

## Student-Teacher Responsibilities in English Studies: An Empirical Analysis of Arab Student and English Faculty Perceptions

**Kashif Raza**

Department of English, Foundation Program  
Qatar University, Doha, Qatar

### Abstract

Given the vast research on the existence of distinctive student-teacher expectations about their roles in the classroom and their significance in shaping prospective actions, there is a scarcity of studies that examine Arab student expectations and contrast them with their teachers' expectancies. Realizing this research gap, this study aims to analyze Gulf Arab, Non-Gulf Arab and English Faculty expectations about their roles in English studies. The objectives of the study were to answer four research questions: Do student-faculty expectations about their classroom roles correspond on nine given items; where do the differentiations lie; what are the classroom implications of these dissimilarities; and how teachers and students can share and meet each other's expectations. Using a mixed methods research design, quantitative data were collected from students and faculty through an online bilingual survey followed by individual interviews for further exploration. The data analysis revealed that mismatches exist in teacher-student expectations and these dissimilar beliefs can influence student-teacher relationship. Five out of nine given items were found statistically significant between English faculty and Gulf and Non-Gulf Arab students where students had higher expectations about their responsibilities; however, Gulf Arab and Non-Gulf Arab student expectations differed only on three items. In addition to other practical suggestions for sharing and aligning divergent expectations, the study proposes employing a teacher-student learning contract to augment student and faculty cognizance of their academic and social obligations as well as assist the school administration in catering for their perspectives.

**Keywords:** Arab student expectations, faculty-student responsibility, culture and expectations

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## 1. Introduction

Research into second language acquisition (SLA) has pointed to teacher and learner expectations as one of the variables that can influence the learning process (Nhapulo, 2013). The significance of these expectations in the development of faculty-student relationship and their implications in academics are greatly debated by many researchers. It is widely argued that students and teachers hold their distinctive expectations about each other and the learning process, which can impact on their cooperation and collaboration (Javid, Farooq, & Gulzar, 2012; Rubie-Davies, Peterson, Irving, & Widdowson, 2010; Sherry, Bhatt, Beaver, & Ling, 2004). In other words, the presence of these idiosyncratic expectations may beget a lack of student-faculty partnerships that could pose a great challenge to successful language and literacy acquisition.

One way to increase the chances of success in a language program is to enhance better understanding between the English faculty and the students studying English by investigating the expectations both groups hold about their roles in language development. Many research studies have tried to investigate these views in different contexts (Nhapulo, 2013; Sherry et al., 2004; Tsiplakides & Keramida, 2010). However, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, this will be the first study of its kind that will evaluate 1) Gulf Arab-a student that comes from any of the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries: Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain and Oman; 2) Non-Gulf Arab-a student that comes from a country that is an Arab state but is not included in the GCC countries; and 3) English Faculty expectations about their responsibilities towards English studies at a Middle Eastern university.

Since students and teachers are expected to play specific role(s) in a classroom for a successful learning process-successful instructions, modifications in teaching methodologies, collaboration with each other, participation in the learning process, and attendance (e.g., see Parris & Block; and Stronge, 2007), this paper aims to conduct an expectations analysis by comparing student-teacher expectations about their 'duties' towards English literacy and suggests ways to align the differing expectations.

The analysis presented in this paper will help cultivate mutual understanding as well as assist in designing productive literacy instructions (Godley & Escher, 2012) that reflect the perspectives of the teachers and the students. Literacy educators in different settings may also benefit from doing a similar analysis to evaluate the differing expectations of the students and the faculty so that the relationship between the two can be ameliorated in terms of academic and non-academic coordination. The study also raises questions about the roots of these beliefs that shall be investigated in future research.

In specific, the study aimed to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the differences and similarities in the expectations of Gulf Arab students, Non-Gulf Arab students and the English faculty of student responsibility in English studies at a Middle Eastern university?
2. Where do the differences lie if there is a mismatch in expectations?
3. How can these differences manifest themselves in classroom practices?

