

The Influence of Interactive Positioning in Professional Development in the Teaching-Learning Environment

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ABSTRACT: From a discursive viewpoint, the concept of positioning was originally introduced in relation to gender to identify interpersonal interactions. Positioning theory highlights the significance of improving our understanding of teaching and learning context through interactional positionings, specifically on how students position teachers in language classrooms, and focuses on educational leadership and teacher professional development, because positioning oneself in a way that motivates one to perform the specific task with their deep-rooted interest is vital, and this results from characterising oneself positively rather than negatively. The study aims to analyse the influence of interactive positioning in a teaching-learning environment and identify the factors that motivated the students towards positive or negative positioning. The research study employed a mixed-methods design, in which a survey was administered to gather quantitative data from 50 participants, and interviews and observations were made to obtain qualitative data from 20 participants. The key findings of the research revealed that the student and teacher positioning is influenced by gender, proficiency, teaching style, and classroom context. Positive positioning, supported by empathy, approachability, and interactive teaching, boosts student motivation, confidence, and engagement. Negative positioning, caused by disengagement, bias, or poor communication, reduces participation and learning outcomes. Overall, the understanding of the above factors can foster professional development through positive engagement by applying inclusive strategies.

KEYWORDS: Positive positioning, negative positioning, gender, bias, professional development

I. INTRODUCTION

The notion of positioning was initially introduced by Hollway (1984) in her research on gender. The term "Positioning" is a metaphorical term originally introduced to analyse interpersonal encounters from a discursive viewpoint (Langenhove & Harré, 1994, p. 12). Accordingly, the ultimate goal of positioning theory is to comprehend how interactions between interlocutors affect social routines through their positions and behaviour as they dynamically change based on the context of exposure. For instance, positioning oneself in a classroom differs from the external environment one was exposed to due to the presence of physical resources and mental stability. A classroom doesn't remain the same as it differs based on the mental stance, physical resources, and external exposure of individuals. As there are males and females in the classroom, female students mostly consider the classroom as a safety shield to explore their skills and engage in self-studies, while male students consider it as only a lecture hall, and they are not bound within the premises to further continue their studies.

Grade 9 students of Al-Hidhaya school, Pottuvil, are my target group of students, specifically, the lower proficiency students. According to their point of view, a classroom is a place where they are being tutored from 7.30 to 1.30. Furthermore, the infrastructure facilities and the availability of sophisticated educational tools like smart boards, air conditioning, tables, and chairs are comparatively less in rural areas, which paves the way towards low performance and less fruitful outcomes not only in terms of education but also in their behaviours too. For instance, the classroom remains noisy and disruptive even in the presence of lecturers, but in their absence, they consider it a joyful environment in which they are free to perform any action that plays a pivotal role in poisoning the teachers.

In terms of their education, the rural classroom environment discourages students from focusing on their studies because of its poor facilities and disruptive atmosphere. Despite creating a space for meaningful learning or individual study, the environment often limits students' ability to achieve educational objectives. Unlike urban settings, where classrooms may combine learning with joyful interactions, rural classrooms lack such opportunities due to overcrowding, inadequate resources, and insufficient teaching aids. Outside the classroom, students rarely discuss academic matters, as they are more motivated to engage in casual conversations, reflecting their lack of academic motivation.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Two perspectives are of much relevance in the studies concerning positioning theory. The initial one is the intentional self-positioning, or reflexive positioning, as proposed by Davies and Harre (1990), according to which people do position themselves (p. 48). That implies that perceptions are shaped by the positionality of people that subsequently determine their actions, thinking, and explanations of their roles, duties, and various responsibilities in a certain setting. According to constructionism, self-positioning is manifested in the form of discursive practices that allow individuals to take personal responsibility for their actions and define their position. Harre and van Langenhove (1999) also note that such discursive practices enable people to mark their statements relative to their worldview (p. 62). Within the educational setting, the beliefs of teachers concerning their professional world have an impact on the way that they situate themselves within the classroom. The position of some teachers might be on teaching all the students inclusively, whereas others may target a particular group of students who may be regular students of education. In both instances, the role taken by the teachers is very influential in determining the teacher-teacher interactions and pedagogical methods in the classroom setting.

Interactive positioning, as defined by Davies and Harre (1990) in the academic research, is the process through which what one says or does places another individual in a social or conversational situation. This notion is the opposite of reflexive positioning, which does not have the mechanism that encompasses how people position themselves differently in different settings. Interactive positioning fills this gap by noting that this kind of positioning is relative and contextual; it takes place in response to other people.

