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Constructing the Meaning of 'School': An Ethnographic Insight on Student Perspectives on Teachers and Friends

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Abstract:

The present ethnographic account tries to sense the meaning of 'school' from the perspective of the students. Being the key agency of a school, the students reflect their perception and values during interaction with other agencies (mainly friends and teachers) within school setting. The interaction with other agencies influence their academic practices and educational attainment in one hand, and, shape their views to school. At this juncture, the current endeavor focuses on the impact of the friends and teachers on the students to generate 'new' and alternative meaning of school.

Keywords: School, student, friend, teacher, ethnography

1. Introduction

The disciplinary interests within school premise unearth kinds of value, meaning and interaction both in inter and intra levels of its stakeholders (i.e., the students, their parents, teachers and other related participants of the school), gradually fabricates the culture of a school (Colley, 1999; Hinde, 2002), which is frequently constructed and reconstructed through interactions and actions of the participants (Finnan, 2000) and containing the societal values as a major ingredient of the concerned culture (Hinde, 2002). Hence, being culturally fashioned, the term 'school' provides a space to be interpreted from multiple angles and highly differs among its participants and contexts. The present attempt is an output of a one year ethnographic research among the students of a local higher secondary girls' school located at North Howrah. Its endeavor is to explore multiple meanings of 'school' from the eyes of one of its key participants i.e. the students by focusing only on the contexts of friend(s) and teacher(s) as she (a student) primarily intends to interact with those agencies within school setting. The versions of the students' pole may be significant to understand the perception and notion about school, which further helps grasping the orientation towards education and educational attainment.

2. A Brief Review of the Earlier Works

Although educational anthropology is regarded as one of the conventional fields of enquiry (Comitas and Dolgin, 1978) but the systematic attempts in 'school ethnography' (Ogbu, 1981; Erickson, 1984, p-61) initiated by the works of Spindler in 1954 (Yon, 2003). Primarily within the circumstances of educational anthropology, following cultural transmission approach, 'school' was assumed as an institutional discipline facilitating cultural transmission (Ogbu, 1981), specifically in terms of developing the "...attitudes, values, notions about the world and notions about the self" (Rist, 1975; p. 86) of the children through generations. In most general sense, a school is a formal institution provides education and raises expectations of young's, i. e., the students' abilities, confidence and motivation in schools and obviously in society. But what is about the reflection and perception of the students about their school as one of the major participants of it? Concentration on the concerned literatures suggests that, students' interests must be considered for the betterment of the educational attainment, which shows close dependency on the attitudes towards teachers and friends.

With the intention to probe in the domain of teachers' and students' interrelation and attitudes, Smith (2004) articulated that best performance of students may be witnessed in an 'ideal classroom environment' (Smith, 2004), in which they are valued highly and encouraged by positive remarks as human beings generally perform best in proximity of their favorable person (Fay and Funk, 1995). Creton, Wubbels & Hooymayers (1989) significantly analyzed the role of teachers in creating suitable learning environment and in controlling the classroom by their interpersonal behavior. A Learning environment provides a particular circumstance in which individuals incline to act and interact in predefined ways (Bourdieu, 1992; Lemke, 1985), and the productivity depends partly on the 'learner's environment', i.e., it has been established that the positive impression of the classroom or learning atmosphere supplements better learning of the students (Den Brok, Fisher, & Rickards, 2004; Fraser, 1994, 1986, 1998a; Goh &

Fraser, 1995; Teven and McCroskey, 1997). Thus a majority of the researchers reflected that students' attraction towards classroom is considerably related with teachers' skill to produce a fascinating environment that retains the interests of the students as created by the teachers. Then may it be stated that, the entity of the school to the students is significantly attached with the emotion towards their teachers? Teven's and McCroskey's (1997) postulations probably satisfies the answer that a teacher's behavior (facial expression, gaze, posture, and other body movements) remains always under 'scrutiny' by students, either it is in the classroom or beyond, and moreover, the pupils tend to follow the teacher's expression to obtain his/her emotional orientation that, how he/she feels about that student, which further affect the levels of educational attainment (Teven and McCroskey, 1997). Students' learning is greatly depended on their intention and interest to learn (McKeachie, 1963) and the role of the teachers is significant to motivate them. The supposition achieves a height with the observation of Enwistle (1981) that, being an active and dynamic process to receive and enhance knowledge; education always demands students' interacting participation in the learning process (in Yahaya, A. et al., 2010), for which students' interest and emotion about school, classroom and teaching-learning process must be considered in terms of betterment of education.

