



ADA UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

MASTER OF ARTS IN EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT

**CAPSTONE PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN
EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT**

Exploring the Ways to Build Better Teacher-Student Relationship Since the Resumption of
Face-to-Face Classes in Azerbaijan British College

Final Draft of Capstone Project

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Baku, 04/18/2022

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ABSTRACT

Many studies have shown that, the teacher-student relationship is one of the most crucial components in student learning. Student's self-regulation abilities, notably autonomy and self-determination, can be aided by constructive teacher-student relationships. As a result of the positive teacher-student relationships, students can achieve their personal and academic goals if they learn to analyze and modify their conduct. Moreover, students who had good relationships with their teachers have gradually improved their behavior. With the aim of creating positive teacher-student relationship, it is important that teachers and students interact in a face-to-face environment. However, transitioning to online setting because of the pandemic has created some challenging relations amid teachers and students. Based on preliminary data collected from the teaching staff of Azerbaijan British College, it was obvious that the secondary school students became more neglectful since traditional classes have started after the lockdowns. Teachers and students have been experiencing similar issues regarding the difficulties caused by the online classes. Nevertheless, when the face-to-face classes have started again, the teacher-student relations were distorted again, as the re-adaptation process had to take place. This research comprises interview-based research that analyzes how teacher-student relations have changed since the resumption of face-to-face classes in Azerbaijan British College, and what are some ways that teacher-student relationships can be enhanced. Research recommends dual approach on the advancement of the teacher-student relationship.

Key words: education, teacher-student relationship, online teaching, face-to-face teaching

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected the people from all segments of the society which were asked to self-quarantine in their houses to stop the virus from spreading out (Chaturvedi et al., 2020). The situation was aggravated by the way that there was no known medicine or vaccine found at this point, consequently causing a lot of extreme effect on human health and life (Anisul, 2021). For that reason, numerous countries were locking their population and implementing strict quarantine to control the spread of the ruin of this profoundly transferable illness (Haleem et al., 2020). According to the study that conducted by Anisul (2021) shows that the degree and seriousness of such limitations change broadly from one country to another, such limitations has commonly caused exceptional disturbances underway, dispersion, utilization, store network organizations, worldwide result, costs, global exchange and unfamiliar ventures, travel, and the travel industry, among others. Inherently, these limitations have also deeply affected educational field, too. According to UNESCO reports, more than 1.5 billion students in around 165 nations have been impacted by the lockdown of schools and campuses (Osman, 2020). As a result, the abrupt breakdown of COVID-19 and resultant lockdown prompted the disruption of traditional teaching method techniques and a compulsory shift toward online mode (Gupta, 2020).

1.0 Problem Statement

According to Hunsberger's (2020) study, the teacher-student relationship is one of the most crucial components in student learning. Student's self-regulation abilities, notably autonomy and self-determination, can be aided by positive teacher-student relationships. Given the positive teacher-student relationships, students can achieve their personal and academic goals if they learn to analyze and modify their conduct. Moreover, Archambault, et al. (2007) states that students who had good relationships with their teachers revealed improved their behavior. To create a positive teacher-student relationship it is important that teachers and

students can interact in a face-to-face environment. However, transitioning to online setting because of the pandemic has created some challenging relations between teachers and students. Based on preliminary data collected from the academic staff of Azerbaijan British College revealed that the secondary school students became more neglectful since traditional classes have started after lockdown. The data shows that the main reason could have been not being adjusted to the traditional classes after two years of having online classes. Teachers have also been experiencing the same problems as the students. When they started face-to-face classes the relations between them, and students were distorted. The preliminary data shows that the teachers of college had adaptation problems as well. Some secondary school teachers lost their close relatives and they had to continue their work in a face-to-face mode. Also due to the pandemic teachers and students are still getting infected which leads to switching between online and face-to-face settings, creating adaptation problems.

1.1 Definition of Key Terms

Teacher-student relations – If teachers can build a positive and friendly relations with their students, in that case it will impact students' academic achievement and they might work more diligently, show more fortitude to beat challenges, and acknowledge educators' direction and analysis, accordingly, committing themselves totally to learning (Hughes & Kwok, 2007).

Lack-of face-to-face interactions - To effectively educate from a distance, instructors require information and abilities that are not quite the same as those needed in the ordinary face to face classroom (Moorhouse & Wong, 2021). Lack of face-to-face interaction occurs when teachers have to convey content through digital technologies. It requires instructing and communicating content across a screen; checking progress from a distance; working with connection in an advanced space; taking care of students' feelings across distance; keeping a feeling of essence notwithstanding not being physically together (Peachey, 2017)

Adaptation - According to the Terzeiv (2017) the adaptation is acknowledged as the change of the inside association of the person to the current standards of the general public. On the individual level variation comprises in the reception by the person of the predominant public ethical quality, consciousness of his/her duty to society, which shows itself in his/her thoughts, objectives, activities (Terzeiv, 2017).

1.2 Research Questions and the Purpose of the Study

Our research will reveal how teacher-student relationships have altered since Azerbaijan British College resumed face-to-face lessons. In addition, to determine how teacher-student relationships might be strengthened.

The following main research questions guided in this study:

1. How have teacher-student relations changed since the resumption of face-to-face classes in Azerbaijan British College?
2. What are some ways that teacher-student relationships can be better supported?

1.3 Significance of the Study

The importance of students' and instructors' interpersonal relationships for students' effective school adjustment has been extensively recognized in research on primary and secondary education (BernsteinYamashiro & Noam, 2013; Roorda, Koomen, Spilt, & Oort, 2011). Studies on instructors' views of teacher–student interactions in the moment demonstrate a link between these perceptions and teacher happiness. Positive interactions with students in the moment (e.g., students expressing their difficulties and positive experiences with the teacher) might be a motivator for teachers to stay in the profession (Newman, 2000). According to interpersonal interaction theories, teachers have a basic need for relatedness with the students in their class. Teachers absorb student experiences in representational models of relationships, which drive emotional responses in everyday encounters with students and, in the long run,

influence teacher welfare. It is clear that the teacher–student relationship's affective quality is a significant element in students' school engagement, well-being, and academic performance (for a meta-analysis, see—Roorda et al. 2011).

