

Behavioural Persistence of B.Ed. Student teachers - A Survey

¹Ashwathi, ²D. Hemalatha Kalaimathi

¹Ph.D, Research Scholar, Lady Willingdon Institute of Advanced Study in Education.

²Assistant Professor, Lady Willingdon Institute of Advanced Study in Education, Chennai

Abstract

Teacher attrition is a common problem faced by schools. Research attributes organisational characteristics, student body composition, and resources (instructional spending and teacher salaries) as well as Personal characteristics of teachers as important predictors of Teacher attrition (Borman & Dowling, 2008). The current study was conducted to investigate one such predictor Behavioural Persistence. The study aimed to find the levels Behavioural Persistence of B.Ed. Student teachers in terms of Demographic variables like Age and Gender. The Behavioural Persistence Scale developed and standardised by the researcher and guide (Ashwathi & Dr. D. Hemalatha Kalaimathi, 2019) was used for data collection. 1180 B.Ed. Student Teachers from various B.Ed. colleges of Tamilnadu voluntarily participated in the present study. Independent t test was used to compare the subscales by Gender. ANOVA was conducted to compare the Age groups. The results showed Behavioural Persistence level among B.Ed. Student teachers to be low and significant differences were observed with respect to Age whereas no significant differences were observed for Gender.

Keywords: Behavioural Persistence.

1. INTRODUCTION

Bachelors of Education or B.Ed. as we know is an endeavour for training novice teachers to learn how to teach. An attempt is made to teach prospective teachers the psychology of the students they handle once they step into the teaching profession. A prospective teacher's attitude towards self and also towards his/her endeavours would greatly influence the way they will be handling the young individuals later in their profession. At an early stage of development, a child always looks up to his/ her teacher. A word of appreciation and a change in facial expression on the part of the teacher means a world to the student. A teacher's role does not end there. There are responsibilities towards the management as well. There is a constant pressure to make the students perform well, along with organising and conducting extra curriculars, maintaining a constant rapport with the parents and also tons of paperwork which comes with handling records of students, corrections of answer sheets, making question

papers and what not. The list can be quite overwhelming. To sum it up, a teaching job is not just transacting subject knowledge to the learners. Thus the teaching profession is facing high rates of attrition (Lindqvist, Nordänger, & Carlsson, 2014) which might be because of the stress teachers face as part of the teaching profession. An ability to persevere and persist in one's endeavours is a characteristic of a strong mind (Zimmerman, 2018). A prospective teacher having this ability can achieve his/her goals with ease. The job profile of a teacher incorporates handling a number of tasks within a short duration and meeting deadlines. The inability to achieve deadlines is a major cause of stress and tension among teachers. Persistence is the ability to accomplish a task despite difficulties, influences, opposition or discouragement. Persistence is a set of teachable behaviours for approaching problems and challenges and for working to reach other academic or non-academic outcomes. It is important that students understand that in order to practice persistence

they should generate several possible strategies so that they will have choices. Half-way through a problem, the students may decide to switch strategies, and it is useful to have already identified possibilities even if the student ultimately chooses a strategy that was not on her original list of possibilities. Persistence is about being conscious of choices, criteria and outcomes. Persistence in Behaviour shown by teachers doesn't help just the teachers themselves but indirectly it influences the students with whom they interact. Persistence in behaviour is a quality that students need to acquire in today's world where there are distractions everywhere.

2. Review of Related Literature

A study conducted by Evans et al. (2009) suggested that self-awareness is necessary to regulate one's behaviours, though it was not clear regarding the effect of present-centred, non-judgmental, and non-reactive awareness, would have on behavioural self-regulation. The study also revealed non-judge items and non-react facets of Mindfulness could predict increased persistence on a difficult task ($N = 142$). A study conducted by Onturk & Yildiz (2020) showed a difference between the age and motivational persistence of the students. A study on nursing students conducted by Fortes et al. (2022) was conducted to study the influence of social determinants of education on nursing student persistence and professional values. Structural Equation Modelling was used to analyse the social determinants of education. This study was conducted by the researcher to especially find the Behavioural Persistence of B.Ed. Student teachers studying in districts of TamilNadu.

Objectives

1. To find the level of Behavioural Persistence among B.Ed. Student Teachers.
2. To find difference in Behavioural persistence and its dimensions among B.Ed. student teachers based on
 - a. Age
 - b. Gender

3. Hypothesis

1. The level of Behavioural Persistence among B.Ed. Student Teachers is moderate.
2. There is no significant difference in Behavioural persistence and its dimensions among B.Ed. student teachers based on
 - a. Age
 - b. Gender.

4. Methodology

4.1 Method of the Study

Survey Method was used in the present study.