Adams and Harre (2001) argued that the positioning of people in interactions has great significance to their communicative possibilities. It may restrain or increase their ability to express, think and act. On the same note, Harre and van Langenhove (1999) state that positioning is critical in defining the right to participate in discourse, especially in areas where expertise or competence is necessary. As an example, when someone is put in an incompetent position in a certain area, he or she is not allowed to be involved effectively in the discussion that surrounds that particular area. On the other hand, the opportunity to enhance cognitive performance and interactions can become possible when one is placed in a position of capability or intelligence (Harre and Moghaddam, 2003). Therefore, positioning is dynamic, and based on the relationships, roles, rights, and potential contributions of people in different contexts is formed. It is an idea that emphasises power relationships existing within social relations and gives a model of how the role and identity of a person are formed through a discourse.

The interactive positioning concept provides useful information on the manner in which teachers position English Language Learners (ELLs) in the classrooms. In their methods of teaching, teachers may have an effect, consciously or subconsciously, on how ELLs view themselves as learners. Such a position can increase or restrict the opportunities of students to gain a positive self-concept. As reported by other researchers (Tan and Moghaddam, 1995) and Taylor, Bougie and Caouette (2003), interpersonal as well as intergroup positioning contribute significantly to the development of self-concepts among people. Howie (1999) underlines the importance of meeting the needs of individuals with the help of positive action (p. The latter 58) is necessary in nurturing a positive design of self. Theoretically, it is evident that by placing ELLs in a prominent position and attending to their special needs, this could have a positive impact on the self-concept of the students, which in its turn may have a positive impact on the extent to which the students are involved and engaged in the learning process.

A. Impact of positioning

Positioning theory has been playing a significant role in the education field, where students and teachers can explore their identities and roles. In his example, Lonngren (2021) utilised the positioning theory to investigate the influence of emotion in engineering education and found the contextual nature of emotional position bargaining by students in engineering as a rational discipline. This paper has shown how the positioning theory can be popularly applied to find out the intricate relationship between emotions and professional identity in education. Research in Engineering Education.

On the same note, Van der Kloot (2025) applied the positioning theory to research the issue of power in mentoring relationships in the context of an internship, where students play an active role in the development of their role and identity within a professional context. This study highlights the relevance of applying the positioning theory in the interpretation of the fluid nature of roles and the power bargaining in educational and professional settings.

Furthermore, Sywulka (2025) also conducted a scoping literature review in order to identify articles that entail the application of the positioning theory to follow how Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CLD) teens are involved in the classroom environment. The review had indicated the applicability of the positioning theory in investigating the navigating and negotiating processes of CLD students in the learning institutions, which can be helpful when examining the complexities of identity theory within various learning classrooms.

As a whole, these works demonstrate the immense contribution of the positioning theory to the research in education by providing the prism through which the negotiated and dynamic character of the identities and roles can be explained. With special attention to the rights and obligations that are attributed to the individuals in particular plot lines, the positioning theory offers a subtle insight into the social construction of identity, power relations, and the role negotiation in different social situations.

B. Conceptual Framework



Figure 1: The Conceptual Framework of the Study

Figure 1 summarises the conceptual framework of the study, focusing on the theory of positioning to establish the key concepts, including how teachers are positioned, the impact of positive and negative positioning, and the strategies to overcome the negative positioning, which aim to reclaim the teachers' rights as reflective professionals.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. Research design

The study employs a mixed-methods approach, utilising an exploratory sequential design in which qualitative data were collected first, followed by quantitative data to validate the findings. Ten teachers were selected for one-to-one interviews to gather qualitative data, and a survey was conducted among 50 Grade 9 students who were aware of positioning theory to find out the influence of Interactive Positioning in a Teaching-Learning Environment, along with their students' and teachers' perceptions. The survey was designed with fifteen questions and provided to students to collect numerical data, and was hypothesised based on descriptive statistic design to conclude in numerical values, while qualitative data was analysed based on thematic design. The population of the study was selected from AL-Hidaya school, Pottuvil, with ten teachers and 40 students to meet an interview who were aware of the positioning theory from different fields.

B. Research Instrument

The study adopted a mixed methodology in a sequential explanatory design. The mixed methodology combines both quantitative and qualitative methodologies within a single framework concerning the validation of the data. Preliminary piloting of questionnaires and interviews was conducted to identify the practical errors and evaluate the feasibility and appropriateness of the data before moving into the primary data collection process.

