

Learner Autonomy: Pakistani Learners' Perceptions, Attitudes, Motivation and Challenges

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Abstract

Learner autonomy has drawn much interest from educationists and researchers around the world both in terms of second language acquisition as well as students' learning orientation, classroom organization, and personal development. Classroom teaching in Pakistan has long so been teacher-centred that, even at the level of higher education, it is widely in practice resulting in a low quality of learning outcomes. This study aims at investigating learner autonomy in higher education in Punjab. The purpose is to examine the students' views, attitudes and their orientation to the learning approach that they take on to develop and strengthen their knowledge. Firstly, through their views, the particular focus was to investigate whether teachers endeavour for the promotion of autonomy. Secondly, it has also attempted to determine the major challenge to independent learning. The study, therefore, also examined the gender differences in terms of learner autonomy. The data instrument was a structured questionnaire consisting of fifteen items on the attitude scale, the Likert-scale. Sixty students comprising an equal number of both genders from the University of Gujrat were sampled. Therefore, this paper finds out that both the teachers and the students have positive attitudes towards autonomy and active involvement in its promotion. Because learners at the university level can have better learning opportunity within teacher-supervised autonomy, this can improve their learning skills far better than doing everything on their instructors' disposal. Challenges, i.e. marking system and fixed course outlines are present, but teachers have their commitment to promoting learner autonomy.

Keywords: Learner autonomy, learning orientation, attitudes, Pakistan, Punjab, higher education

1. Introduction

Opposite to the concept of 'scaffolding' from Vygotsky's sociocultural theory is the concept of learner's autonomy which lays stress on the independence of learners and which is also getting the considerable attention from the researchers. According to Allwright (1988), the concept of learner autonomy was previously mainly linked with the move away from

the traditional teaching style for new styles of teaching intending to introduce new methods. However, the present-day learner autonomy has got some different definitions. For instance, Holec (1981) has defined it as the ability to take charge of one's own learning. The concept has gained much popularity among language teachers during the past couple of decades. Sometimes, the use of the concept of "learner autonomy" for different purposes has also lead to a situation in which it is, as Little (2003) has asserted, "widely confused with self-instruction." This study, then, has applied the Littlewood's (1997) model that comprised three levels but operating under one level the "learning approach" in the frame of reference of classroom organization. Meanwhile, it is widely believed that, as Borg and Al-Busaidi (2012) have argued, learners autonomy is the way to achieve improvement in the quality of language learning as well as enabling learners to make optimum use of "learning opportunities in and out of class." Various models have also been proposed for it. For example, Nunan's (1997) model, which discussed five levels of autonomy, was related to language learning. However, Littlewood (1996) presented three levels of autonomy in his model.

The educational system in Pakistan, on the other hand, is highly teacher-centered along with instruction in traditional methods which compels students to do nothing but merely be the passive listeners who, later on, are evaluated solely by written tests and exams. Subsequently, like other Asian countries, it is an indication that learner autonomy is a little appreciative on the part of students in Pakistan (Nguyen, 2014). This study, thus, aims at evaluating the attitudes of the students of higher education towards learner autonomy among university students in the Punjab where the process of teaching, as well as learning, has long been taking place in the teacher-centered setting. Furthermore, it also identifies the variation among attitudes of both sexes. The rationale for this study was the latest fashion in students' attitude about their learning in which they are but do not want to be bound by the instructors' teaching methods and material merely acting as passive entities. Although the major trigger behind this can presumably be traced back to technological advancement due to which students or learners of the present time have far better access to a zone that is full of development, the other strand in this theoretical framework can also assume to be the increasing development of students interest in learning, as Gremmo

and Riley (1995) claimed that there are some additional key factors other than technological advancement and development in education.

1.1 Questions and Objectives

Based on the perception of the students' views and perception, therefore, this study intends to seek answers to the following questions:

1. What are the attitudes of university students towards learner autonomy and their awareness about being autonomous in their learning?
2. What are the challenges to learner autonomy for learners at the university level?
3. Do male and female students exhibit a difference in the level of autonomy?

Hence, also, the objectives of this study can be described are to determine the university students' autonomy in learning at public sector universities of the Punjab, to find out the challenges in learner autonomy for learners at the university level and to find out if there are differences in the level of autonomy for male and female students.

1.2 Rationale and Significance

The Higher Education Commission of Pakistan instructed all the public sector universities to abandon the two-year graduation (BA/BSC/B.COM) and master (M.A/M.SC) programs and replace them with the four year BS program by 2019. Majority of the universities, therefore, shifted their focus from two-year programs to four-year programs in 2017. So, as mentioned in the introduction section that the Educational system in Pakistan - especially up to the secondary level- is highly teacher-centered, therefore, it was the need of the time that the studies must be done in order to make a smooth transition and to minimize the problem from school career to the university career because having been brought up an educational career that highly differs from that designed for higher education poses challenges not only to the learners but also to the teachers. Thus, studies like the present one can help in figuring out remedies for the present and expected challenges.

Thus, to make an effective and smooth transition from the teacher-centered environment to the student or learner-centered, this study can help in

making a shift toward the latter by highlighting the benefits of learners autonomy and by promoting it at the higher education level. Therefore, the practical implications of this study would, especially, be helpful both on the part of teachers and that of learners as well. Also, this work is intended to help instructors at higher education level in comprehending the effectiveness of learner autonomy in universities, and also in developing, maintaining and promoting it for better educational outcomes.