4. What can be done to enable English Faculty, Gulf, and Non-Gulf Arab students to meet each other's expectations?

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Challenges in English language teaching in the GCC countries

Javid et al. (2012) argue "A growing mass of research suggests that English language teaching (ELT) in the Arab world has not produced the desired results" (p. 56). They note that despite spending huge amount of money and hiring international faculties to teach English, the results are unimpressive. Among the many causes of this disturbing situation reported by researchers, lack of collaboration with the native speakers of English, student motivation, and cultural differences (Sonleitner & Khelifa, 2005) are worth mentioning.

Though the GCC universities attract many English teachers (Ali, 2009), not many of them share the culture of their students. For instance, the teaching demographic in the Foundation Program comes from different nations and beliefs. Since language and culture are distinctive but connected areas, their relationship becomes important when a faculty works with students from a dissimilar culture. For example, Sonleitner and Khelifa (2005) investigated the challenges Western-educated faculty face in a gulf classroom and concluded that faculty-student cultural differences lead to frustration. They further argue that a conflict between foreign faculty expectations about teaching and learning and student attitude towards education can result in misinterpretation of the local cultural context, which can hinder the education process in the classroom. However, the results can be different if the actions are informed by a solid understanding of the cultural and historical perspectives of each other's practices (Gutierrez & Rogoff, 2003).

### 2.2 Challenges in English language teaching in Qatar

The history of ELT in Qatar dates back to its introduction in the Qatari education in 1949 and to the adoption of the "Crescent English Course" in 1970s that was used by the Qatari schools to teach communicative language skills. Al-Buainain (1988) describes the course as "an attempt to present four aspects of language use which characterize in particular the learning of languages when this is done successfully in a 'natural' situation" (p. 5). Since then, the field of ELT in Qatar has gone through several changes to adapt modern language teaching techniques, train the faculty, and develop students' language skills. Among the many challenges ELT in Qatar encounters are the struggle to create a balance between language and identity (Romanowski, Cherif, Al-Ammari, & Al-Attayah, 2013), 'typical teaching behaviors' (Al-Thani, 1993), and inexperienced and unqualified faculty, unsuitable instructions, poor teacher training, and incongruous assessments (Al-Khwaiter, 2001).

## 3. Context of the Study

According to Hofstede (1991), culture is "the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another" (p. 5). Though people share certain socio-cultural practices (heroes, symbols, rituals and values), Hofstede opines that they also carry certain 'layers of culture' at group and/or individual levels, which may lack harmony and are exposed to internal conflicts, leading to differing behavioral patterns.

Abu El-Haj (2008) furthers Hofstede's definition when she challenges the notion of treating culture as a static entity and classifying different groups of Arabs and Muslims under similar ideologies. For instance, categorizing all the diverse Arab communities as one 'culture' and defining it as a unilateral way of being, doing and acting merely because of a shared language-Arabic-does not serve the purpose because they "are highly diverse in terms of religion, socioeconomic class, national origin, and migration patterns" (p. 177). This explains the existence of multiculturalism within the Arab world, and cautions against overgeneralizing the traits of one group over the other in academia (Raza, 2018).

For example, Gutierrez and Rogoff (2003) disapprove the practice of teaching strategies that are informed by the categorization of individuals on the assumption that they share similar expectations, abilities and interests. They provide a description of cultural regularities through a comparison of the immigrated children of rural Mexican and European families and the way these children perceive adult assistance in task completion. They believe that such descriptions allow us to understand literacy development and that "it is more useful to consider differences in the children's, their families', and their communities' histories of engaging in particular endeavors organized in contrasting manners" (p. 22).

This informs the division of Arab students into Gulf and Non-Gulf Arabs in this paper based upon their cultural regularities, socio-economic situation, and educational backgrounds to understand their distinctive expectations on English literacy. Similarly, it also helps us understand why an expectation analysis of these two sub-divisions of student population and English faculty is essential.

During transculturation, different cultures intersect with each other in places that Pratt (1996) calls "contact zones" to establish a society that is aware of the ideas and perspectives of its members. The discussions that take place in this new social setting result in sharing distinct expectations and producing new meanings. However, this interaction does not result in coalescence of different cultures; rather a social structure comes into existence "in which very distinct cultural systems coexist in a space and interact with each other" (p. 3). Thus, differences in thinking, feeling and acting of people can result in producing different expectations about their roles in education.

