



Examining the correlation between walking patterns and student academic outcomes.

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to provide educational actors with alternative teaching practices and planning perspectives. We aim to establish this through our quest to answer an odd, yet plausible question. During our investigation, we learnt that the demonstration of "Problem Walk" may be used as an indicator to anticipate students' academic performance degradation. We selected 30 students who exhibit signs of a "problem walk," looked up for their records and prepared a dossier to examine. The results showed that 80% of students who demonstrated "problem walk" appeared to have weak academic performance. The findings revealed that students who walk in the same way have had a history of troubled relationships with their teachers in addition to their low school performance.

1. Introduction:

As educators, we understand that multiple factors such as intelligence, motivation, academic behavior, learning styles and habits have had the upper hand determining students' performance in school (Camille A. Farrington, Melissa Roderick, Elaine Al, 2012). However, there are other aspects that if they don't link directly to student's performance, they still affect it. Our perception of ourselves, society, and the modern world affect our physical appearance.

As teachers, it is our responsibility to assume various roles inside the classroom, including serving as facilitators, instructors, and observers (Harmer, 2015). We observe the slightest forms of our student's behavior and analyze them and based on this practice, we have developed a cognitive catalogue to interpret their body language. We are capable, to a reasonable extent, of knowing when they fake, act foolish, or just want to show off. In addition, we are aware when they try hard, genuinely fail and sincerely want to catch-up and improve. Furthermore, as teachers who are based in small areas, we frequently encounter our learners outside the school and therefore we have a greater opportunity to understand them even more. We see how they talk, and walk.

During the few years I have thought English as a foreign language, I noticed a small thing but still too controversial to ignore. I noticed that students who tend to fail their classes, act noisy and disregard their teachers' instructions have something in common. They walk the same way. Our investigation may lead us to link students' academic performance to the way they walk. This would encourage non-educators to take part in the learner's learning process.

2. Literature Review:

The role of non-cognitive factors in shaping learners' performance is viewed with considerable optimism. Their success in school depends fairly on factors such as their attendance, work habits, and social skills that allow them to manage what is referred to as problematic situations inside and outside the classroom (Furkas, 2003). It is asserted by prominent psychologists that a key determinant of academic performance lies in students' self-control or conscientiousness (Duckworth, 2005). In other words; 'self-control' is a key factor behind failure to exert self-discipline.

Brian Jacob (2002) observes that academic challenges learners encounter are frequently linked to deficient "non-cognitive skills," encompassing issues like "inattention in class, difficulty collaborating with others, struggles in organizing and managing homework or class materials, and a reluctance to seek assistance from others." (Camille A. Farrington, Melissa Roderick, Elaine Al, 2012).

On the other hand, a wide spectrum of research studies in the fields of sociology, psychology, and neurology advocates the basic idea that 'physiology informs psychology'. The influence of thought on behavior is of supreme authority. The profound impact of one's mental state on shaping behavior is highlighted, as actions are strongly swayed by the prevailing frame of mind (Darwin, 1872).

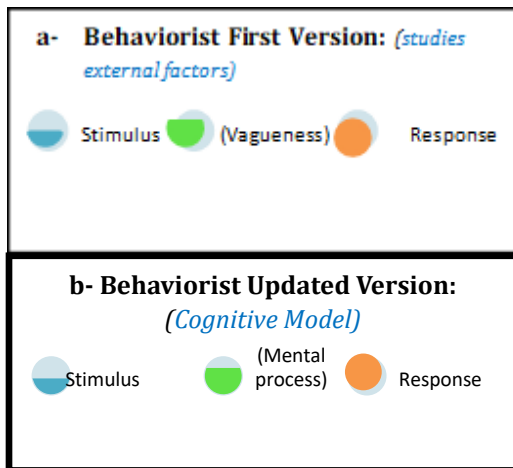
Moreover; recent studies in Social psychology assert that behavior is under the influence of both situation and personality (S. T. Fiske, D. T. Gilbert, & G. Lindzey, 2010). Our interactions and actions are immediately framed by our surroundings and environment (Richard, Bond, & Stokes-Zoota, 2003). Even the way we dress informs a great portion of who we are (Baumgartner, 2012).

Research on non-cognitive factors often concentrates on a particular skill, mindset, or behavior in isolation. This approach introduces ambiguity regarding the interplay of these factors and their collective impact on student outcomes. Moreover, all these studies target an audience with expertise in the fields of psychology, sociology, and education, raising questions about the feasibility of identifying non-cognitive signs that don't require an expert to notice and examine. What we offer here is, to a great extent, original, since we link students' performance to the way they walk. But there is still a great concern about the way it is.