Google Forms were made, providing an invitation text to take part in research with the necessary details of ethical consideration to ensure their confidentiality and voluntary participation. A preliminary pilot of a Google form was designed at the beginning of the research and issued to five participants to evaluate the feasibility and appropriateness of the questions. Then, it was issued as a primary data collection tool to a large number of participants that encompassed two parts. The first part of it includes questions regarding demographic information. The second part includes fifteen structured questions and one unstructured question to get their overall feedback. Closed questions were formulated with a five-point Likert scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree, while one short answer and an open-ended question were given to draw individual interest.

Additionally, to ensure the reliability of the data, observation was conducted for one semester, which is for six months, and a structured interview was designed to meet with ten teachers of AL-Hidaya school with fifteen questions. The questions were sent a week before interviewing the respective lecturers, and the meeting was conducted physically at the school premises. The teachers' confidentiality was ensured at the beginning of the interview, and the recording was done throughout the interview.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

This study aimed to examine the role of interactive positioning in a teaching learning process, specifically, the teacher-student interactions in schools. The results offered here are based on three main sources of information: (a) the survey was given to the respondents (n=40, Grade 9 students), (b) semi-structured interviews with 10 teachers, and (c) classroom observation for six months.

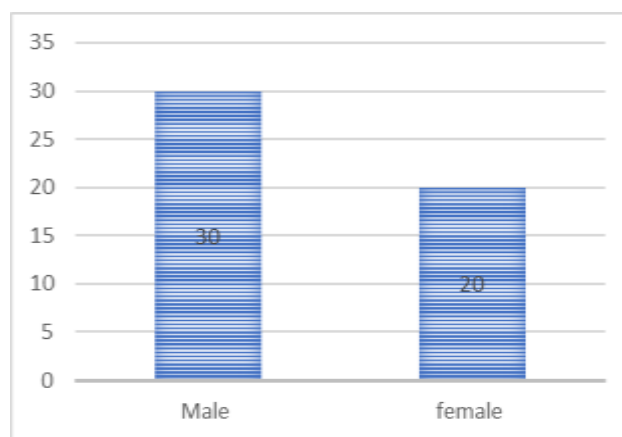


Figure 2: Awareness of the topic

Figure 2 demonstrates the perception of the positioning theory in the case of male and female participants. It states that there were 30 males and 20 females who were aware of the theory. The male population is greater than the female, but the general findings point evidently towards the fact that both groups are conscious of positioning theory.

Besides, the presence of both male and female representatives of the sample also supports the argument that all the research participants know the theory. This is due to the consistency of the two groups, even though there are variations in the numerical value, and the validity of the data is high because it represents a steady and representative distribution of awareness among the respondents.

The graph confirms that positioning theory is recognised among the participants, both males and females showed awareness, hence the validity and credibility of the collected data.

4.2.1 How do students position class teachers?

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Student Participants (N = 50)

Characteristic	Category	Frequency
Gender	Male	30
	Female	20
Proficiency Level	Lower Proficiency	30
	Higher Proficiency	20
Social class	Low income	29
	High income	21

Table 1 presents the findings on how students position their teachers and how teachers position their students, based on demographic factors such as gender, proficiency level, and social class, as well as contextual elements like time and learning environment, which reflect interactive positioning.

1) Gender-Based Positioning

The evidences indicate that male students and female students have a distinct difference in ranking teachers. Out of the 30 male students, most of them (25) identified their teachers negatively, with only a small number of them indicating positive positioning. Female students, in turn, had more positive perceptions: 15 of them put their teachers in a positive position, and only 5 of them put their teachers in a negative one. This indicates that female students tend to have a more positive attitude towards their teachers than their male counterparts do.

2) Proficiency-Level Positioning

The perceptions were also determined by student proficiency. Within the group of lower proficiency students, a good majority (25) had negative reactions towards their teachers, and only 4 of them expressed positive reactions. Comparatively, more proficient students indicated a more balanced perception, with 15 giving a positive rating and 6 giving a negative rating to their teachers. It means that the level of proficiency influences positioning since students who feel more confident in academic achievements seem to be more inclined to become more positive about their teachers.

3) Social-Class Positioning

Positioning differences were also caused by socio-economic background. The low-income students showed a high likelihood to be negatively positioned, with 25 students indicating negative and just 4 students positive. On the other hand, high-income students overwhelmingly used a positive view of their teachers (21), which confirms the impact of social class on the development of

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student-teacher relationships. These results imply that perceived teacher may be greatly affected by socio-economic factors, especially access to resources and exposure.