Concurrently, researchers' attempt on the relation of the students and peer group exhibit another dimension of the impact of school on its student that, having a best friend with well academic performances along with positive attitude towards school – together shape a student's orientation towards betterment in academic attainment (Jacobson and Brudsal, 2012; Ferrer-Chancy and Fugate, 2002) and social outcomes (Appleton et al., 2008), such as how to communicate, cooperate, solve problems, control emotions and respond to the emotions of others, and finally develop the ability to think through and negotiate different situations that arise in relationships (Ferrer-Chancy and Fugate, 2002). Jackson (2010; p.1) explained the fact that, "The people with whom we interact... influence our beliefs, decisions and behaviours" and individual has the tendency to be closer to establish relationships with others, sharing somewhat likewise attributes (Burgess, Sanderson, and Umana-Aponte, 2011). Douvan & Adelson (1966), in the context, suggested that, since puberty associated with significant physiological and psychological alterations with supplementary emotional disturbances from different angles, the friend (other than parents or relatives) primarily becomes the necessity to share problems, impulsion and related affairs in early adolescence [more or less 12-16 years of age (Kagan & Coles, 1972)], found specifically in case of girls than boys (Douvan & Adelson, 1966). Moreover, close friend is assumed as the most reliable one therefore the relation does not tolerate interference of any third parties (Parker et al., 2005). Early adolescence is actually attributed certain level of 'role-taking ability' and 'own views' to share thoughts (such as, worries, fears, or other personal traits) and feelings to others (Selman, 1981). Having more or less parallel frequencies in experiences and emotional attachments, the tendency to find friend becomes high in early adolescence and the level of intimacy attains a peak in this phase (Maas, 1968), closely related to secondary school life due to its conveniences of securing prolonged interactions with friends through school hours. Thus the research identifies the friends as another point of attraction to students on the ground of attending and attaching emotion to school.

As per the mentioned discussion, the present attempt intends to find out and interpret the meaning of a particular 'school' under study, from the experience of the students that if there any relevance of interaction of co-agencies in school as a field, and how the interaction generates the attitudes towards their school and academic practices. The study is then hardly interested to view 'school' as normative system and the authors are neither interested to go through the general consensus about school and its curriculum, nor are intended to show the universality of schooling. Moreover, impression of school from the perspective of students is important because, not only to understand the orientation of the participants towards education, but also to comprehend their contribution to understand the school culture and the definition of school which are credited by them (Hollins, 1996, p. 31). Hence, the present study aims to unearth the subjective meanings, reasoning and experiences attached to the 'school' of selective students of the concerned school influenced by the basic question that- *'What are the consequences of friends and teachers on student to shape the perception about School?'*

3. The Objectives

To meet the research problem satisfactorily the objectives have been drawn into following way:

- To explore and understand definition and categorization of friends and teachers constructed by the students.
- To understand the effect of preferences and critical assessments of the students about their co-agencies on making sense of school.

4. Methodology and Findings

The researchers purposively tend to follow ethnographic strategy grounded on qualitative reasoning to grasp the meaning, beliefs, attitudes, emotion and actions of the participants centering the 'friend' and 'teacher' from the insiders' perspectives and to provide an in-depth interpretation of the pupil's experiences.

To accomplish the queries, the researchers concentrated on a particular school where the first author, who conducted the field investigation, has completed her schooling, assumed to be more convenient since facilitating the accessibility and geographical proximity, necessitated for being selected as a field setting in ethnography (Warren and Karner, 2010). To communicate smoothly and to decode the meaning and emotion of the students attached to the 'school' from the insiders' point of view, it was significant to the recorder to select such a school with Bengali as the medium of instruction since it was her mother tongue as well. The ethnographer purposively selected girl students with an expectation to have similarities in identity and emotional attachment concerned with gender, facilitating in embodiment of the 'self' of the researchers in the field. She purposively excluded the students of primary or preparatory sections for operational convenience and intended to cover each of the succeeding academic classes from class V to XII, which was possible in this setting. Following the intention of the work, it became priority to categorize the participants according to their respective academic classes (such as, the students of V, VI, VII...), rather the same

in terms of age since it is very overlapping in nature, has been carefully avoided. Verbal consents were assured by each of the participants under study. The introduction of the participants (all the names here documented are pseudonyms) is given below:

Pseudonym	Class	Pseudonym	Class	Pseudonym	Class	Pseudonym	Class
Dinki	V	Bristi	VII	Snata	IX	Aliva	XI
Tinni	V	Meghna	VII	Madhu	IX	Aishee	XI
Anusuya	VI	Disha	VIII	Priya	X	Ria	XII
Rikang	VI	Sreya	VIII	Anu	X	Saona	XII

Table 1

After going through several informal conversations, like, title-tattle, the investigator prepared a set of open ended questions were given to ten students of each class (from class-V to class-XII) of the selected school. The number has been fixed just for the operational convenience but never for any quantification. Therefore, the way of selecting the students were somewhere voluntary (most of the cases), lottery (according to the roll number) or purposive stratified (in terms of sitting arrangement). The students were asked to fill it up and requested to back the set within a range of negotiable dates (like -within one week or 15 days). After the collection of that answer forms, the researcher randomly selected two students from each academic classes for in-depth interviews. Thus the data were collected from only sixteen students within the school conducted here. Those set of answers became very crucial source of descriptive data, recorded by participants themselves. Moreover, it supplemented the verbal versions of them, collected through in-depth interviews (specifically semi-structured interview), arranged at their residential settings and sometimes within the school settings. The study is thus an output of one year fieldwork conducted at the above stated settings.

Recording of voice was implemented to record the exact sentences and verbal expressions along with noting down their gestures and body languages for betterment of analysis. On the other hand, taking field notes to record the expression, thinking and feelings of the researcher during and after an interview gradually became indispensable parts of the research work. The data on infra-structural condition of both – material (furniture, other arrangements etc.) and structural (facilities, intra- and inter- action of all the domains within school) components, concerned with the students' interests towards their school, have been regularly observed for better consideration of the objectives. The observation also makes easy the field of cross – verification. The strategy of ethnography is also accompanied by shooting photos of school building, mid – day meal system, school dress, groupings among students etc. Finally, the field diary in Malinowski's sense (Malinowski, 1967) and field data are being described in details at the end of the respective days of work. After the interview was over, the data was translated and sorted according to the objectives of the research. During translation the actual phrase, words, sentences and interpretation of the students remained unaltered to keep it natural or as it is. The collected data were analyzed and interpreted following ethnographic approach and methods. The detailing of the dialogue of each individual student's experiences finally emerged into themes and analyzed accordingly. The link and connections of the themes have been made in terms of successive classes (V - XII) to find out a common ground and at the same time the unique ground of the experiences.

4.1. The context of friendship

Except Priya all the students under study intend to stay within their group of friends. They maintain the essence of 'group' in terms of inclusion and exclusion of friends based on several parameters. Groupings were clearly identified through focusing on their desired arrangement of sitting and during capturing the snapshots in the field. Aishee explained, "*thought times.....gradually.....a 'classmate' becomes 'friend'...Everybody has own criteria to choose friends. For me, it may be either commonness and sharing, or competition...*", and thus being fashioned, friendship is nurtured and maintained by the students within school, "*specifically.....within the classroom*" said by Disha, Snata and Anu. Friendship is a fundamental factor to feel and keep school interesting, "*.....otherwise all the colors would become pale without friends in school*" – opined Aliva. It was noteworthy that, all the participants from VIII to XI believe friendship is very precious one and is almost at the center of their worlds. But "*....it is very hard to get a best friend with equal wavelength*" stated Dinki and Anusuya. Contrasting others Anusuya thinks "*there are many as 'friends' only.....but no one is my best friend.*" She extends the fact that, no one is there within her known circles, is able to satisfy her criteria of being the 'ideal' best friend, those are: the person who understands her every words and cares for her emotions, and keeps every promise to manage or to cover up the discussion they perceive as 'personal' within them. Among the class mates, even sometimes the close friends usually cross the line of the promises and passes out the personal matter to the others who are not in an actual concern. Since then she never shares and discusses any personal issue or family matter with them. Again, Priya believes that, unlike boys, "*Girls are very jealous to each other..... They are non-cooperative too*". Hence within the school she never categorizes the friends as best or good one and interacts with everyone available to her.

