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Original Research Article

A Study on Interaction Pattern of Students in Teacher Education Institutions of Kolkata, West Bengal

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Abstract: Teacher education institutions which are known as B.Ed. (Bachelor of Education) College are mainly provide a professional course through which our society gets future teachers. Here, with the others teaching skills, it is equally important to know and implement the communication skill for being a proficient teacher. This kind of interaction focuses on meaningful communication among the students and teachers and it helps the students to recognize their own ability. It also provides an exposure to the immense field of learning. The paper aims to explore the interaction pattern of B.Ed. students with each other and with the teachers from various colleges in Kolkata. This research is based on both primary and secondary data along with thorough literature review. Data analysis involved qualitative methods. Students' interaction patterns are of various wings and respondents accept that due to lack of fluency in English language, deficiency in financial wealth, cultural differences are the prime factors of less communication. Moreover they have showed positive response towards this interaction. Proper management of classroom and as well as adequate time and space is required for organizing different activities to enhance students' communication skills.

Keywords: B.Ed. students, teachers, interaction pattern, socio-economic background, education, communication skills.

INTRODUCTION

The utmost important influences in a classroom situation are the interactions and exchanges of thoughts commenced by teacher and students. Interaction in the classroom is a vital part of teaching learning procedure. Interaction or human interaction has been defined as a method where two or more people involved in mutual actions. This action may be verbal or nonverbal (Celce and Murcia, 1987). Cundell and Pierce (2009) specified that interaction is viewed as significant because it is claimed that only through interaction, the learner can dissolve the teaching learning structures and develop meaning from classroom events. Additionally, Allwright and Bailey (1991) specified that over classroom interaction, the plan produces results (input, practice opportunities, and approachability). Changes in pre-college education and a rise of student diversity but also advances in curricula, faculty training, instructional technology, and pedagogical innovation led to measurable modifications in classroom interaction and transmuted the types and styles of teaching as well as the learning skills, and prospects of students (Kuh and Hu, 2001). To recognise changes in teaching and learning, a study of interaction is essential because it infuses associations between professors and students or among students themselves (Moore, 1993); it occurs inside as well as outside the classroom (Alderman, 2008); and it is obvious regardless whether the teaching is face-to-face, blended or fully online (Smith and Kurthen, 2007). The definition of interaction quality is grounded on the individual perception that a meaningful educational purpose is fulfilled, that something can be accomplished, that the level of interest or engagement is high (i.e., few students are bored or sleeping), and that learning is intense in the form of exchanges, analytical, amplifications (Cerbin, 2011).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Cuseo (2007) has studied the relationship between student-professor interaction inside and outside the classroom. Pascarella *et al*. (1977) highlights that Often student-teachers interaction was used as a predictor variable to explain student outcomes. But a relative large organisation of research is apprehensive with student-faculty interaction outside the classroom (Cotten and Wilson 2006). Still, classroom interaction is generally influenced by the combined effect of class, student, teachers and teaching characteristics.

Classroom atmosphere

A review of the literature checks that class size matters for communication quantity and quality. This is not shocking since smaller classes upturn the ability of teachers and the willingness of students to involve in higher quality, positive way of interaction (Smimou and Dahl 2012). In a larger class, professors generally apply lecture method instead of discussions method of teaching (Cuseo 2007). Other reasons that have been found to affect interaction pattern are the type of classes, i.e., electives versus required courses (Hoffmann and Oreopoulos 2009), physical classroom design, e.g., lecture halls versus seminar style rooms, access to media and technology (Adams 2010), and other environmental conditions such as time, day, length, and semester in which classes are held.

Nature of students

Kim & Sax opined that students' gender, race, and ethnicity have greater influences on students' interaction pattern. Other factors such as immigration and socioeconomic status, economic condition, family background, employment type, types of commuting, residential living and roommates as well as physical and emotional features of students, such as healthiness and disability, mental and emotional status, attention, lack of sleep, enthusiasm, and concentration (Hardre and Sullivan 2008). While some colleges accept underprivileged minority students with lower high school grades in order to boost campus diversity, these students have a tough time adjusting given their frequently unsatisfactory preparation. In effect, this often makes a two-tier system of performance and interaction (Lundberg and Schreiner 2004).

Teacher's attitude

Teacher's personality, skills, groundwork and association knowledge and experience (Carrell and West 2010) as well as passion, cordiality, and outlooks (Rubie. *et al*. 2006) are also relevant in case of students' interaction. McBroom and Reed (1994) point out that it is much more advantageous to have focused discussions compared to lectures, not least because formulating discussion questions or providing answers makes each student explain, analyse and defend their answers or help other struggling students.

OBJECTIVES

The major objectives of the study are as follows
a. To bring out the existing interaction pattern of students with fellow students and authorities.
b. To observe latent indicators towards institutional communication if any.

