

## **The Correlation between Classroom Seating Position and Students'**

### **Achievement**

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**Abstract.** The classroom is crucial for students, and seating position within the classroom can affect students' achievement. This research aims to know about (1) the classroom seating position, (2) the students' achievement, and (3) the correlation between the classroom seating position and the students' achievement. This research used quantitative research approach with the correlational research design. The data were gathered from 92 respondents by distributing the questionnaire about classroom seating position and asking the students' achievement from the GPA score. The instrument was validated by expert judgement checking. The instrument was also reliable, and the reliability score was 0.79 from 21 statements. The result shown that the mean score of classroom seating position was 2.37 meaning that the students tended to sit in the center position. On the other hand, the mean score of students' achievement was 3.20 meaning that the students had high achievement. Moreover, the result score of correlation coefficient was 0.23. It indicated that there was a positive correlation between classroom seating position and students' achievement. Then, the significant correlation ( $p$  value = 0.027) and the ( $r$  value = 0.23) were in weak correlation, so the alternative hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) which is there is a significant

correlation between classroom seating position and students' achievement is accepted.

**Keywords:** classroom seating position, students' achievement.

## **Introduction**

Students' achievement can be influenced by various factors. The factors that can affect students' achievement can be divided into internal and external factors. According to Bolliger and Martindale (2004), internal factors include the interest, talent, motivation, and level of student intelligence, while external factors include the classroom management, unattractive learning models, family factors, and community environment. Both internal and external factors can affect students' achievement. This research focuses on classroom management which is included in the external factor.

Classroom management is one of the skills that the teachers must have. Classroom management focuses on the teachers' efforts to create an optimal condition in the learning process. In classroom management, there are two subjects as a role; those are teachers and students. The teachers have the opportunity to organize and to manage the classroom conditions in order to achieve the learning objective. Therefore, classroom management is aimed to the teachers' role, while as the students they can follow the learning process well in the classroom. This study focuses on motivation, involvement, and the willingness of students to decide the position seat in the classroom.

People often hear that "position determines achievement". It means that the position of student seat in the classroom can affect their achievement. According to Wannarka and Ruhl, (2008), interaction between students and teachers can occur through seating position, so the seating position should be in line with the class' objectives and learning activities. It can also create an optimal condition in the classroom, create a positive atmosphere, create a good relationship between teachers and students. In addition, Wannarka and Ruhl (2008) found out that classroom seating position becomes an important role in learning, because it facilitates students in achieving learning achievements. Thus, optimal seating positions are expected to enhance the learning process better especially in language learning.

During the researcher's study time, the researcher observed that students tend to choose their seats in classroom. Students who have high motivation tend to sit in the front row. They tend to be quiet and listen to the teacher's explanation well. Additionally, at the end of the class, they may ask questions related to the lesson. This is because they are close to the teacher, and they can pay more attention to the teacher's voice and explanation. On the other hand, the late students and those who have low motivation will sit in the middle to the back row. This is because they are further apart from the teacher's attention, and they will sometimes distract themselves by chatting with other students or playing games on their phone. This is why the researcher was interested in finding out the correlation between classroom seating position and students' achievement. To examine this topic comprehensively, the researcher conducted a study with the

title “The Correlation between Classroom Seating Position and Students’ Achievement”.

### **Methodology**

This research used quantitative research method and used correlational research design. This research was conducted at English Language Education Department at one private university in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. The population of this research is batch 2015 at English Language Education Department at one private university in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, which is a total of 118 students, a number given to the researcher by the administration.

The researcher determined that the sample of the research depends on the population of the research. According to Cohen et al (2011), sampling is a process of selecting samples from the target population. In this research, the researcher used the probability sample for the quantitative research. Through this strategy, it eased the researcher to make generalizations to see representatives of the wider population. For the probability sample, the researcher used random sampling method to take the sample. Cohen et al (2011) explained that each member of the population has an equal chance of being selected under the study. This means they have the same opportunity, and there are no subjective considerations from the researcher such as their age, gender, and economic status.

The first instrument used in this research was a questionnaire. The researcher created the questionnaire that was distributed to the students, and it consists of 21 statements. The researcher conduct the questionnaire into 3

categories, they are the type of position, the reason of choosing the position, and the students' perceived impact of choosing the position. The response of this category used likert scales which the options were "1=Strongly Disagree", "2=Disagree", "3=Agree", and "4=Strongly Agree".