## **4. Methodology**

### ***4.1 Research methodology***

The research design chosen for this study was sequential explanatory mixed methods. This design consists of two dissimilar stages where qualitative is preceded by quantitative (Ivankova, Cresswell, & Stick, 2006). Quantitative data, collected and analyzed in the first stage, is further explored with the help of qualitative data. Since quantitative and qualitative methods are not without limitations and cannot fully solve the complexity of human behavior, a combination of the two, as in this study, helps explore the statistical findings in detail by involving participant in-depth views (Miles, Huberman & Saldana, 2014).

The motivation for choosing sequential explanatory design for this study was to identify the differences between the expectations of Gulf Arab students, Non-Gulf Arab students and English Faculty. This study used two separate questionnaires for quantitative and qualitative data collection. First, quantitative data was collected through a bilingual (English & Arabic) Web-based survey (Creswell, 2012) questionnaire that consisted of nine items about student responsibility and used a four point Likert scale of *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree*. The purpose of the quantitative phase was to answer research questions one and two that focused on identifying and classifying the selected variables to see the similarities and the differences in the expectations of all three groups.

The data was collected from the faculty and the students in a Foundation Program Department of English (FPDE) at a Middle Eastern University (MEU). This program consists of three sub-programs: Foundation English, Post-Foundation and Embedded; and aims at achieving students' academic readiness through the development of English language proficiency. Foundation English and Post-Foundation students study their majors in English; whereas, Embedded students pursue their studies in Arabic language.

The survey questionnaire is based on the theory of 'self-fulfilling prophecy' rediscovered by Rosenthal and Jacobs (1968). Though Robert Merton coined the concept in 1948, Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968) provided the first evidence to show that a teacher's expectations can affect his students' achievement. As Dusek and Joseph (1983, as cited in Tsiplakides & Keramida, 2010) proposed that teacher expectations are correlated with student achievements, this important issue directs attention towards understanding the relationship between teachers' expectations and students' learning behavior.

All but one of the survey items were borrowed from the previous studies that investigated similar research questions (Javid, et al., 2012; Nhapulo, 2013; Parris & Block, 2007; Sherry, et al. 2004). To establish validity and reliability of these items, the survey was pilot-tested with forty-two students and eight faculty. Based on the results of this pilot study, the items were modified slightly from their original form with regard to the clarity of instructions and wording of the items to be included in the Likert scale. The condition followed for selecting the faculty was that they should be teaching English for the Foundation Program. The criteria for selecting the students included: (1) being Gulf Arab students; (2) and currently studying English in the Foundation Program.

Sixty six faculty members agreed to participate in this study; 64% of the respondents were male and 54 % of them reported English as their first language (L1). Forty five percent participating faculty were aged between 31-40 years and 52% were 40+. Only 3% fell in the 21-30 years old category. The nationalities reported by the faculty participants were Albanian (1), American (18), Australians (2), British (5), Bulgarian (2), Canadians (3), Egyptians (1), Indians (4), Iranians (1), Turkish (7), Maldivian (1), Moroccan (1), Nigerian (1), Pakistanis (3), Russian (1), Sudanese (5), Syrians (3), Tunisians (4), Ukrainian (1), and Yeminis (2). Similarly, 708 students completed the survey. After eliminating all the non-Arab student responses, as they were not the focus of this study, there remained 527 Arab respondents (383 Gulf Arabs and 144 non-Gulf Arabs). Seventy

six percent of the respondents were female students. 65% of the participants were aged between 15-20 years and 32% were between 21-30 years old.

Secondly, qualitative multiple case study was used to collect in-depth views through individual interviews which were semi-structured. This type of study is used to collect and analyze data which is rich in context, from more than one cases, and helps in generalizing the collected data (Merriam, 1998). The qualitative stage helped answering the last two research questions that focused on two connected areas: understanding the roles the differing expectations can play in classroom practices and the ways the expectations of English faculty be aligned with students.

Eleven faculty and eleven students were purposefully selected (Ivankova, et al., 2006), from those who completed the survey, for this stage to explore the qualitative data by recording their detailed views. The faculty consisted of eight male and three female, and were from USA (5), Britain (1), Canada (2), Yemen (1), Egypt (1), Sudan (1) and Albania, (1). The faculty were selected based upon two criteria: (1) should be working full time in the Foundation Program; and (2) have taught English in the Gulf countries for at least three years or in Qatar for at least 1.5 years. The selection method for the students included: (1) being Gulf Arab or Non-Gulf Arab students; (2) currently studying English in the Foundation Program; (3) must have completed the survey; (4) and should have intermediate language proficiency to ease communication. Eleven students participated in the interview: seven Gulf Arabs and four non-Gulf Arabs. Among these participants, six were male and five were female. All of the students had been studying English for more than three years in an academic setting.

