, therefore, challenge limitations suggested by Piaget by helping students grasp abstract concepts earlier (McLeod, 2018).

Direct Method of Teaching

The Direct Method, also known as the natural method, emerged in the late 19th and early 20th centuries (Cai and Hwang, 2020). It emphasizes exclusive use of the target language in classrooms, encouraging students to acquire language naturally through immersion, oral practice, and inductive grammar learning (Brandão, Barata, and Nobre, 2022). Unlike the grammar-translation method, it discourages reliance on the native language (González-Lloret, 2020).

Despite its strengths, the method has been criticized for requiring teachers to have near-native fluency. Ducháčková and Daňhel (2006) argued that teachers need high stamina, creativity, and linguistic competence to implement it successfully. Nonetheless, continuous exposure to the target language remains a key advantage of this approach, as it fosters listening and speaking skills (Richards, 2007; Larsen-Freeman, 2000).

Grammar Translation Method (GTM)

Originating in Prussia, the Grammar Translation Method (GTM) has dominated language instruction for centuries (Larsen-Freeman, 2023). Initially used to teach Latin and Greek, it focuses on grammatical rules, translation exercises, and vocabulary memorization. Although considered outdated, it remains prevalent in some regions due to its structured approach. The primary aim of GTM was to simplify language learning by using model sentences and translation exercises (Mondal, 2023). Its importance lies in its focus on grammar as the foundation of language acquisition, essential for developing controlled and accurate language use (Schneider et al., 2002; Fachrurrazy, 2017). However, it has been criticized for overreliance on the mother tongue and for limiting communicative competence (Brown and Duguid, 2001; Thornbury, 2002).

Discussion Method of Teaching

The discussion method emphasizes interactive and collaborative learning. Ardeleanu (2019) concluded that small-group discussions enhance attention, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills. Similarly, Agba, Agba, and Chukwurah (2021) confirmed its effectiveness compared to traditional lectures, while Schwartz et al. (2017) demonstrated its role in developing communication skills.

According to Saito et al. (2018), this method is characterized by self-directed dialogue, where learners exchange ideas to solve problems. Its features include maximum participation, critical evaluation, and meaningful conclusions (Yi, Walia, and Babyn, 2019). Colby et al. (2011a, 2011b) further argued that discussion not only improves academic skills but also fosters moral reasoning and self-reflection, making it particularly valuable in higher education.

Instructors play a critical role by designing thought-provoking questions, ensuring accountability, and facilitating meaningful engagement (Adler, HilleRisLambers, and Levine, 2007; Dierksmeier, 2016). Thus, the discussion method provides a platform for learners to enhance collaboration, develop communication skills, and cultivate deeper self-awareness.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The present study employed an action research design to evaluate students' perceptions of teaching methods at Government Girls High School, Gulhar, Kotli, Azad Jammu and Kashmir. Action research was considered appropriate as it enables practitioners to investigate and improve teaching practices in real educational contexts. Data was collected through a structured questionnaire, which facilitated the gathering of quantitative insights into students' views.

Population

The target population consisted of students enrolled at the 6th-grade level in Government Girls High School, Gulhar. As the school had a limited number of students at this grade level, the entire population was included in the study. The study was conducted with 15 students from 6th grade, representing the whole class at Government Girls High School, Gulhar.

S#	Students	Number
1	GGHS Gulhar (6th Grade)	15

Sample and Sampling Technique

Given the small size of the population, a universal sampling technique was employed. Thus, all 15 students of class 6th at Government Girls High School, Gulhar, Kotli, AJ&K, were selected as the study sample.

S#	Students	Number
1	GGHS Gulhar (6th Grade)	15

Research Instrument

A structured questionnaire was utilized as the primary research instrument. The instrument was designed to collect quantitative data on students' perceptions regarding teaching methods. The questionnaire ensured consistency in responses and allowed for systematic analysis of the data obtained.