Currently, the main problem in Azerbaijan secondary schools is not overemphasized. Very small amount of research has been carried away to identify the challenges in teacher-student relationship. This particular project could be valuable to novice teachers, secondary school instructors and future teachers. They can discover important details regarding primary challenges in teacher-student relationship and apply what they have learnt from this project to their future career. Knowing what causes troubles in the teacher-student interaction might assist educators in avoiding these situations. Azerbaijani British collage may also be one of the main parties that could benefit from this project. This project will contribute existing literature on teacher- student relationship in secondary school in Azerbaijan. The authors will be able to identify the key issues in the teacher-student interaction in British College and why these challenges exist with the help of this research.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The pandemic has forced the global academic community to turn to new teaching methods, including distance and online learning (UKCISA, 2020). This has proven challenging for both students and teachers, who have to cope with the negative emotional, physical and economic consequences of the disease while helping to combat the spread of the virus (Trudeau, 2020).

2.0 Challenges Between Teacher and Student Relationship

The problem of the challenges between teacher and student is a traditional psychological and pedagogical issue that has been the subject of research by many local and foreign scientists (Əhmədov, 2011). In modern conditions when moving from online classes to traditional ones rapidly, serious steps are being taken to update teacher and student relationship at its various levels (Gill & Sankulkar, 2017). The learning process is the unity of teaching and learning, where the activities of the teacher and the student are interconnected. It is also a mixed system of relationships of different types. In other words, the education premise (school, college, university, etc.) is like a huge social mechanism, the characteristics of which depend on smaller links - leadership, teachers, groups of students, thematic subgroups (sections, circles, councils, etc.), each of which has its own distinctive features (Meehan et al., 2003). It would be good to pay special attention to the key type of relationship - teacher and student, as well as the fundamental element of the transfer and acquisition of knowledge (Nordenbo et al., 2010).

The main tasks of the teacher are to adapt the student to social life as much as possible, to provide him with a fundamental set of knowledges, as well as to determine personal qualities in order to help the student find his special, unique place in society (Murray et al., 2004).

At the beginning of communication, the most important thing is to impartially get to know each other, discard negative stereotypes, imposed opinions, and try to develop an

independent point of view about the person with whom to deal (Göksoy & Argon, 2016). It is not an easy task for both the teacher and the student, therefore, the faster it is possible to find a common language and mutual understanding, the faster the goals set in the learning process will be achieved (Hojbotãa et al., 2014). Each student is individual, so there cannot be a single approach when working with students. To build communication most effectively, the teacher must be able to build relationships both with an individual student and with the class or the stream as a whole; pay attention to whether the subject being taught is profile for the student; take into account the quantitative relationships between students on different grounds - gender, age, nationality and many others; determine the motivation, the degree of learning in the studied subject (Əhmədov, 2011).

Respect trust, sincerity, and reliance as well as less interpersonal conflict are generally characterized to be as a positive teacher-student cooperation (Chernavin, 2016). But to think over a better transition, long term studies have revealed that belligerence and disciplinary problems in students—as severe group of student misbehavior—are associated to more troublesome teacher-student relationships (Savchenko et al., 2016). Furthermore, an exhaustive number of studies research elements linked to teacher well-being have discovered that teachers characterize student misbehavior as specially stressful and continuously state poorer well-being when they are being influenced by increased levels of carelessness, classroom distractions, or disciplinary issues (Schoeps et al., 2019). Teachers who feel passionate about their work are more likely to nourish student's motivation and create friendly environment in the classroom (Murray & Zvoch, 2011).

The teacher, in turn, must respect the uniqueness, dissimilarity, beliefs and views of students. In order to encourage students to actively learn, it is necessary to give them more opportunities for self-realization and to recognize the value of their ideas. This will help them achieve better academic performance (Blackmann & Lankau, 2019).

On the other hand, there are vast amount of factual evidence illustrating that students who feel valued and supported by the educators achieve more positive emotional, mannerly, and cognitive outcomes (Nordenbo et al., 2010). However, referring to findings from three independent studies (one national quantitative and two urban) verify important outcomes that educators base their educational expectations extremely on students' test grades (Muller et al., 1999). According to Muller et al(1999), at the same time the students configure their own educational expectations hugely from their comprehension of their teachers' expectations besides their test grades. Teachers' trust on test grades camouflage race-related differences in their expectations, which students might interpret as racism and this may hurt student-teacher relationship as well (Muller et al., 1999).

It seemed that education would never be the same again. For the new academic year, teachers were preparing mixed online and offline training programs, and some educational institutions were switching to a completely distant mode (Maamari & Majdalani, 2019).

The mistakes of the abrupt transition to distance learning are still fresh in the minds of teachers, students and their parents. More than 85% of university teachers consider the distant format to be worse than the full-time format (Trudeau, 2020).

Even before the forced distance learning, many were skeptical about online education: 55% of adults already had a bad experience of taking courses on the Internet (Blackmann & Lankau, 2019).

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2020a) has by now identified skepticism and stress between teachers as being one of the negative outcomes of school closures, according to the incoherence of such decisions, uncertainty of the length of the processes, and a lack of experience with online education. The uncomfortable work-related feelings linked with the reduction of psychological potential has already been a subject of recurring arguments between stakeholders, education professionals and researchers

(Al-Samarrai et al., 2020). Taking into account how teachers are dealing with the reopening of schools during this pandemic we may be in a better situation to put in place the proper support structures that might be needed (Schleicher & Reimers, 2020). Accordingly, the way the COVID-19 pandemic has influenced the emotional well-being of teachers is a major challenge that needs to be handled by both the educational community and society in overall (Trudeau, 2020).

Today's experience shows that the online format of education is becoming an integral part of the classical school, while completely distance education is impossible: live contact is still necessary (Dhawan, 2020).

Teachers admit that they do not understand how classes can be conducted without personal contact with children. It is especially difficult for teachers with extensive teaching experience to adapt. The problem lies not only in the organization of distance learning, but also in the fact that these subjects are not available on the available educational platforms (Mukhtar et al., 2020).