4) Contextual Factors: Time and Environment

On top of the demographic factors, the contextual factors also influenced the positioning of students. Time of day mattered: the students were more inclined to have a negative position towards teachers when it was an afternoon session (past 12 p.m.) and more inclined to have a positive position towards teachers when it was a morning session (before 12 p.m.). On the same note, perceptions were affected by the learning environment through physical aspects. Playgrounds, unconventional learning spaces under trees or in practical laboratories were found to influence either positive or negative positioning, and it was found that learning situations play a very strong mediating role on student attitudes.

In conclusion, the results indicate that teacher positioning by students is not predetermined but is influenced by a variety of overlapping issues. The effects of gender, proficiency and social class are measurable, and male, lower proficiency and low income students are more likely to articulate negative positioning. On the contrary, the female, more competent and high-income students demonstrate more favourable positioning. Further, the time and context aspects of the situational factors emphasise the dynamic essence of positioning, reminding us of the fact that it is contextually dependent and not fixed.

4.2 How do teachers position students in the classroom?

Table 2: Gender-based positioning

Gender	Total	Negative Positioning	Positive Positioning
Male	6	4	2
Female	14	10	4

Table 2 highlights the variations in how male and female teachers positioned their students within the school context. Out of the six male teachers, four (67%) positioned students negatively, while only two (33%) adopted positive positioning. In contrast, among the fourteen female teachers, a larger proportion—ten (71%)—positioned students negatively, while only four (29%) demonstrated positive positioning.

When comparing across genders, both male and female teachers were more likely to engage in negative positioning than positive positioning. However, the prevalence of negative positioning was slightly higher among female teachers (71%) compared to their male counterparts (67%). This suggests that although both groups tended to negative positioning, female teachers more consistently reinforced limiting or critical perspectives on student performance and behaviour.

B. Factors influencing Interactive positioning positively and negatively

1) Students' perception

The data given below reflects the findings of the positioning of teachers by students in the classroom environment. At the same time, interview data and observation notes were also triangulated to affirm the validity and reliability of the findings.

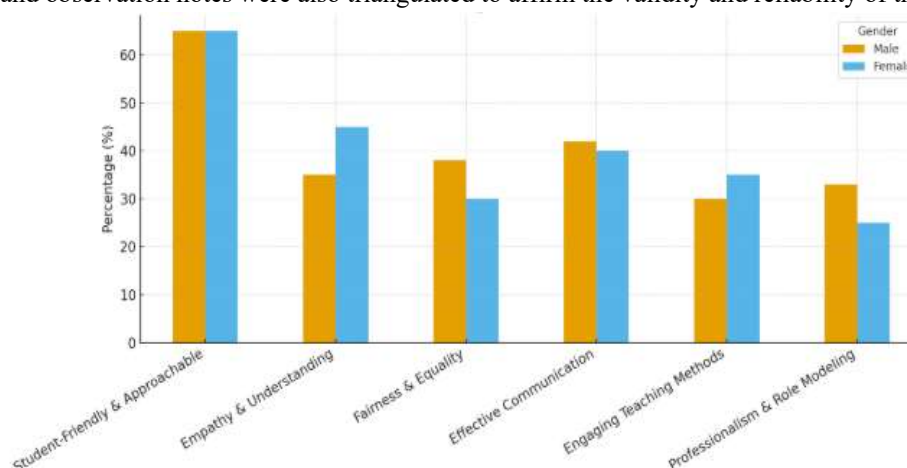


Figure 2: Positive Positioning of the teacher by Male and Female Students

Figure 2 describes the positive positioning of the teacher by male and female students. Although positive positioning occurred less frequently than negative positioning overall, students identified several key factors that motivated them to adopt favourable perceptions of both male and female teachers.

Student-Friendliness and Approachability became the most important positive factor (65%), which was reported in both male and female teachers consistently. The learners appreciated educators who were easy to approach, sensitive, and treated them as peers.

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In the case of female teachers, friendliness would be connected to the nurturing and caring qualities, whereas in the case of male teachers, it would be connected to being approachable and who is not so authoritative. As explained by one of the students, "When the lecturer listens to us and addresses us as equals, I am motivated to learn and respect him/her more. This indicates that the relational traits and not the gender differences were the strongest factors that predetermined the positive position of teachers.

Positive positioning was also formed based on Empathy and Understanding (45%), mostly in the case of female teachers. The students believed that the female teachers were more likely to realise and respond to their plight, academic or personal, and thus they felt supported by them. One of the male students elaborated that our female lecturers know our plight as men, and they do not criticise but offer guidance. Although male teachers were also recognised to have empathy, they felt that it was less common than female teachers, which supports the idea of gender care expectations.