Our physical appearance has strong ties to our perception of society and of us as members of this society. Each one of us is assigned a status and a role (Merton, 1940). The role of the student is supposed to align with the school's values and objectives. However, when the school fails to be what it preaches, the deviance occurs. Consequently, some students would choose to rebel on existing societal norms (1993, الزعل), and adapt roles that doesn't confirm to that of a student. These changes are justified and we assume they are linked to their physical appearance. "Problem walk" is one way the student rebels against

the school's values and express different priorities in society.

First of all, let's start by explaining Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory and why it differs from the behaviorist approach. Bandura's upgraded Social Learning Theory (1986) is set apart by its emphasis on cognition, distinguishing it from his earlier theory (1977) as well as Jhon B. Watson's theory (1913).



The mental aspect of the Social Cognitive Theory refers to the phase in which the subject unconsciously internalize, analyze and reinforce targeted behavioral details. Usually, the targeted behavior is selected through means of attraction or admiration (Bandura 267). Put simply, learners first observe the behavior of individuals they look up to as role models, paying close attention to the consequences that arise from their actions (Albert Bandura, 1963). This marks the occurrence of vicarious learning phenomena which consequently leads to the occurrence of imitative learning (Albert Bandura. Richard H Walters, 1963). It is worthy to note that the imitative learning occurs when the consequences are rewarding, as it is important to recognize that the conception of young people to what is rewarding isn't the same as adults.

Why we decide to imitate certain behavior in particular?

We assume that in order for a child to selectively imitate specific details of a behavior, the behavior (person) must be within sight of the child and must be frequently observed (Bandura, Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory, 1986) (Zimmerman, 1978). Additionally, the behavior must be rewarding, such as being attractive to the opposite sex, and must have distinguishable features that are

observable, such as a unique tone of voice, clothing, or walking. These features may pertain to an individual's gait or accent (Bandura 1977).

"Consequently, their conceptions of social reality are greatly influenced by vicarious experiences—by what they see, hear, and read—without direct experiential correctives." Bandura 271.

Our objective is to illustrate the applicability of a unique perspective in research studies closely examining the influence of non-cognitive factors on school performance. We advocate for recognizing the 'Problem Walk' as a valid pattern in education, integral to the teaching-learning process. Furthermore, our aim is to offer an intervention plan that is easily applicable to all educational participants, including parents.

3. Research Questions:

This study aimed to investigate and explore the following questions:

- Is it possible to predict students' academic performance by observing the way they walk?
- Why we decide to imitate certain behavior in particular?
- How can parents, educators, and teachers collaborate to address signs of 'Problem Walk'?
- What counter measures or intervention plans can be implemented in response?

4. Methodology:

In order to demonstrate how the way young learners walk linked to their academic performance, we selected 30 high school students, ages range from 16 to 18, the majority of them we teach or have taught who show signs of problem walk. Once the list is finalized, we brought their transcripts, record of high school final grades, and study their academic scores.

4.1. Research method:

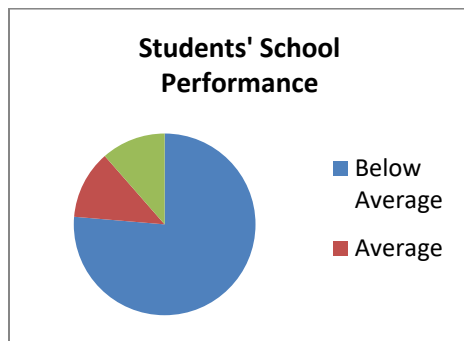
This study adopts a mixed-methods approach to gather both qualitative and quantitative data. This includes observational data on 'Problem Walk' as well as detailed examination of 30 students' school records that exhibit signs of problem walk.

4.2. Observational Data Collection: (non-cognitive factors framework)

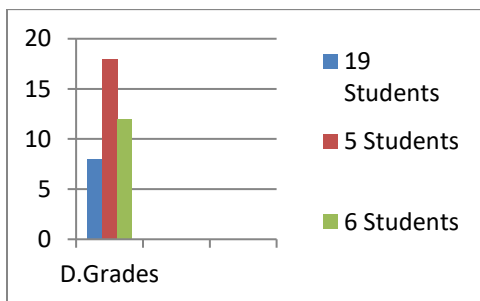
Elements with problem walk exhibit the following signs: Forehead back, chin up, body pushes forward, mainly the weight pushes to the stomach, shoulders sway forward left and right in a rhythmic manner. They deliberately tend to drag their feet on the floor, to move slowly and give an impression of strength and carelessness. For the sake of our research we are going to refer to this behavior pattern as “Problem Walk”.