All participants in the educational process faced difficulties in organizing work remotely (Kaur et al., 2020).

2.1 Solutions to Support Teacher and Student Relationship

This section would demonstrate the solutions to deal with in teacher-student collaboration.

In addition, teacher need to reinforce in them the confidence that teacher is always happy to answer their inquisitive questions. This will foster a culture of cooperation (Aliasgari & Farzadnia, 2012).

For the successful implementation of the educational process, the interaction between teachers and students in educational institutions must be properly established in this process, and a healthy environment must be created for them to exchange information with each other

(Rüstəmov & İsayev, 2013). In this case, a pedagogical relationship is formed, and in this process, the successful establishment of the relationship depends on pedagogical communication. Because without pedagogical communication, that is, without the free discussion of knowledge between teachers and students, the teacher cannot achieve interaction with students (Myasoedov & Radosteva, 2018). It is through joint activity that teachers and students understand each other more flexibly, and the teacher can more easily convey their knowledge and ideas, lectures, opinions and attitudes to the student (Maamari & Majdalani, 2019). This communication allows students to develop and form comprehensively, to create a social environment among them and to manage the socio-psychological processes in the group (Hojbotāa et al., 2014). The culture of pedagogical communication is the result of the teacher's deep mastery of methods and techniques of communication, pedagogical skills and creativity. In addition to pedagogical communication, the teacher must also have the character of objective approach to students (Meletichev, 2015). If a student receives a low score on the test, the teacher should not treat the student negatively for this reason. On the contrary, when praising students with good results, he should also motivate students who show negative results in tests, encourage them not to be discouraged and try to achieve better results next time (Hopkins & Yonker, 2015). In most cases, we only celebrate achievements and results, but to get the most out of the class, teacher must make students believe in the value of the process itself (Chernavin, 2016). One of the great ways to do this is to identify progress, praise and reward for the work done. This way, teacher can increase the motivation of his students and make them believe that any hard work always bears fruit. Whether in the business environment or in the classroom, encouragement and recognition are essential elements of good governance (Shamina, 2018). When planning classroom management, teacher need to think, as broadly as possible, have a non-standard perspective and take small but very important steps that, others often underestimate (Stepanova & Nikolaeva, 2019). When students see, their peers receive

gratitude from the teacher, they want to become like them. The next time a student shows visible signs of growth, report it in front of the class (Schoeps et al., 2019). Good examples are essential for effective classroom management. It is these examples that can guide others. Even in a virtual lesson, teacher can give credit to his students' achievements in a convenient way (Trudeau, 2020). Teacher should never show himself or allow other students to show discrimination in class or treat some students badly because of their culture or nationality, racism would never be allowed in class. In order to overcome this kind of situations, teacher should find out nationality and culture of each student if it is multinational class and show deep respect to each culture and nationality by giving good example to his students (Myasoedov, 2020).

Another solution to achieve good relationship with students is collaboration with their parents, especially if the classes are online or distant. It is worthwhile to have a communication with the parents, in which there is a direct discussion of the student's progress and informing the parents and guardians of the student about his success. In the framework of direct communication with students and their parents, teachers can provide objective information about the success of students, assess their strengths, solve problems, give advice and offer solutions for the further educational path of students (Hechler, 2017). The teacher can develop a template for taking notes of each student and share this template with the parents of each student individually (Savchenko et al., 2016). In online education, there is lack of time for teacher-student communication, the given time is not even enough for giving proper information and knowledge and getting back feedback from the students on the specific subject. Teacher-parent collaboration would be very productive and beneficial in this case to achieve great results both in teacher-student relationship and in education success of the students (Kaur et al., 2020).

Another method of effective interaction with students should also be explored by the teachers. New opportunities must be sought to provide students with opportunities to collaborate. It can take the form of group assignments or creative extracurricular activities within the classroom (Blackmann & Lankau, 2019). By effectively interacting with each other, students are better at managing their own time. In addition, they learn to divide a difficult task into smaller ones. Students take an example from each other's strengths and mutually compensate for weaknesses (Rüstəmov & İsayev, 2013). The pride will fill teacher when the students begin to manage their own activities. Thus, by giving them the opportunity to work together, teacher empower them to play an active role in the management of the classroom, and his job is simplified (Перова, 2006).

One of the best ways to manage students in the classroom is by empowering them with responsibilities. After assigning responsibilities, it is necessary to convey to the students what is expected of them in this role (Murray & Murray, 2004). For a quick example, try putting a few students with no interest in learning in leadership roles. At the same time, teacher need to assign them a number of important responsibilities and emphasize that teacher is always ready to help them (Argon, 2014). When a passive student receives, a responsible task related to managing classmates, he will by default be actively involved in the process. Giving students this confidence and giving them the opportunity to assess their strengths in the assigned assignments can be an effective strategy (Michael & Stern, 2014). This approach helps students understand what they are capable of. At the very least, such opportunities help students acquire the necessary life skills. Even the smallest leadership roles, such as the role of class leader or project team leader, can change a person's outlook (Meletichev, 2014).

Whether it is a virtual lesson, or a face-to-face lesson, glitches and disruptions need to be addressed immediately by the teacher. If teacher do not do this, then the students may get the impression that it is normal to misbehave in class. This can upset the balance and affect

students who are genuinely willing to learn. However, it is recommended that teacher respond courteously and with dignity even to unacceptable misconduct in the classroom (Murray & Zvoch, 2011). To manage the class with dignity, it is necessary to be regularly reminded of the importance and necessity of maintaining order. Students should be aware that for all teacher's goodwill, he will not tolerate discipline violations (Savchenko et al., 2016). Teacher do not have to punish students for misbehaving. Disobedience can also be dealt with through love and affection. Nevertheless, focusing on the misconduct as it happens is very important (Trudeau, 2020). Teacher must maintain discipline in the classroom. In addition, even in a virtual classroom, teacher need to set the example of the behaviour teacher expect from his students. For example, if students see that teacher are doing a great job of dealing with distractions during his online class, they will try to do the same (Stepanova & Nikolaeva, 2019). They will know that it is inappropriate to use a phone or tablet in an online lesson. On the other hand, if they see that teacher use his phone a lot during the lesson, they may do the same, because they will think that it is completely normal (Chernavin, 2016). Teacher must set an excellent role model for his students as their leader and be aware of his responsibility for their behaviour (Əhmədov, 2011).