In case of making friendship, they generate and follow own categorization of friends. Disha has sorted friends into three levels in terms of degree of reliability, and emotional proximity, treats them accordingly. She has a 'best' friend, with whom she feels transparency, shares every bit of experiences and always remains accompanied. With the 'good' friends (next category) she shares some common affairs except personal. Third grading consisted of a few as 'just' friends having selective and generally formal sharing with her. On the query about "How a 'best' friend can be differentiated?" Meghna explained, all friends are 'just' friends, but "*a best friend is my closest and dearest one.....she is very good..... She never breaks the promises. She is always beside there in any of my problem. She is very well behaved with me and shares own sorrow, problems and other feelings*". Rikang treats two of her friends as special as they stand by her in thick and thin. Again, the criterion of being 'best' among the friends to Dinki is, 'honesty' means "*.....the ability to keep promises - to never disclose any secret either it is the personal, family*

matters or daily activities". Similarly, Sreya's classification of friends depends on proximity, sharing and good academic performance; as the consequences of which they consciously practice academic competition for betterment. Levels of interaction and compatibility are the basic parameters of selecting 'close' friend to Madhu through which she got three, among whom she found one as the 'best' having somewhat similar wavelengths in each term. Otherwise Snata is considered as 'good' friend showing often disparity in decisions and reasoning. They habitually share about their family matters, emotional and material crises, TV serials, cinema and love affairs in general. Nila is 'special' one to share the emotion about love and boy-friend. Again, Tinni has three 'good' friends with whom she shares seat, but the sentiments attached to them are different; one is close to her as playmate, while the other two are good friends just for the purpose of study. Bristi nurtures passion regarding 'best' friend whom she loves very much and never gets involved in quarrels with her. All of them (except Priya) show noteworthy possessiveness on 'best' friend, that only they can share every corner of emotion and problem with their 'best' friends respectively and vice versa, otherwise one may be offended. Meghna explained, "We, actually, always seek importance from one another. Friends are praising me.....or.....attending me.....ufff!!! I relish it highly....I can't tolerate my friends when they do the same with another.....and you know!! Though I do not allow everyone to know my secret and my thinking about others, but I love to know the same of others", which motivate her to attend school regularly to draw attention and not to be misguided by others in any form.

The versions of the participants unearth the crucial aspects of friendship that, it is not only a type of relationship, rather a 'friend' is a necessity in school setting to share problems, to get company in playing and chatting which differs through individuals and academic classes. It plays vital role in student's life in framing perception about school and learning in unique way(s).

Varying forms and notions of playing and chatting are two basic modes of interaction in each class. The central attraction of the students of class V, VI and VII in attending school is playing with friends. They are interested to play outdoor games primarily, but through the succession of classes the tendency to play on ground decreases and inclination to chat increases drastically. As the consequences, the majority of class VIII - X are found to be entertained with playing by sitting on own seat or in grouping within the classroom. But irrespective of academic classes all the participants show a common action that when they feel bore in ongoing class they usually play (with friend) beside on papers by putting down their heads on the desk.

Conversing with friends is another relevant aspect to the students for which they (specially the students of class VIII - X) usually avoid absence at school. Suffering the problem of loneliness at home, either being one child of the parents or even having elder or younger brother or sister, they find friends as the most reliable and incomparable destination to share the corners of the emotion and freely converse on the curiosities of the adolescence. Such as, being accompanied with the 'best' friend, Dinki discovered the glory of entertainment at school and finds meaning to attend school regularly. Again, for Bristi, Anu, Disha, Snata, and Madhu friends are the only space to provide emotional support, chatting, sharing of problems and secrets. The topics of discussion show a wide range but with some common and distinguished standpoints vary through individuals and through succession of classes. Being restricted to the elders and youngers cinema, boyfriend, and the topic of physical relation occupy the central focus of discussion from class VII and onwards. The ways of conversation helps themselves (consciously or unconsciously) to improve personality, communication skill and education simultaneously. The interwoven and interrelatedness of all the issues and interactions make a reality in abstraction which makes school alive and ever interesting to the students, in which the role of friendship is most fundamental one.

