

**A CORRELATIONAL STUDY OF INTENSIVE ENGLISH  
PROGRAM STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHER RAPPORT  
AND DELIVERY, MOTIVATION FOR LEARNING AND  
ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN THE INTENSIVE ENGLISH  
CLASS AT THE INSTITUTE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES,  
MAIJAYANG, KACHIN STATE, MYANMAR**

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**Abstract:** This quantitative study aimed to investigate whether there was a significant relationship of students' perceptions of teacher rapport and delivery, motivation for learning, and academic achievement in the Intensive English Program at the Institute of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Myanmar. The population comprised of 48 students in the Intensive English Program (IEP) during the academic year of 2019-2020. The research instruments were the Students' Perceptions of Teacher Rapport and Delivery Questionnaire (SPTRDQ; Barnes & Lock, 2013), the Questionnaire for Measuring Motivation for Learning English as a Foreign Language (QMMLEFL; Gardner, 2010), and the Intensive English examination. Data collection was analyzed by using descriptive statistics and multiple correlation coefficients. The research findings indicated that the students perceived teacher rapport and delivery in the Intensive English class as good, and their motivation for learning EFL was high. The IEP students were found to have good academic achievement. The results from the correlational analysis revealed significant, moderately strong multiple linear relationships of students' perception of teacher delivery and motivation for learning EFL with their academic achievement in the Intensive English class, whereas no significant relationship was found between participants' perception of teacher rapport and their academic achievement.

**Keywords:** Perceptions, Teacher Rapport, Teacher Delivery, Motivation for Learning, English Academic Achievement, English as a Foreign Language,

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### **Introduction**

In relation to teaching and learning, the classroom is a basic learning environment where teacher and students work together. Within this environment, the teacher has the main responsibility for creating the basic motivational conditions for students to learn (Dörnyei, 2001). A strong teacher-student relationship (i.e., teacher rapport) enables teachers to address affective aspects of students' learning. Then promote a positive classroom atmosphere where students can feel warm, safe, and confident, which are essential emotional states for students to learn actively (Yunus et al., 2011). Moreover, if teachers lack knowledge and skills in teaching (i.e., if teachers have a poor delivery), it is difficult for them to guide or mentor students to get higher achievement in their study (Fong-Yee & Normore, 2013). Then, to improve the quality of teaching English as a foreign language, knowing students' perceptions of teachers' rapport and delivery is crucial to create positive learning opportunities for the improvement of students' academic achievement (Barnes & Lock, 2013; Chen, 2012; Faranda & Clarke, 2004).

Another factor affecting students' academic achievement is their motivation for learning. According to Gardner (2010), learning a foreign language is different from learning other subjects. Dörnyei (1998) claimed that a student with low motivation would face difficulties learning a foreign language. Therefore, if students are not motivated, they are unlikely to put effort and succeed in their foreign language learning process.

The first author, working at the Institute of Liberal Arts and Sciences (ILAS), Maijayang, Kachin State, Myanmar, has noticed that some students tend to have a lower motivation in comparison to those of outside class activities; such as sport and music classes. Still, there are situations in which the teachers cannot pay attention to students individually, students do not feel close to the teachers, the teacher gives a lot of homework, the students do not meet teachers' expectations, or students have no confidence in the teaching capacity. Both the students' perception of teacher rapport and delivery and their motivation for learning can highly affect the learning process and academic achievement (Chen, 2012; Yunus et al., 2011). Therefore, the researchers decided to conduct a study examining the relationship of students' perception of teachers' rapport and delivery and motivation for learning with academic achievement in learning English as a foreign language in the Intensive English class at the Institute of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

### **Research Objectives**

The following research objectives were addressed in this study.