2. Literature Review

Little (2009) has claimed that, back in the 1980s, the learner was interpreted as the self-learning in adult education but now it is viewed as a matter of learners doing things not necessarily on their own but for themselves with the emergence of learner-centered theories. A seminal contribution to the work in the field of learner autonomy is attributed to Holec (1981) who pioneered this term in the “Council of Europe’s Modern Language Project,” and his definition is the essence of learner autonomy. Benson (2007) claims that Holec’s definition is an “attribute of learners, rather than learning situations” (p.22). However, numerous definitions without a single theory are available, and researchers have portrayed it differently. Nevertheless, it is established that variation is a matter of linguistics only.

In recent times across the world, learner autonomy has received increasing interest in its application as a theory not only in learning of language but also in teaching (Benson, 2013). Benson further notes that the contribution of literature during after the beginning of the 21st century was larger than that published during the two and a half decades before 2000. According to Little, learner autonomy benefits three major areas: the effectiveness in learning in immediate and long-term contexts, the minimization of barrier between the learner and living, and ultimately turning the learners into useful and active individuals in a society. Sakai, Takagi, and Chu (2010) studied learner autonomy in the language classroom by taking a sample from various colleges and university in Japan and Taiwan. They had a reasonable sample that consisted of 902 students. The results of their study noted that there is a difference in learner autonomy among male and female students in that latter are more autonomous than the former.

However, Borg and Al-Busaidi (2012) conducted a recent and comprehensive study of learner autonomy. This study highlighted some

salient and interlinked aspects of the concepts involving the nature of “learner autonomy,” teachers’ roles in its promotion, constraints on it concerning individual and institutional, social and individual perspective, and kinds of encouraging opportunities in learning that autonomy can offer. They used a mixed method – both an interview of twenty teachers and a questionnaire consisting approximately fifty items, with a five-point Likert-scale, which as they described were theme around the concepts of psychological, social, technical, political perspectives, the age and proficiency of learner, teacher role, the efficiency relation between learner and language - to draw their results. Through an experiment in her research, (Nguyen, 2012) investigated teachers’ role in promoting “learner autonomy” through the use of learner-autonomy-related teaching practices to understand it. Her research resulted in that the development of an autonomous culture in learning is contingent on the teacher.

Previously research showed some challenges in promoting learner autonomy. These challenges were of several types. Most common among those were psychological or dispositional, institutional, situational and socio-cultural (Yasmin & Sohail, 2018b). Saar, Täht, and Roosalu (2014) found institutional constraints as less challenging and easy to remove by the educational system as compared to psychological or cultural constraints. Most of the constraints were also found in overlapping. Learner related constraints such as learner dependence were found both psychological but also the effects of cultural structures (Yasmin, Sohail, Sarkar, & Hafeez, 2017).

Moreover, institutional constraints such as entrance exams found in Nakata (2011), examination system, traditional teaching practices and educational policies found in Yasmin and Sohail (2018a) and Nasri, Dastjerdy, Rasekh, and Amirian's (2015) research led to low level of proficiency and lack of motivation. The review of literature highlighted that above researcher explored the constraints through teachers’ voices. It is important to examine the perceptions of the main stakeholders-the students to study the prospects of learner autonomy. Present study intended to study learners’ perceptions at the university level. As girls have shown greater and better performance in education in Pakistan, this study also focuses on gender differences. Gender differences were also explored by Sakai et al. (2010) in their research. Therefore, presuming that there exist differences, the investigation of the

relationship of autonomy in gender differences can help in pedagogy and render some assistance to the promotion of autonomy.

3. Methodology

This research follows the quantitative approach of research to seek answer under investigation. The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire with a Likert scale with five answers for the respondents to choose from.

3.1 Research Design and Instrumentation

This research employed the quantitative methods of study and used descriptive statistics for the analysis and interpretation of the data. The main tool for the collection of the primary data of the study was the questionnaire (see appendix). This close-ended structured questionnaire consisted of 18 statements that were designed to investigate (a) the students' awareness about autonomy, (b) their attitude towards autonomy, (c) its promotion, and (d) challenges to autonomy. The questionnaire was maximally minimized in length and format. Consisting of two pages, there were three sections; the introduction to the present research, variable information (semester, gender, educational level, previous schooling, and educational field), general and specific instructions, and the statements/questions.

The questionnaire originally had 23 items which were reduced to 18 after having it piloted. After the reliability test, further three items were deleted to increase the reliability score of the test. The reliability score, then, was .640.

Table 1. Reliability score of the instrument

| Cronbach's Alpha | Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items | N of Items |
|------------------|--|------------|
| .640 | .646 | 15 |

It was intended to measure the four constructs. First, five items on the questionnaire were meant to measure the students' awareness (were related to cognition) about learner autonomy. Item 6 was about behavioural construct whereas item 7 and 9 were about students' attitude about learner autonomy. Item 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14 were about the promotion of autonomy. These were intended to measure teachers' attitude (from the

perspective of the students) towards learner autonomy. Item 8 and last item (15) were concerned with the measurement of the challenge to autonomy.