4.3. Record Examination:

We have collected 60 academic records from 30 students of the current year of this research study and the previous one; the records also include disciplinary grades as well as teachers’ observations.



Graph 1: Examination of students’ school records



5. Analysis:

Graph 1 illustrates the distribution of overall academic achievement among 30 students, categorized into three school descriptions: Below average, Average, and Above average. The data are presented as follows: 20 students are below average, 6 are average, and 5 are above average.

On the other hand, Graph 2 displays the disciplinary grades of students. It's noteworthy that in

Moroccan public high schools, discipline is graded based on attendance, behavior towards teachers and administration, whether students have had any disciplinary measures before or not, on a scale of 20 out of 20. The grade is included as an element of overall academic performance, with the understanding that 1 is its lowest level.

6. Results:

The results showed that approximately 80% of students who demonstrated "problem walk" appeared to have weak academic performance. The findings revealed that students who walk in the same way have had a history of troubled relationships with their teachers in addition to their low school performance.

7. Discussion:

By this study, we by no means seek to conclude that low school performance is the result of ‘Problem walk’. However, we want all those engaged in the act of education to consider this manifestation as a sign of behavior degradation which must be regarded as a factor among the multiple factors which impact learners’ school achievement.

The manifestation of walk problem has to be regarded as a valid indicator in order to anticipate any deviance or degradation in terms of learners’ academic performance and therefore prepare a cooperative plan for more effective countermeasures. We strongly believe that the earlier the intervention occurs, the better chances are to positively influence our children.

7.1. Intervention Plan:

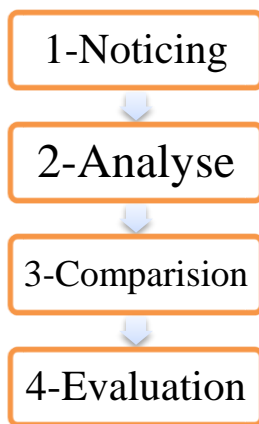
7.1.1. Act Accordingly:

The school should work on bringing role models to the learner’s environment, encourage those selected kids to come, by organizing special events and invite guests who are leaders in entrepreneurship, education, medicine, and the list goes on.

Children who were selected by teachers, parents and school administration, should be given an assignment and told that their attendance is mandatory. The assignment is simply filling out a form that has four stages:

The process to target this behavior is based on four phases:

1. Noticing: the aim of noticing is to make students conscious of appearance of the guests. By describing how they dress, talk and walk. Awareness is crucial for learning to happen (Spielberger, 1966).
2. Analyze: Our ultimate objective in this phase is to reinforce units of the behavior's demonstration in their inner mind. We recommend the composition of a series of WH-questions that would incite learners to frequently think and question the appearance.
3. Comparison: Our purpose in this stage is to lead learners to unconsciously question the demonstration of their own behavior. Writing or speaking activities in which they are instructed to demonstrate the differences and similarities would be an efficient means for our purpose.
4. Evaluation: This stage is crucial to us as educators, teachers and parents as this is the step in which we are putting under close scrutiny the overall of our planning.



7.1.2. Instruction and guidance for teachers:

The assignment should be reviewed by teachers once students return to classes. Teachers should take this task seriously and prepare a lesson plan with clear objectives. The assignment should not mark the end of this process, but rather be accomplished repeatedly to reinforce learning.

7.1.3. Implement PBIS in the Classroom:

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) multi-tiered framework brings about practices,

with social and behavioral objectives, in a classroom setting. It includes three tiers:

- First Tier includes proactive and positive elements that apply to every student in the classroom, such as designing effective classroom environments, developing predictable routines, teaching expectations, delivering engaging instruction, providing prompts and active supervision, acknowledging positive behavior, and responding to problem behavior.
- Second tier school personnel align their supports with existing classroom practices provide targeted professional development, and increase prompts and specific feedback for individual students.
- Third tier provides intensive, individualized support for students who require it, with behavior support plans and individualized professional development plans for school personnel (Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports (PBIS), n.d.).

8. Conclusion:

Non-cognitive factors may significantly impact our behavior and cognition. This study aimed to investigate the link between problem walk and students' school performance. The study presents a close examination of 30 high school students' academic records from the past two years, focusing on subjects exhibiting signs of what we assume to be "problem walk". Even if these non-cognitive factors don't directly affect students' performance, they are still used as indicators to take countermeasure or corrective actions with the purpose of preventing and correcting any deterioration in learner's academic performance. This paper offers an alternative perspective for addressing low achievement and problematic behavior in an unorthodox manner. It provides straightforward and practical procedures for both educator actors and parents to actively participate in the learning-teaching process.

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