All the interviews were audiotaped using two recording devices and notes were taken onto paper to increase the availability of information. Both of these recorded talks were utilized when transcribing and analyzing the qualitative data.

## 5. Results and Analysis

### 5.1 Quantitative data analysis

#### 5.1.1 Independent *t*-test results

Since one of the purposes of this research is to explore the differences between the expectations on student responsibility of the English faculty, Gulf and Non-Gulf Arab students, an independent *t*-test was considered appropriate to investigate if the differences between the means of the groups were statistically significant. Three independent *t*-tests were run to compare the results. The first test compared the means of the English faculty and Gulf Arab students. The second test compared the means of the English faculty and Non-Gulf Arab students. Lastly, Gulf Arab and Non-Gulf Arab student means were compared.

The first independent *t*-test was run to see if Gulf Arab student and English Faculty expectations on student responsibilities towards nine given items were different. Significant difference was found in the expectations on five items as shown in Table 1. This reveals that students and faculty expect student responsibilities on these five items differently which may have great pedagogical impact. It also shows that teacher expectations were higher only in one area (item 1: developing

fluent English accent); however, student expectations were higher than teachers in other four areas (item 2 - item 4).

**Table 1.** *t*-test Results Comparing Teachers and Gulf Arab Students on Expectations of Student Responsibilities

Expectations on Student Responsibility include:	<i>t</i> -test	M	S D	T	df	D	95% C1	d
1. Developing fluent English accent		2.303	0.840				95% C1[-.95969, -.52365]	
Teacher								
Student	.000	.561	0.705	-7.655	447	-.74167	95% C1[-.93209, -.55125]	-0.724
2. Classroom discipline		1.773	0.747				95% C1[.10094, .51882]	
Student	.004			2.915	435	.309		0.279
Teacher		1.463	0.605				95% C1[.12910, .49067]	
3. Peer Collaboration and interaction		1.671	0.749				95% C1[.02339, .40956]	
Student	.028			2.203	447	.21647		0.208
Teacher		1.454	0.661				95% C1[.03807, .39487]	
4. Studying additional books		2.616	0.963				95% C1[.54080, 1.02491]	
Student	.000			8.366	121	.78285		1.519
Teacher		1.833	0.646				95% C1[.59760, .96811]	
5. Taking homework seriously and turning in assignments on time		1.877	0.830				95% C1[.28944, .70755]	
Student	.000			4.686	447	.49850		0.443
Teacher		1.379	0.575				95% C1[.33498, .66202]	

The second independent *t*-test was run to see if Non-Gulf Arab student and English Faculty expectations on student responsibilities towards nine given items were different. Significant differences were found in the expectations on five items as shown in Table 2. This indicates that students and

faculty expect student responsibilities on these five items differently which may have great pedagogical impact. It also shows that teacher expectations were higher only in one area (item 1: developing fluent English accent); however, student expectations were higher than teachers in other four areas (item 2 - item 4).

**Table 2.** *t*-test Results Comparing Teachers and Non-Gulf Arab Students on Expectations of Student Responsibilities

Expectations on Student Responsibility	<i>t</i> -test	M	SD	<i>t</i>	df	D	95% C1	d
1. Fluent English accent Teacher Student	.000	.303 1.840	0.840 0.833	-3.725	208	-.46275	95% C1[-.70940, -.21610] 95% C1[-.70765, -.21785]	-0.517
2. Classroom discipline Student Teacher	.000	1.861 1.454	0.763 0.612	3.803	208	.40657	95% C1[.19581, .61732] 95% C1[.21180, .60133]	0.527
3. Collaboration and interaction with peers Student Teacher	.004	1.778 1.455	0.770 0.661	2.947	208	.32323	95% C1[.10699, .53947] 95% C1[.11847, .52800]	0.409
4. Studying additional books Student Teacher	.000	2.409 1.833	0.888 0.646	4.726	208	.57639	95% C1[.33597, .81680] 95% C1[.36184, .79094]	0.655
5. Taking homework seriously and turning in assignments on time Student Teacher	.000	1.979 1.379	0.806 0.576	5.445	208	.60038	95% C1[.38298, .81777] 95% C1[.40766, .79309]	0.755

