Chapter 4

Data Analysis and Interpretation

4.0 Introduction

The Chapter 3 gave a clear picture of all the procedures that took place during the present study i.e. methodology adopted, preliminary study, data collection and the main study. This chapter presents the analysis of the various aspects and the results of the present study. At the outset, the chapter outlines the results of the pilot study done before the main study. It gives an outline of the students’ and teachers’ responses on writing conferences. Questionnaires were administered and informal discussions were conducted to understand the use of writing conferences in developing writing skills.

4.1 Analysis of the Preliminary Study

Before the main study was carried out, a preliminary study was conducted to find out the problems of students related to the teaching learning of writing skills and various issues involved in teaching writing. As already described in chapter 3, the preliminary study was conducted by using different tools like classroom observations, questionnaires and the pre-test.

4.1.1 Analysis of Classroom Observations

The researcher observed the writing classes conducted by the English teachers who were working at the college where the research was carried out. The purpose of the classroom observation was to understand the practice of teaching writing and the learners’ responses
to the teaching of writing skills in that particular college. A checklist was used to observe the practices of teaching writing.

The first four criteria in the classroom observation checklist involved how the concerned teacher started the writing. Criterion 1 was: ‘Teacher provides an example of writing related to the lesson on composition’. The researcher found that except one teacher, the remaining five teachers did not provide any examples before they started their composition class. They started teaching directly without any discussion or brainstorming on the given topic. This shows that majority of the teachers begin their classes without preparing students for the purpose by giving examples or necessary information. The second criterion was: ‘Teacher provides students with strategies for generating ideas, organizing them and planning’. It was found during the classroom observation that no teacher provided strategies for generating ideas, organizing ideas and planning writing.

All the six teachers more or less started their writing class in a similar fashion.

The criterion-3 in the checklist was: Teacher enables students to collect information from reading, taking notes etc. Out of the six teachers, the researcher observed that only two teachers asked the students to collect information from their prescribed textbook. However, the four other teachers did not discuss the topic with the students to generate ideas and collect information either from their textbook or from any other source before they wrote. This implied that majority of the teachers at the engineering college do not provide students with ideas or ask them to gather information before they write on something.
The fourth criterion was: *Teacher simply gives a topic and asks students to write on their own.* It was noticed that four teachers out of the six who were teaching writing simply gave a topic and asked the learners to submit their written scripts at the end of the class. This type of instruction did not give any opportunity for the learners to plan their writing properly before putting it on paper. They had no idea about the process approach to writing - collecting ideas, organizing ideas, writing, revising, redrafting and so on. Students in the class were seen trying to complete the given writing task and submit the same to the teachers at the end of the class. It was a fact that their writing had numerous limitations, both linguistic and organizational. However, they were not bothered about it since learning to write well was never brought to their attention by the teachers. They were writing because it was a command from their teacher.

The next criterion was: ‘*What are the students doing during skill/strategy instruction/practice?*’ This criterion was included in order to check the behaviour of the students when the writing classes were in progress. The following pie chart describes the behaviour of the students while the classes were going on.
It was observed that 40% of the students were carefully listening and taking down the notes while teaching was going on in the classroom. The students had the same kind of behaviour irrespective of teachers. There were some students who were always not only listening but also responding to their teachers. It was found that 12% of the students kept on talking to their fellow students unnecessarily and made noise whenever the teachers turned to the black board to write. This behaviour on the part of the students irritated majority of the teachers. In addition to this group, there were some students who kept on disturbing the classes. It was done intentionally because they had no interest in studies.

Criterion 6 was to investigate how the students were working to complete their writing task as stated in the table below.

| 6. As part of the skills/strategies instruction and/or practice, students are working ........ |
|---------------------------------|----------------|------------------|
| | Alone | With | Small group |
|---------|-------|-----------|

Figure 1 students behaviour during the instruction
During classroom observation, it was found by the researcher that in the classes of four teachers, almost all the students were working alone. The rest two teachers were found asking their students to sit in pairs or in small groups and write on the given topic.