In summary, effective teacher-student interaction should not be characterized as a one-sided relationship. This is a dialogue, cooperation, in which the following rules are adhered to: listening to each other's opinion, jointly making decisions and responsibility for their actions and for the work of the whole group (Hechler, 2017). What kind of relationship a teacher will have with students depends largely on the characteristics of his personality. To build a business-like, but at the same time, trusting interaction with the class, the teacher must have a certain set of qualities, the essentials are: personal: openness, benevolence, emotional stability and poise, responsibility, the ability to self-control; organizational: fairness, consistency, honesty, respect for other people's opinions; business: democracy, the ability to interest others with their

thoughts and ideas; visual: harmonious and neat appearance, pleasant voice, restrained but expressive gestures and facial expressions, general attractiveness (Shamina, 2018). To minimize the risk of challenges and conflicts, teacher must not only choose the right model of pedagogical behaviour, but also strive for the continuous development of his personal qualities and professional competencies (Göksoy & Argon, 2016). The higher the authority of the teacher, the respect for him as a teacher and a person, the better the relationship with students and the fewer reasons for conflict (Hopkins & Yonker, 2015). Racism and cultural difference should never be allowed in classroom environment by both teacher and students. One of the responsibilities of teachers after the transition from distance education to face-to-face education is to restore communication with students and help them adjust to an intensive and daily routine (Blackmann & Lankau, 2019).

The relationship between teachers and students when moving from online study to traditional one should be in details evaluated and progressed. In this transition period, along with the students, the teachers also need a psychological assistance.

CHAPTER 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Ponomarev and Pikuleva (2014) emphasizes the importance of the methodology in the formulation of the problem, the construction of the subject of research, the construction of a scientific theory, as well as the verification of the obtained result from the point of view of its truth. In many academic and professional disciplines, qualitative research has now become an acceptable, if not mainstream, method of investigation (Yin, 2011). Given the importance and relevance of qualitative research, we will apply the exploratory qualitative methodology to investigate the ways on how to build better teacher-student relationships since the resumption of face-to-face classes in Azerbaijan British College. We will interview British College secondary school students to identify problems that hinder teacher-student relationships and attempt to find a solution model to help them improve their relations (Creswell, 2007).

3.0 Research Design

This study will use the qualitative research approach because qualitative methods are especially important in assessing the meaning that individuals attach to situations that they encounter (Creswell, 2014). Because qualitative research will allow us to work with nonmainstream cultures and social contexts, one of the most common contributions of qualitative research has been to uncover the existence of more diversified conditions than have been identified by prior studies (Yin, 2011).

One-on-one semi-structured interviews will be utilized as qualitative research methodologies in this study. Semi-structured interviews will be done with the 10th graders and one-on-one interviews will be held with the science teachers. Creswell (2014) points out that, when the interaction between interviewees will likely yield the best information, when interviewees are similar and cooperative with one another, when time to collect information is limited, and when individuals interviewed one-on-one may be hesitant to provide information,

semi-structured interviews are advantageous (Krueger, 1994; Morgan, 1988; Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990).

For one-on-one interviews, the researcher will require people who aren't afraid to speak out and offer their opinions, as well as a context in which this is feasible (Creswell, 2014).

3.1 Research Site

This study will be conducted in one of the private schools in Baku, Azerbaijan British College (ABC). ABC is registered and recognized by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The students sit Azerbaijani examinations, but ABC is also approved as an examination center for international examinations. This ensures that the school's pupils will receive internationally recognized accreditation. Cambridge and Edexcel examine Azerbaijan British College on a yearly basis to ensure that they maintain their excellent standards. ABC got full accredited member status from CIS (Council of International Schools) in July 2021, and it received the same from COBIS (Council of British International Schools) in September 2021. For students and parents, these accreditations serve as a mark of excellence. ABC is the only school in the region that has received both accreditations. ABC is also a part of the Black Sea Schools Group (BSS), a consortium of British-accredited schools in our region. BSS hosts seminars, contests, and opportunities for top rated institutions in the region to discuss best practices. The mission statement of the school is 'To provide a creative, multicultural, and bilingual educational atmosphere in which our students may grow academically, socially, physically, and emotionally'. There are 650 students studying at ABC and 120 teaching staff.

3.2 Population

The population of this study is secondary students and teachers. The total number of secondary students is 282 and 46 teachers are currently teaching at this level. Specifically, we will focus on the 10th graders and the teachers teaching them. The number of total students in the 10th grade is 44.

3.3 Sampling

As previously mentioned, the preliminary data were the discussion with four teachers from Azerbaijan British College, who teach the 10th graders. We will apply a purposive sampling technique. This type of sampling will assist in selecting a sample that is most useful to the purposes of our research (Yin, 2011). Thus, three science teachers will be purposefully selected who are teaching the 10th graders and experiencing teacher-student relationship problems. As one of our group member is currently teaching physics in the same school it will be easier to contact science teachers. Also, simple random sampling will be utilized for choosing the students. That being said, six students out of forty-four 10th graders, will be chosen (Creswell, 2007). Our study seeks to generalize its results quantitatively to the full population of units, so random sampling—selecting a statistically determined sample of units from a known population of units—can be done (Yin, 2011).

3.4 Data Collection Methods

We will collect data by conducting individual semi-structured interviews with teachers and the 10th grade students (5 teachers and 11 students). Particularly, semi-structured interviews will be utilized to obtain teachers' opinions on how they face the relationship problems with their 10th graders after resuming face-to-face classes. The one-on-one interviews will last approximately 40-45 minutes. Azerbaijan British College has three 10th grade classes (10N, 10E and 10W) we will choose 11 students from these groups and invite them into the semi-structured interviews. When compared to individual interviews, there is a clear trade-off between efficiency (speaking with several people at once) and depth (getting less information from each participant). However, one of the most compelling reasons for doing group interviews has nothing to do with this trade-off. Rather, group interviews are preferable when you anticipate that people (e.g., children and teenagers) will express themselves more

freely in a group setting than when they are the subject of a one-on-one interview with you (Yin, 2011).