3.2 Participants

The sampling framework of this research was a non-probability convenient method. The target population of this study was the university students in Punjab. The accessible population was the students of the University of Gujrat, Gujrat (Pakistan). Out of this accessible population, 60 students from arts and sciences were taken using convenience sampling technique. However, most of the sample consisted of students of English. The sample was comprised of students from an equal number of male and female students. An equal proportion of students of both sexes were sampled as this study also hypothesized that, in terms of the autonomy of the students, there is a difference between male and female students. Cumulative percentage of undergraduates in the study was 66.7, and it was 33.3 for graduates.

The participants were requested to fill out the questionnaire. Upon their acceptance, they were handed over to the groups with three to five individuals. The larger groups were not selected because the researcher expected that the participants would give some serious considerations when they knew he is sitting with them and also to help them out in case they wanted some clarification about any point. They were briefed with some preliminary introduction to the research following instructions about filling out the questionnaire.

3.3 Method of Analysis

A total of 66 questionnaires were got filled out by the participants of both genders (male/female) and educational level (BS/MS). However, only sixty questionnaires were considered. Four questionnaires had missing values for items while two questionnaires were rejected because the participants seemed to have filled them carelessly (i.e. they were almost all agreed or disagreed).

The data were analyzed using SPSS 25. The results have been explained through descriptive statistics. Then, items were categorized under five headings and explained the results verbally along with the presentation of mean scores and standard deviations. The reliability test was also conducted on the instrument. Finally, a T-test was used to get the differences between

male and female students. Research ethics about the anonymity of the respondents and the information they provided were followed while ensuring the collection of data. No personal information such as name, age, etc. was asked. Also, there was no clue on the questionnaire that could lead even the researcher back to them.

4. Results and discussion

This part presents the research findings and their interpretations. Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics and shows an overview of the findings. Following that, the interpretations have been provided in line with the division of theoretical constructs set earlier during the development of instrumentation.

Table. 2 An overview of the findings

| Sr. No. | Statements | N | Min | Max | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---------|--|----|-----|-----|------|----------------|
| 1 | I understand what learner autonomy means | 60 | 1 | 5 | 3.48 | .930 |
| 2 | Independence in learning means that I have to learn everything on my own. | 60 | 1 | 5 | 3.13 | 1.186 |
| 3 | Independence in learning is when a student is allowed to decide how to learn and where to learn. | 60 | 1 | 5 | 3.57 | 1.198 |
| 4 | Learning on my own gives me the chance to use better learning opportunities. | 60 | 1 | 5 | 4.03 | .843 |
| 5 | I can monitor my own learning; I know how | 60 | 1 | 5 | 3.87 | .853 |

| | | | | | | | |
|----|--|----|---|---|------|-------|--|
| | much I can and have learned on my own. | | | | | | |
| 6 | I learn only from that material (notes, books) which the teacher gives me to learn from. | 60 | 1 | 5 | 2.73 | 1.326 | |
| 7 | It brings me confidence when I learn things on my own. | 60 | 1 | 5 | 4.23 | .927 | |
| 8 | Independent learning cannot take place without the help of a teacher. | 60 | 1 | 5 | 3.52 | 1.157 | |
| 9 | Teachers allow me to learn independently by making my own choices about how to learn. | 60 | 1 | 5 | 3.58 | 1.169 | |
| 10 | Teachers appreciate me when I contribute my own learning during class lectures. | 60 | 1 | 5 | 4.03 | 1.221 | |
| 11 | Teachers encourage me to learn outside the boundaries of syllabus/outline. | 60 | 1 | 5 | 3.67 | 1.174 | |
| 12 | Teachers give us activities that help us with independent learning. | 60 | 1 | 5 | 3.75 | 1.052 | |

| | | | | | | |
|----|--|----|---|---|------|-------|
| 13 | Group activities help me with independent learning. | 60 | 1 | 5 | 3.50 | 1.384 |
| 14 | The marking system of exam stops me to learn independently by not allowing me to use my resources. | 60 | 1 | 5 | 3.60 | 1.405 |
| 15 | The learning should not be confined to the classroom. | 60 | 1 | 5 | 3.80 | 1.132 |

4.1 Awareness

The first five statements surveyed the students' awareness of the concept of 'learner autonomy' as a mental representation. These items attempted to find out whether students are, implicitly or explicitly, aware of being independent in their learning and their efforts for self-learning.

The purpose of these statements (figure 1) was to find whether students in universities are aware of the concept of autonomy. The mean score (3.48) for the first statement gives us the positive answer and shows that students considerably understand - or at least know - learner autonomy as they were supposed to have an understanding about it. The next two statements (figure 1) analyzed their perception about the learner autonomy, for example, whether they see it as an entirely self-responsibility (statement 2) and whether students have the opportunity to decide on the learning methods and sources of their own (statement 3). With this, it could become apparent which situation they hold ideal for themselves. Therefore, the mean scores for statement 2, which is 3.13, is towards the positive side of the attitudinal scale and give us the finding that students appreciation and enthusiasm about making efforts to learn on their own. However, statement 3, which has a mean score of 3.57, has a considerably high score than statement 2. This, consequently, propounds that, instead of doing everything in the learning process on their own, they have high regard when teachers allow them to

choose their own sources for more knowledge. To illustrate in other words, guided autonomy has a preference for them.