Fairness and Equality (38%) was very instrumental in influencing a positive position of male teachers. Students often associated the unbiasedness of male teachers with professional discipline, which was the opposite of that of female teachers, who were sometimes accused of favouritism. As an example, one of the respondents had commented, "Sir does not discriminate against anyone, he does not treat anyone special, and that is why I respect him. This shows that although equity inspired good intentions towards the representation of both genders, it was more specific in the image of male educators.

Also reported as motivators of positive positioning were Effective Communication (42%), Engaging Teaching Methods (35%), but the students saw female teachers as more willing and able to include interactive activities and technology, whereas male teachers were seen more frequently as having to provide clear explanations. It was noted that students felt part of the learning process through the use of engaging methods, and communication minimised misunderstandings. As an illustration, a student remarked, Madam makes the lecture interactive and has activities, and that keeps us engaged. Therefore, positive positioning varied among gendered expectations due to the role of pedagogy, where the male was a teacher who was appreciated for clarity and the female teacher who was appreciated for creativity.

Another reason that inspired the positive positioning, particularly in the male teachers, was Professionalism and Role Modelling (33%). Students perceived them as strict people whose behaviour was an example. One of them said, Sir is strict and professional, and that is what makes us obey rules. In comparison, female teachers were less often referred to as role models in this sense, but were viewed in a more favourable light when they were both professional and friendly.

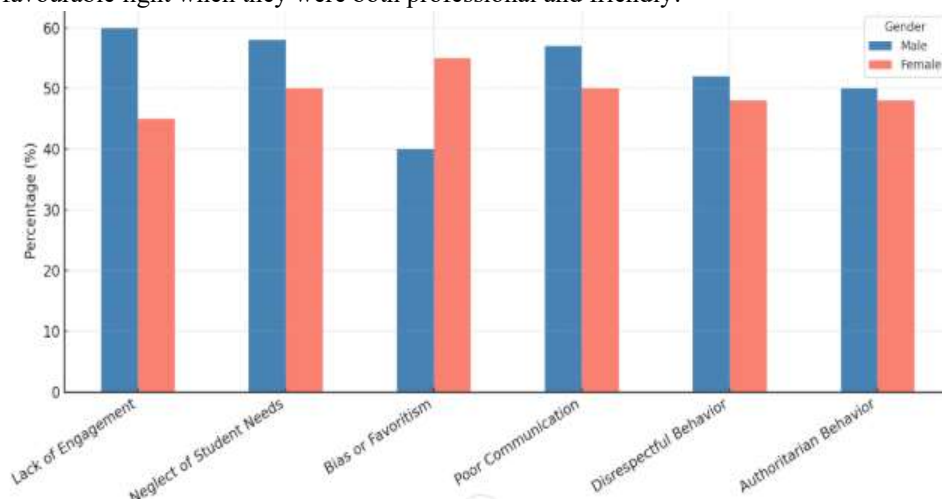


Figure 3: Negative Positioning of Male and Female Teachers by Students

Regardless of the positive factors, the chart shows that negative positioning was more predominant in both male and female teachers, but the causes were slightly different depending on the gender.

Lack of Engagement (60) was identified as the most powerful negative influence, especially amongst male teachers. According to the students, some male lecturers were over-reliant on traditional lecturing and failed to encourage interaction. When one of the students said, he reads the slides without even asking whether we understand or not. This portrayed a feeling of alienation, putting the male teachers at a disadvantage as indifferent and unconcerned with student education. The lack of engagement was also criticised against female teachers, but less often, as perceived by students, particularly when they used activities.

Another factor that influenced negative positioning was Neglect of Student Needs (58%), which was mentioned by both male and female teachers. Lack of attention of teachers towards questions and concerns, or ignoring of multiple learning styles, would make students feel dismissed or neglected. Neglect was, however, more often reported among male teachers because female teachers were also rated to be more attentive by the students. One of the female students said, "Some lecturers do not even listen to our questions, and they make us feel unheard in the classroom".

Female teachers were especially associated with bias or favouritism (55%). Students noted that some female lecturers attended more to some of the students, either the high achievers or the ones they were close to. As one of the respondents stated,

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favouritism by teachers discourages others and creates an awkward atmosphere in the classroom. This observation shows how relational processes may result in negative positioning, particularly in cases where fairness has been undermined.