1. To determine the level of perception of teacher rapport in the Intensive English class of Intensive English Program students at the Institute of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Maijayang, Kachin State, Myanmar.
2. To determine the level of perception of teacher delivery in the Intensive English class of Intensive English Program students at the Institute of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Maijayang, Kachin State, Myanmar.
3. To determine the level of motivation for learning English as a foreign language at the Intensive English class of Intensive English Program students at the Institute of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Maijayang, Kachin State, Myanmar.
4. To determine the level of academic achievement in the Intensive English class of Intensive English Program students at the Institute of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Maijayang, Kachin State, Myanmar.
5. To determine if there is a significant relationship of Intensive English Program students' perceptions of teacher rapport and delivery and motivation for learning with academic achievement in the Intensive English class at the Institute of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Maijayang, Kachin State, Myanmar.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study was conducted based on the following supporting theories: the attributes of effective teachers (Faranda & Clarke, 2004), the socio-educational model of second language acquisition (Gardner, 2010), and the theory of perceptual learning (Gibson, 1969).

#### *Attributes of Effective Teachers (Faranda & Clarke, 2004)*

The attributes of effective teachers identified by Faranda and Clarke (2004) are indicators for measuring the extent to which teachers demonstrate their contribution to growth in student learning. According to Faranda and Clarke (2004), there are five categories of teacher attributes: rapport, delivery, fairness, knowledge and credibility, and organization and preparation. Among these five attributes, rapport and delivery were chosen to be addressed in this study since the researchers believed that these two attributes represented the biggest concerns for the target institution.

#### *Rapport*

This attribute is defined as the teacher's ability to establish and sustain a relationship characterized by a high degree of friendliness, sociability, empathy, accessibility, receptiveness, and mutual respect with their students. Students prefer teachers who develop and maintain a good rapport with them

since these teachers usually have a positive attitude toward students and the ability to be patient, approachable, and harmonious (Faranda & Clarke, 2004).

#### *Delivery*

This attribute is related to the teacher's way of instruction (Faranda & Clarke, 2004), specifically with a teacher's competence to deliver knowledge and implement pedagogical strategies to interact with students to help them engage in the learning process (Barnes & Lock, 2013). Teachers who have a good delivery will be able to encourage students to work in groups, use good examples to explain the lessons, use different delivery methods, and correct students' mistakes in positive ways (Barnes & Lock, 2013; Faranda & Clarke, 2004).

#### *Fairness*

This attribute is mostly concerned with a teacher's ability to treat each student honestly, assign a balanced workload to students, have transparency in teaching and evaluation, and provide clear grading instructions (Barnes & Lock, 2013; Faranda & Clarke, 2004).

#### *Knowledge and Credibility*

This attribute is mainly related to the set of professional information and skills a teacher uses in teaching a subject matter and the extent to which students perceive this information to be believable. Students will be more likely to be attentive to and influenced by teachers they perceive as knowledgeable and credible (Barnes & Lock, 2013).

#### *Organization and Preparation*

This attribute is mainly concerned with a teacher's ability to organize instruction and prepare lessons, which requires teachers to be able to incorporate the curriculum standards into clear and appropriate lesson plans, quizzes, homework, and school activities (Barnes & Lock, 2013; Faranda & Clarke, 2004).

#### *Gardner's (2010) Socio-Educational Model of Second Language Acquisition*

This framework examines the relationship between the main social-psychological components believed to influence achievement in learning a second language, such as motivation and attitudes toward the learning situation. Motivation in the socio-educational model of second language acquisition is assessed through three components: motivational intensity (i.e., the effort the students put in learning a second language), desire to learn the language (i.e., students' willingness to learn a second language), and attitudes toward learning the language (i.e., students' dispositional evaluations of their