3.5 Ethical Considerations

Before starting the data collection process, we will obtain an official letter from ADA University to request access from Azerbaijan British College (ABC) to collect the data. We will also the school obtain permission documents from the ABC principal or general manager to interview students and teachers. Three science teachers will be emailed with attached the consent form to be signed before the individual interviews, as teachers should know the purpose, benefits, and risks of the study before they agree or decline to participate in this study. We acknowledge the importance of keeping the information counseled and anonymizing personally identifiable data. These are particularly crucial when we negotiate access to the research field location, immerse participants in our study, collect intimate, emotional data that reveals life's nuances, and ask participants to devote significant time to our projects (Creswell, 2007).

3.6 Data Analysis

During data analysis, we will take a route of analyzing the data to get a more complete understanding of the issue under investigation. Rather than the quest for truth that quantitative research focuses on, qualitative analysis tries to give meaning to a situation. Strauss and Corbin (1998) define analysis as "... the interaction between researchers and data," understanding that the generated data is susceptible to some human selection and interpretation (Rabiee, 2004). Although the recorded spoken language produced from the interview is the primary source of data analysis, reflecting on the interview, the surroundings, and recording the non-verbal communication conveyed by members of the groups will offer a useful dimension to the data production and analysis. As Krueger and Casey (2000) recommend our data analysis will be methodical, sequential, verifiable, and ongoing in order to minimize the possibility for bias

when analyzing and interpreting interview data. Following this approach leaves a trail of evidence while also boosting the data's dependability, consistency, and conformability (Lincoln & Guba, 1989), all of which are essential factors in determining the quality of qualitative data (Rabiee, 2004). To analyze our collected data, we will use Krueger's (1994) framework analysis. Individual and focus-group interviews are both conducted using framework analysis. The Krueger (1994) technique has the benefit of providing a clear set of stages that may make it easier for first-time researchers to manage the huge volume and complexity of qualitative data (Rabiee, 2004).

Trustworthiness. Qualitative researchers must demonstrate four dimensions of trustworthiness: credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability. The first aspect, or criterion, that we must determine is credibility. It is regarded as the most crucial factor or criterion in determining trustworthiness. This is because, in order to illustrate the veracity of the research study's findings, we as researchers must clearly relate the research study's findings to reality. Validation, according to Angen (2000), is "a assessment of a piece of research's trustworthiness or quality" (Creswell, 2007).

Triangulation. Every qualitative researcher should be familiar with this concept. To get full picture of the subject being examined, triangulation entails using various methodologies, data sources, witnesses, or hypotheses. It is used to ensure that the study findings are solid, thorough, and well-developed. Triangulation is an analytic approach for correlating a result with evidence from two or more independent sources, which may be employed during fieldwork as well as afterwards during formal analysis (Yin, 2011).

Member Checking. As qualitative researchers, we will utilize this strategy to build credibility for the second time. This is a strategy in which the participants are given access to the data, interpretations, and conclusions. Participants will be able to explain their objectives, rectify mistakes, and offer more information as needed. Because, if a tape recorder was utilized,

the articulations themselves should have been precisely caught, the focus should be on whether the informants believe their statements reflect what they truly intended (Shenton, 2004).

Validity and Reliability. Validity and reliability are critical components of every study. Paying close attention to these two characteristics may mean the difference between excellent and bad research, as well as ensuring that our findings are accepted as legitimate and trustworthy by other researchers. This is especially important in qualitative research, where subjectivity may easily cloud data interpretation and study conclusions are frequently questioned or viewed with skepticism by the scientific community (Brink, 1993). As a result, maintaining the data analysis process will be given significant consideration.

3.7 Limitations

This study's primary focus is on 10th grade students and science teachers. As a result, our findings may be different when addressing students from below grades or teachers of further subjects, such as literature or arts.

CHAPTER 4. FINDINGS

This chapter aims to present the findings of the qualitative study obtained from the semi-structured interviews. The study involved 16 participants to better understand the teacher-student relations since the resumption of face-to-face classes and to explore the ways to support teacher-student relations in Azerbaijan British College. Based on the purpose of the current study, the researchers intended to respond to the following questions:

1. How have teacher-student relations changed since the resumption of face-to-face classes in Azerbaijan British College?
2. What are some ways that teacher-student relationships can be better supported?

Two prevalent larger themes emerged from the data analysis: a) Teacher-student relations after the resumption of face-to-face classes: Right after the resumption of face-to-face classes (September -October); b) Teacher-student relations after the resumption of face-to-face classes: Over the course of time. In the second sub-heading, we will discuss suggestions from students and teachers to improve teacher-student relationships.

4.0 Teacher-student relations after the resumption of face-to-face classes: Right after the resumption of face-to-face classes (September-October)

Subtheme 1.1: Indifferent Attitude

The findings revealed that the students were frequently logging in and out during the online classes without actively participating. It lasted all the lockdown period creating indifferent attitude towards their teachers as well as the classes. Thus, when they just started their face-to-face classes, the students were not taking the classes seriously and not very involved in listening the teachers. The indifferent attitude made the teachers angry and take

measure like punishment. As a result, the students had some problems with the teachers that distorted their relationship. One of the students said:

“Before online classes I didn’t take my teachers seriously, however, after the online classes I became more serious. Because when we had online classes, it was easy to unmute ourselves and do whatever we want, therefore it was difficult for me to take responsibility toward my teachers and their lessons. However, in face-to-face classes, we are meeting every day and it is not easy to be careless and not to listen to them.”

Teachers shared the same sentiment that when students moved to the face-to-face settings, it was difficult for students to take school, teachers, and lessons in earnest. The teachers were feeling indifference towards them and the classes such as the students were not involved in learning, or even they did not want to communicate with the teachers. All these factors led to some relationship problems. One of the teachers’ shared:

“Firstly, in online classes, you cannot make eye contact with your students, and you don't feel their energy in your classroom. As online lessons are done in front of camera, it is difficult to determine students’ mood, welfare which harms relationships. Online learning causes social isolation and results in pupils not developing the necessary communication skills. This fractured relationship persisted even after face-to-face sessions were resumed.”