4.2. Being Naughty and Making Bully

Sreya, Aishee and Aliva find naughtiness and leg-pulling as the best means of gaining fun at school. They like attending school daily to invent and perform mischiefs (mainly during recess) with others in unique ways as their groups conspire respectively. For instances, Sreya and her group like to pull leg of the friends by spreading the dust of chalk on them, hiding their bags etc.; Aliva and her friends discover a unique way to steal mid-day-meal; and Aishee and her friends make mischief in terms of slip of tongue of juniors.

In sum, School is interesting to Dinki, "..... for that little bit of time.....during Tiffin hour and off periods. Because I can play with friends at that time....throughout the classes I gossip with my best friend.....otherwise school is very boring, because I hate books and study". Tinni ".... never drop school unless any family occasion falls on the day." Similarly, Anusua, Rikang, Bristi, Disha and Snata cannot even think of bunking the school as it would restrict her from meeting her friends. Because Disha perceives ".....school is only place to have fun with friends". Similarly, Meghna likes to attend school every day to have fun with friends. Disha and Snata, and the students of XII attend it regularly to avoid the undesirable environments of the families. Then school is assumed to be the only place where she shares freely with friends. While the students of class V, VI and VII eagerly wait to attend school every day to enjoy with friends, the same of class VIII, IX, X and specially of XI and XII strictly deny attending school "when I got informed my (best) friend is going to drop the day, I miss it too. There are two reasons. Firstly I feel bore and lonely. Second one is, if I attend school she may think I do not love her soooo much. She will be offended". The students of class XI were found principally reluctant in academics but come to school specially to enjoy with friends. Therefore attending school is greatly depended and related to the intimacy and impersonal relationship with the friends and on contrary, lacking of compatible friend in school fades out the interest and consequence to attend regularly.

4.3. Reciprocity and Competition: The space for personal achievement

The students of class V to X are found to depend on their best friends primarily to get information about their homework or classwork when she remained absent at school. They believe except their best friends, other may misguide due to competition or jealousy. But in case of getting any academic information, Madhu never keeps faith even on her close friends and that is why she attempts to go school every day, ".....I don't like to miss any information,.....either on syllabus or rules or any tip to easy read and write.....valid for examinations", as she prefer to grasp the 'as it is' declaration rather than any via (friend). They

usually treat friends and the classmates as the competitor in the backdrop of personal educational achievement. Madhu feels that “*competition is the indispensable part of education.....is the psychological composition and positive analyst of learning process*”. Then what is better other than ‘school’ to practice learning within such a circumstance consisting a considerable number of competitors at a time! The participants argued recent process of examination, the rule of withdrawal pass and fail generates severe damage in learning system. Meghna assumes, “*competition is the necessity to prove myself as the best in the school. But alas!! The mark sheet does not show more the holding position like before.....it is very bad. As a result the interest in practicing is decreasing to some extent*”. Sreyaputs forward her worries that, “*.....the steps, taken by the authority may produce a permanent loss in learning system, since the existing system of examination is hardly productive to gain educational success at school as well*”.

Contrarily high dependency on mother for preparing lessons minimizes the likewise consistency on the friends of Anusuya and Meghna. These two cases spotlighted the issue, significant to understand students’ orientation about school and education that, close sharing with mother somewhat makes a distance with friends. Again, the averseness of Priya on learning subjects keeps neutral her to interact with friends in this regard. The students of XI show hardly concerns about their dependency on school friends as well as they rarely visit school. But the issue becomes valid for their coaching friends since being accurately regular at coaching centers.

