



Pre-Service Teachers' Global Mindset and Intercultural Competence at Bangladesh's Universities: The Contribution of Teacher Education Institutions

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Abstract

Every corner of the world has witnessed the wonders of globalisation, which has increased the necessity for fostering intercultural competency and an international mindset. The current study is being conducted to better understand how teacher preparation programmes might foster potential teachers' global awareness and intercultural competency while they are enrolled in public higher education institutions in Sindh, Bangladesh. Through the use of a survey method and a five-point Likert Scale, the data were gathered from a sample of 800 pre-service teachers enrolled in the University of Sindh, Jamshoro. For data analysis, the researcher used statistical methods like regression, Chi-Square, and percentages. The results showed that pre-service teachers' levels of intercultural competency and global awareness were not commendable. Additionally, there was a strong relationship between the importance of teacher education institutions and both intercultural and global awareness. However, teacher preparation programmes have struggled to appropriately foster pre-service teachers' global awareness and intercultural competency.

Keywords: Institutions that train teachers, international perspective, and cross-cultural competency

Introduction

The world has shrunk into a global village as geographical boundaries have been removed and distances have been shortened, intensifying the inevitable interdependence between people, groups, and countries (Zhao, 2010) [46]. Growth in trade, technology, communication, medicine, and education—factors that are dependent on intercultural competence and an international mindset—are crucial for a country's survival (Harwood and Bailey, 2012) [20–21]. In light of this, new learning and teaching facets should be offered, and intercultural competency and global thinking should be taught and learned (Crawford & Kirby, 2008).

The ability to notice, recognise, and understand the global environment, norms, values, practises, and cultures in which one is expected to live, engage, and communicate is referred to as having an international mindset (Schattle, 2008) [39]. International mindedness enables a person to comprehend various difficulties and cultures while also offering solutions (Hill, 2012) [24–25]. In this context, Haywood (2007) [22–23] has identified five aspects of having an international mindset. He has underlined the need to talk about and encourage these qualities in each person. One should first be interested in learning about the earth's physical and human geography. Second, one ought to be accepting of various cultural viewpoints. Third, one should be scientifically aware of the value and universality of the earth. Fourthly, it's

important to understand how and why people are interconnected and dependent on one another. And finally, respecting people from different cultural origins is important. However, studies have also shown that without acquiring intercultural competence, developing an international mindset is not simple.

In order to develop future teachers' intercultural competency and global awareness, teacher education institutes must promote these traits in their behaviour. In this regard, Harrison (2014) [19] and Hill (2012) [24–25] think that teachers go above and beyond to help their pupils develop an international mindset. They also think that teachers are aware of the necessity of some methods for surviving in a connected world. Black and Bernardes (2014) [5] support the same idea and add that instructors' words have an impact on the student body and that the ideas they convey go on to influence future generations.

The goal of the current study is to advance the status of intercultural competence and international mindedness by taking into account their importance and necessity at the local, national, and worldwide levels. The study also sought to determine how two factors—international mindedness and intercultural competence—relate to the function of teacher education institutions in this area.

Research Objectives

- i) To determine if pre-service teachers enrolling in Sindhi teacher education institutions have an international mindset.
- ii) To determine the level of intercultural competency of aspiring teachers enrolled in Sindhi teacher training programmes.
- iii) To evaluate how Sindh's pre-service teachers are being prepared for the global classroom and how they are acquiring intercultural sensitivity.

Hypotheses

- a) **Ho:** In Sindh's public sector teacher education schools, the status of being globally minded is not statistically significant among pre-service teachers.
- b) **Ho:** In pre-service teachers enrolled in Sindh's public sector teacher education schools, the intercultural competency status is not statistically significant.
- c) **Ho:** For fostering an international perspective in Sindh's pre-service teachers, teacher education institutes are not very effective.