Research Intervention

The study aimed to explore students' perceptions of teaching methods in their classroom. The researcher personally visited Government Girls High School, Gulhar, and administered printed copies of the questionnaire. Students were requested to complete the questionnaire during school hours. Some challenges were encountered, such as delayed responses and lack of cooperation from a few participants. However, most students completed the questionnaire promptly, enabling the researcher to collect the required data successfully.

DATA ANALYSIS

After the collection of data, it was tabulated. Questionnaire was analyzed. After collecting data, the percentage used to evaluate the score on different indicators to check the Teacher students' collaboration towards students' performance.

Table 1: Teacher teaching style

Values	A	D	N
Percentage	66.7%	20.0%	13.3%

Table 1 shows the percentage of the responses to statement 1. It shows that 66.7% of respondents agree, 20.0% disagreed, 13.3% were undecided. This table also reveals that mostly respondent was agreeing with "teacher teaching method".

Table 2: Respects students' views

Values	A	D	N
Percentage	66.7%	26.7%	6.7%

Table 2 shows the percentage of the responses to statement 2. It shows that 66.7% of respondents agree, 26.7% disagree, 6.7 % were undecided. This table also reveals that mostly respondent was agreeing with "respect student views".

Table 3: Discussion over Lecture

Values	A	D	N
Percentage	13.3%	53.3%	33.3%

Table 3 shows the percentage of the responses to statement 3. It was shown that 13.3% of respondents agree, 53.3 % disagreed, 33.3 % were undecided. This table also reveals that mostly respondent was disagreeing with "discussion over lecture".

Table 4: Individual attention

Values	A	D	N
Percentage	60.0%	20.0%	20.0%

Table 4 shows the percentage of the responses from statement 4. It was showed that 60.0% of responded were agree, 20.0 % were disagree, 20.0 % were undecided. This table also reveals that mostly respondent was agreeing with "individual attention".

Table 5: Explain concepts clearly

Values	A	D	N
Percentage	73.3%	13.3%	13.3%

Table 5 shows the percentage of the responses to statement 5. It was shown that 73.3% of respondents agreed, 13.3% disagreed, 13.3% were undecided. This table also reveals that mostly respondent was agreeing with "explain concepts clearly".

Table 6: encouraged for participation

Values	A	D	N
Percentage	60.0%	26.7%	13.3%

Table 6 shows the percentage of the responses of statement 6. It was shown that 60.0% of respondents agreed, 26.7% disagreed, 13.3% were undecided. This table also reveals that mostly respondent was agreeing with "encouraged for participation".

Table 7: Regular notes

Values	A	D	N
Percentage	40.0%	20.0%	40.0%

Table 7 shows the percentage of the responses to statement 7. It was shown that 40.0% of responded were agree, 20.0 % disagreed, 40.0 % were undecided. This table also reveals that mostly respondent was agreeing and undecided with "regular notes".

Table 8: Conducive learning environment

Values	A	D	N
Percentage	53.3%	13.3%	33.3%

Table 8 shows the percentage of the responses to statement 8. It was shown that 53.3% of respondents agree, 13.3% disagree, 33.3 % were undecided. This table also reveals that mostly respondent was agreeing with "conducive learning environment".

Table 9: Multimedia resources

Values	A	D	N
Percentage	20.0%	66.7%	13.3%

Table 9 shows the percentage of the responses from statement 9. It was shown that 20.0% of respondents agreed, 66.7% disagreed, and 13.3% were undecided. This table also reveals that mostly respondent was disagreeing with "multimedia resources".

Table 10: Understand knowledge

Values	A	D	N
Percentage	60.0%	26.7%	13.3%

Table 10 shows the percentage of the responses of statement 10. It was shown that 60.0% of respondents agreed, 26.7 % disagreed, 13.3% were undecided. This table also reveals that mostly respondent was agreeing with "Understand knowledge".

Table 11: Different strategies

Values	A	D	N
Percentage	26.7%	53.3%	20.0%

Table 11 shows the percentage of the responses from statement 11. It was shown that 26.7% of respondents agreed, 53.3 % disagreed, 20.0 % were undecided. This table also reveals that mostly respondent was disagreeing with "different strategies".