4.2 Population and Sample

The population of this research consists of students from different departments of B.Ed. Colleges in TamilNadu. A random sampling method was used and the sample was taken from the B.Ed. student teachers studying in various B.Ed. Colleges in Chennai and Thiruvallur district. A total of 1180 B.Ed. Student Teachers voluntarily participated in this survey.

4.3 Data collection Tool

The Behavioural Persistence Scale developed and standardised by the researcher and guide (Ashwathi & Dr. D. Hemalatha Kalaimathi, 2019) was used to collect data. The tool has been graded as a five-point Likert type scale (1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-neutral, 4-agree, 5-strongly agree). Behavioural Persistence Scale is a 40 item scale with three dimensions namely Long-term purposes pursuing (LTPP), Current purposes pursuing (CPP) and Recurrence of unattained purposes (RUP). Cronbach alpha coefficient was found to be .776 for the Behavioural Persistence scale.

5 The Analysis & Interpretation of the Data

The data gathered as a result of measurements during research was analysed using SPSS software. For parametric datum, independent samples t-tests and ANOVA were applied to determine whether there was a meaningful difference among the B.Ed. Student Teachers with respect to Age and Gender.

Hypothesis 1: The level of Behavioural Persistence among B.Ed. student Teachers is moderate.

Table 1 *Range, category, Frequency and Percentage of Behavioural Persistence among B.Ed. Student Teachers with respect to Entire sample is moderate.*

Variable	Range	Category	Frequency	Percentage
<i>Overall Behavioural Persistence</i>	105 - 124	Low	440	37.3%
	125 - 132	Medium	350	29.7%
	132 - 194	High	390	33.1%

The continuous variable Behavioural Persistence was split into three levels, high, medium and low to find the level of Behavioural Persistence among B.Ed. Student Teachers. Table 1 shows that in the sample under study 37.3% of the B.Ed. Student teachers have a low level of Behavioural Persistence. Therefore,

comparatively, the level of Behavioural Persistence among B.Ed. Student Teachers is inferred to be low.

Hypothesis 2a: There is no significant difference in Behavioural Persistence and its dimensions among B.Ed. student teachers based on Age.

Table 2 *Values of ANOVA for Significant Difference in Behavioural Persistence and its dimensions among B.Ed student teachers based on their Age*

Factors of Behavioural Persistence	Age in Years				F-value	P-value
	21-25	26-30	31-35	36-40		
Long-term purposes pursuing (LTPP)	58.24 8.087	57.26 7.660	57.69 8.503	58.04 7.086	1.142	.331
Current purposes pursuing (CPP)	86.93 11.442	87.52 11.630	88.29 11.481	84.27 10.812	3.263*	.021 2&4 3&4
Recurrence of unattained purposes (RUP)	43.31 7.502	44.10 8.570	43.97 7.555	42.22 6.260	2.094	.099
Behavioural Persistence	188.48 21.507	188.87 21.057	189.96 20.989	184.53 13.550	1.790	.147

Note:* The mean difference is significant at the 5% level.

According to the findings in Table 2, for the dimension Current purposes pursuing (CPP) [t(1178)=3.263; p<0.05], obtained p value was less than .05 hence B.Ed. Student Teachers show significant differences in terms of the Age variable at 5% level of significance. B.Ed. student Teachers belonging to 36-40 age group differ significantly from 26-30 and 31-35 year olds whereas for Behavioural Persistence

[t(1178)=1.790; p>0.05], its factors, Long-term purposes pursuing (LTPP) [t(1178)=1.142; p>0.05], and Recurrence of unattained purposes (RUP) [t(1178)=2.094; p>0.05] B.Ed. Student Teachers do not show significant differences in terms of the Age variable as the p value is greater than .05 .

Hypothesis 2b: There is no significant difference in Behavioural Persistence and its dimensions among B.Ed. student teachers based on Gender.

Table 3 *Values of t value for Significant Difference in Behavioural Persistence and its dimensions among B.Ed. student teachers based on their Gender*

Factors of Behavioural Persistence	Gender				t value	p value
	Male		Female			
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Long-term purposes pursuing (LTPP)	57.75	8.548	57.82	7.748	.132	.895
Current purposes pursuing (CPP)	86.74	12.123	87.21	11.293	.588	.557
Recurrence of unattained purposes (RUP)	43.44	8.628	43.62	7.518	.317	.751
Behavioural Persistence	187.93	18.762	188.65	19.897	.497	.619

According to the findings in Table 3, the obtained p value is greater than .05 hence there exists no significant difference in Behavioural Persistence [$t(1178)=.497$; $p>0.05$], and its dimensions Long-term purposes pursuing (LTPP) [$t(1178)=.132$; $p>0.05$], Current purposes pursuing (CPP) [$t(1178)=.588$; $p>0.05$] and Recurrence of unattained purposes (RUP) [$t(1178)=.317$; $p>0.05$] among B.Ed. Student Teachers in terms of the Gender variable.