The fourth statement in this construct measures whether the independence in learning provides them with the chance to utilize the present-day learning resources more efficiently and beneficially. The mean score for this statement is 4.03 which is a considerable score toward the positive side on the scale. This indicates that being independent in their learning provides university learners with better learning opportunities. Finally, the fifth and last statement in this construct examines the learners' ability to check the progress of their learning and acquisition of knowledge when they learn entirely on their own, or in the second case; they have the option to learn on their own. The response score for this is 3.87 which is also a positive attitude to their cognitive awareness about learner autonomy. Therefore, being able to monitor their learning is useful to decide whether they should keep on or stop.

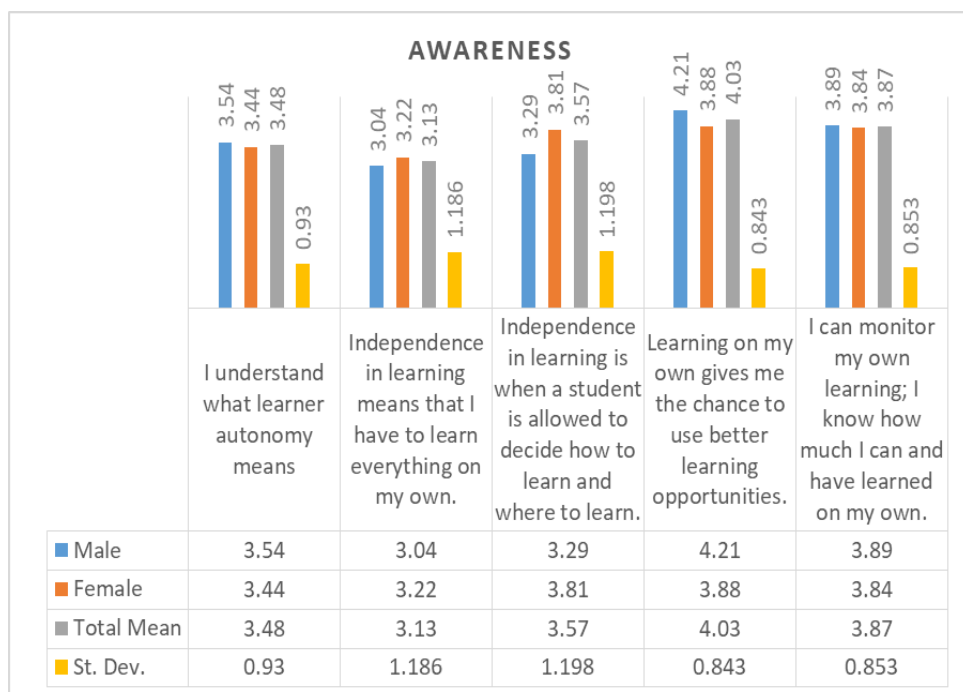


Figure 1. Measurement of awareness construct

Gender Differences. The T-test indicates that the difference was insignificant between the two sexes in statement 3 and 4 of the awareness construct. The differences (figure 2) surfaced in statement 3 and 4, which were about deciding on resources for learning and having a chance to employ better learning opportunities, indicate that male and female students have a different stance about being independent in their learning choices. Learning choices in this sense are, not explicitly but rather implicitly, controlled by the learners' ZPD (zone of proximal development) which directly influences the learners' choices (such as online lectures, tutorials, forums, book consultation etc.) as those who have exposure to a wide range of learning resources would definitely prefer employing the available options. Having these difference among the male and female students also reflects that students have a significant awareness of learner autonomy. The more they are aware of it, the more varied opinions will show up. Besides, this awareness plays a significant and beneficial role in the educational ends.

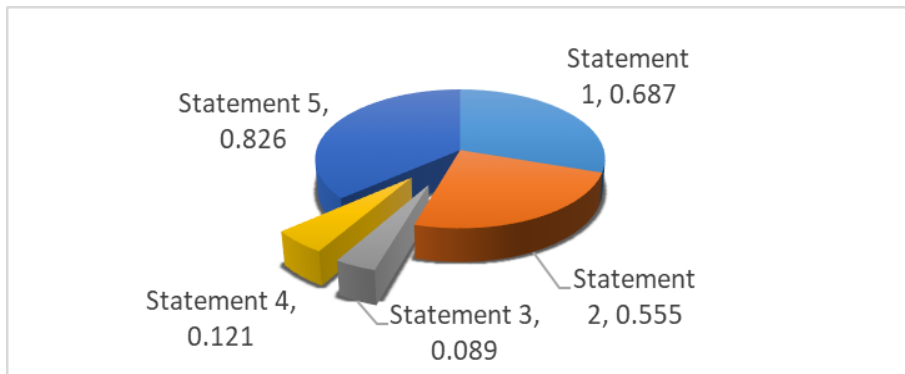


Figure 2. T-test for gender differences in the construct 'awareness'

4.2 Behaviour

Measuring merely the attitudes of the learners would not be sufficient to account for how they go along with being independent in learning. For this, the sixth statement measures the students' behaviour towards autonomy through their act by examining whether they learn from the material that every teacher gives them or they just confine themselves to content

boundaries. The score for this was 2.73 (see figure 3) which is below 3 and, therefore, exhibits the negative response. In other words, more than fifty percent students, appear to be autonomous in their learning style. This behavioural pattern of the learners reflects that either they make or they have to make explicit efforts to achieve the learning tasks assigned. For that, the majority of them have consulted other available resources – which clearly shows their self-struggle and therefore and is related to autonomy.