Criterion 7 was to know what kind of support the particular teacher was providing to the students who were working on the given writing tasks. Here the researcher noticed different observations about the teacher’s help to the students. The following table provides the details about the teacher’s help during the writing task.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>partner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 1</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 2</td>
<td>×</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 3</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 4</td>
<td>×</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 5</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 6</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 students working style in writing classes

7. What does the teacher do while students are working?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Moves around the classroom</th>
<th>Works with individuals</th>
<th>Works with Small groups</th>
<th>Addresses whole class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 1</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>×</td>
<td>×</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 2</td>
<td>×</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>×</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 3</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>×</td>
<td>×</td>
<td>×</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 4</td>
<td>×</td>
<td>×</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It was found that three teachers out of six were moving around the class while the students were working on the topics given to them. They were going near the students who were not writing anything, to help them. There was only one teacher among the six who was trying his best to interact with every student to write something on their own. Only two among six teachers divided the class into small groups and asked them to discuss the task thoroughly and write. It was observed that they were working well in small groups and the students were helping one another. Four teachers out of six were found addressing and explaining the writing problems of the students on the blackboard instead of going to the individual students because of time constrains.

Criterion 8 aimed to identify the exact stage where the student was in his/her process of writing. It was observed because it is a common belief that student generally work on the final draft in one go and submit it to their teachers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>8. In what part of the composing process are students engaged?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class taken by</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It was found that the majority of the students engaged themselves in completing the final drafts instead of planning or revising their drafts. With the introduction of process approach, students are expected to plan their drafts, revise and edit before the final draft is submitted because writing is a process. In this context, there was only one teacher who encouraged the students to revise and edit their drafts but the other four teachers did not ask the students to follow the actual process of writing.

Criterion 9: *What does the teacher do after receiving written drafts from the students?*

The purpose of keeping this question in the checklist was to see the feedback practices at the college, where the study was carried out. Actually, there is a criticism about teachers that they just give the final grades on students writing and that they do not provide feedback on students’ written drafts.

| Teacher 3 | ✓ | x | x | x | x |
| Teacher 4 | x | x | ✓ | x | ✓ |
| Teacher 5 | ✓ | x | x | x | ✓ |
| Teacher 6 | ✓ | x | x | x | ✓ |

**Table 5 students’ engaged in composing process**
Figure 2: What does the teacher do after receiving written drafts from the students?

This observation answered the doubt that many people have in their minds. Here, the researcher tried to see three aspects through this question to know whether teachers give feedback or not and whether teachers conduct writing conferences with students. As per the teacher-researcher’s classroom observation, it was found that 34% of the teachers were giving feedback on their students’ written drafts but 66% of the teachers were not giving feedback or not returning the students’ drafts. Thus, it shows that there were some teachers who gave feedback but not all of them. Lastly, it was seen that the teachers were not conducting writing conferences with their students perhaps because they did not know about such conferences.

4.1.2 Analysis of Students’ Questionnaire

A questionnaire was used as a tool to gather the relevant information from the students of JBR engineering college. It was done as a part of the preliminary study. This exercise was performed to understand the teaching and learning practices at the college. At the outset, the researcher tried to obtain basic information about the students and their writing skills.
The first question was used to seek the opinion of the students on their English language skills. Question 1 ‘Do you think improving writing skills is important for your career?’ it was responded by all participants as ‘yes’.

![Figure 3: improving writing is important](image)

Figure 3: improving writing is important

The second question was ‘If ‘yes’, how often do you write in English?’ to know how often the students write in English.

![Figure 4: how often students write in English?](image)

Figure 4: how often students write in English?

In response to this question, only 2 students stated that they write ‘always’ in English. None of the students ticked for ‘never’. Fifteen, out of thirty participants in this study mentioned that they ‘often’ wrote in English and thirteen students opted for
‘sometimes’. So the majority of the students responded that they did not write ‘always’ but they wrote sometimes as part of their academics and professional life requirements.

Question 3 was ‘Do you get feedback on your writing from the teacher?’ to know whether they get feedback from their teachers. The responses from the students are shown in the pie chart given below.

![Figure 5: how often students get feedback?](image)

The above pie chart clearly explains that there were no teachers who ‘always’ give feedback on their students’ written drafts. Only 6.6% of the students responded that their teacher ‘often’ give feedback on their written drafts. 66% of the students responded that their teachers ‘never’ give feedback. According to the maximum of number respondents, majority of the teachers ‘never’ gave any kind of feedback. There were teachers who provided feedback on students’ written work but they did it only ‘sometimes’.

