

AN INSIGHT INTO THE CORE OF SUPERSTITIOUS-BELIEF OF PUPIL TEACHERS THROUGH AN EXPLORATORY APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

Superstitious belief stands in front of education as a hurdle which destructively interferes to the various societal process whereas a teacher inspires the future generation to combat with the challenges of the modern, socialized and scientific world along with the transfer of acquired knowledge. In Indian Subcontinents, superstitions are well fabricated by the people in their regular daily life. To study superstitious beliefs of pupil-teacher according to gender, habitat, and subject background (science and other method subjects) the researchers took 420 student teachers from different teacher education institutions in the state of West Bengal, India. Random Sampling techniques & descriptive survey-based research design were used to carry out this study. After the t-test and ANOVA analysis, it is evident that B.Ed. students from rural and urban areas significantly differ regarding their Superstitious-Belief whereas no significant difference in superstitious-belief was found among B.Ed. trainee teachers of various method subject background or respect to gender.

Key Words : Superstitions, Belief, Superstitious-Belief, Pupil Teacher

Introduction

Education is how members of a society learn to achieve goals, enrich skill development, transfer and transform its cultural heritage along with social, economical, and scientific knowledge with the dynamic pattern of advancement of the society. A teacher not only transfers the acquired knowledge but also inspires the future generation to combat the challenges of the modern, socialized and scientific world. From the history of the human race, it is evident that superstitious belief has been the greatest enemy of scientific progress as well as social development. The term 'Superstition' is a Latin word with the meaning "to stand over in awe". In India, the so-called Pandit gave some "do's" and "don'ts" for human behavior to their interest but persist not only in tribal and backward classes but also in modern people. The binding fiber of every societal aspect is well explained by psychosocial factors in which superstitious-belief play an important role. Traces of superstitious articulated in every society originated from illogical fear and are associated with unnatural beliefs. According to Faiza, A. (2018) in the United States loss of \$800 and \$900 million happens to their superstitious belief on the 13th Friday each year (Ng, Chong & Du, 2010) as they believe the 13th is an unlucky number. Similarly, the 8th date

is lucky for the people of China, and generally, they fixed their work on the 8th e.g., Beijing Olympics was held on 08/08/08.

In Indian Subcontinents some superstitions like seeing a black cat, breaking a mirror, the number 13, etc. are well fabricated by the people in their regular daily life. In 2020 people are afraid of the COVID-19 pandemic which has affected about 20 million people around the globe causing a death toll of more than 4 lacks. Superstitious Belief may be compared with coronavirus in the aspect of its width of spreading. Coronavirus affects our entire society irrespective of caste, gender, or economy. On the other hand, superstitious belief is well observed in both so-called lower- and upper-class societies. Societal development

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takes a reverse run by the irrational beliefs of a society. The components of superstitious belief are vast in range, from belief in supernaturalism to daily-life normal routine work.

Review of Related Studies

People's stickiness towards their belief in astrologers has made India home of superstitions. Even now marriage is fixed between two people following the advice of an astrologer. Even their own choice or parental choice is not so important. Sneezing which is completely a physical phenomenon is considered here as an interruption of good work. Chicken Pox is considered the outcome of the anger of God. (Goddess Ma Shitala in West Bengal). All these inconsequential creations give birth to irrational minds and superstitions.

In our cultural heritage, people mainly copy their society and parents for learning but without proper justification. Superstitious-Belief can be thought of as opposed to that of reality or possibility. Man's fear of supernatural and unknown natural events or science originates from Superstitious-Beliefs. Utietiang et. al. (2015) showed that superstitious- belief shows a decay effect on science academic achievement in primary or early childhood students. Olorundare(2008) showed how Superstitious-Belief constrained science learning. The researcher explained the fact that scientific learning enlightens our logical building and eradicates superstitions. Students may face difficulty in learning science if there is the acquisition of wrong facts and irrational beliefs in a student. They gradually move apart from the logical approach in every aspect of their lives.