4.4. Making sense about classroom

The students distinctively identify the essence of classroom, totally different from living or their study room. Presence of preferable friends at classroom makes Tinni feel that, “*a classroom is never like a (living) room*”, and Rikangadmitted, “*Classroom is most favorable place in the school..... here we can practice lessons and can spent time with friends.*”

4.5. Sarwasati puja: A religious festival in the school

Sarwasati puja is the only religious festival practiced in the school, encompasses active participation of students. It is the only serious issue of the institution where students appear as major decision makers and most crucial performer besides academics. To Tinni, Meghna, Disha, Snata, Madhu and Priya, the concept of *Saraswati puja* is solely attached to the emotion of school: visiting *pratima*, having enormous fun with friends devoid of having any pressure of routinized curriculum and wearing saree or any casual dress without the monotony of uniform at school. Another attraction of the day to Snata is the regulation of having lunch in rows with the friends at the school premise adds an “*amazing*” flavor to the event.

4.6. Own way of being entertained

Lacking any reliable or compatible friend at school, Priya usually remains alone, attempts to bunk the undesired classes, and interacts with the students irrespective of age. She is well known that many of the classmates usually avoid her for talkative nature. So, school is the best space for self-imagination and self-analysis, evaluating own crises and preference without having any disturbances and makes her feel that school is “*an intimate sole to find ‘self’.....as I prefer to be fashioned.*”

4.7. The context of Teachers

Throughout the fieldwork, the explorer observed all the students were very curious to know their teachers’ feeling about them that what she think about that particular girl. It is very prominent among those who are enough aware to be a ‘good’ (in terms on academic performance) student at class. They show an attention seeking behavior and compete among themselves to get proximity to the favorable teachers and to be appreciated by her as well. As per the data, positive attitudes towards teacher and the appreciation of her effect the educational attainment positively and stimulate the interest to come school daily. They find it very charming and interesting to minutely follow and always scrutinize each of their teacher from all the dimensions namely, style to talk, walk, wear dress, make up, hand writing, roll call and teaching process; attitude towards students and specifically the participant herself; pattern of evaluating answers; biasness; partiality to students; preferences of word selection, books and even of colors; punctuality; and attitude towards discipline, co-teachers, parents, private tutors, students and teachers of other schools, and above all worlds that how she categorize items. Some of attend school only for participate in the classes delivered by their preferred teachers. Such as –all of them even including Priya never miss the class of their English teacher. Disha and Sreya think she is an ideal teacher having all the qualities such as, very calm and quite in nature, well behaved but having the potential to scold the students if they are away from practicing the lessons, very simple in dress and make up, and the most important is to treat all the students of a class equally. Even ‘scolding’ of that teacher is similarly charming and soft but with weight, smoothly accepted by the students. Dishacrazily observes every word and gestures of that teacher who was Christian from birth and “*probably....that is the reason to have such a beauty in figure and nature*”. It inspires her to be a Christian from Hindu in future and to be a teacher in profession. Sreya is crazy of her as well. She thoroughly observes the teacher everyday - “*.....her style of dress up, talking.....amazing!!!.....just amazing!!!.....her wonderful deliberation of lecture..... sounds the lessons exceptionally interesting and vivid.....she is really... realllyyy good. She is excessively gorgeous. Do you know.....we like her to that extent and enjoy her teaching, that we can’t feel when the class is over.*” Sreya and her friends think, that English teacher has such a beautiful personality, figure and skin texture that she easily can go with saree or salwer, “*anything will suit her.....we are dam sure. But alas! She never wore salwer at school. What a sense of make-up she has.....!*”. None of them remain absent at school on those days which consists the class of that teacher and they memorize the lessons regularly. Sreya prefers to attend school specially on Friday and Saturday for that teacher, but the scheduled class of Sanskrit on those days held by the ‘boring’ teacher tends to resist her to go. The presence of the Sanskrit teacher is highly funny and irritating actually that makes them laugh throughout the ongoing class and even when the teacher scolds them a lot. Thus Sanskrit appears as the most boring subject to her. Concurrently,