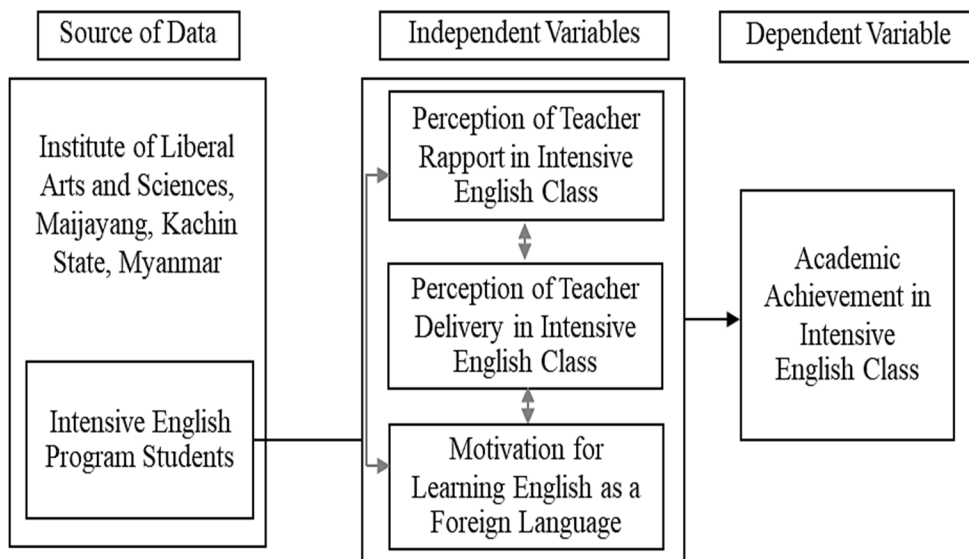
second language learning process; Gardner, 2010).

### *Theory of Perceptual Learning (Gibson, 1969)*

This theoretical model states that perceptual learning (i.e., the ability to extract information from sensory stimulation) is the process of becoming increasingly connected to one's environment, particularly by individuals making finer and finer descriptions of perceptual stimuli from the environment (Gibson, 1969). With different knowledge and experience, people are able to find, obtain information, and come to understand something through the senses (i.e., perceive) differently, even when the perceptual stimuli come from the same source (Gibson, 1969). In this study, students' perceptions refer to students' beliefs, opinions, perspectives, or mental viewpoints, through which they interpret information extracted from sensory stimulation about their IEP teachers' rapport and delivery.

### **Conceptual Framework**

Figure 1 depicts the conceptual framework of the current study.



**Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the Current Study**

### **Literature Review**

In this section, some previous studies related to the research variables addressed in this study are reviewed and summarized.

Yunus et al. (2011) conducted a study on the effect of teacher rapport on learners' motivation and academic achievement in an English as a Second

Language (ESL) classroom. Qualitative interviews were used for this study. Six pre-service teachers enrolled in a B. Ed. program in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) at one university in Malaysia were asked to respond to 21 interview questions. The findings revealed that a good rapport and interpersonal relationship between teachers and students is crucial in supporting students' learning in the English language classroom. Also, it was found that a good rapport between teacher and students can improve students' motivation to learn and academic achievement.

Research on the relationship of business students' perception of teacher rapport and their academic achievement was carried out by Mohamed et al. (2018). Data were collected from 97 students enrolled in their third or fourth semester of a six-semester diploma level program in either Accountancy, Business Studies, or Marketing at a Malaysian polytechnic institute. The results indicated that there was no significant correlation between the way students perceive teacher rapport and their academic achievement.

Fong-Yee and Normore (2013) studied the impact of quality teachers' emotional ability, content knowledge, knowledge of instruction and learning, licensure, and teaching delivery in the class on the students' academic achievement. Data for this study were collected from a literature review and a grounded theory approach to identify the diverse factors related to teacher quality that influence students' academic achievement. Among other results, the findings revealed that teaching delivery in the class had a positive and significant impact on student learning and academic achievement.

Contreras and Lynch (2018) examined the relationship of motivation for learning and perceived parental encouragement with English oral skills achievement held by Grades 6-8 students at an international school in Bangkok, Thailand. For the data collection, Gardner's (2005) Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB) was implemented to measure the level of students' motivation for learning English. The findings showed that the students' motivation for learning English had a significantly strong relationship with their English oral skills achievement.

## **Methodology/Procedure**

### *Population*

The research population was comprised of all the 48 students enrolled in the Intensive English Program (IEP) during the academic year of 2019-2020 at the Institute of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Maijayang, Kachin State, Myanmar.

### *Research Instruments*

In order to address the objectives of this study, three research instruments were used: The Students' Perception of Teacher Rapport and Delivery Questionnaire (SPTRDQ), the Questionnaire for Measuring Motivation for Learning English as a Foreign Language (QMMLEFL), and the Intensive English examination of the IEP. Data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics (means and standard deviation) and correlational analysis using multiple correlation coefficients.