Review of Literature

When training pre-service teachers for the global market, educational institutions must cover a number of additional competencies (Hobson, 2007) [26]. The teacher education institutions must continuously connect their approach and content with the changing requirements of the world as this is a vital component of their work (Livingston, 2016) [31]. Because of the interdependence of nations and communities, developing an international mindset and intercultural competency is now essential for everyone's survival, which is why teacher education institutes are becoming more and more important (DiYanni, 2007) [13]. Global nationality is promoted by having an international mindset since it fosters respect for one another (IBO, 2013) [27]. In this regard, VanAlstine and Homes (2016) [44] hold that the person and community with low global awareness and intercultural competence confront numerous challenges in order to survive, and success becomes increasingly out of reach for them.

In a nutshell, globalisation has increased the issues facing people and countries, which cannot be overcome without having an international perspective and cultural competency. Arguably, the primary duty of teacher education institutes becomes the development of global perspectives and cultural competency.

Methodology

Research Approach/Method/Tool

This study used a quantitative research methodology in which survey results were used to gather information (questionnaire). According to Ahmad et al. (2019) [2], quantitative methodology—particularly the survey method—is frequently utilised in a variety of social scientific fields. It not only produces superior results and can be generalised to a broader population (Neuman, 2007) [33–34]. According to Fink (2003) [16], the survey method is well-known throughout the world for its high reliability and validity. According to DeMarraiss & Lapan (2004) [11–12], surveys not only include a bigger population and sample size, but also yield more accurate, valid, and trustworthy results. Similarly, Gray (2004) [17] notes that survey methods are frequently used by researchers in every subject to assess beliefs, attitudes, conventions, values, feelings, thoughts, traditions, and other factors.

Instrument for research

The purpose of the questionnaire utilised in this study was to better understand how public sector teacher education institutes may help pre-service teachers become more globally aware and proficient. It mainly concentrated on how B. Ed. and M. Ed. students perceived things. The questionnaire was created using a Five Point Likert Scale and was broken down into three sections: section one questioned about the status of IM, section two asked about the status of IC, and section three looked into how far teacher preparation programmes had advanced these skills. Procedures were followed to evaluate the data gathering tool's dependability. Cronbach's Alpha was then used to determine the questionnaire's reliability, which was 0.91. Similar to that, item analysis was carried out utilising percentages and Chi-Square in SPSS software version 26 while analysing the data. However, Chi-Square and regression were used to evaluate the hypotheses.

Discussion

According to respondents, RQ1's findings showed that pre-service teachers' international mindedness was not in a commendable state. The majority of the instructors seemed to lack a scientific understanding of how the threat to the ecological atmosphere ultimately impacts their lives in terms of their physical and mental health. They were discovered to be unaware of how they were influencing the global sustainable ecological change. The teachers had very little or no understanding of the necessity to recycle or grow new trees. Most of the pre-service educators acknowledged that getting along with and working with people from other cultures was satisfying. They were at ease working with persons from various sociocultural backgrounds, demonstrating their intrinsic propensity to assimilate multiple cultures.

It was also shown that these teachers lacked the knowledge of the methods for fostering the intercultural competence necessary for communicating effectively and positively with persons from different cultural backgrounds. Prospective teachers who lacked these abilities would prevent their students from learning how to meld with various cultures. Lack of these abilities would prove to be a significant hindrance in their lives, preventing them from achieving success in their personal, academic, and professional endeavours.

Conclusion

The major findings of this study have led to the conclusion that pre-service teachers in Sindh, Bangladesh, studying in public sector teacher education institutes fall well short of meeting desirable levels of international mindedness and intercultural competence. Additionally, intercultural ability and having an international mindset were substantially connected with the role of teacher education institutes. However, the public sector teacher education institutions have not been able to significantly contribute to the development of pre-service teachers' global awareness and intercultural competency. The lack of intercultural awareness and intercultural competence among potential teachers is not acceptable because it will limit their ability to adapt to different cultural contexts and prevent them from effectively communicating these ideas to their students, which will also limit the employability of their own students. Unfamiliarity with different cultures will foster a propensity to become narrow-minded, conservative, and intolerant, which could

lead to the development of these people becoming antisocialists in a modern, global society.

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