Question 4 was ‘How often does your teacher ask you to re-draft your composition after correction?’ This question intended to elicit information whether the students were ever
being asked by the teacher to revise and rewrite the first drafts of their written compositions.

The above chart illustrates the responses from the students about how often teachers ask students to rewrite their written drafts. In reply to this question, the students responded that their teacher did not ask ‘always’ to rewrite written compositions. Actually, many teachers did not provide feedback and so there was no point in asking for redrafting. Only 6% of the students stated that their teachers ‘often’ ask them for redrafting their written scripts and 16% of students said that their teachers ‘sometimes’ ask them to rewrite their written drafts. 76% of the students responded that the teachers ‘never’ ask them to rewrite.

**Figure 6: how often teacher asks for re-drafting?**

The above chart illustrates the responses from the students about how often teachers ask students to rewrite their written drafts. In reply to this question, the students responded that their teacher did not ask ‘always’ to rewrite written compositions. Actually, many teachers did not provide feedback and so there was no point in asking for redrafting. Only 6% of the students stated that their teachers ‘often’ ask them for redrafting their written scripts and 16% of students said that their teachers ‘sometimes’ ask them to rewrite their written drafts. 76% of the students responded that the teachers ‘never’ ask them to rewrite.

**Question 5** was ‘Does your teacher discuss with you the errors and other limitations after returning your composition?’ This question aimed to know whether the teachers conduct writing conferences with students or not.
The above chart evidently explains that the teachers, who work at the college where this study was undertaken, did not conduct writing conferences with the students. So it gave a confirmation that these students never had experience with writing conferences before the main study was carried out.

4.2 The Main Study

The main study was carried out with the thirty students at the same engineering college where the preliminary study was done. This main study included the intervention study, questionnaire administration and informal discussions.

4.2.1 Analysis of the Teacher’s Feedback and Writing Conferences

The argument made in the research done on second language writing is that feedback is important, but researchers are not very clear whether the nature of feedback improves the quality of writing. Though Fathman and Whalley’s (1985) study found that students who
received feedback on the form did register improvement on writing than those who do not, the actual focus of feedback, whether on content or form, will not make any difference (1990) they found. The main goal of this study has been to see the use of writing conferences in developing writing skills. As stated earlier, this feedback was given to the students twice for the students’ written scripts and conferences were conducted with them. Every task was written, revised twice and conferences were held twice with the students after each writing task. By the end of the intervention study, the total number of written scripts was 90 and the interaction during the writing conferences with students was noted in the teacher’s diary because the college management did not agree for the recording of the conferences.

4.2.2 Analysis of Students’ Perceptions and Expectations

At the end of the intervention study, the second part of the questionnaire was administered to the students to know about their perceptions and expectations on writing conferencing method. The responses from the students are presented in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students perceptions and expectations on writing conferences</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 I expect my teacher to point out all the grammatical errors in my draft.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 I want to tell my teacher what I am trying to say in my draft.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 I expect my teacher to point out all the organizational problems in my draft and help me to overcome them</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. I expect my teacher to help me to get rid of all my grammatical errors.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Expected</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. I expect my teacher to help me to get rid of all my grammatical errors</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I expect my teacher to provide me suggestions on how to improve my draft.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I want my teacher to tell me how to do very well in writing an essay.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I want to ask my teacher the requirements of writing a good essay.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I enjoy talking with my instructor privately. I think the conference method can help us better to know each other personally.</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Table 6: students’ questionnaire: part 1**

This is the second part of the questionnaire to know about the perceptions and expectations of students on writing conferences. It was administered to the students at the end of the intervention study because students were not familiar with this type of feedback before. Interestingly, it was found that majority of the students’ opinions on conferences were similar, although a few students differed in their views.

**Statement1: I expect my teacher to point out all the grammatical errors in my draft.**

This statement was given to know what the students expected from their teachers.
The responses of the students as evident from the chart indicate that a majority of them i.e. 50% expected that their grammatical errors should be corrected ‘always’ by their teachers. Perhaps they believed that grammar was more important for learning a language. Fifty percent of the students expected that their teachers should correct their grammatical errors in their written drafts. 33% expressed that they ‘often’ desire to expect their teachers to correct grammatical errors. There were only 13% of the students who said ‘sometimes’ to get their grammatical errors to be corrected. Only one student said ‘rarely’ but there was no one who said ‘never’.

