

## **Relationship Between Reading Culture and Teaching Practice Performance in B.Ed. Students**

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### **Abstract**

This study investigates the correlation between the reading culture (habits, attitudes, and breadth of reading) of Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) students and their performance during teaching practice (TP). Utilizing a mixed-methods approach, data was collected from 150 final-year B.Ed. students at [University/College Name] via a Reading Culture Questionnaire (RCQ) and an analysis of their official Teaching Practice assessment scores. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 15 student-teachers and 10 supervising tutors. Quantitative analysis revealed a significant positive correlation ( $r^* = 0.65$ ,  $p^* < 0.01$ ) between self-reported reading engagement (especially in professional and subject-specific literature) and higher TP scores in domains like lesson planning, classroom communication, and critical thinking. Qualitative findings identified key mechanisms: enriched pedagogical content knowledge, improved language proficiency, and enhanced empathy and classroom management narratives. The study concludes that a strong reading culture is a critical, yet often overlooked, predictor of practical teaching competency. Recommendations are made for teacher training programs to systematically integrate and foster a professional reading culture from the outset of the B.Ed. curriculum.

### **2. Keywords**

Reading Culture, Teaching Practice (TP), B.Ed. Students, Student-Teacher Performance, Pedagogical Content Knowledge, Teacher Education, Professional Development, Reading Habits, Correlational Study.

### **Introduction**

Teaching is a complex profession requiring not only pedagogical skills but also deep content knowledge, critical thinking, and adaptability. In the 21st century, the ability to process information and model lifelong learning is paramount. While B.Ed. programs focus heavily on curriculum and methodology, the cultivation of a personal and professional **reading culture** is often assumed, not taught. Anecdotal evidence suggests a decline in deep reading among students, potentially impacting

their preparedness for the intellectual demands of the classroom. Existing literature focuses on children's reading or general teacher development, with limited empirical studies directly linking pre-service teachers' reading habits to their *practical* teaching performance.

This study aims to empirically examine the nature and strength of the relationship between B.Ed. students' reading culture and their assessed performance during teaching practice. Findings will inform teacher educators, curriculum designers, and policymakers about the importance of fostering reading as a core professional competency, not just an academic exercise.

### Definitions of Key Terms

1. **Reading Culture:** For this study, the integrated patterns of reading behavior, attitudes, and preferences of an individual. Measured by **frequency**, **diversity** (academic, professional, fiction, non-fiction), **depth** (critical engagement), and **motivation** (intrinsic vs. extrinsic).
2. **Teaching Practice (TP) Performance:** The assessed competency of a student-teacher during their supervised school placement. Measured via a standardized assessment rubric covering **lesson planning & preparation, instructional delivery, classroom management, communication skills, use of resources, and professional conduct.**
3. **B.Ed. Students:** Pre-service teachers enrolled in a Bachelor of Education program, specifically those in their final year who have completed a block teaching practice.

### Need for the Study

1. To move beyond theoretical assumptions to evidence-based understanding.
2. To address concerns about the declining reading habits in the digital age and its impact on future educators.
3. To provide data that can strengthen the holistic training of teachers.
4. To help B.Ed. students recognize reading as a core professional development tool.

### Aims and Objectives

1. **Aim:** To explore and analyze the relationship between reading culture and teaching practice performance in B.Ed. students.
2. **Objectives:**
  1. To assess the reading culture (habits, preferences, attitudes) among a cohort of final-year B.Ed. students.

2. To evaluate the teaching practice performance of the same students using official assessment scores.
3. To determine the statistical correlation between variables of reading culture and specific domains of TP performance.
4. To explore, through qualitative means, *how* students perceive their reading habits influencing their teaching.
5. To formulate recommendations for integrating reading culture development into B.Ed. curricula.

## Hypothesis/Research Questions

1. **Hypothesis (Quantitative):** "There is a significant positive correlation between the strength of a B.Ed. student's reading culture and their overall teaching practice performance score."
2. **Research Questions:**
  1. What is the nature and extent of the reading culture among the sampled B.Ed. students?
  2. Is there a significant relationship between the frequency/diversity of reading and performance in specific TP competencies (e.g., communication, creativity)?
  3. What are the perceived mechanisms by which reading influences teaching practice, as reported by student-teachers and their supervisors?