Sreya and her group tease that Sankrit teacher when she comes school wearing *salwar-suit*. Sreya almost bursts out with laugh, “do you have ever seen that teacher in salwar?” the recorder when replied “no”, she again loudly laughed and stated, “then you must see that scene..... you will also wish to tease and laugh at her.....ha..ha....she looks like a frog in salwar. And the most funny is, there are a few sample too of such kind”. Snata prefers her beautiful and interesting style of deliberating lectures, attractive personality, and thus dreams to be a teacher in future. There is another teacher in the school who has ‘typical’ rural accents in Bengali for which she can’t control laugh even in the front of that teacher that she wish to have at least one class of her to laugh loudly. Sreya is a fan of their Life Science teacher because of highly systematized style of teaching that she never felt any necessity to practice the lessons further at home. Disha likes to practice computer and the concerned teacher and that is why, she takes private practice to her at her personal coaching center; and Madhu likes the teacher who teaches them mathematics as she takes care of each and every problem of each chapter and never miss those days. The suggestion given by teacher in terms of practicing the type of extra-curricular activity greatly affected Dinkithat she wished to shift to singing rather than dancing. In case of explaining preferable way of teaching process, Tinni (V) expects “it would provide better learning if the teachers never scold us.....even on not memorizing the lessons in the class. Rather it would be better to warn only by reporting to the guardian through school diary.....i think it is enough in this regard.” Contrarily, Meghna tends to be absent at school when she feels not to be prepared for memorizing the lessons in the class as it would be the reason to be scolded badly by teacher in the class.

The students of class V, VI, and VII, do not tease behind the teacher whom they dislike. But the students of class VIII – X clearly clarify the ‘effective’ and ‘non-effective’ teachers of school and never hesitate to express negatively about the ‘boring’ teachers. They claim any monotonous topic of any colorless textbook may appear as highly interesting by person like the English teacher; otherwise a ‘boring’ teacher must be criticized from the possible dimensions. Contrarily, the students of class XI and XII are found to be more concrete in their liking and disliking, that they directly ignore to attend school according to the preferences of the favorable teachers.

In sum, the influence of the teachers (may be positive or negative) prominently found on the students from V to X, but never on XI and XII, who are highly influenced by their private tutor as per the data reveals. Ria and Saona remain absent throughout week at school except the practical classes but attend coaching centers regularly for being prepared for examination. They stated, whole day at school becomes spoiled even after being present there as it appears as only a bogus ground for bogus chatting in spite of practicing academics in following ways:

- No regular theoretical classes in school, the teachers’ attitude become very casual in case of teaching subject that, “we know, all the endeavor of school teachers will be ruined. You guys are going to only follow the guideline of your private tutors. So why we waste time for you!!”
- Their private tutors influence them to escape school with the promise that they will provide better practice for Board Examination
- Their parents motivate them to bunk the school to take preparation at home instead of wasting time at school.
- Another aspect of remaining absent on class XII is, majority of the students become serious about their studies and follow the guideline of private tutors and remain absent at school. So absent of friends further lead to be detach with school and restricts to grow minimum interest to it. Hence they remain absent after conducting conspiracy over phone and remain present only on practical classes following same way.

5. The Meaning of ‘School’ from the Experiences of the Students

The study explores the emotion on school, friends and entertainment are exclusively inseparable and very crucial to the participants. The participants identify ‘school’ primarily in terms of two agencies: friends and teachers. The data inclines to define friendship as such a special type of relation, exclusively distinguished from any consanguineal or affinal bonding, but solely dependable and reliable one under which participant can share her problems, affairs, instincts or drives and impulses with others, i.e., the friend(s). This article goes with the earlier works that, the positive attachment with friends make a positive outlook of student towards her school. Since feeling loneliness Dinki remained aloof from school, but the same person is found herself as one of the participants of it just after finding accompanied by a friend. Many of them are regular to school only for having friends there. As a result, a regular attender shows somewhat consistency with her lessons; otherwise she may be punished according to the situations. Thus regular contact with friends helps in practicing lessons regularly.

Actually having emotional distance with parents or relatives, early adolescence impulses are found only to be empathetically realized only by friends. Thus ‘friend’ is treated not only as the company to have fun and play, but a basic requirement to share and communicate feelings and information, learn the ways to regulate and produce behavior, manage and manipulate situations, learn to converse and interact with unknown and finally, learn to analyze behavior, thinking and interacting of self – which help to grow up and shape one’s personality in its culture. Therefore, the interaction with the friends actually helps to socialize students in one hand, and the same with the preferred teachers on another, but never the rules of the school. Disciplines are there in school to regulate the behavior of them only within school premise, means to control the pole of the students for the sake of academic convenience and related purpose. As for example, Tinni avoids hand decoration only within school, due to the fear of being punished by the teachers. But this norm becomes fail to teach its negative aspect of utilizing chemicals and she uses such decoration beyond it. The optimistic attitude towards teacher also makes a student regular in school, class and lessons. Hence teacher is revealing as another most fundamental agency (within school) the interaction with whom triggers student’s stance towards school. It means the excitement of assuming a subject interesting and understanding it significantly depends on the teacher’s effectiveness and her orientation to the student, school and learning; otherwise the student loses the glory to attend school and gradually fades interest and significance of school.