Poor Communication (57%) and Disrespectful Behaviour (52%) contributed significantly to negative positioning for both genders. Students disapproved of male teachers for being dismissive or too brief in explanations, while female teachers were criticised for harsh tones or public criticism. A student explained, *"When a teacher points out my mistakes in front of the whole class, I feel embarrassed rather than encouraged."* Both male and female teachers were thus positioned negatively when their communication undermined student confidence.

Even though the quantitative data states that female teachers were blamed for their public criticism, the qualitative data contrasts the findings and denotes that male teachers are mostly shown disrespectful behaviours by students in terms of committing a mistake and making them feel down, which triggers the students towards negative positioning.

Authoritarian Behaviour (50%) was a strong motivator of negative positioning, though it manifested differently across genders. Male teachers were often seen as disciplinarians who emphasised control, while female teachers were described as overly strict in enforcing rules. For example, a student commented, *"Some teachers act more like police than mentors, and that makes it hard to connect with them."*

It was interesting to note that some higher proficiency students posited that adaptation of effective teaching methodology triggers them to position the teachers negatively because of reading the notes, lack of cracking jokes in the middle, integration of a practical approach, and playing games.

The comparison between male and female teachers reveals both similarities and differences in the factors shaping positive and negative positioning. On the positive side, friendliness, empathy, and communication motivated students to position both male and female teachers favorably, but with nuanced gendered differences: male teachers were valued more for fairness and professionalism, while female teachers were praised for empathy and engaging methods.

On the negative, non-engagement and being neglected were widely reported, irrespective of gender, but students attributed it more to male teachers. On the other hand, female teachers were also more often associated with favouritism and harsh criticism, implying that the relational factors influenced the perception of female teaching styles more as compared to male teaching styles. Both genders were also found to exhibit authoritarianism, albeit in different ways, which was a result of gendered expectations of authority.

The results in general show that no matter the gender of teachers, their students depend more on the relations of practices, pedagogy, and discourse to form an opinion about the teacher and their position. However, gendered expectations are involved in the interpretation of specific behaviours. Male teachers are placed negatively when they are shown to be disengaged, and female teachers are placed negatively when they are shown to be biased or too critical. Positive positioning, however, involves a moderation of friendliness, empathy, fairness and effective teaching within the two groups.

Moreover, one should mention that time and environment are also the factors that prompt students to place the teachers either positively or negatively.

2) The Influence of Time

In addition to the relational and pedagogical influences, the time of day also influenced the students in positioning their teachers. Negative positioning was more prevalent among the male students, especially after 12 pm., when teachers were giving theoretical lessons that involved taking notes or passive listening. Such a trend indicates that there is more loss of attention and motivation in afternoon sessions, in which monotonous instructional styles were found to be more negative. The female students, on the contrary, were more balanced, and the amount of changes in positioning over time of the day was less.

ST 3,5,7:

"Some teachers request us to write notes without speaking to our friends in the last period, and if we speak, they threaten us, so we don't like them."

3) The Role of Environment

Teacher positioning was also mainly influenced by the learning environment. Both genders of students always appreciated teachers who brought them out of the classroom to undertake hands-on activities. These practices were linked to active involvement, practical use of knowledge and respite from the boredom of lecture-based learning. The teachers who promoted learning beyond the four walls of the classroom were placed in a positive position irrespective of gender, indicating the importance of the surroundings to students. The dynamics are further complicated by time and environment: engagement and disengagement in male students during the afternoon indicate the significance of the time when the lesson takes place, and the necessity of instructing in a practical and habitual setting, which emphasises the necessity of interactive instructions. In the end, although gendered expectations influence the interpretation of specific behaviours, the placement of teachers by students indicates the wider issue of relational practices, the methods of pedagogy, and situational issues.

C. Findings from observation notes

The survey and interview data were triangulated with the classroom observations made during one semester. Regularly, the observer realised that educators tended to start the lessons in a conventional lecture style, placing themselves in a position of

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authority (first-order positioning). Nevertheless, this approach changed when interactive positioning took place during group activities, when there were teachers who were simply urging their students to work together. However, tacit positioning patterns were observed in which the less proficient students would often stay quiet and be neglected during discussions.

The instances of public criticism occurred in a number of situations where teachers reprimanded the students publicly in the presence of their colleagues. As an example, during one of the observed lessons, a student was unable to say a word correctly, and the teacher reacted by laughing and providing a correction. This was visually humiliating to the student who did not utter a word throughout the session. These cases strengthened the results of the survey, according to which almost 60 per cent of the students admitted to being discouraged by the public criticism.