#### *Students' Perceptions of Teacher Rapport and Delivery Questionnaire (SPTRDQ)*

This questionnaire, comprised of 28 items, adapted the subscales of rapport (11 items) and delivery (17 items) from Barnes and Lock (2013), which in turn were originally developed by Faranda and Clarke (2004). All the items were positively worded and used a 7-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 2 = *disagree*, 3 = *slightly disagree*, 4 = *no feelings*, 5 = *slightly agree*, 6 = *agree*, 7 = *strongly agree*).

#### *Questionnaire for Measuring Motivation for Learning English as a Foreign Language (QMMLEFL)*

This instrument adopted three subscales from the Attitude/ Motivational Test Battery (Gardner, 2004) in order to measure participants' motivation for learning English as a foreign language. The chosen AMTB subscales were motivational intensity (10 items), desire to learn English (10 items), and attitudes toward learning English (10 items). Each subscale used a mix of five positively worded and five negatively worded items, measured with a 6-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 2 = *moderately disagree*, 3 = *slightly disagree*, 4 = *slightly agree*, 5 = *moderately agree*, 6 = *strongly agree*).

#### *The Intensive English Examination of the IEP*

This instrument was used to measure the EFL academic achievement of Intensive English Program's students at the Institute of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Maijyang, Kachin State, Myanmar. The examination assessed the students' language skills in English subjects: vocabulary, grammar, and composition, phonetic, communicative English, and reading. The students were expected to achieve a minimum score of 60 out of 100 points in the examination, with a score lower than 60 points being regarded as failing this test. This grading scale is the one officially used at the Institute of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Maijyang, Kachin State, Myanmar.

### **Research Findings**

In this section, the findings regarding each research objective are summarized.

*Findings from Research Objective 1*

Regarding to this research objective, the following finding was obtained.

- Overall, the Intensive English Program students at the Institute of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Maijayang, Kachin State, Myanmar, perceived their teachers' rapport as good (on a scale of 1-7, with 7 meaning "good"),  $M = 5.72$ ,  $SD = .96$ .

*Findings from Research Objective 2*

Regarding to this research objective, the following finding was obtained.

- Overall, the Intensive English Program students at the Institute of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Maijayang, Kachin State, Myanmar, perceived their teachers' delivery as good (on a scale of 1-7, with 7 meaning "good"),  $M = 5.98$ ,  $SD = .93$ .

*Findings from Research Objective 3*

Regarding this research objective, the following findings were obtained.

- The level of motivational intensity in learning English as a foreign language in the Intensive English class of Intensive English Program students at the Institute of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Maijayang, Kachin State, Myanmar, was slightly high (on a scale of 1-6, with 6 meaning "very high"),  $M = 3.85$ ,  $SD = 1.18$ .
- The level of desire to learn English in learning English as a foreign language in the Intensive English class of Intensive English Program students at the Institute of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Maijayang, Kachin State, Myanmar was high (on a scale of 1-6, with 6 meaning "very high"),  $M = 4.61$ ,  $SD = 1.22$ .
- The level of attitude toward learning English in learning English as a foreign language in the Intensive English class of Intensive English Program students at the Institute of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Maijayang, Kachin State, Myanmar, was positive (on a scale of 1-6, with 6 meaning "very positive"),  $M = 5.16$ ,  $SD = .97$ .
- Overall, the Intensive English Program students at the Institute of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Maijayang, Kachin State, Myanmar, had a high level of motivation for learning English as a foreign language (on a scale of 1-6, with 6 meaning "very high"),  $M = 4.54$ ,  $SD = 1.12$ .

*Findings from Research Objective 4*

Regarding to this research objective, the following finding was obtained.

- Overall, the Intensive English Program students at the Institute of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Maijayang, Kachin State, Myanmar, had a good academic achievement (on a scale of 0-100, with 100 meaning "excellent"),



$M = 70.81, SD = 9.62.$

#### *Findings from Research Objective 5*

The following findings were obtained regarding this research objective by performing a correlational analysis of the collected data.