Response to this question indicates that the students have more interest in grammatical issues and a majority had expressed their desire to get their grammatical errors to be corrected when they meet their teacher at the time of writing conferences.

Statement 2: ‘I want to tell my teacher what I am trying to say in my draft’.

This statement intended to seek information if the students wanted to tell their teacher orally what they tried to express in their writing.
There were only five students out of thirty who gave their response as ‘always’ and eight students opted for ‘often’. Six students said that ‘sometimes’ they wanted to explain to their teacher orally and two students said ‘rarely’. There were nine students who had marked their response as ‘never’. These responses from the students show that a few students wanted to explain what they were trying to say in their written drafts but almost half the respondents said that they did not want to explain what they wanted to say in their drafts.

**Statement 3:** ‘*I expect my teacher to point out all the organizational problems in my draft and help me to overcome them*.’

The intention behind the statement was to know what the students thought about the organization of a paragraph or an essay. It was also observed that the students did not have much idea about how to plan for writing, organize ideas and then write. They just wrote whatever came to their mind during the writing task.
In response to this statement, twelve students answered ‘always’. This implies that they recognized the importance of organizing ideas in a piece of writing. So they desired at the end of the study that their organizational problems should be pointed out by their teachers so that they can produce a good piece of writing. Eight students responded as ‘often’ and five students ‘sometimes’. The response from the students clearly shows us that they were able to understand the role of the organization or plan in producing something on their own. Only two students responded to ‘rarely’ and three students to ‘never’. So it can be understood that only a few students were not in favour of being pointed out by their teachers about the organizational problems in their writing.

**Statement 4: ‘I expect my teacher to help me to get rid of all my grammatical errors’**

This statement was included to know the expectations of the students on grammatical issues when they come for writing conferences. It was found that during the intervention study some students asked the researcher to correct all the grammatical errors but some students asked for the explanation on the grammatical errors. Through this statement, it was tried to know how many students wanted their errors to be corrected by their teachers.
Figure 10: how often students want errors to be corrected?

The above chart clearly tells us that a majority of the students wished to get help from their teachers. Instead of doing corrections on their own, they wanted their teachers’ involvement in correcting errors. 18 students responded that they ‘always’ expected their teachers to get rid of all the grammatical errors made by them. It is a clear indication of the dependence of the students on their teachers for correction of errors. It seems they have the idea that they may not be able to correct all their linguistic errors.. It can also be understood that they had no desire to know about their weak areas.

Out of the thirty respondents, seven students chose ‘often’ against teachers’ involvement in correcting grammatical errors. Five students chose ‘sometimes’ on teachers’ involvement in student error correction. It can be understood that these five students were also in favour of teachers’ involvement in correcting students’ grammatical errors. Interestingly there were no students who chose ‘rarely’ or ‘never’. The responses from the students to this statement undoubtedly implies that teachers are the main source in providing corrective feedbacks on students’ writing in order to make their writing error
free. It also explains that students consider grammar to be the most difficult part and they think that grammatical corrections can be done only by teachers.

Statement 5: ‘I expect my teacher to provide me suggestions on how to improve my draft.’ Through this statement, the researcher tried to understand whether students expected suggestions from their teachers on how to improve their written drafts or they simply wanted corrective feedback on their errors and other limitations in their writing from their teachers.

![Figure 11: how often students desire for teachers suggestions?](image)

The chart shows us that there was a mixed response on asking for suggestions from teachers to improve their written drafts. It can be understood through this chart that there were students who expected suggestions from teachers and at the same there were students who did not expect any suggestion. Only six students opted for ‘always’ from teachers and other six students expected it only ‘often’. Eight students said that they expected suggestions from teachers ‘sometimes’. This shows that almost 66% of students were in favour of getting suggestions from their teachers to improve their written scripts.
but ten students gave their response as ‘never’. It could be understood that these students did not expect any suggestions from their teachers on their written scripts.