There is well baggage of superstitions and tradition of skepticism. In Chakraborty's (2017) research work we found that superstition is more in the OBC category than GEN, SC, and ST categories. So, we can say that religion and culture-based aspect is involved in scientific temper building and logic formation which is opposite to superstitions. Proper Scientific attitude development from childhood can grow curiosity, open-mindedness, objective-based thinking, rationale building, etc. making our society a

progressed, developed, and modernized one. Sindhu & Tamilselvi (2017) in their research work found a slightly low degree of superstitious belief in rural (more vulnerable) teachers than that in urban areas. But the difference is not so significant. So, a locale in my research is included to verify the contradictory result of an important question. Whether there is any importance for the village (rural) and city (urban) environments take place to build logical personnel or not? So, the locale has also shown paramount importance in our study. Vijay, Tripathi, & Vijay (2017) subdivided superstitious-belief into different components. In their study, the researcher showed no significant difference in superstitious –beliefs concerning gender.

In the contemporary period and same geographical territory, Sharma, Sharma & Naz, (2017) showed that there is a significant difference in superstitious–beliefs concerning gender. Male has higher than their counterpart. These two contradictory studies compelled us to think again - Is there any significant difference in the superstitious-belief present or not for gender variables? So, the categorical variable 'gender' regarding superstitious-belief is rational for new research work. Not only these two but there are more studies in this field that show contradictory results.

In recent times, Fuertes, Sanchez, Corrochano, & Jambrina(2020) found that pre-service teachers acquired some false beliefs and superstitions although having enough knowledge and interest in science and technology. These illogical acquisitions are very harmful to our student teachers as they can transmit or induce this knowledge to our future generation through hidden curricula. So, among the student teacher, the degree of acquisition of superstitious belief should be measured. Sagone and Caroly reviewed this variable thoroughly for adolescents and young People. They carried out their research work in this regard for a long time but only in Italy. From West Bengal's perspective, the area is very much untouched. So, the study shows paramount significance for pupil teachers from the West Bengal perspective.



Statement of the Problem: An insight into the core of Superstitious-Belief of pupil teachers through the exploratory approach.

Significance of the Study

By measuring Superstitious Belief in Pupil Teachers, we can measure the acceptable beliefs and values from where they belong i.e., our society’s belief and value systems, progressiveness, or backwardness which our society incorporate in pupil teacher. So, evaluation of superstitious beliefs will help us to measure the need for scientific literacy and awareness to foster progressiveness in our society. Here, the Subject background categorical variable has been taken to study whether science subjects learning has any influence on Superstitious Belief or not. In our research work, we have also tried to find out whether subjects can have any influence on scientific temper building or having fewer superstitions. We have tried to find out the answers to these research questions from the West Bengal perspective. So, the researchers took science subjects other than science subjects as a categorical variable to measure superstitious-belief. This area is very much untouched and the researcher is trying to investigate the subject-based propaganda on superstitious-belief among student teachers. Whether there is any role of science education in B.Ed. curriculum for proper rationale building has to be verified.

Objectives

To study superstitious beliefs of pupil-teacher according to gender, habitat or locale, and subject background (science and others subject).

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference in superstitious beliefs between male and female pupil teachers.
2. There is no significant difference in superstitious belief between rural and urban pupil teachers.
3. There is no significant difference in superstitious beliefs among science, mathematics, language, and social science subject pupil teacher.

Methodology

Descriptive survey-based research method by online method via google-form was used to carry out this study.

Population and Sample

The population will be Pupil teachers of different Teacher Educational Institutions and sample will be from 420 pupil teachers of different Teacher Educational Institutions of West Bengal.

Sampling Procedure

Random Sampling techniques for data collection purpose was chosen.

Tool

A Standardized Superstitious-Belief Scale by Sanjeev Kumar Jha and Ashok Kumar which was further revised by the Researcher.

Analysis and Interpretation

Kolmogorov-Smirnov test shows that in all the cases the values are above 0.05. So, it can be assumed that the distribution is normal. So, we can apply descriptive statistics here.