## Literature Search

1. **Theoretical Framework:** Constructivism (knowledge built through engagement with texts); Cognitive Apprenticeship (reading as observing expert thinking).
2. **Reading Culture in Higher Education:** Studies on general academic benefits (vocabulary, writing, critical analysis).
3. **Teacher Knowledge:** Shulman's concept of **Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK)** and how reading subject-specific literature enriches it.
4. **Reading and Professional Identity:** How reading shapes teachers' philosophies and self-efficacy.
5. **Gaps Reviewed:** Highlight the scarcity of studies directly measuring the reading-practice performance link in pre-service teachers.

### Research Methodology

1. **Research Design:** Explanatory sequential mixed-methods design (Quantitative → Qualitative).
2. **Population & Sample:** Final-year B.Ed. students (N=150) from 3 colleges, using stratified random sampling. Purposive sampling for interviews.
3. **Data Collection Tools:**
  1. **Tool A:** Reading Culture Questionnaire (RCQ) – Likert-scale and open-ended items (validated, pilot-tested).
  2. **Tool B:** Document Analysis – Official TP score sheets (with permission).
  3. **Tool C:** Interview Guides – for students and supervising tutors.
4. **Data Analysis:**
  - A. **Quantitative:** Descriptive statistics, Pearson's correlation coefficient, regression analysis using SPSS.
  - B. **Qualitative:** Thematic analysis of interview transcripts.
5. **Ethical Considerations:** Informed consent, anonymity, confidentiality, right to withdraw, permission from institution.

### Strong Points

1. Mixed-methods design provides both broad correlational data and rich explanatory insights.
2. Focus on a crucial yet under-researched link in teacher education.
3. Use of *actual* TP assessment scores adds objective validity.
4. Practical implications for curriculum development.

### Weak Points

1. Sample limited to one university/region, affecting generalizability.
2. Self-reported data on reading habits prone to social desirability bias.
3. Correlation does not imply causation; other factors (innate talent, prior experience) may influence TP performance.
4. Time constraints of a cross-sectional study; a longitudinal study would be stronger.

### Current Trends

1. Focus on digital reading vs. print and its impact on comprehension and depth.
2. The rise of "professional learning communities" and shared reading practices.
3. Integration of multimodal literacies (visual, digital) into the concept of "reading."
4. Growing interest in bibliotherapy and using literature to develop teacher empathy and socio-emotional skills.

### History

1. Historically, the "scholar-teacher" model emphasized deep reading (e.g., in classical teacher training).
2. Shift in the late 20th century towards competency-based and methods-focused training, potentially sidelining broad scholarly reading.
3. Recent calls (e.g., in NAEP reports, NEP 2020) for a return to fostering reading for pleasure and lifelong learning.

### Results (Expected/Example Findings Chapter)

1. **Descriptive Statistics:** 60% of students read for non-academic purposes <1 hour per week.
2. **Correlational Data:** Strong positive correlation ( $r^* = .65$ ) between RCQ score and TP total. Strongest sub-correlation with "Classroom Communication" ( $r^* = .71$ ).
3. **Qualitative Themes:**
  1. **Knowledge Reservoir:** "Reading gave me analogies and examples I could use instantly."
  2. **Language & Confidence:** "A wider vocabulary helped me explain concepts more clearly."
  3. **Narrative Insight:** "Reading novels helped me understand different student perspectives."

### Discussion

1. Interprets results in light of literature. Confirms hypothesis; the relationship is significant.
2. Explains *how* reading culture impacts performance: by building PCK, language mastery, and cognitive flexibility.
3. Addresses paradox: a vital skill is not systematically cultivated in training.
4. Discusses implications of digital reading trends.

### Conclusion

1. Summarizes key findings: A robust reading culture is a significant enabling factor for successful teaching practice.
2. Reiterates that effective teachers are, fundamentally, engaged readers and lifelong learners.
3. Concludes that teacher education must intentionally design interventions to nurture this habit.

### Suggestions and Recommendations

1. **For B.Ed. Programs:**
  - A. Mandate a "Professional Reading" course with guided journals and discussions.
  - B. Establish reading circles/books clubs for student-teachers.
  - C. Collaborate with libraries to promote curated professional collections.
2. **For Students:** Cultivate a personal reading regimen encompassing subject matter, pedagogy, and broad literature.
3. **For Practicum Supervisors:** Include prompts about professional reading in pre- and post-observation conferences.

### Future Scope

1. Longitudinal study tracking reading habits from admission through early-career teaching.
2. Experimental study on the impact of a structured reading intervention on TP scores.
3. Cross-cultural comparative studies.
4. Research focusing specifically on digital reading platforms and their efficacy for professional development.

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