On the other hand, there was also the positive reflexive positioning. During group work, some lecturers would select the weaker students as the leaders of the group, and this provided them with confidence. In one instance, a student who had been silent to date in a discussion has become the active facilitator of a discussion after being made the spokesperson of the group, showing the transformational value of deliberate positive positioning.

Making a comparison between quantitative and qualitative results, it is possible to identify several convergent patterns. To begin with, most negative elements of positioning, including authoritarian behaviour, favouritism, and publicly criticising the organisation, were identified in all surveys, interviews, and observations. This implies that they are not single cases of such practices but a pattern of them in the teaching-learning context. Second, students and lecturers admitted that positive positioning strategies, being less common, produced a strong effect on the motivation and involvement of students in the classroom. This was particularly pronounced in instances where the teachers employed marginalised students in leadership positions willingly. Third, the results show the reflexive-interactive place of positioning: even though teachers reflexively perceive themselves as figures of authority, it affects the interactive way they position the students, usually in a manner that continues to passively or silence students further.

D. The Impact of Positioning Theory on Student Engagement: A Comparative Analysis

This framework is especially applicable to the educational context since the teacher-student relationships are directly involved in motivation, participation, and academic performance of learners. The positive positioning would lead to Enhanced Student Engagement, Increased Motivation and Enthusiasm, Improved Academic Confidence, Strengthened Teacher-Student Relationships and Long-term Academic and Personal Growth, whereas negative positioning would most likely lead to Reduced Student Participation, depletion of Motivation and Interest, lower academic confidence, and weak teacher-student relationships. The paper will cover both dimensions and will outline the views of students, classroom ramifications and some creative ways of increasing positive positioning.

1) Positive Positioning and Student Engagement

Positive positioning is achieved when the teachers recognise the input of the students, give constructive feedback, and linguistically establish an inclusive setting to participate. The practices give rise to a sense of belonging and agency, both of which have a direct impact on engagement.

Increased motivation

Students whose positions are favourable to them will be more willing to participate in group activities and class discussions. Questioning, exchanging ideas and explaining concepts will allow the learners to reinforce their own understanding as well as add to a vibrant classroom atmosphere. It is also possible to collaborate on the work and thus provide students with an opportunity to see themselves as co-creators of the knowledge, which also contributes to their increased interest. My teacher helps me feel more confident and encourages me to share my ideas and speak up when my teacher supports and involves us in activities.

Motivation and Enthusiasm

Positive positioning fosters intrinsic motivation as it makes the students feel that they are appreciated. Students will be interested in attending classes, doing assignments, and engaging in creative projects. The recognition leads to emotional satisfaction that gives rise to the enthusiasm needed in terms of long-term commitment to academic activity.

S4,5,10:

“The Maths class teacher usually inquires about my studies and supports my financial issues, then provides financial support that motivates me to engage in the learning process actively, but some of the teachers don’t even turn around to me.”

Confidence in learning

The confidence arises when the teachers take note of the progress of the students, however small. Positive feedback, as opposed to punitive action, will assure the learners that they are progressing through errors. Achievement recognition Verbal praise, digital badges, peer recognition, etc., can be a great boost to self-esteem. I feel more confident when my teacher pushes me on, which refers to the fact that you have done it right or have scored high points, but there are very few people among them.

Thus, positive praising is also central in ensuring that the students place the teachers favourably, which would translate to improved learning results.

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2) Negative Positioning and Student Disengagement

On the other hand, negative positioning is the case in which the teachers are inadvertent in communicating disinterest, prejudice or criticism to the learners. Such interactions destroy the confidence of the students and reduce their participation.

Lack of participation

The negatively placed students tend to assume passive behaviours. They can look away, not volunteer their responses and not engage in peer cooperation. This, over the course of time, undermines their agency in the classroom.

S 4, 8, 7, 12, 23, 18: *"Some of my teachers don't consider me while teaching, so I don't pay attention to the session."*

Any negative positioning by a student toward a teacher is dangerous concerning the outcome of learning, since the student is not able to concentrate on the session.

Decreased motivation

Learners lose motivation in learning when they feel that their voices are not heard or that they are not taken seriously. They can go to the classes because they have to, not because they want to do so, and as a result, they will put little effort into the assignments or the project.

"When teachers don't address our concerns or seem biased, it makes me worried and not want to participate."

Reduced confidence

The lack of continuous criticism or attention erodes the self-esteem of students. Students start not believing in themselves and usually get the fear of failing. This fear also deters engagement and has long-term consequences on school success and identity development.