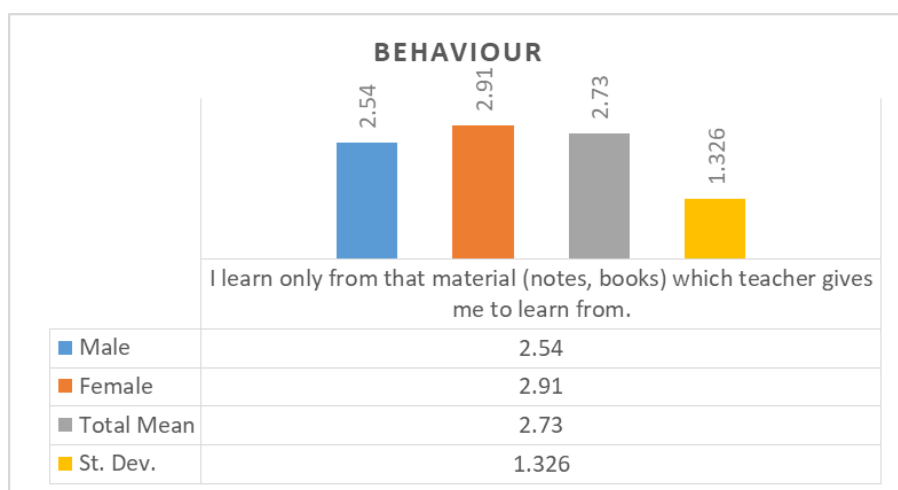


Figure 3. Measure of behaviour construct

Gender Differences. T-test score (.280) in behaviour construct shows that the difference between the behaviour of the students of both sexes is significant as it was measured 0.280. Thus, this variation among the male and female learners indicates their learning styles which are directly related to their autonomy. As figure (3) shows, female learners make fewer efforts to learn to depend merely on the material given to them by their instructors in the form of a specific book or notes of the lectures. Comparatively, male learners exhibited less agreement to this statement as their mean score is lower (figure 3) than that of female learners. This indicates that male students make more efforts to use other resources as compared to female students.

4.3 Attitude

Attitudes are developed with exposure to or experiences with something. Three statements (figure 4) were used to measure the student's attitude about learner autonomy. For example, statement 7 examines the outcome attitude of learner autonomy in students. The mean score (4.23) of this item was significantly high to the positive side of scale shows (figure 4). The result indicates if they are allowed to learn independently, they have comparatively more confidence for learning on their own. By this, their skills can become more improved as compared to the otherwise situation.

Since teachers' play, a vital role in students learning, autonomy without the teachers' support can be misleading and disastrous. Therefore, to find out how significant the teachers are in this regard, statement 8 examined the teacher's role in autonomy in learning. The positive mean score 3.52 (figure 4) concludes that independence in learning is sufficiently dependent on teacher' role. Without the assistance of teachers, learner autonomy cannot take place or cannot be as fruitful as it should be. Therefore, teachers play a critical role in this regard and the learner understands their importance.

The analysis of this construct indicates the significance of being independent in learning as it allows the learners to be confident in learning as well as acquiring new information. Confidence and learning on their own is also an important tool with which the students must be equipped as it not only reduces teachers' load, but the learners are also able to learn more on their own. When the teacher becomes indispensable for a learner, it becomes a kind of barrier for him/her because the learners are unable to use their potential.

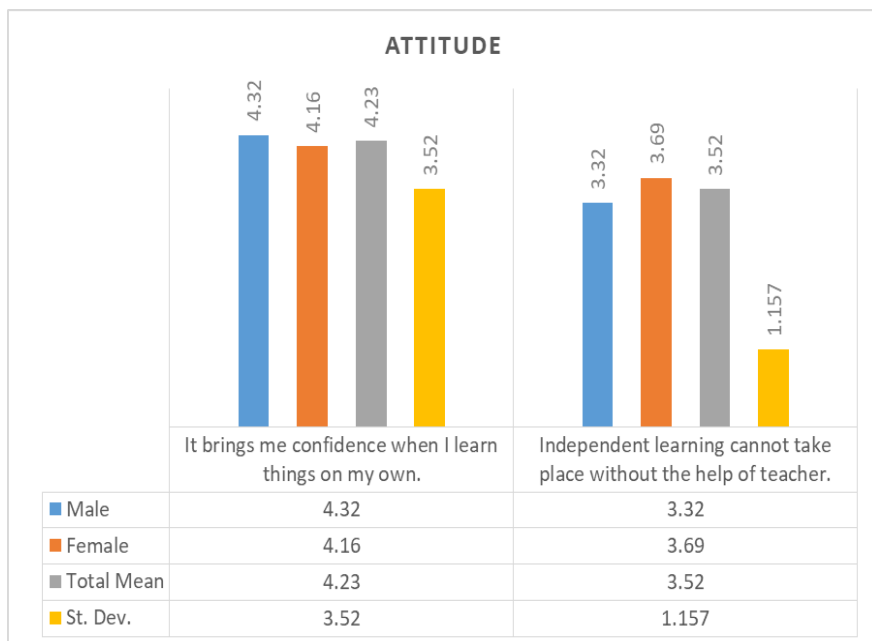


Figure 4. Measure of attitude construct in learner autonomy

Gender Differences. T-test (figure 5) in this construct shows that both genders also vary in their attitude about whether or not independent learning can occur without the help of a teacher. The gender difference in this construct is only significant in statement 8 as the T-test result is 0.224 which indicates that male and female students vary in their opinion about the attitude about the role of the teacher in autonomy. The mean score of the answers from the male respondents is 3.32 whereas the score from the female respondents is 3.69. This indicates that female students have a high opinion about the teachers' role in learner autonomy.