The third independent *t*-test was run to see if Gulf Arab and Non-Gulf Arab student expectations on student responsibilities towards nine given items were different. Significant differences were found in the expectations on three items as shown in Table 3. This reveals that Gulf Arab and Non-Gulf Arab students expect student responsibilities on these three items differently which may have great impact on academic and non-academic collaboration. It also shows that Non-Gulf Arab student expectations were higher in two areas (item 1: developing fluent English accent, and item 2: developing grammatical accuracy); however, Gulf Arab student expectations were higher than Non-Gulf Arab student in only one area (item 3: studying additional books).



**Table 3.** *t-test Results Comparing Gulf Arab and Non-Gulf Arab Student on Expectations of Student Responsibilities*

Expectations on Student Responsibility	<i>t</i> -test		M	SD	t	df	D	95% C1	D
	(2-tailed)								
1. Fluent English accent									
Non-Gulf Arab			1.305	0.461				95% C1[-.17421, -.01705]	
Gulf Arab	.016		1.209	0.408	-2.392	446.861	-.09563	95% C1[-.17349, -.01777]	-0.226
2. Grammatical accuracy									
Non-Gulf Arab			1.924	0.720				95% C1[-.29425, -.01772]	
Gulf Arab	.027		1.768	0.713	-2.231	525	-.15599	95% C1[-.29331, -.10866]	-0.195
3. Studying additional books									
Gulf Arab			2.616	0.963				95% C1[.02527, .38766]	
Non-Gulf Arab	.026		2.409	0.888	2.238	525	.20647	95% C1[.03147, .38146]	0.195

### 5.2 Qualitative data analysis

In order to explain the results from phase 1 and to explore ways to align the differing expectations, individual interviews were scheduled with the students and the faculty. The interviews were divided into three parts. First, the participants were asked to re-take the survey questionnaire and explain their responses. Then they were asked to respond to the survey results. The motivation for doing this was to collect detailed participant views about their responses. In the last part of the interview, participant suggestions on expectation alignment strategies were recorded.

As Table 4 shows, the entire faculty agreed with faculty survey responses but disagreed with student responses. In addition, majority of the faculty considered students responsible for all the items on the survey questionnaire. On the other hand, majority of the students disagreed with all the survey results. However, they explained that student responsibilities include developing an English accent, maintaining good relationship with the instructor, doing homework and assignments on time, and studying additional books.

**Table 4.** Student and Faculty Responses to Interview Questions and Qualitative Data Analysis Results

Items	Student Responses	Teacher Responses
Consistency of results	64% disagreed with faculty and student survey results	All faculty agreed with faculty survey results; but 81.82% disagreed with student survey results
An English Accent	55% believed it is student responsibility	91% believed it is student responsibility; however, explained that they prefer fluency not accent
Grammatical Accuracy	63% believed it is teacher responsibility	80% believed it is student responsibility
Classroom Discipline	46% believed it is shared responsibility	80% believed it is student responsibility
Relationship with the Instructor	36% believed it is student responsibility 36% believed it is teacher responsibility	46% believed it is student responsibility
Collaboration and Interaction with Peers	46% believed it is shared responsibility	80% believed it is student responsibility
Homework and Assignments	81% believed it is student responsibility	100% believed it is student responsibility
Additional Books	46% believed it is student responsibility	72% believed it is student responsibility
IT Skills	46% believed it is shared responsibility	62% believed it is student responsibility

Similarly, students believed that teacher responsibilities include developing students' grammatical accuracy and establishing good relationship with the students. Finally, students considered maintaining classroom discipline, creating opportunities for collaboration and interaction between students, and developing IT skills as shared responsibilities of the faculty and the students.