Subtheme 1.2 Lack of Communication

Furthermore, the findings present that lack of communication during online classes was another reason for damaged relations between the teachers and students when just face-to-face classes resumed. One of the students shared:

“What I can confirm is that we lost trust to teachers because of lack of communication during online lessons. While before the pandemic the situation was different as we

had less computer use in class and all concentration was on the teacher, which was leading to better relations.”

Another student stated:

“Overall, my relationship with my teachers weakened after lockdown, I lost my faith toward to them. The reason is that I was not able to interact and communicate with them on a daily basis.”

Teachers also claimed that they had some misunderstandings with students shortly after the resumption; pupils did not want to share their feelings, thoughts, or difficulties with their teachers. Most teachers answered that distance education was the key cause. They were unable to contact with pupils on a daily basis, explain their concerns, or establish solid relationships. One of them stated emphatically:

“In our communication we have different tools, voices are the one tool. Eye contact, gestures, mimics, postures these are body of the communication. In online lessons, students most of time were saying that we have connection problems and they closed their camera and now we were communicating with them only our sound. It was very limited communication because we couldn't talk about their lives, social lives. We also cannot show our care, love, respect to them appropriately in online classes, it was so difficult to do that. When they returned, the same situation remained, and it was incredibly challenging to mend this strained relationship.”

Subtheme 1.3 Teacher-Centered Classes

Moreover, the data analysis demonstrated that teachers were more active and took responsibility for the entire teaching and learning process during the online classes, making the students passive learners. Thus, when the face-to-face classes just resumed, it was difficult for instructors to engage the students in the learning process and for the students to

stay focused. That was resulted in having a damaged relation between them. One of the students stated:

“During online lessons students including me would just think of teachers as people who give information because that was basically what they did during online lessons. The class during online lessons were boring as most of the class would stay silent and teachers would be seen as just giving information with occasional questions when in fact they were capable of much more. When we returned back, it was quite difficult to make a close and warm relation with them.”

The teachers also mentioned that the approach they were using created some challenges to involve the students. It was a nightmare for some of them when the students were not responsive when it was needed. All these led to more difficulties when they just started the face-to-face classes. The most challenging issue was to rebuild a positive rapport between the teachers and students that presumably could result in more learning success. One of the teachers shared:

“The biggest challenge right after the resumption to face to face classes is that it takes time for the students to adapt to the requirements of face-to-face classes. This means that they have to be more motivated, enthusiastic and active, as they became lazy by sitting hours and hours in front of the computer.”

Subtheme 1.4 School Restrictions Due to Covid-19

The data also showed that the school implemented several procedures to avoid the spread of the virus shortly after the beginning of face-to-face lessons. Among those rules were keeping some distance, wearing the masks, or frequently cleaning and disinfecting the hands. The students disobeyed the regulations due to the limits established by school administration right after the resumption of the face-to-face classes. According to the findings, disobedience distorted student-teacher relationships. The students generally

underlined those novel rules and restrictions applied to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19, negatively impacted their relations with their teachers, as the teachers looked more stringent in light of this. One of the students shared:

“New rules against COVID-19 made teachers be stricter when applying rules, which I do not think many students liked.”

Another student claimed that the imposed restrictions made teachers more aggressive and stressed, and that it had a detrimental impact on their relationships:

“In any case, it might have gotten slightly worse, due to the sheer number of new rules being implemented, and teachers obviously have to follow.”

Furthermore, the findings about teachers' perspectives demonstrated that restrictions related to the Covid-19 have a detrimental impact on their relationship. As a consequence, teachers forced students to follow these norms; nonetheless, the majority of pupils disregarded their teachers and feel annoyed toward to their teachers.

“According to the teachers the biggest challenge after the resumption to onsite classes is the adaptation problem into new rules. The reason is that most of the students dislike the instructions about the new regulations of Covid-19 environment. At the same time, they forget about these basic routines that they have to follow at school after the pandemic and they reject to obey them now.”

The above idea is backed by many students, proving that following the resumption, new laws against COVID-19 have had an impact on the relations between instructors and pupils. It is clear that to make the learning environment safe for the students, teachers must become stricter when enforcing these guidelines. However, the majority of the pupils disapproved of the restrictions as well as their teachers' demeanor.

4.1 Teacher-Student Relations After the Resumption of Face-to-face classes: Over the Course of Time

In addition to the negative relationship that the data revealed, the relationship became more positive over time. The main reason was both sides needed some time to get adjusted to the offline teaching and learning setting.

Below are the themes found from the data, confirming the establishment of positive relationship over the time between teachers and students.

Subtheme 2.1 Frequent Interaction and Physical Presence

The analysis of the data showed that over the time teachers and students have had numerous opportunities to meet and communicate not only during the class but also after the class. Students received emotional support during these meetings, something they did not receive during their online classes. They became more connected and built more favorable relationships as a result of these interactions. One student noted that:

“In online lessons, if you had some problems, you didn’t have any enthusiasm to ask it or fix it with the help of teacher. However, in face-to-face, teachers themselves can identify it by your face that there is any issue that should be solved. After that they can arrange individual meeting with us in order to talk and solve our problems. Yet, all these took some time to build that positive bonds.”

Likewise, teachers reported that the students became more involved and got the needed supported from them over the course of time. That was possible because of frequent interactions and physical presence, leading to more positive relations between them. One of the teachers shared:

“As we all know, there is no human interaction between two sides in an online setting (teacher and student). When we returned after a few months, students were much

more eager to meet with their teachers after class and discuss any particular problems with them. It has a significant positive impact on the teacher-student relationship.”

