

Does an Eye Contact or a Soft Tone of the Teacher help in Creating Supportive Learning Environment in the MBA Class?'

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Abstract

Research points out that quality teaching is all about student learning and is thus student-centered. Effective teachers use immediacy behavior for enhancing the student performance. They smile, make eye contact, move around the room, gesture, and use encouraging tone while talking to students. Consequently, teachers make the learning environment supportive through the use of these nonverbal cues, encouraging students to participate, thereby enhancing their level of retention and understanding. The present study also aims at investigating the impact of teacher's nonverbal behavior on the students' motivation, engagement and the learning outcomes in the Indian context. The analysis of the results indicate that the teachers who create psychologically safe environment in the class help students participate and make their contributions in class activities freely. The students, especially, are found to be sensitive to the tone of their class teacher. If they find the tone of the teacher non-threatening, devoid of sarcasm or ridicule, they feel confident to share their opinions in the class even if it is contrary to the teachers' point of view. Even the eye contact or the smiling face of the teacher is seen as a motivating factor for students to recall concepts learnt in the class.

Key Words: Nonverbal Immediacy Behaviour; Learning Outcome, Engagement; Motivation, Supportive Learning Environment

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