The second instrument used by the researcher for gathering the data was a document, more specifically the Grade Point Average (GPA) of the students. The GPA itself is the final result of the students' class. The researcher received the GPA document by asking the administration office in the university.

### **Finding and Discuccion**

The classroom seating psotion. This research discovers that the position of the students' seat in the classroom is in center row position category which has the mean 2.37. The researcher found out the result based on the frequency in types, the students' reason of choosing the position, and students perceived impact of seating position.

First, based on the finding, the students determine their seating position based on three types; they are in the front, center, and back rows. It supports Ngware et al (2013) who stated that there are three kinds of seating position; those are in front, center, and back row. The finding points out that the types in classroom seating position is 2.37, means center row position. The students frequently use that type, because according to the researcher observations when taking data, the researcher saw that most of the students sat in the center row to the back row, and the front row was not used.

Second, this study includes an analysis of the reasons when choosing the seating position. The result shows that more than half of the students (76.1%) agree that the reason they sit in the front and center row are considered as practical position. Meeks et al (2013) stated that students who sit toward the front and center of the classroom in action seats see themselves as practical and imaginative. However, few of the students (22.8%) agree that seat position may affect their achievement. It can be concluded that the reason they chose the position of seat was because they considered the front and center row may affect their achievement. This also shows that has a significant correlation in weak category. Parker et al (2011) found that students seating position correlated with course performance and students' GPA.

Third, the researcher stressed an impact of classroom seat position and students' achievement. The students who sit in the front row will easily understand the material, and they have an easier time getting a good score. Unlike the students who sit in the back row, they have the opportunity to not to pay attention to the teacher's explanation, because their seat position is too far from the teacher attention. According to Gremmen et al (2016), students who sit in the front row will actually produce a higher score than those who sit in the back row.

From 16 statements about the impact of seating position, the researcher concluded that most of the students disagree when they sit in the back row, they have difficulty to participate in classroom, have less attention, have less attendance, and have a low score. It is supported by Meeks et al (2013) who found out that there is no relationship between seating position and student outcomes.

The students who enter the classroom first can select desirable seats, while those who are late do not have chance to choose their seats, and they have no other option. Stires (2013) found out that no grade differences between students who chose to sit at the front of the class, and students who chose at back row.

Accordingly every student has their own motivation and belief, and classroom seating position does not always have a negative impact for the students.

Students' achievement. This research also discovers the students' achievement. The mean of the students' achievement result is 3.20. Based on the range criteria of interpretation, the result is in high achievement category. An achievement is the maximum result achieved by a person after they make the effort through learning. Wannarka and Ruhl (2008) indicated that an achievement is a proof of success that has been achieved by someone after the learning process.

Additionally, the correlation between classroom seating position and students' achievement. This research was conducted to know the relationship between classroom seating position and students' achievement. The result of this research accepts H1 (p- value) which is 0.027, and it is lower than 0.05. It means that there is a positive correlation between classroom seating position and students' achievement. The Pearson correlation value (r-value) of this research is 0.230 which indicates that the interpretation of the correlation between two variables is in weak correlation (0.21- 0.35).

The positive correlation between classroom seating position and students' achievement is in center position (2.37) and high achievement (3.20). The selection of seats is determined by the consideration of the students through the

position, the reasons for choosing position, and students perceived impact by seating position. It is supported by Fernandes et al (2011) who stated that the selection is related to academic achievement and student participation in the classroom. Therefore, the students who choose a seat that appropriate with their ability may affect their achievement in class.

### **Conclusion**

The result showed that the mean score of seating position is 2.37 which is in center row position. Based on the result, most of the students tend to sit in the center row to the back row. In addition, the mean score of students' achievement is 3.20 meaning that the students have high achievement in learning. Moreover, the correlation between classroom seating position and students' achievement is determined by the value of coefficient correlation in Pearson Product Moment ( $r$ ). The result of this research accepts H1 (p- value) which is 0.027, and it is lower than 0.05. It means that there is a positive correlation between classroom seating position and students' achievement. The Pearson correlation value (r-value) of this research is 0.230 which indicates that the interpretation of the correlation between two variables is in weak correlation (0.21- 0.35).



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