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## IMPACT OF EFL TEACHERS' FEEDBACK ON STUDENTS' COURSE LEARNING AND SATISFACTION: EFL STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS AT TERTIARY LEVEL

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**ABSTRACT**

*This empirical study aims at examining the impact of EFL Teachers' Feedback on Students' Course Learning and Satisfaction at the tertiary level. The problem is that EFL students show their prime concern with course learning if learnt well which results in their satisfaction with the course at the tertiary level. EFL teachers' feedback is one of the important factors which influence students' course learning. The population of current study is EFL students of the Department of English at four public sector universities of Karachi. Convenience sampling technique was used to collect the data and the useable sample size was  $n = 311$  ( $n=177$  male and  $n=134$  female) respondents. This study used adapted scales such as Feedback (Zumbrunn, Marrs, & Mewborn, 2016), Course Learning (Pace, 1979) and Students satisfaction (Oliver, & Swan, 1989). Data were analyzed using SmartPLS v.4 and the research model holds a medium Predictive Power (Shmueli et al., 2019). It was seen that EFL Teachers' Feedback has an effect on students' course learning at tertiary level and EFL students' course learning has an effect on EFL students' satisfaction at tertiary level. EFL students' course learning mediates the relationship between EFL*

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*Teachers' Feedback and EFL students' satisfaction at the tertiary level. This study recommends that EFL teachers should provide positive feedback because it enhances students' course learning and satisfaction. Limitations and directions for future research have been discussed.*

## **KEYWORDS**

*Teachers' Feedback, Course Learning, Students' Satisfaction*

## **INTRODUCTION**

English language teachers play a significant role in providing positive feedback to ESL students' course learning at higher education level and students make some headway if constructive feedback is provided in time (Lewis, 2002). Peer feedback is also important if classmates or students in groups provide to each other in the classroom and this approach is widely used around the globe (Hyland, 2000). In second language acquisition research, the theoretical foundation is mainly taken from cooperative learning theory and the process writing approach (Liu & Edwards, 2018). Research indicates that peer feedback is very useful in enhancing students' course learning and it develops students' interest (Arndt, 1993).

Previous research studies revealed that feedback has a significant impact on students' course learning (Winstone et al. 2017; Wisniewski, Zierer, & Hattie 2020). EFL teachers preferably provide written feedback (Agius & Wilkinson 2014) as well as assessment feedback to EFL students at the tertiary level (Hattie & Clarke 2018). However, in some cases, EFL teachers provide online feedback (Gikandi, Morrow, & Davis 2011), audio feedback (Dixon 2015), and video feedback (Mahoney, Macfarlane, & Ajjawi 2019). EFL students feel motivated and involved in their course learning when feedback was ascertained (Winstone et al., 2017). The feedback depends upon the nature of the tasks assigned to students in order to increase their course learning ((Tomas & Jessop 2019). Students really enjoy evaluating each other's work and this enhances their performance in course learning (Tunagür, 2021). Peer assessment involves EFL students in assessing and judging each other's various learning activities and performances (Bryan & Clegg, 2019; Liu & Brantmeier, 2019). Peer assessment promotes a learner-centered approach among ESL learners (Wanner& Palmer, 2018).

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

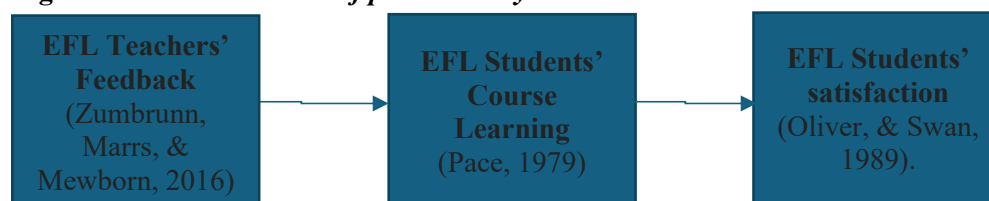
Feedback has been much emphasized by researchers and teachers to develop students' interest for course learning (Ozan & Kincal, 2018; Khoso et al., 2024). The purpose of quality feedback is to enhance students' course learning and academic performance (Black & Wiliam, 2018; Van der Kleij et al., 2018). Feedback enhances EFL students' writing performance of ESL students (Haq et al., 2020). EFL teachers