### **5.3 Participant recommendations for faculty**

#### **5.3.1 Mutual understanding**

Both groups of participants suggested developing a teacher-student learning contract (TSLC) by sharing their expectations through surveys, conferences and in-class discussions. They believed that the development of a TSLC is vital in English literacy as it could cater for the academic and social duties of both groups, and can help in setting rules for task completion, discipline, participation, motivation and classroom management. Furthermore, these TSLCs can also guide school and university administrations towards addressing student-faculty expectations through orientations and workshops.

#### **5.3.2 Teacher characteristics**

The participants suggested using instructional strategies in English studies that not only motivate instructors to teach effectively but also encourage students to learn better. One participant argued,

“Students do all the work if teachers make them realize that it is serious”. One more participant added, “A teacher should help his students develop skills, not simply assist them in passing the course”.

The participants claimed that the nationality of the instructor does not matter. However, majority of the students prefer instructors of opposite gender. One participant disapproved generalization of perception, discouraged stereotyping and expected “the teachers to have higher expectations of their students” in English studies.

#### **5.4 Participant recommendations for students**

##### **5.4.1 Student characteristics**

The participants suggested that English students could achieve their academic goals through peer collaboration, class participation, and working closely with the instructor. One faculty stated, “Students should submit assignments on time and study additional books to show that they understand their responsibility”. Similarly, one student advised, “Gulf Arab students need to be realistic and understand their future needs”. Commenting on learner autonomy, one participant suggested relying more on self-study and less on instructors for language development.

##### **5.4.2 Development of study skills**

The participants argued for the development of study skills and learning strategies for successful literacy. For example, one participant claimed that “different skills need different ways”, so the students need “training” to develop them for English education. One participant suggested, “The skills that were not developed at school can be developed now at university”.

#### **5.5 Recommendations for the university**

##### **5.5.1 Rules and regulations**

The participants emphasized English faculty empowerment in decision-making and application of university’s English literacy policies. Motivation of students through social pressure and campaigns, monitoring of student intake for quality purposes, legal application of policies on attendance, plagiarism and discipline, enforcement of the IELTS exam as an exit requirement, heavier weighting on speaking performance, inclusion of faculty-student expectations in SLOs, and development of a strong referral system and its proper monitoring were among other suggestions.

##### **5.5.2 University expectations**

A participant suggested the university to “be realistic and expect less from the instructors as students cannot develop all the English skills in one year”. Another participant added, “Covering more in English classes does not mean more learning by the students”.

## **6. Discussion**

In answer to the first two research questions raised by this study, similarities and differences were found in faculty and Arab student expectations of student responsibility in English studies. This study also identified areas where teacher-student expectations did not match. Though Gulf Arab and non-Gulf Arab student expectations were same when compared to teacher expectations-teacher-student expectations differed on the same 5 items (See Table 1 & 2); however, their mutual expectations did not match on only 3 items when compared against each other (see Table 3). This

shows that both Gulf and Non-Gulf Arab student expectations of their teachers' role(s) in the classroom are same.

This similarity could be because majority of the non-Gulf Arab students were either born in Qatar or have lived here for very long, which may have localized their expectations. On the other hand, these results call for increasing efforts to enable English teachers, including expatriates, to meet Arab student expectations. This confirms the conclusions of Syed (2003) that highlighted the issues caused by limited awareness of local sociocultural and linguistic characteristics and emphasized the need to increase the English instructors' understanding of the Gulf culture and aspects of language education to enhance quality teaching.

The survey results were surprising because Arab student expectations on the 5 items where student-teacher expectations did not match were higher than the teacher expectations. This is consistent with Rubie-Davies, et al.'s (2010) findings where students had positive expectations of themselves as compared to their teachers and parents. Since research (Tsiplakides & Keramida, 2010) suggests that teacher expectations influence student performance-for instance, when they act as self-fulfilling prophecy-lower teacher expectations can result in poor student achievement (Rubie-Davies, et al., 2010). This helps in answering the third research question that the differing expectations can directly affect the learning process and widen the gap between a teacher and his student.

These findings provide room for further study by raising certain questions. For example, what factors contribute to lower teacher expectations? Why students have higher expectations of themselves as compared to their teachers? What are the consequences of lower teacher expectations in the English classes?

The survey questionnaire allows educators to analyze faculty-student expectations about their roles in the classroom. Educators can use this survey to collect information about their students' perspectives on English literacy and then compare the results with their own views about teaching and learning. This analysis is important in selecting instructional strategies that cater for the academic needs of the learners.