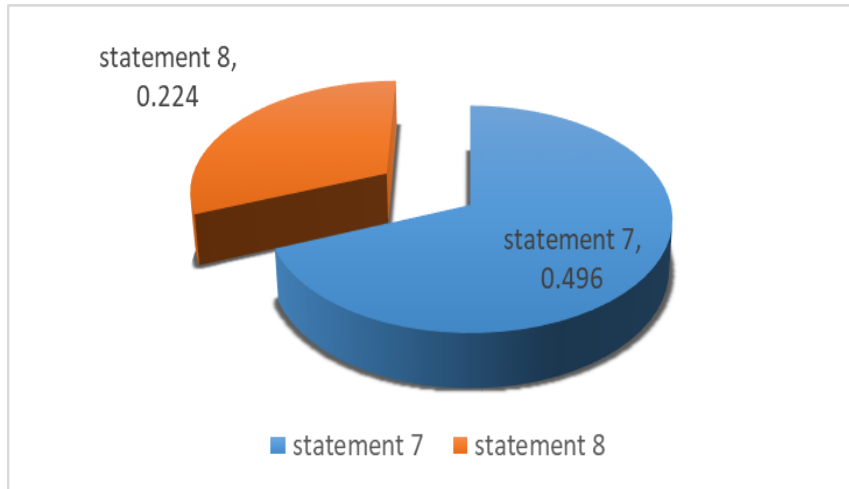


Figure 5. T-test for gender differences in the construct "attitude"

4.4 Promotion/motivation

The absence of motivation can surely be a challenge to learner autonomy. Referring to the interpretation of statement 9 (see section 0), there is a positive response that autonomy in learning is dependent on the role of teacher but how teachers play their role was examined through statement 10 to 14. These items are about the promotion of "learner autonomy."

For example, statement 10 and 11 have a positive mean score of 3.58 and 4.03 respectively. This gives the interpretation of the teacher's role in promoting autonomy. The scores of these two items reflect that teachers promote autonomy not only by permitting students to make their choices about the learning sources but they also have a positive attitude to it by appreciating their students' being independent in their learning. Also, the positive mean score 3.67 (figure 6) of statement 12, shows teachers contribution in trying to remove the syllabus-related difficulty which often prohibits learners' independence. The flexibility in syllabic boundaries carries promotion to students' autonomy in learning.

Further steps to the promotion of autonomy also involve some strategic aspects. For instance, the positive mean scores 3.75 and 3.50 for the item 13

and 14 respectively exhibit teacher’s active dedication and contribution to promoting learner autonomy through the appreciation of specific activities and collaborative participation other than class learning.

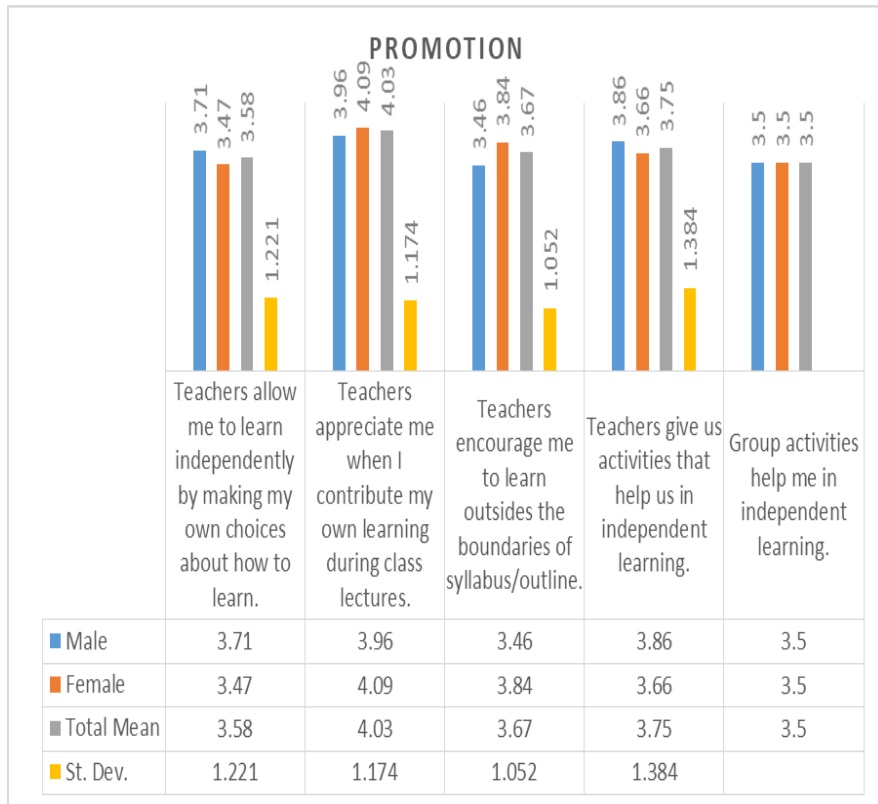


Figure 6. measure of construct “promotion of autonomy”