STUDY AREA

The city of Kolkata, the metropolitan city of India, is popularly known as the 'City of Joy' has a population of Kolkata is 4,486,679 according to 2011 census. It ranks 5th among all the other metropolitan cities of India. It has a density of 27,306 per sq.km. The sex ratio is 908 females per 1000 males (2011), which are lower than the national average. Kolkata Municipal Corporation area has registered a growth rate of 4.1%. The literacy rate of the city population is 80.86% (2011). This city has large number of educational institutes, colleges, universities for higher education and different professional courses.
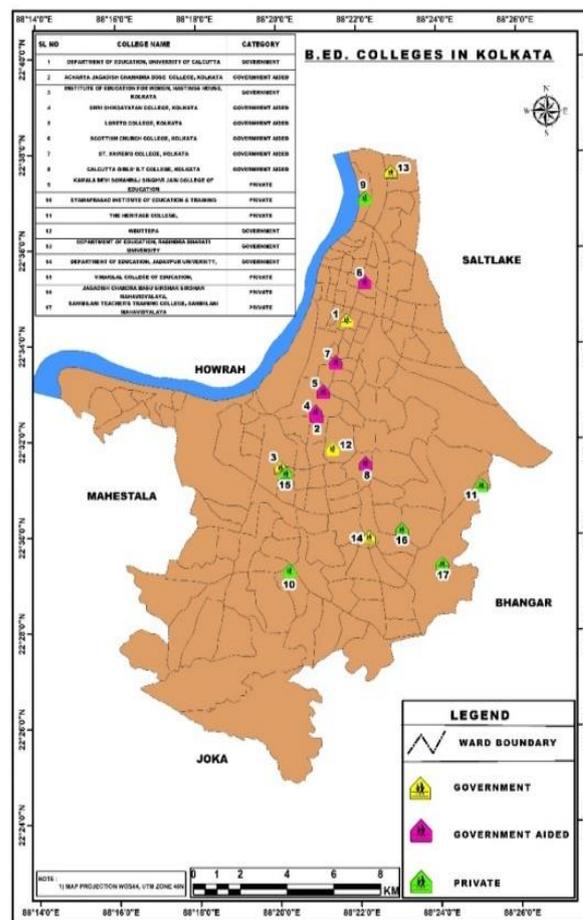
METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to observe the interaction pattern of B.Ed. students in college and the reasons behind this. Population of the study consisted of students from teacher education institutions popularly known as B.Ed. colleges. The present study was conducted in Kolkata during December 2019 to February, 2020. This study is based on a qualitative method. A perception survey was conducted involving students of B.Ed. colleges (n=210). As a sample for this study a smaller group has been obtained from the population. Different types of sampling had been used to execute the study. At first Purposive sampling had been used to the state. Then selected all the B.Ed. colleges from the district. Then Simple Random Sampling had been used to select the teaching faculties and students of every college. After that Snow Ball Sampling had been use also to know the view of the respondents. The survey covered 19 B.Ed. colleges with semi-structured questionnaire. The majority of students were between the ages of 24 to 28 years with few

aberrations. Apart from this, case studies were also conducted involving male and female B.Ed. college students.

The questionnaire for students consists of two sections. The first section requested demographic data including the student's gender, age, socio-economic status and family background. The second section of the questionnaire consists of various aspects to measure student's perspective regarding interpersonal relationship. The study was conducted among government, government-aided and private B.Ed. colleges of above mentioned district. Data was personally collected. Respondents were briefed regarding the importance and purpose of the study and why their opinions were important. This questionnaire had covered different areas like students' level of

adjustment, communication and interpersonal relationships and students' need and expectations. There were five options against each item- 'strongly disagree', 'disagree', 'undecided', 'agree' and 'strongly agree' and the respondents had to choose one of them.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The way students interact with each other: pattern

Student-to-student interaction is a vital part of any course experience. In a classroom setting, this interaction happens naturally, as students listen to each other's comments, ask each other questions, and build rapport through frequent contact. Teachers can also foster student-to-student interaction, but it may require building formal and informal interaction opportunities in course design.

1. **Attendance**
2. **Time spend in college campus**
3. **Involvement in campus activities**
4. **Work in group**
5. **Preference in group decision making**
6. **Participation in College excursion**
7. **Leading attitude**
8. **Feeling shy or unsupported due to lack of spoken English power**
9. **Nervous to talk with peers come from higher socioeconomic background**
10. **Feeling shy to bring parents in college campus**
11. **Feeling occurred to stand up and say something in the class in front of other students and teachers**
12. **Fellow friends are not interested to work with me.**
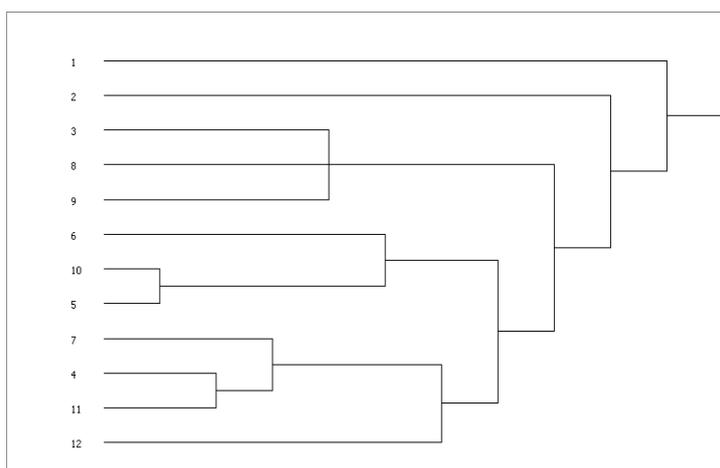
The Dendrogram highlights two distinct chunks comprising attendance (1) and time spend in college campus (2). These are substantially different from the other chunks. Students who are regular in class find it easy to cope up with the institutional climate and they spent much time in the campus to communicate with peers, teachers and other staff of the college outside the classroom. Number 5 and 10 has shown