- It was found that there was no significant relationship between the IEP students' perception of teacher rapport and their academic achievement in the Intensive English class at the Institute of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Maijyang, Kachin State, Myanmar,  $r = .28, p = .053$ . However, IEP students' perception of teacher delivery and academic achievement variables were significantly and weakly correlated ( $r = .29, p = .045$ ), while IEP students' motivation for learning EFL and academic achievement were found to have a significant and moderately strong correlation ( $r = .50, p < .001$ ).
- At the target institution, IEP students' perception of teacher delivery and motivation for learning EFL were found to have a significant, moderately strong multiple correlation with their academic achievement in the Intensive English class,  $R = .52, R^2 = .27, F(2, 45) = 8.39, p = .001$ .
- The multiple coefficients of determination ( $R^2$ ) for the collective effect of IEP students' perception of teacher delivery and motivation for learning EFL on their academic achievement in the Intensive English class was .27, which indicates that 27% of the variance of IEP students' academic achievement in the Intensive English class was explained by the combination of their perception of teacher delivery and motivation for learning EFL.

#### **Discussion**

In this section, the findings of this study are discussed and placed in context with previous studies. The discussion is arranged in the following seven subsections: perception of teacher rapport; perception of teacher delivery; motivation for learning English as a foreign language; perception of teacher rapport and academic achievement; perception of teacher delivery and academic achievement; motivation for learning English as a foreign language and academic achievement; and perception of teacher delivery, motivation for learning EFL and academic achievement.

#### *Perception of Teacher Rapport*

According to the findings from this study, the rapport between teachers and students in the Intensive English class at ILAS was perceived as good by the students. This could be grounded on the operation conditions of ILAS. The target institution is a boarding school, and the teachers and students stay at the same campus. Therefore, the students and teachers can meet inside and outside

of the class. Moreover, ILAS has club activities where both teachers and students have to participate (e.g., music and drama club, art and decorating club, motivating club, agriculture club, IT club, library club, and religious club). At the beginning of the school year, each club is led by one or two teachers, and every student must choose one club to participate in for the whole school year. Besides, as a community-based school, IEP students must engage in community service (e.g., collecting trash at the public park), accompanied by their teachers. With a good rapport between teachers and students, the students may get good confidence, and they may overcome the tension and fear they might face in the class (Yunus et al., 2011).

#### *Perception of Teacher Delivery*

Based on the findings from this study, the IEP students perceived their teachers as good at delivering content knowledge to students in the Intensive English class. According to researchers' knowledge, this can be because these teachers have a solid knowledge base in teaching English. The teachers from ILAS are all Master and Bachelor degree holders from local universities in fields related to English language teaching, with some of them having studied abroad. Moreover, since all the teachers are from local communities, they are familiar with their students' backgrounds and basic English language problems. Therefore, these teachers seem to understand their students' needs in English language learning and implement different instructional strategies applied to the local context.

#### *Motivation for Learning English as a Foreign Language*

According to the findings from this study, the overall level of IEP students' motivation for learning EFL was high and a slightly high level of motivational intensity to learn English. According to Gardner (1985), this indicates that IEP students are willing to put effort to achieve specific goals in relation to learning EFL.

The findings also showed that IEP students had a strong desire to learn English until they were fluent in English. According to Gardner and Lambert (1972), this indicates that IEP students have a strong willingness to learn the English language for practical or educational purposes and to put effort into improving their English language skills and have better career prospects in the future. According to the researchers' knowledge, during the school entrance interview session, most of the IEP students expressed that preparing for further studies was their main reason to enroll in the IEP. Therefore, students would like to build their English foundation skills in IEP classes and continue to study advanced English for better job opportunities in the future.

It was found that the IEP students had a positive attitude towards learning English. According to researchers' knowledge, IEP students have a good learning environment with small class sizes, which is very different from their previous state school classes. There are usually more than 40 students in one class. Moreover, they have a resourceful library to research for their studies. The quality of the learning setting could impact a students' motivation (Gardner, 2005). In addition, the teachers and students from the IEP meet both inside and outside of the class, engaging together in activities such as school clubs, outdoor activities, and social service. Therefore, they can build a good relationship, which may impact their motivation to learn. Gardner (2010) stated that the relationship between teachers and learners greatly influences the learners' attitudes toward language learning.