Table 12: Time taken

Values	A	D	N

Percentage	66.7%	13.3%	20.0%

Table 12 shows the percentage of the responses of statement 12. It was shown that 66.7% of respondents agreed, 13.3 % disagreed, 20.0 % were undecided. This table also reveals that mostly respondent was agreeing with "time taken".

Table 13: Group readings

Values	A	D	N
Percentage	33.3%	20.0%	46.7%

Table 13 shows the percentage of the responses of statement 13. It was shown that 33.3% of respondents agreed, 20.0% disagreed, 46.7% were undecided. This table also reveals that mostly respondent was undecided with "group readings".

Table 14: Encourage for questioning

Values	A	D	N
Percentage	66.7%	20.0%	13.3%

Table 14 shows the percentage of the responses of statement 14. It shows that 66.7% of respondents agreed, 20% disagreed, and 13.3% disagreed. This table also reveals that mostly respondent was agreeing with "encourage for questioning".

Table 15: Critical thinking

Values	A	D	N
Percentage	33.3%	20.0%	46.7%

Table 15 shows the percentage of the responses of statement 15. It was shown that 33.3% of respondents agreed, 20.0% disagreed, 46.7 % were undecided. This table also reveals that mostly respondent was undecided with "Critical thinking".

FINDINGS

The findings of the study revealed varied perceptions of Grade 8 students at Government Girls High School Gulhar regarding teaching methods. For several statements, most students expressed agreement, indicating generally positive views. Specifically, 66.7% agreed with statements 1, 2, 4, 12, and 14, while 73.3% supported statement 5, and 60% endorsed statements 6 and 10. Similarly, 53.3% agreed with statement 8, reflecting favorable perceptions. However, contrasting opinions emerged for other items. Only 13.3% of students agreed with statement 3, while 53.3% disagreed and 33.3% remained undecided, showing strong reservations. Likewise, 66.7% disagreed with statement 9, and 53.3% disagreed with statement 11, highlighting negative perceptions of certain aspects of teaching practices. In the case of statements 7 and 13, responses were more divided, with higher levels of indecision (40% and 46.7%,

respectively). Overall, the findings suggest that while students generally showed agreement with most teaching methods, there were particular areas where dissatisfaction and uncertainty were notable.

DISCUSSION

The results of this research show that the majority of students at Government Girls High School Gulhar have a positive attitude towards the teaching practices employed in their classrooms. Students valued the teacher's clear teaching and encouragement during the learning process. Such attitudes show that teaching practices are generally

effective in ensuring engagement and understanding. This is in line with the belief that wellstructured instructional strategies increase students' interest and participation, thus promoting meaningful learning outcomes (Kaur & Kaur, 2019).

Concurrently, the research also identified areas that require improvement, specifically in giving timely feedback, inviting questions, and ensuring more active participation from students. The occurrence of indecisive or negative responses shows that teaching practices may not always provide opportunities for student-centered learning. Previous research stresses that participatory approaches and ongoing feedback are necessary to build learners' confidence and academic motivation (Ahmad & Mahmood, 2020). Thus, while the overall attitude is positive, embracing more interactive and feedback-based strategies could further enhance students' learning experiences.

CONCLUSION

According to the study, students at government Girls High School Gulhar perceive positively the teaching methods that is paracticed in thier classroom.The findings indicate that while teachers are successful in teaching effectively and involving students actively, there is still a need for some improvement like ongoing assessment, encouraging students involvement and adopting a approach that is learner focused.

By enhancing these elements the teachers' quality can be improved resulting in better learning outcomes. In conclusion, the study highlights the need for ongoing reflection and adaptation of teaching strategies to support the needs of learners.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are proposed from the findings:

i.   Adopt diverse teaching strategies to engage students.
ii.   Incorporate real-world examples and applications.
iii. Actively Participate in class and engage with teachers

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