firmly believe that ESL students are provided with unbiased, logical, motivating, and constructive feedback to enhance their learning performance at the university level (Mulliner & Tucker, 2017). Gan et al. (2019) came up with a theoretical framework to develop perception scale on formative assessment which comprises self-assessment (Qasem, 2020; Vasu et al., 2020), interactive informal assessment, in-class diagnostic assessment, subject performance assessment, and teacher scaffolding. Formative assessment is considered to be an assessment for enhancing students' learning performance (Lee et al., 2019). Many previous studies revealed that feedback is instrumental in students' learning performance (Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Parikh et al., 2001). Effective feedback brings a drastic change in the learning outcomes of ESL students (Henderson et al., 2019). Teacher feedback enhances EFL students' learning (Dean et al., 2012). Feedback has a significant impact on students' course learning (Evans, 2013; Shute, 2008). Peer assessment is of a paramount importance like teachers' assessment which increases students' academic performance (Double et al., 2020; Dawson, Henderson, Mahoney, Phillips, Ryan, Boud, & Molloy, 2019; Patchan et al., 2018).

EFL students' satisfaction is related to course learning to be recommended to others (Marzo-Navarro et al., 2005). Students' satisfaction is related with course learning (Denson, Loveday, & Dalton, 2010). Students' satisfaction is associated with feedback and quality of teaching (Ladyshewsky, 2013). Course learning, engagement, learner interaction and satisfaction are interrelated with each other (Gray, & DiLoreto, 2016). Students' assessment of teachers' expertise, counseling and support predicted students' learning performance and course satisfaction (Paechter, Maier, & Macher, 2010).

### Conceptual framework

**Figure 1: Research Model of present study**



**Source:** Authors' contribution

### Note:

In the above-researched model, we have a first-order reflective exogenous construct that has EFL teachers' feedback, a first-order reflective mediating construct in the middle that has EFL students' course learning and a first-order reflective endogenous construct at the end that has EFL students' satisfaction.

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**RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

1. To examine the impact of EFL Teachers' Feedback on students' course learning at the tertiary level.
2. To investigate the impact of EFL students' course learning on students' satisfaction at tertiary level.
3. To determine whether EFL students' course learning mediates the relationship between EFL Teachers' Feedback and EFL students' satisfaction at the tertiary level.

**RESEARCH HYPOTHESES**

1. The study results established that EFL Teachers' Feedback affects the degree of learning attained by students in their tertiary-level courses.
2. Previous studies, it reveals that EFL students' course learning influences students' satisfaction at the tertiary level.
3. EFL students' course learning mediates the relationship between EFL Teachers' Feedback and EFL students' satisfaction at tertiary level.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY****Sample and Procedure**

The researcher visited universities physically and distributed survey questionnaires at four public sector general universities in Karachi, Sindh, Pakistan. In this explanatory research, cited and well-established scales were used to serve the purpose of the current study. The data collection involved a sample of  $n=320$  undergraduate students from the English departments of four public universities in Karachi, Sindh, Pakistan. The sampling maintained a minimum ratio of 10:1, equating to ten research participants for each survey item (Jackson, 2003; Kyriazos, 2018). The data screening procedure was performed on SPSS v. 22 wherein missing data was addressed as Little's MCAR test: Chi-Square = 40.499, DF = 48, Sig. = .771 was insignificant therefore missing data were dealt with accordingly. Furthermore, multivariate outliers were  $n = 9$  which comprises research participants such as 193 (0.00001), 98 (0.00011), 96 (0.00016), 191 (0.00045), 189 (0.00052), 93 (0.00054), 159 (0.00069), 283 (0.00087), 214 (0.001) because all these values were less than the benchmark i.e., 0.001. Removing the outliers, the number of the real cases, that could be used, was equal to  $n = 311$  ( $n=177$  male and  $n=134$  female) research participants. Ethical guidelines as recommended by Bryman (2016) and Dillman, Smyth, and Christian (2014) were adhered to throughout the research process. Research participants were provided consent forms to ensure their voluntary participation and they were assured no harm if they participated in the current study (Rooney & Evans, 2018). Furthermore, anonymity and confidentiality were assured (Babbie, 2020).