Subtheme 2.2 Student-Centered Approach

Since the resumption of face-to-face classes, teachers were more focused on using student-centered approach to engage the students into the learning process. That was very helpful for the teachers to feel the students’ presence. The data suggests that the used approach (i.e., student-centered) created an opportunity to build positive bonds with students. One of the students confirms the importance of the student-centered approach in creating positive relations with their teachers:

“For me, the meaning of online classes was just receiving information from the teachers and struggling to pay attention and listen to them. However, in face-to-face classes, students can share their views with peers and teachers, which leads to great discussions and strengthens our bonds, make us closer to each other. And that took some time, I would say.”

The teachers were also claiming that after the resumption of the face-to-face classes they started to focus more on the student-centered approach which was not possible during the online classes. Yet, it took some time for the teachers to involve the students since they were trying various strategies to make the classes more student based. All these attempts led to more positive relations between the teachers and students. One of the teachers stated:

"The student-centered approach has numerous benefits, but in our scenario, it substantially benefited teachers in rebuilding strong connections with pupils. It aided in the development of an interactive student-teacher atmosphere in which all students feel at ease and may freely discuss their thoughts, ideas, and feelings with their teachers."

Subtheme 2.3 Being Intellectually Engaged

The analysis showed that over the course of time having more student-centered classes created intellectual environment both for teachers and students. As a result, the students became more responsible for their own learning and built trusted and positive relations with teachers. One of interviewed student bluntly stated that:

“We acted irresponsibly in online classrooms; hardly anyone cared about the lessons. When we returned to the regular teaching and learning setting, however, the situation shifted from the root. Teachers invite us to participate in conversations and share ideas in a face-to-face situation, gradually made the classes more engaging. As a result, I can conclude that being in a face-to-face atmosphere allows us to speak with one another, learn from one another's experiences, and feel closer to each other.”

Similarly, the teachers found intellectual environment very engaging in terms of building positive relationship with the students. Yet, that took some time to build the environment to involve the students think more out of box. One of the teachers shared:

"When students are engaged in the classroom, it is easier for teachers to motivate them, attract their attention, and make the lesson more fruitful for all students. It also attempts to help teachers better understand their pupils and build stronger relationships with them. This collaborative and intellectual environment strengthens our relationship with the learner over time after the resumption of face-to-face environment."

The above findings once again prove that the teacher-student relationship was distorted because of the online classes. It took some time to rebuild the relations in a more positive way. Below is the summary of the findings, confirming that both teachers and students needed some time to get adjusted to the face-to-face mode, which resulted in having more positive relations between them.

Table 1. The Summary of the Findings

Teacher-student relations after the resumption of face-to-face classes	
Right after the resumption of face-to-face classes (September -October)	Over the course of time
Students' and Teachers' Perspectives	Students' and Teachers' Perspectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indifferent attitude • Lack of communication • Teacher-centered classes • School restrictions due to Covid-19 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequent interaction and Physical presence • Student-centered approach • Being intellectually engaged

4.2 The Ways of Improving Teacher-student Relations: Students' Suggestions

In addition to the negative and positive relationship both teachers and students were experiencing, the study was also aimed to find out the possible ways of enhancing teacher-student relations. The semi-structured interviews with students and teachers helped us respond to the second research study. That said, this section is organized around students' and teachers' suggestions.

Subtheme 3.1 Being a Part of the Decision-Making Process

The data analysis shows that most of the students want to be a part of the decision-making process. They want to be heard by teachers and make important decisions about their learning. In doing so, they may build trust and positive relationship with teachers accordingly. One of the students stated:

“I think that teacher-student relationships could be improved if more teachers listened to the recommendations of students. Some of the teachers ignore our opinions and decide to do what is best for them.”

Subtheme 3.2 Team Building Activities

Besides being involved in decision making process, the students suggested team building activities that will help build positive relationships with their teachers. One of the students shared:

“Teacher-student relations can be supported by spending more time with each other. Teachers should organize lots of different activities out of class, such as field trips or excursions which would help students with their studies, be fun and interesting and help to improve teacher-student relations at the same time.”

Similarly, another student shared:

“Arranging trips can help building stronger relations between teachers and students. For instance, at the moment - when the strict lockdown measures are not effective anymore, some of our teachers arranged trips to Shamakhi and Guba, which were quite interesting and fascinating for us. It helped us to make close relations with our teachers. If other teachers also organize this kind of trips, it would be better for us to make better relations with them.”

Subtheme 3.3 Create a Safe Environment for all Students

The findings also revealed that some students feel insecure because of their shyness. Thus, they want their teachers to create a safe environment for all students. The students believe that this will help establish more positive bonds with their teachers. One of the students said:

“They should also interact with all the students, not leaving calm students behind.”

The following section introduces the findings from the teachers’ interviews on how they can build more positive relations with their students.

4.3 The Ways of Improving Teacher-student Relations: Teachers' Suggestions

Subtheme 4.1 Frequent Communications

The analysis shows that teachers intend to have frequent communications with their students to talk about their challenges or simply to talk with them to foster positive relationships. The teachers believe that these communications will help them build empathy, support their students, and value each student. As one teacher emphasized:

“Positive teacher-student relations do not only include in-class relations, but communication before and after the class. If teacher values his/her students, the students will value that teacher equally. Therefore, mutual respect, understanding and care is the key to positive teacher-student relations.”

Subtheme 4.2 Build a Caring Environment

The findings suggest that the teachers believe that building caring environment will help enhance more positive relations with their students. One of the teachers shared:

“Teacher should care about students - their personal and social situation. If I see that there are some gaps regarding academic mental, personal or social situation of my students, I try to understand and solve them on time. If students see that teacher tries to do something for them, they also try to understand their teachers and establish better relationship with them.”

Subtheme 4.3 Parental Involvement

Majority of teachers indicated the importance of parental involvement in their children's learning and how this engagement can help build positive bonds with the students. One of the teachers stated:

“Improving students' relationships with their teachers has important positive and long-lasting implications, but in my opinion, we have to engage the parents in the process as well. Sometimes it might be difficult to understand students, their behavior

in order to help them. It leads to one fact that this type of students might have problem with their parents. Therefore, in these situations we have to first communicate with their parents and understand the main problem.”

The below table demonstrates both teachers’ and students’ views on enhancing their relations.