#### *Perception of Teacher Rapport and Academic Achievement*

Based on the findings from this study, no significant relationship was found between Intensive English Program students' perception of teacher rapport and their academic achievement in the Intensive English class at the Institute of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Maijyang, Kachin State, Myanmar. This can be interpreted as teacher rapport being a factor not having a significant influence on the participants' academic achievement in the Intensive English class. This result was aligned with the one reported by Mohamed et al. (2018), who found that teacher rapport did not significantly influence business students' academic achievement, and it did not show a significant correlation between the two variables. According to Ang (2005), young learners are more dependent on teachers when compared to older learners (i.e., college or university students). The quality and influence of teacher rapport tend to decrease when students move to higher education. Since IEP students are studying at a higher education level, they could be considered more independent in their learning. Therefore, this might be why IEP students' perception of teacher rapport did not significantly impact their academic achievement in the Intensive English class.

#### *Perception of Teacher Delivery and Academic Achievement*

This study showed a moderately strong correlation between Intensive English Program students' perceptions of teacher delivery and academic achievement in Intensive English class at the Institute of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Maijyang, Kachin State, Myanmar. These results show that the quality of teacher delivery had a moderately strong impact on IEP students' academic achievement in Intensive English class, which is aligned with many previous studies. For example, Fong-Yee and Normore (2013) reported that the quality of teaching delivery in the class could improve student achievement.

### *Motivation for Learning EFL and Academic Achievement*

According to the findings from this study, there was a moderately strong correlation between Intensive English Program students' motivation for learning and academic achievement in Intensive English class at the Institute of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Maijayang, Kachin State, Myanmar. This indicates that IEP students' motivation for learning EFL had a moderately strong influence on their academic achievement in Intensive English class. This aligns with the research findings reported by Contreras and Lynch (2018), who also found a strong relationship between students' motivation to learn English and their English oral skills achievement. According to Gardner (2005), highly motivated students have a better chance of achieving better success in their language learning process than those with a lower level of motivation. Dörnyei (1998) claimed that students with a high motivation to learn are more likely to put more effort and succeed in their foreign language learning process.

### *Perception of Teacher Delivery, Motivation for Learning EFL and Academic Achievement*

It was found that there was significant, moderately strong multiple correlations of IEP students' perception of teacher delivery and motivation for learning EFL with their academic achievement in the Intensive English class at the target institution. Moreover, the combination of IEP students' perception of teacher delivery and motivation for learning EFL was found to explain 27% of the total variance of IEP students' academic achievement in the Intensive English class. From these results, it can be concluded that the combination of students' perception of teacher delivery and motivation for learning EFL had a moderately strong explanatory and predictive power for participants' academic achievement in the Intensive English class. These results were aligned with those reported by Fong-Yee and Normore (2013). They also found that teachers' delivery and motivational behaviors in the class were significantly correlated with the students' improvement in academic achievement.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings, conclusions, and discussion obtained in this study, some recommendations are made for students, teachers, school administrators, and future researchers.

#### *Recommendations for Students*

Based on the study findings, students should put more effort in learning English to improve their motivational intensity, and then increase their possibility of achieving their goals in relation to learning English. Moreover,

students should also plan small goals and practice according to their preferred learning strategies.

#### *Recommendations for Teachers*

According to the findings of this study, teachers are recommended to implement homework and assignments that might attract students' attention to perform. Teachers are also recommended to use exciting teaching and learning strategies and creative learning materials. Besides, teachers should help students find their weaknesses and strengths in learning English by giving face-to-face discussion time, feedback, and encouragement for their improvement.

#### *Recommendations for Administrators*

The school administrators should create a school environment where teachers can build a better relationship with their students. Also, the school administrators should provide better environments and opportunities for students to be able to implement the English language knowledge and skills they have acquired in the IEP. In addition, the ILAS administrators should build a professional learning community for teachers to support their professional development.

#### *Recommendations for Future Researchers*

Future researchers should consider examining other factors that might influence the students' academic achievement, such as perception of teacher fairness, knowledge and credibility, organization and preparation (Faranda & Clarke, 2004), the school environment, the use of ICT in the classroom, and the implementation of different learning strategies and assessments.

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