**Measures**

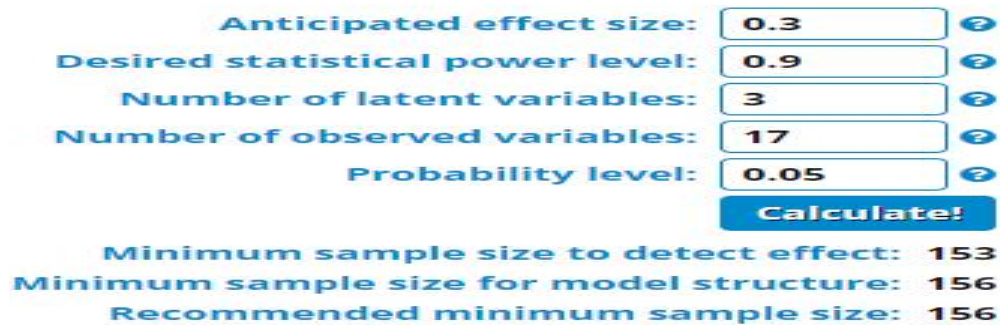
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The research model for this study incorporated three latent lower-order constructs (LOCs). Additionally, it included 17 Likert scale indicators, which were adapted from prior studies and demonstrated strong psychometric properties. Table 2 presents the variables under investigation, the number of indicators, the sources of the adapted constructs, the mean and standard deviation of each variable, and their alpha reliability coefficients. Furthermore, the sample size for the pilot study was  $n = 30$  respondents and this sample was excluded from the main study. In the pilot study, instrument reliability Chronbach Alpha = 0.77 which is considered good (Hair et al., 2010).

**Sample size and Sampling**

The useable sample size of the current study is  $n = 311$ , whereas, to determine the sample size researcher used Daniel Sooper (2020) to detect the minimum sample size for the current study. According to Soper (2020), the recommended minimum sample size to detect the effect was  $n=156$ . The data for the present empirical study was collected by employing a convenience sampling technique. Moreover, researchers collected the data from EFL students in their natural settings, and before collecting the data, the researcher sought consent from the research participants, and then they were provided with the survey questionnaire.

**Figure 2: Daniel Cooper Calculator Results**



Source: Author’s estimation

**DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS**

**Table 1: Variables used in the present main study**

Construct s (Type of Construct s)	Item cod es	One Sample Item	Mean (SD) of variable	No. of Items	$\alpha$	Rating scale	Source
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Feedback	TF1	I like talking with my teachers about my course learning.	3.1578 (.80567)	6	.783	Five-point Likert scale: (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree.	Zumbrunn, Marrs, & Mewborn, (2016)
Course Learning	CL1	I took detailed notes in class.	3.2601 (.67910)	8	.784	Five-point Likert scale: (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree.	Pace, (1979)
Students' satisfaction	SS1	Overall, I am satisfied with this course.	3.3473 (.85014)	3	.679	Five-point Likert scale: (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree.	Oliver, & Swan, (1989)
Overall Instrument Reliability				17	.890		

**Source:** author's estimation

**Note:** TF = EFL teachers' feedback, CL = EFL students' course learning, and SS = EFL students' satisfaction

**Table 2: Descriptive statistics of respondents' profile (n = 311)**

S#	Variable	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
1	Gender	Male	177	56.9
		Female	134	43.1
2	Age	≤ 20 years	78	25.1
		21-25 years	160	51.4
		26-30 years	63	20.3
		31-35 years	6	1.9
		36 years and above	4	1.3
3	University	University 1	86	27.7
		University 2	70	22.5
		University 3	74	23.8
		University 4	81	26.0
4	Education	BS English	179	57.6
		MA English	132	42.4

5	Family Status	Married	76	24.4
		Unmarried	235	75.6
6	Socio-economic Background	Lower Class	43	13.8
		Middle Class	243	78.1
		Upper/Elite Class	25	8.0
7	Place of Residence	Urban	195	62.7
		Rural	98	31.5
		Peri-urban	18	5.8
8	Religiosity	Islam	267	85.9
		Hinduism	28	9.0
		Christianity	16	5.1