The last research question asked suggestions of the students and the teachers to reduce the gap in expectations that fall under three main categories: recommendations for faculty, students and university. In faculty's case, the participants suggested the need of a student-teacher expectations contract that can serve as a platform for sharing expectations and developing mutual understanding. The faculty can use this contract as a tool to remind students of their responsibilities and motivate them to engage in academically concentrated activities (Breen & Littlejohn, 2000). The participants also advised that a teacher should hold higher expectations of his students.

Secondly, the participants argued for increased student awareness of their responsibility and of their teacher's expectations for successful learning. There was a call for students to increase hard work, collaborate with peers, develop study skills, and work closely with their instructors to increase the chances of academic success.

In the last category, the participants suggested changes in the university English education policies and demanded successful implementation of these policies. To improve the university education, the participants suggested lowering class sizes, providing role models for students, increasing extra-curricular activities and creating opportunities for student-teacher collaboration. The participants emphasized extra help for the first year students in their smooth transition to university setting, and accelerated efforts to develop literacy skills that are necessary to succeed in a university.

## 7. Conclusion

This study has exposed that a gap exists between the teacher and the student expectations of what the students are estimated to do in the English classes at a Middle Eastern university and suggests that this gap should be bridged. The teachers and the students agreed that they should convey their expectations in the classroom and expected the university to facilitate and support these efforts.

Since this was the first study in this context that analyzed the data collected from the English faculty, Gulf, and Non-Gulf Arab students studying in a Middle Eastern University, it cannot be claimed that this study is without limitations. For example, the study provides information about participants' expectations but does not explore the roots and the development of these expectations. This should be investigated in a future study to understand the factors behind these expectations and the ways these expectations grow.

Another limitation of this research is that the student population mostly consisted of the Gulf and non-Gulf Arabs that were either born in Qatar or have lived here for a considerable amount of time, and that could be the reason that their expectations were same when compared to their teachers. Therefore, it is not sure whether the results of this research can be generalized beyond the participants' experiences. Further research is needed to explore and compare the expectations that Arab students studying in other countries have about their responsibilities in English studies.

### About the author:

**Kashif Raza** is a lecturer in English at Qatar University's Foundation English Program. His research interests include expectations and perceptions in English education, SLW, and language policy development. Mr. Kashif has presented at various international and regional conferences and serves on the editorial board of Language Teaching Research Quarterly (LTRQ) journal. ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5922-2052>

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**Appendix A: Survey Questionnaire**

Q. Student responsibilities towards English studies include:

	Strongly Agree أوافق بشدة	Agree أوافق	Strongly Disagree أرفض بشدة	Disagree أرفض
Developing fluent English script التطوير سلسة الكتابة بالإنجليزية	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Grammatical accuracy دقة في النطق	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Classroom discipline الانضباط الصفية	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Good relationship with instructor جودة العلاقة بين الطالب والمدرسة	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Collaboration and interaction with peers التعاون والتفاعل مع الزملاء	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Take home work and assignments seriously الجدد العمل في الواجبات التي خارج الصف	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Study additional books دراسة كتب إضافية	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop IT skills تطوير مهارات التعلم باستخدام التكنولوجيا	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Turning in assignments on time التقديم الواجبات في الوقت المحدد	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Appendix B: Interview Questionnaire

### *Focus Group Agenda and Interview Questions on Student Responsibility towards English Studies*

#### **English Faculty vs. Gulf Arab and Non-Gulf Arab Students**

**1. Do these results align with your own observations?**

Prompts (if needed):

- a. What is consistent with your observations? Can you give an example?
- b. What is not consistent with your observations? Can you give an example?

**2. How do you explain or make sense of these results?**

Prompts (if needed):

- a. Why do you think these differences show up? Can you give me an example?
- b. Do you think there might be any extraneous reasons that might explain the difference (i.e., limitations of the research?)

**3. What do you think the implications of these findings are?**

Prompts (if needed):

- a. For faculty?
- b. For the universities?
- c. For the students?

**4. What recommendations would you give based on these findings and what we have discussed?**

Prompts (if needed):

- a. Recommendations for faculty/students?
- b. Recommendations for the universities?