Table 2. The Ways of Improving Teacher-students Relations

The Ways of Improving Teacher-student Relations	
Students’ Suggestions	Teachers’ Suggestions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being a Part of the Decision-Making Process • Team Building Activities • Create a Safe Environment for all Students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequent Communications • Build a Caring Environment • Parental Involvement

The Final Product

The Purpose of the Workshop: the purpose of the workshop was to help the participants understand the importance of the workshop, and also, help them come up with the ways that will help the teachers build positive relations with their students.

The Objectives: By the end of the workshop, the participants will be able to:

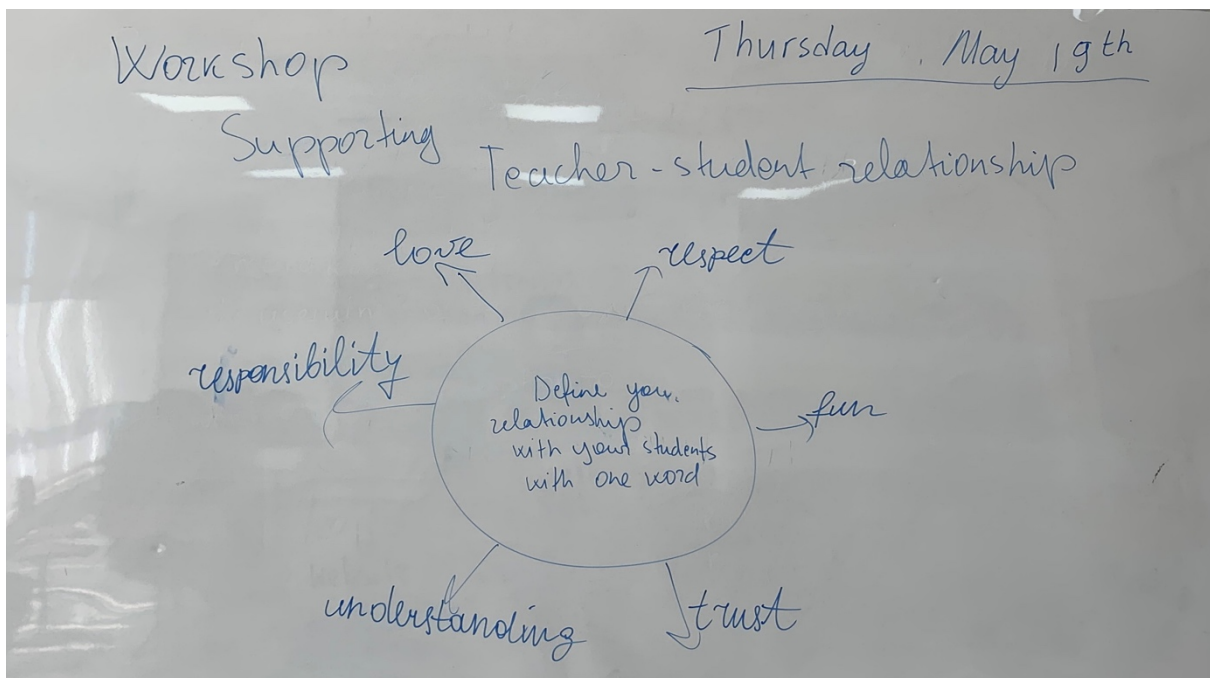
- Understand the importance of positive relations with their students
- Identify the ways to build positive relations between their students

The Duration of the Workshop: 45 minutes

The Number of Participants: 20

The Outline:

1. **Brainstorming Activity: Mind map:** We asked the participants to define teacher-student relationship with one word.



2. Presentation of the Project Findings (15 min):

- The Problem statement:
- The purpose of your study:
- The research questions:
- The findings:
- The resources (PPT)



3. The whole class discussion:

- What would be your suggestions regarding building positive bonds with your students?
 - Which strategies do you usually use to involve your students into the learning process?
-

- Do you think that those strategies are helpful? If so, why?

4. Activity (Group Work) (20 min):

Based on the study findings, the students and teachers suggested the following ways they think would help them build positive relations:

- Being a Part of the Decision-Making Processes
- Team Building Activities
- Create a Safe Environment for all Students
- Parental Involvement

We have divided the participants into four groups (based on the numbers: 1,2,3, and 4), and each group has shared their ideas on the following:

Group 1: How to involve the students into the decision-making process? Think of the ways.

Group 2: What team building activities would you think of? Think of some activities that will help you build positive relations.

Group 3: How would you create a safe environment for all of your students? How would you involve your shy students into the learning process? Think of the ways.

Group 4: What strategies would you use to involve the parents that will help you be closer with your students? Think of the ways.

5. Reflection (5 min):

- What have you learned from today's session?
 - Was it helpful?
 - Why building positive relations is important?
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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Interview Questions

Interview questions with students:

1. What grade are you in?
2. Have you already chosen the university to continue your education? Could you please briefly describe your future plans?
3. What were your difficulties while having online classes?
4. Were you being motivated by your teachers? If so, how were they encouraging you to learn and stay focused?
5. What about your relations with teachers? Could you please compare your relations between the teachers and you? The relations before the lockdown and after the lockdown?
6. Do you think online classes had a negative effect on your relations with teachers? Could you provide some specific examples?
7. How teacher-student relations could be supported? Could you provide any specific example?

Interview questions with teachers:

1. How long have you been teaching in this school?
 2. What subject are you teaching?
 3. How many students do you usually have in your class?
 4. Do you have any disruptive students in your class?
 5. Was that your first experience teaching online during the lockdown?
 6. What were advantages and disadvantages of teaching online? Please provide some specific examples based on your experience.
 7. Were you able to engage your students in the learning process while teaching online?
 8. What is positive teacher-student relations? Please provide some specific examples from your own experience.
 9. Do you think online classes had a negative effect on teacher-student relations? If so, how? Please provide any specific examples. What are the reasons of having a negative effect of online classes on teacher-student relations?
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10. What is the biggest challenge after the resumption to face-to-face classes in your relations with students? Please provide some specific examples.
 11. A number of research studies found that having positive relations between teachers and students lead to the student academic success. How would you boost your relationship with your students? What can be the best method for improving those relations?
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