Source: Author's estimation

**Common Method Variance (CMV) Bias**

In the present data set, there was no issue of CMV bias because the total variance explained by Harman's single factor = 36.405% which is < 50%. Thus, the data collected are unbiased, allowing the researcher to proceed with further data analysis. (Podsakoff et al., 2012). Secondly, the researcher also used full collinearity testing wherein if  $VIF \leq 3.3$  then it is the manifestation of no CMV issue with the data set (Kock, 2015; Tehseen, Ramayah, & Sajilan, 2017) because the VIF of the outer model was TF = 2.056, CL = 2.200, and SS = 2.024. Therefore, the researcher can move forward with further analysis.

**Table 3: Descriptive statistics of Correlations between constructs**

S#	Constructs	Mean	Std	Alpha	TF	CL	SS
1	TF	3.1578	.80567	.783	1		
2	CL	3.2601	.67910	.784	.671**	1	
3	SS	3.3473	.85014	.679	.634**	.664**	1

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Author's estimation

Note: TF = EFL teachers' feedback, CL = EFL students' course learning, and SS = EFL students' satisfaction

**Reasons for using SmartPLS**

The researcher used SmartPLS v.4 software based on the following prime reasons.

1. There were three first-order reflective constructs with a mediating construct in the present empirical study.

2. There were 17 items.
3. The total useable sample size was  $n = 311$  to detect the effect size which is considered adequate enough for present study.
4. To run the entire model using SEM technique(Hair Jr, Howard, & Nitzl, 2020).
5. As suggested by Sarstedt, Ringle, & Hair, (2017) and Cain, Zhang, & Yuan, (2017), Data were not normal.

**Table 4: *Mardia's Coefficient***

	<b>Threshold Value</b>	<b>Mardia's Coefficient</b>	<b>z-Statistic</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Skewness	+/-1	<b>0.1918967</b>	<b>9.946647</b>	<b>0.445186577</b>
Kurtosis	+/-20	<b>16.8212007</b>	<b>2.931888</b>	<b>0.003369081</b>

**Source:** Author's estimation

**Measurement Model Assessment**

Partial Least Square -Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was used to estimate the outer and inner models (Hair et al., 2016). To establish the measurement model, reliability and validity were ascertained. While testing convergent validity two criteria should be followed firstly, the loading of all items should be  $> 0.5$  and above, and second is Average Variance Extracted (AVE) of all constructs should be greater than 0.50 (Hair et al., 2016). In the same way, in discriminant validity specific construct's items outer loading should be greater than the cross-loadings of other variables. Finally, in the process of internal consistency also known as internal reliability, there are two steps, the first is Cronbach's Alpha should be greater than 0.7 and the second is Composite reliability (CR)  $> 0.6$  (Hair et al., 2016). Table 2 shows that the AVE values of all variables are up to the mark or exceed the required threshold. More importantly, "the nature of the present model is reflective therefore, the items whose outer loading was low, were deleted for better path analysis" (Hair et al., 2016). After establishing the measurement model, the inner model was tested using a bootstrapping technique.

**Table 5: *Measurement Model of First-Order Reflective Constructs***

<b>Constructs</b>	<b>Items</b>	<b>Loadings</b>	<b>Cronbac</b>				<b>Outer VIF</b>
			<b>h's Alpha</b>	<b>rho_A</b>	<b>CR</b>	<b>AVE</b>	
TF	TF1	0.773	0.774	0.783	0.846	0.524	1.546
	TF2	0.657					1.354
	TF3	0.74					1.467
	TF4	0.699					1.412