Though teaching- learning process contains the core of school education formally, but as per the data it becomes secondary to the students. The essence of 'school' in reality is significantly subjected to its participant providing the most convenient space to unfold emotional corners to friend(s) with parallel experiences. Friendship is being attributed by more proximal and intimate due to – lacking encouragement and poor attention of parents, curiosity about adolescence and resulting sensations, pressure of study and repetitive examinations, coaching centers and moreover having mobile phones, the tendency of utilization of which is highly prominent among the students of class VIII- X rather than V- VII. Biological and psychological transformations and resulted behavioral and emotional vibration find solution and is cultivated through the discussion on similar experiences, which needs time to converse. That is why, tendency to be busy to gossip and explore entertainment from chatting with friends unexpectedly increases with the succession of academic classes, initiated on roughly class VII and onwards; whereas the junior classes prefer the school primarily for playing. While the students of class V and VI enjoys extracurricular activities and are found to attend school on the days holding programmes but it fails to grow interest of the students of higher classes. Again, the school, i.e., the teacher significantly plays role to choose the item of extracurricular practices as was true in case of Dinki, who inclined to take care of singing rather than dancing.

Friends are the necessity too, to compare academic performance and progress. Meghna is most probably the best instance of the statement. She exercises an apparent friendship specially with Bristi to follow up her rival's activities in terms of academics and gaining attention of teachers. So school curriculum provokes the competitive attitudes in students, which helps to concentrate on learning as well.

Hence, the data explores that, though the students identify school from numerous perspectives which they attach to the terms to make it meaningful subjectively but in reality all the extension of the friends and the teachers. So to the students 'school' is a mosaic of various activities, interactions and orientation related to teachers and friends.

Throughout the early and late childhood, the individuals are designated and performed the role of 'students', deal prolonged time with it and, hence maintains a close relationship with school. In other words, positive or negative attachment to school of a student helps to grow likewise senses to social and personal life. Thus if possible, the consideration of the fascination and expectations of the participants towards the school should be accounted. But, it should keep in mind that majority of them show disparity in actions such as, though they claimed to be fond of extracurricular activities and any celebration but remains absent on those special days at school. According to the teachers, school sentiment is decreasing day by day with high impact of electronic media entertainment, pressure of study, unawareness of parents, and distance of home to school.

The exploration of the transformations of thinking of the students in terms of their preferences and its clarification concerned with school significantly supplements the objective of the study. It reflects the changes of preferences of the issues to discuss, patterns of amusements, causes behind attending school, utilizing electronic items etc. which generate an outline that, since class V the attraction to the friends and entertainments incredibly increases and get a height in class VIII – X. but in class XII, they are found to be more careerist and moreover, they lose the bonding among school friends, which ultimately leads to grow negative attachment to school and the vice versa.

School is not only a formal academic institution that channelizes the academics through disciplines. The student perceives school with its alternative meanings that shape their ideas and perception about academic practices and interaction within the school setting. The essence of school is not only embedded in its normative and disciplinary systems rather it is fundamentally depended on its participant's experiences.

Thus, throughout class V the concept of friendship is found to develop though it takes time to mature (along with enough shuffling of partners) as found in the succeeding classes. In most general senses, Play and quarrels are their centers of interaction of the students of class V and VI. Contrarily, with the consequences of succeeding classes, the partners are found to be stabled, and engaged majorly involve in gossip, moving to and fro or learning. Another significant aspect in this regard should be highlighted that, in lower classes attachment of parents and family is high among the students, but with succession of classes they gradually feel deep attachment with friends replacing the same with parents. Hence, the participants of higher classes either very intimately attracted to the school if she finds friends of her choice, or she loses it completely due to lacking any interesting company at school.

6. References

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