6. Findings and Discussion

Results in Table 3, showed that with respect to gender, Behavioural Persistence and its factors have been observed to show no significant difference. The observed result is in sync with the results obtained in studies like Cenberci and Beyhan, 2016; Demir and Doner, 2019; Dubey, 1982; Duckworth et al., 2007; Duckworth et al. 2009.

Behavioural persistence of B.Ed. Student Teachers were studied with respect to age and findings indicate that there is no significant

difference among the B.Ed. Student Teachers for Behavioural persistence and its factors except for Current Purposes Pursuing which showed significant differences at 5% level of significance. These findings were not similar to the empirical results obtained like the findings of the study conducted by Onturk & Yildiz (2020) which showed that difference between the age and motivational persistence of the students was not statistically significant for “long-term purposes pursuing”, “current purposes pursuing”, and “recurrence of unattained purposes” ($p>0.05$). However, it was observed that the mean score of “current purposes pursuing” ($X=4.04$ for 23–24 age and $X=4.08$ for 25 and over) was lower than the other age groups. Cenberci and Beyhan (2016) too didn't find any significant differences for age and levels of Behavioural persistence and its factors.

7. Conclusions

The present study was able to find the level of Behavioural Persistence among B.Ed. Student Teachers. The level was found to be low in case

of Behavioural Persistence. Previous results have shown that mindful self-awareness, particularly non judging and nonreactivity, can have a salutary effect on persistence at a difficult task. Prospective teachers have an immense task in front of them, that is to re-learn the art of teaching and un-learn the concept of old style teaching. Our society gives importance to all jobs except the most important one that is teaching. Only a handful of students enter this professional course because they really want to teach and make a significant change to society. Otherwise, the usual reason for choosing B.Ed. is - to earn an easy job, females can handle family if they are into teaching profession, safe job for females, or if no other options were available so choose B.Ed. What is lacking in all these reasons is one essential element: "PASSION". Mindfulness might not bring that passion in teaching but as teachers, one has to be mindful in every single action as the young minds are imbibing the qualities from teachers knowingly or unknowingly. Similarly persistence in behaviour, a teacher is said to be one of the best people to advise the students. It's easy to advice but as teachers, our behaviour should do the talking. Children don't learn from advice but by observing. Teaching profession is a roller coaster ride with immense pressure from various ends. A teacher is answerable to the parents, management and now even students. For married individuals, an additional task is there to balance work and professional life. Unlike IT or other professions, teaching is a 24/7 job so persisting in each task on a daily basis can take a toll on an individual. Hence, a mindful outlook towards life could help teachers to persist in difficult tasks or any tasks and that becomes a part of one's behaviour. Then, taking efforts to be persistent is not required, persistence in behaviour becomes one's nature.

Reference

- [1] Borman, G. D., & Dowling, N. M. (2008). Teacher attrition and retention: A meta-analytic and narrative review of the research. *Review of educational research*, 78(3), 367-409.
- [2] Evans, D. R., Baer, R. A., & Segerstrom, S. C. (2009). The effects of mindfulness and self-consciousness on persistence. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 47(4), 379-382.
- [3] Fortes, K., Latham, C. L., Vaughn, S., & Preston, K. (2022). The influence of social determinants of education on nursing student persistence and professional values. *Journal of Professional Nursing*, 39, 41-53.
- [4] Imtiaz, F., Ji, L. J., & Vaughan-Johnston, T. (2018). Exploring the influence of a low-dose mindfulness induction on performance and persistence in a challenging cognitive task. *Journal of Theoretical Social Psychology*, 2(4), 107-118.
- [5] Kim, K., Milne, G.R. and Bahl, S. (2018), "Smart phone addiction and mindfulness: an intergenerational comparison", *International Journal of Pharmaceutical and Healthcare Marketing*, Vol. 12 No. 1, pp. 25-43. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJPHM-08-2016-0044>
- [6] Lindqvist, P., Nordänger, U.K., & Carlsson, R. (2014). Teacher Attrition The First Five years—A multifaceted image. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 40, 94-103.
- [7] Onturk, Y., & Yildiz, Y. (2020). Investigation of the Motivational Persistence Levels of the Students Studying at the Faculty of Sport Sciences According to Some Demographic Characteristics. *Asian Journal of Education and Training*, 6(3), 514-519.
- [8] Tasneem, S. A., & Panwar, N. (2019). Academic confidence and mindfulness: a study on gender differences. *International Journal of Social Science and Economic Research*, 4(6), 4690-4702.
- [9] Zimmerman, A. (2018). Considering the Prospect of Cultivating Mindfulness in Teacher Education. *Issues in Teacher Education*, 27(1), 57-72.