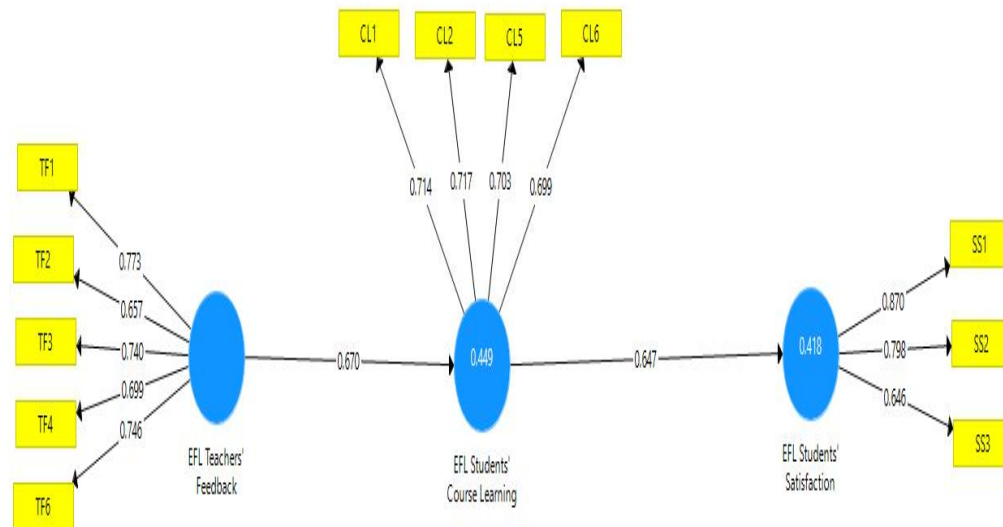
	TF6	0.746					1.438
CL	CL1	0.714	0.669	0.669	0.801	0.502	1.278
	CL2	0.717					1.321
	CL5	0.703					1.24
	CL6	0.699					1.27
SS	SS1	0.87	0.677	0.737	0.819	0.604	1.45
	SS2	0.798					1.383
	SS3	0.646					1.219

Source: Author’s estimation

Note: TF = EFL teachers’ feedback, CL = EFL students’ course learning, and SS = EFL students’ satisfaction

As indicated in Table 5 the loadings exceed 0.60. and Composite Reliability (CR) also exceeds 0.70 and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) of all variables is greater than 0.50. It is evident that outer model is fit/established, and the researcher can go further to test the hypotheses.

Figure 3: Measurement Model



Source: Author’s estimation

Table 6: Discriminant Validity based on Fornell-Larcker criterion (FLC) Matrix

S#	Constructs	1	2	3
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1	EFL Students' Course Learning	0.708		
2	EFL Students' Satisfaction	0.647	0.777	
3	EFL Teachers' Feedback	0.67	0.65	0.724

**Source:** Author's estimation

**Note:** The bolded diagonal elements represent the square root of the average variance extracted (AVE), while the off-diagonal elements indicate the correlations between constructs. To establish discriminant validity, the diagonal elements must be greater than the off-diagonal elements, as noted by Chiu & Wang (2008). In this context, TF corresponds to feedback from EFL teachers, CL to the course learning of EFL students, and SS to the satisfaction of EFL students.

Table 6 shows that the AVE of a latent variable is higher than the squared correlations between the latent variable and all other variables; therefore, it can be said that the Discriminant Validity by Fornell-Larcker Criterion is established in the current study.

**Table 7: Discriminant Validity based on Cross Loading Matrix**

Constructs	Items	CL	SS	TF
CL	CL1	0.714	0.429	0.524
	CL2	0.717	0.468	0.432
	CL5	0.703	0.494	0.466
	CL6	0.699	0.441	0.473
SS	SS1	0.624	0.87	0.605
	SS2	0.495	0.798	0.46
	SS3	0.335	0.646	0.434
TF	TF1	0.544	0.538	0.773
	TF2	0.381	0.324	0.657
	TF3	0.504	0.527	0.74
	TF4	0.428	0.443	0.699
	TF6	0.54	0.487	0.746

**Source:** Author's estimation

**Note:** TF = EFL teachers' feedback, CL = EFL students' course learning, and SS = EFL students' satisfaction

**Table 8: Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT<sub>0.85</sub>)**

S. No.	Constructs	1	2	3
1	EFL Students' Course Learning			

2	EFL Students' Satisfaction	0.824		
3	EFL Teachers' Feedback	0.818	0.832	

**Source:** Author’s estimation

**Note:** TF = EFL teachers’ feedback, CL = EFL students’ course learning, and SS = EFL students’ satisfaction

Table 8 shows that all the values in  $HTMT_{0.85}$  are lower than 0.85 which is a stringent criterion to establish discriminant validity. Therefore, the researcher can proceed to test the hypotheses of the current empirical study.