E. Overcoming the negative positioning and recommendations

Negative positioning in the classroom is a term used to explain how students take negative attitudes and perceptions towards their teachers, classmates, or environment. This kind of positioning will lead to demotivation, lack of interest in lessons, and poor performance. Studies have shown that negative positioning takes place in most classroom settings, and this can be because of poor teacher-student relationships, inadequate resources, stringent rules, or even peer pressure (Ellis, 1994). Teachers and institutions should therefore implement the approaches that lead to positive attitudes and positive participation to overcome this problem.

The enhancement of the teacher-student interaction is one of the most important strategies to rise out of the negative positioning. Research indicates that almost 65% of all students who experience positive and understanding communication with their teachers are likely to place them in a positive aspect, as compared to students who describe their teachers as being distant and authoritative. Active listening, valuing student input, and open-door communication will assist in establishing rapport with the student that will make them perceive teachers as friendly and not as guardians of the rules. A respectful and friendly environment by teachers would increase the chances of positive responses among the students to mitigate cases of resistance and disengagement.

The other approach is through interactive teaching practices. It has been noted that approximately 70 % of teachers stressed the importance of classrooms with greater activities in which participatory tasks like group discussions, role plays, and digital tools have been practised (Lightbown & Spada, 2013). Negative positioning is common when the students feel that they are being taught something that is captured in textbooks. When teachers implement diversity in their teaching styles, embrace real-life scenarios, and use technology, they are likely to make the lessons more relevant and interesting. This makes it less dull and more willing to take a positive approach towards the classroom experience is developed among the students.

Facilities and environment in the classroom are also significant in positioning. At the rural schools, where negative positioning is especially exacerbated by the lack of resources, only close to half of students report that they were demotivated by the poor classroom facilities, like overcrowded classrooms, inadequate ventilation, or the absence of learning materials (Williams & Burden, 1997). To eliminate this, institutions may aim at establishing learner learner-friendly environment through improving the basic facilities, seating arrangement to facilitate collaboration, and access to simple yet effective teaching resources. Even minor details, like the issue of lighting or visual learning charts, can affect student' positioning of their teachers and their educational space.

Positioning is also an aspect affected by discipline policies. Unbending regulations, including not allowing the student to access classes after a definite time, can add up to resentment and negative views. Students who fill in surveys have shown that 48% of them develop unfavourable positioning when the rules are seen to be unfair or too strict (Brown, 2007). In response to this, regulations ought to be implemented in a consistent way but in a flexible manner, which gives the students room to flex but does not fail to hold them accountable. Punitive steps are not always effective due to positive reinforcement, i.e., recognition of punctuality and hard work.

Eventually, another position dimension is the peer influence. Peer discussions have been reported to shape the perception of teachers in almost 60 % of the students in many classrooms (Ellis, 1997). With a negative classroom culture prevailing, individual students would probably replicate it. The educators can overcome this by encouraging group learning, peer mentoring, and developing group accountability assignments in which they inspire group responsibility towards success.

The Influence of Interactive Positioning in Professional Development in the Teaching-Learning Environment

In conclusion, negative positioning is possible to overcome only through a combination of approaches that would be structural and relational in the classroom. Through enhancement of the teacher-student relationship, interactive pedagogy, enhanced classroom culture, equity in disciplinary action, and positive peer pressure, a teacher can help change the attitude of students towards a desirable direction. When these actions are undertaken systematically, most students, according to estimates on classroom-based studies of over 70% are more likely to place themselves in a positive position that results in improved academic performance as well as an improved classroom environment.

V. CONCLUSION

The study focuses on the considerable role of interactive positioning in the teacher and student relationships in the classroom setting. The results indicate that perception of the students about their teachers is influenced by various overlapping factors, where gender, level of proficiency, social status, time of day and physical learning environment play a major role. The study found that male, lower proficiency, and low-income students were more likely to position teachers negatively, while female, higher proficiency, and high-income students showed more positive positioning. Teachers' positioning of students also relies on gender and teaching style, with negative positioning prevailing when teachers were perceived as disengaged, biased, or overly critical. Classroom context, including design, resources, and lesson timing, significantly influenced student attitudes and engagement. Positive positioning, fostered through empathy, approachability, interactive pedagogy, and constructive feedback, enhanced student motivation, confidence, and participation. In contrast, negative positioning, resulting from neglect, authoritarianism, poor communication, or disengagement, reduced student engagement and learning outcomes. Overall, the findings emphasise that classroom interactions are dynamic and context-dependent, and that teachers can transform negative positioning into positive engagement through deliberate, inclusive, and relational strategies, improving both academic performance and classroom experiences.

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