similar characteristics. Students who are generally fearful in nature due to their socio-economic background generally feel shy to bring their parents in college campus as they think parents will not be fitted in the college ambience. These students also prefer group decision regarding any curriculum issue and try work together (4) to hide their own identity. When teacher asks something, they feel occurred to stand up

in front of everyone present there (11). As a result these students do not want to take any lead (7) in any kind of work and try to be happy in other's shelter. Students who communicate less, naturally show fewer interests in co-curricular activities (3). They stated that they feel shy or nervous (9) when they talk to peers come from high society, due to lack of communication (spoken English mainly) power (8). Some of them even are not able to join college excursion due to financial burden and some emotional blockage. Interaction has an impact on student achievement and satisfaction, as reflected by test performance, grades, and student satisfaction (Roblyer & Ekhaml, 2000).

Case Studies depicting ground reality

Case 1:
        Soma Dey (changed name) is a 2nd semester student from a government aided B.Ed. college in Kolkata, coming from a very mediocre family from rural interiors of North 24 Parganas district. His father is a labour of a jute factory and mother is an informal worker. After completing her post-graduation she has opted this course for becoming a teacher. She was trying in several colleges, at last got chance in that college. She was quite tensed at first, and till now she feels very anxious when she entered the college. "It is very uncomfortable for me to communicate with our great teachers and my friends, who are from Kolkata.

        Because I am from a Bengali medium school and my spoken English is very poor. This is the one reason I feel very shy, in spite of that my economic condition is too weak to hang out with friends in cafeteria. Due to this condition sometimes I feel lonely, unacceptable kind of person and this situation control my own identity. Often I want to give response in the class, but lack of fluency in language (English) and proper dress up, I am not able to perform at my level."

Case 2:
        Rahul Sinha (changed name) is a 2nd semester student from a private B.Ed. college in Kolkata. He is from a business family aiming to join his father venture. He has opted this course just as an alternative option. He is pretty good in communicative language as he has passed from a reputed English medium school of Kolkata. But he is very irregular in class as he thinks it is a private college after all. This kind of attitude makes him isolated in his own way. "I am not interested in the classes at all as I have to lookout my father's project. Due to lack of attendance I am not aware of all the activities running in college. There are few friends of mine who try to help me out but many times I find it very hard to follow the instructions given by the college and meet the deadlines of all the practicum."

Case 3:
        Priyanka Roy is a 3rd semester student from a private B.Ed. college in Kolkata. She belongs to middle

class family and very passionate about her study. She is very regular in college and a familiar face in the campus, takes part in all the co-curricular activities. "It is very necessary for all of us to take a significant part in college activities, after all we have chosen the teaching profession for our future career and interaction and communication is the chief professional skill of a teacher. Most of the time it really matters that how you connect with your surroundings and it affects your behavioural approach and academic performance. I really enjoy my college atmosphere and adore my peers company. Although few of us do not interact at all. I think maybe there are some financial or psychological issues."

Case 4:
        Suraj Singhal is a 3rd semester student from a private B.Ed. college. He is very serious and responsible student; follow all the instructions given by the teachers properly. But he is very shy in the college. He talks only if it is necessary. "In my class there are only 5 males and 91 female students. It creates a trouble for me, because every day 2 or 3 male students are absent and I have to sit with any of my female classmates. And I am not comfortable with them. This is the only reason I feel isolated."

CONCLUSION
        Interaction is needed in classroom activities. This study has tried to summarize the findings in order to see B.Ed. students' interaction pattern. The effective communication among students and teachers can increase not only the quality of team work but it also improve personal abilities of students. It also enhance the proficiency of teachers. As it is a professional course and students come here to learn some professional skills for becoming a teacher to handle the school children coming from various age group and different socio-cultural and economic background, it should give prime focus on interaction pattern. It is beneficial for teaching learning process. B.Ed. students accept that their level of communication is largely depends on their socio-economic background, culture and perceptions. However students responded positively regarding the importance of this interaction. The result of the study suggest that if the teachers can organize some constructive activities beyond the syllabus and involve more students to take participation and converse with their mother tongue it will make them more effective and contented towards the learning. Equally students will be able to know each other irrespective of their background. More they interact more they know about co-operative learning, support and bonding which is required in every step of life.

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