**Results of hypotheses testing**

The inner model was characterized by assessing collinearity using the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) of endogenous constructs = 1.00 which is less than 3 and considered to be ideal (Sarstedt et al., 2017). Further, in the process of hypotheses testing of the structural model researcher used a 5,000-sample re-sample in the bootstrapping procedure” (Ramayah et al. 2018).

**Table 9: Hypotheses Testing Direct Effects with 0.5 significance level**

Hypotheses	Relationship	Std. Beta	Std. Error	T values	P values	BCI LL 05 %	BCI UL 95 %	Decision	f <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	Q <sup>2</sup>
H <sub>A1</sub>	TF → CL	0.67	0.034	19.982	0.000	0.603	0.717	Supported	.815	0.449	0.447	0.219
H <sub>A2</sub>	CL → SS	0.647	0.036	18.006	0.000	0.582	0.702	Supported	.719	0.418	0.416	0.242

**Source:** Author’s estimation

**Note:** Researchers used 95% for the above four direct hypotheses and 90% for one direct hypothesis confidence interval with a bootstrapping of 5,000. Here, TF = EFL teachers’ feedback, CL = EFL students’ course learning, and SS = EFL students’ satisfaction.

Table 9 above corroborates this in that the EFL teachers’ feedback on the EFL students significantly influences their learning of the course at tertiary level because  $\beta = 0.67$ , P values = 0.000. Second, there exists a positive and highly significant relationship between EFL students’ course learning and their level of satisfaction at tertiary level because  $\beta = 0.647$  and P = 0.000. Additionally, Kenny (2016) suggests that effect sizes of 0.025, 0.01, and 0.005 correspond to large, medium, and

small, respectively. In this study, the direct effect size between two endogenous constructs demonstrated a very large effect, indicating practical significance, as noted by Cohen (2013).  $Q^2$  of endogenous variables in the research model should be greater than zero ( $Q^2 > 0$ ) which clearly indicates that the present model has predictive relevance (Cha, 1994).

**Testing Indirect Effect**

For testing mediation hypotheses, the researcher adhered to the recommendations of Preacher and Hayes (2004; 2008) by using bootstrapping to analyze the indirect effect. A significant mediation is concluded if the confidence interval does not include zero.

**Table 10: Hypotheses Testing Indirect Effect with 10% Significance Level**

Hypotheses	Relationship	Std. Beta	Std. Error	T values	P value	BCI LL 5%	BCI UL 95%	Decision
H <sub>A6</sub>	TF → CL → SS	0.433	0.039	11.003	0.000	0.366	0.494	Mediation

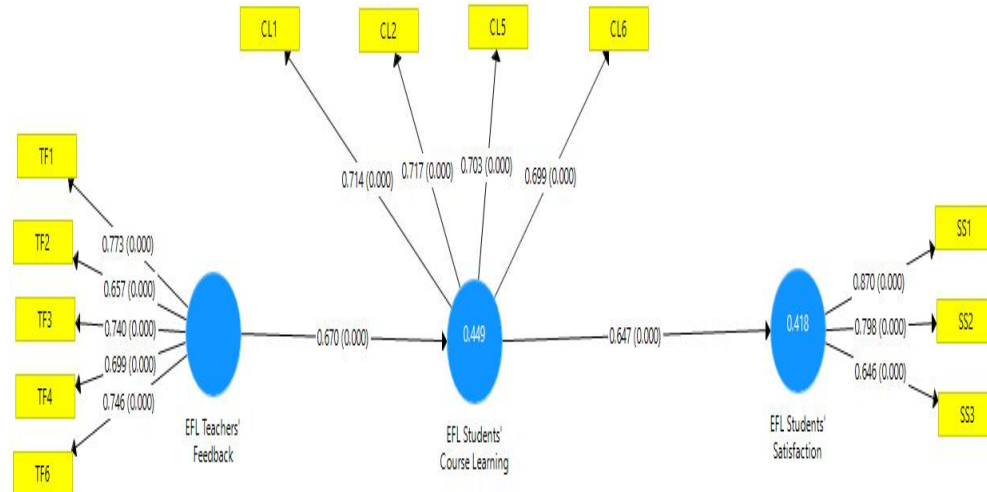
**Source:** Author’s estimation

**Note:** Researchers used a 90% confidence interval with a bootstrapping of 5,000 sub-sample.

Here, TF = EFL teachers’ feedback, CL = EFL students’ course learning, and SS = EFL students’ satisfaction.