Gender difference. A t-test of this construct shows that the difference among the male and female learners is significant in just statement 12 “Teachers encourage me to learn outside the boundaries of syllabus/outline.” The mean score of responses from the male students is 3.86 whereas that of female students is 3.66 (figure 7). This shows that male students are comparatively surer than female students about the inclusion of certain activities intended at enhancing learning skill and thus promoting autonomy during the teaching span.

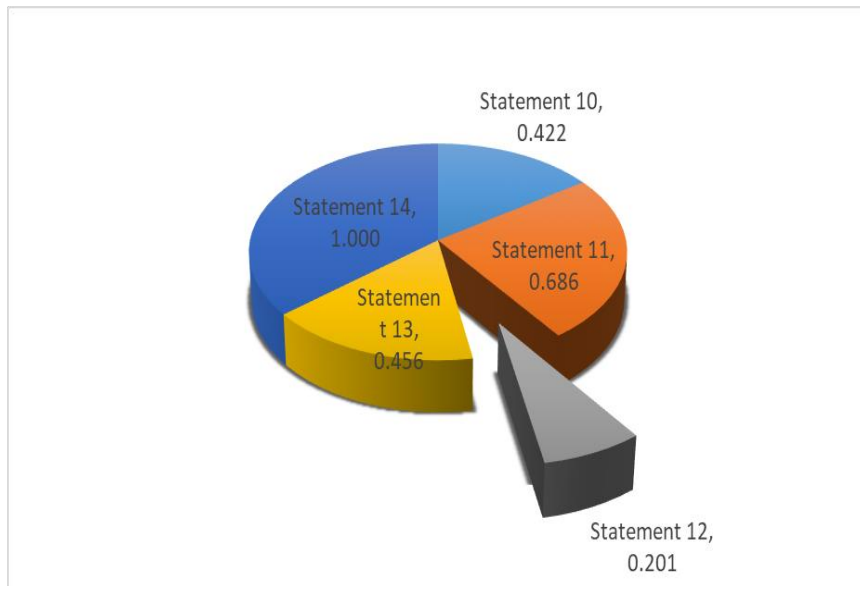


Figure 7. T-test for gender differences in the construct

4.5 Challenges

Marking system in the examination and the confinement of teaching to classroom sources are often the great hurdles to learner autonomy. Therefore, to see the learners' perspective, statement 14 and 15 (see figure 8) on the questionnaire were about these challenges. They were intended to see whether certain restrictions exist as challenges.

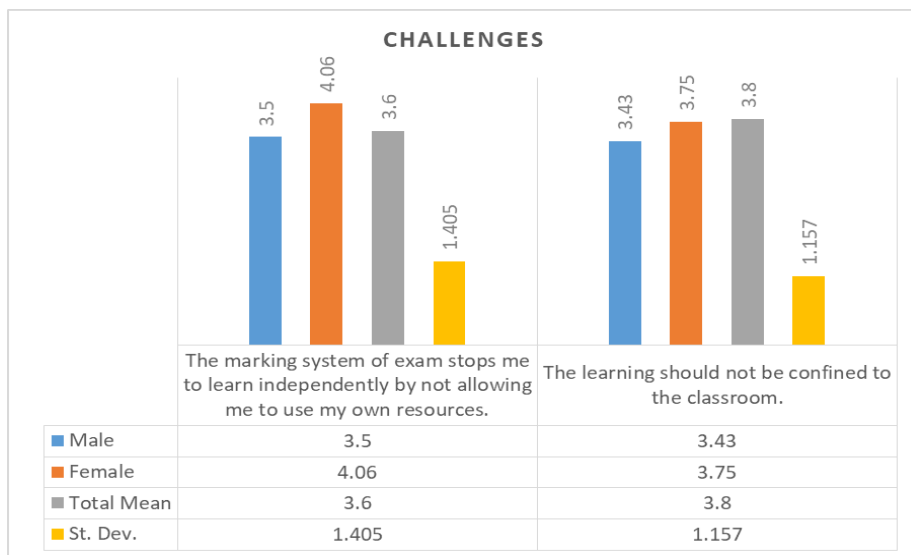


Figure 8. Measure of the challenge to autonomy

Both of these statements got a positive response. The mean scores for statement 14 and 15 were 3.50 and 3.43 respectively (figure 8). These scores, thus, show that the marking system and the teacher-centered study are still the main challenges to autonomy and present finding resonate with previous results (Yasmin & Sohail, 2017, 2018b).

Gender Differences. T-test scores of the statements related to challenges point out differences between the two sexes in statement 15 “The learning should not be confined to the classroom”. This mean score (3.75) for the responses from the female respondents shows that more female prefer the teaching not to be limited to only the classroom boundaries in the sense that there should be other opportunities for learning.