Table 1
Test of Homogeneity of Variances

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
0.42	3	416	0.739

From table 1 we see that the homogeneity of variance is above 0.05 (sig value 0.739). So, from Levene test, we can assume that the data is homogeneous in nature.

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics for Superstitious-Belief according to Gender, locale, and Method Subject Background

Testing Hypothesis	Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	N	Mean	S.D.
Ho1	Superstitious Belief	Female	318	123.57	35.258
		Male	102	119.09	39.557
Ho2	”	Rural	189	127.16	35.476
		Urban	231	118.65	36.685
Ho3	”	Language	144	127.75	35.728
		Mathematics	37	115.14	32.084
		Science	98	117.41	38.316
		Social Science	141	122.56	36.17

Table 3

t-test for superstitious-belief according to locale

Categorical Variable	t	df	Sig (2-tailed)	Remarks
Gender	0.084	418	0.279	H ₀₁ Accepted
Locale	2.4	418	0.017	H ₀₂ Rejected

To test the equality of Variance Levene's F statistics was calculated and it was found that regarding Superstitious-Belief between male and female students there is no such significant difference but for rural and urban B.Ed. students it is significant at a 0.05 level of significance. So, it can be concluded that rural and urban B.Ed. students significantly differ regarding their Superstitious-Belief.

Table 4

ANOVA- test for superstitious belief according to Subject Background

	df	F	Sig	Remarks
Between Groups	3	2.166	0.091	Not significant at 0.05 level
Within Groups	416			H ₀₃ Accepted.

From the ANOVA test between and within the group, the F(3,416) value is 2.166 and P = 0.091 (P > 0.05) for the subject background of B.Ed. trainee teacher. So, H₀₃ is accepted and it can be concluded that there is no significant difference in superstitious-belief among B.Ed. trainee teachers irrespective of their method subject background.

Discussions

The superstitious belief or cultural belief possessed by human beings emanates from their socio-cultural nourishment and acquisition of knowledge. Sometimes it is influenced by others and imposed on cultural background. So, gender has no such role to develop it. The indigeneity

is more nurtured from a rural perspective. So, the logical analysis may be to some extent imbalanced by rural people than urban. Also, scientific and technological propositions and practices are more available for urban people than for rural ones. They can handle their lifestyle and outlooks in a logical way as society is more developed to the scientific approach. The socio-economic status of urban people is higher than rural. So, upbringing, skepticism growing, logical analysis, and proper scientific temper building are more cultivated for urban people. That is why here the researcher found a significant difference in superstitious beliefs according to their locale or habitat. The trainee teachers are more or less near about 20 to 30 years. So, they all possess average superstitious beliefs as they acquired graduation or post-graduation degrees before entering the course. So, we can say that education has a significant role in growing a human being more rational. Subject has no such significant role according to the analysis. We see that in our daily life even doctors, and engineers practice illogical beliefs like the lucky place, lucky charm, numerology, stone wearing, good luck, etc. On the other hand, a person may be grown better without illogical beliefs whatever the subject background is. Here the subject background mathematics however shows a good result in belief perspective. This is because superstitious belief means mainly illogical thinking whereas, in the study of mathematics reasoning, logical analysis is more cultivated by personnel from their childhood.

Conclusion

So, from many studies, we see that superstitious belief is a negative term that interferes not only upper but also with childhood students' science learning. So, it is important to eradicate superstitious-belief from our society through proper development of science curriculum and proper training. This can be done by awareness building and propagation of scientific temper. Student teachers are the future teachers who will transfer and transform acquired knowledge to future generations. Hence, B.Ed. the curriculum should be developed by a new approach where scientific temper must be built up by practical approach and theoretically. Consequently, our future generation will also show a good scientific temper and logic. Still in India if

snake bites, people run toward Exorcist named ‘Sapera’ or ‘Ojha’. So, superstitions even can take life. So, our future generation must be developed in such a way where the term ‘Superstitious- Belief’ must have no space in all over their learning or life.

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