Table 10 shows that EFL students’ course learning mediates the relationship between EFL teachers’ feedback and EFL students’ satisfaction at the tertiary level because ( $\beta = 0.433$ , BCI LL 5% = 0.366 and BCI UL 95% = 0.494).

**Figure 4: Hypotheses Testing (95% Confidence Interval)**



**Source:** Author’s estimation  
**Predictive Validity of Inner Model using PLS Predict**

**Table 11: PLS Predict**

Items	Q <sup>2</sup> <sub>predict</sub>	PLS-SEM RMSE	LM RMSE	PLS-SEM-LM RMSE	Is RMSE (PLS-SEM) less than RMSE (LM)?	Decision
SS1	0.311	0.94	0.972	-0.032	Yes	The research Model of the present study holds a medium Predictive Power (Shmueli et al., 2019).
SS2	0.196	0.984	0.983	0.001	No	
SS3	0.162	0.903	0.916	-0.013	Yes	

**Source:** Author’s estimation  
**Note:** Here SS = EFL students’ satisfaction

Table 11 shows that Most of the indicators from the PLS-SEM (RMSE) were lower than those from the LM (RMSE), indicating that the research model of this study has moderate predictive power. Therefore, the findings can be generalized to the broader population (Shmueli et al., 2019).

**DISCUSSION**

The present empirical study raised the research question of “The Effects of EFL Teachers’ Feedback on Students’ Course Learning and Satisfaction at the tertiary level”. It was established that EFL teachers’ feedback influences the course learning of EFL students at the tertiary level positively because ( $\beta = 0.67$ , P values = 0.000). This finding aligns with previous studies (such as Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Dean et al., 2012; Double et al., 2018; Dawson, Henderson, Mahoney, Phillips, Ryan, Boud, & Molloy, 2019; Patchan et al., 2018). Second, EFL students’ course learning has a significant impact on EFL students’ satisfaction at tertiary level because ( $\beta = 0.647$ , P values = 0.000). This finding is in line with the previous research (such as, Holford & Patkar, 2003; Karna & Julin, 2015; Marzo-Navarro et al., 2005; Rashidi & Moghadam, 2014; Sabarun, 2020). Third, EFL students’ course learning mediates the relationship between EFL teachers’ feedback and EFL students’ satisfaction at the tertiary level because ( $\beta = 0.433$ , BCI LL 5% = 0.366 and BCI UL 95% = 0.494). This finding is consistent with previous studies (such as Denson, Loveday, & Dalton, 2010; Gray, & DiLoreto, 2016; Ladyshevsky, 2013; Paechter, Maier, & Macher, 2010).

- The present empirical study used cross-sectional single-source data, whereas future researchers may use longitudinal multi-source data to explore the phenomenon under the present study is supported by literature.
- Future researchers can use more mediating and moderating variables as supported by the literature review in the present research model
- The mixed method study may be conducted to further explore this phenomenon at the higher education level.

However, the nature of this study led by time and financial constraints meant that this research took place in four urban public sector universities situated in Karachi, Sindh, Pakistan. Hence, in the future, there could be surveys on both the public and private sector universities in an urban and rural setting and the findings could be compared with this research study.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The present study presents the following recommendations based on empirical findings.

1. Feedback predicts a 44% change in course learning and course learning predicts a 41% change in students’ satisfaction. Therefore, feedback and course learning increases students’ satisfaction at the tertiary level. It is the course learning which ultimately results in students’ academic performance in terms of grades or CGPA.
2. The EFL teachers should provide positive and constructive feedback to enhance students’ course learning at tertiary level.
3. EFL teachers should ensure quality feedback to enhance students’ learning

performance in their courses because course learning positively influences students' satisfaction at the tertiary level.

4. The university management should provide quality infrastructure and environment so that the teachers may perform their key roles in a befitting manner.

5. The university management should also provide training continually to teachers on how to ensure quality teaching by using rubrics in the classrooms.

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