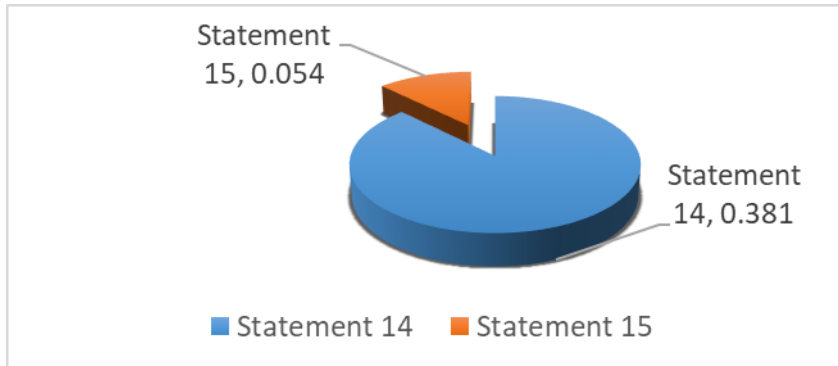


Figure 9. T-test for gender differences in "challenges"

4.6 Summary of Results

- a) The students appear to be aware of the concept of learner autonomy, its applicability, and usefulness for the educational career.
- b) The majority believes that they should be independent in deciding the sources to learn from, but they also believe that the ideal situation is a method in which they are allowed to autonomous but under the supervision of the teachers. To put it in another brief way, the teacher-guided autonomy in leaning has a preference for them.
- c) Learner autonomy is a way of giving the higher education students the opportunity to utilize the several present-day resources to gain maximum learning objectives and goals.
- d) Despite the present situation in which they have to follow a fixed course outline, more than sixty percent of students do not merely rely on the instructor and the content provided.
- e) Being independent in learning brings great confidence among students and also improves their skills.

- f) Teachers' positive role is vital in this regard; they try to be as collaborative as possible.
- g) However, certain challenges related to the examination and course outlines.

5. Findings and Conclusion

This study attempted to examine the students' independence in learning at the level of higher education in universities of Punjab. The questions that it tried to seek answers for were about learners' attitudes and challenges regarding learner autonomy promotion. It has also tried to find out the difference of autonomy in learning among male and female students. The study found out the students of higher education in Punjab are well-aware about learner autonomy and strive to be independent in their learning and reject the methods that are traditional and teacher-centered. It is not appreciative of them to be completely dependent on the teachers. Instead, they make their own contributed efforts to make use of their creative abilities and modern resources to keep up with the present-day world in terms of education. As a result, this enables these learners to maintain a required level of monitoring to their learnings. Further, the behavioural style of students shows their opposition to traditional, worn-out, and teacher-centered methods of learning.

This study has also observed that teachers play a pivotal role in learner autonomy. They actively try to engage in its promotion by indirectly, sometimes directly, motivating their students. This results in bringing confidence in students by not driving them to rely on teachers for whatever they have to learn. Thus, the degree of freedom in the form of learner autonomy establishes a beneficial and strong relationship between the instructors and the learners. However, the marking system in the examination and the focus on instructor-centered instruction are the prominent barriers to the efficacy of learner autonomy. The future researcher is encouraged to direct their research to learner autonomy by incorporation of the perspectives of both the instructors and learners. The combined account of these two will help in more accurate results along with deeper insights into it.

Recommendations: It is recommended for the future researchers who intend to address research on learner autonomy to interview the students to dig out more details that can help the university teachers. Secondly, it was a single-dimensional study that did not gather data from the teachers. Therefore, it is highly recommended that the university teachers' attitudes about learner autonomy must also be studied. The result of those studies with incorporation of the present study would make the panorama clearer and the findings reinforced. These results combined can, then, be tested in the ESL classrooms to better the English language skills of university students.

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Appendix

1.1 T-test Results

| | Independent Samples Test | | |
|--|------------------------------|----|-----------------|
| | t-test for Equality of Means | | |
| | t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) |
| I understand what learner autonomy means | .405 | 58 | .687 |
| Independence in learning means that I have to learn everything on my own. | -.593 | 58 | .555 |
| Independence in learning is when a student is allowed to decide how to learn and where to learn. | - 1.727 | 58 | .089 |
| Learning on my own gives me the chance to use better learning opportunities. | 1.575 | 58 | .121 |
| I can monitor my own learning; I know how much I can and have learned on my own. | .221 | 58 | .826 |
| I learn only from that material (notes, books) which teacher gives me to learn from. | - 1.081 | 58 | .284 |
| It brings me confidence when I learn things on my own. | .685 | 58 | .496 |
| The learning should not be confined to the classroom. | - 1.966 | 58 | .054 |
| Independent learning cannot take place without the help of teacher. | - 1.228 | 58 | .224 |
| Teachers allow me to learn independently by making my own choices about how to learn. | .810 | 58 | .422 |
| Teachers appreciate me when I contribute my own learning during class lectures. | -.407 | 58 | .686 |

| | | | |
|--|------------|----|-------|
| Teachers encourage me to learn outside the boundaries of syllabus/outline. | - 1.255 | 58 | .215 |
| Teachers give us activities that help us in independent learning. | .735 | 58 | .465 |
| Group activities help me in independent learning. | .000 | 58 | 1.000 |
| The marking system of exam stops me to learn independently by not allowing me to use my own resources. | -.883 | 58 | .381 |