**Statement 6: ‘I want my teacher to tell me how to do very well in writing an essay’**

This statement was chosen to identify the students’ expectations on taking help from teachers to do well in writing an essay. It was observed that many students were not happy to write something on their own but they wanted to speak on the given topic. During the intervention study, the students requested the teacher-researcher to change the writing task into a speaking task so that they could do well. Writing is the most difficult area for them because it takes a lot of time to think about it and write it down. Through this statement, the researcher tried to understand if the students expected help from teachers to do well in writing an essay because it is difficult for them.

![Figure 12: how often students expect teacher help to improve writing?](image)

The response from the majority of the students was ‘always’ which indicates that the students always expected their teachers help to do well in writing an essay. There were nine students who responded either ‘rarely’ or ‘never’. The students were able to
understand the value of teachers’ involvement in helping them to write meaningful and grammatically accurate essays.

**Statement 7: I want to ask my teacher about the requirements of writing a good essay.**

The aim of this statement was to find out how many students were able to learn from their teachers about the basic requirements of a good essay.

![Bar chart](image)

**Figure 13.: how often students ask for about the requirements to write?**

The above chart shows the diverse responses from the participants to this statement. Some students were in agreement and some were in disagreement to it. Actually, there were several problems noticed in students writing while correcting the students’ drafts. They were mainly grammatical and organizational problems. They did not know how to organize an essay, so they wrote whatever came to their mind. Their sentences were not in order and there was no coherence or cohesiveness in their writing. So it is very important for them to know about it and improve their writing.

Out of the 30 students, eight students gave their response to ‘always’ for this question, four responded to ‘often’ and another four to ‘sometimes’. These responses give us an
idea that they wanted their teachers to explain about the elements or basic requirements for organizing an essay coherently and cohesively. Seven students responded to ‘rarely’ and another seven students said ‘never’. It means that almost 46% of the students were not in favour of discussing with their teacher the requirements of an essay in conferences.

**Statement 8: I enjoy talking with my instructor privately. I think the conference method can help us better to know each other personally**

The purpose behind this statement was to understand whether students felt happy to come to teacher and discuss their problems in writing. Many students did not feel comfortable to talk to teachers because of their rural educational background. They feel inhibited to talk to teachers during the class and also hesitate to talk to the teacher privately. The writing conferences bring students and teachers together to discuss privately or in small groups.

![Figure 14: how often students want to talk to teacher privately?](image-url)
According to this chart, a majority of the students marked their responses as ‘always’ for this question. Fourteen students out of thirty felt happy to talk to their teacher to find out the reasons for their errors. Six students response was ‘often’ and five students response was ‘sometimes’. It gives an idea on these writing conferences that students like to meet their teachers during writing conferences. Very few students gave their response has ‘rarely’ or ‘never’. It can be understood that through writing conferences it is possible to get rid of the fear of students about teachers and bring them to enjoy a talk with teachers. It makes learning an enjoyable activity for students.

4.2.3 Analysis of the Teacher’s Questionnaires

The teacher’s questionnaire consisted of three parts. The first part was to understand the beliefs of teachers with regard to teaching of writing. The second part was on importance of feedback in teachers’ perspectives and the final part was on writing conferences with students. Twenty teachers participated in this study to record their responses through the questionnaires. These teachers are working as English teaching faculty in different colleges in and around Hyderabad engineering colleges. The following table describes the teachers’ responses on teaching writing practices. The numbers given in the table and the chart are responded number of teachers. So the number indicates teachers who responded.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I believe</th>
<th>agree</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the focus on writing instruction would help students to produce grammatically correct sentences.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teaching the elements of the basic paragraph writing would</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
help students to develop good writing skills

| Teaching students how to divide an essay into introduction, body and conclusion is important in structuring an essay. | 17 | 0 | 3 |
| Teaching of connectives is the effective way to help students in bringing coherence in writing. | 10 | 2 | 8 |
| The effective way to help students develop their writing ability is to engage them in frequent writing practices. | 16 | 2 | 2 |
| Students need explicit and specific guidance in order to improve their writing. | 15 | 3 | 2 |

Table 7 teachers’ questionnaire: part 1

![Bar chart showing responses to statements](chart.png)

Figure 15: teachers questionnaire and their responses

**Statement 1:** was ‘I believe that the focus on writing instruction would help students to produce grammatically correct sentences’.
It was included in the questionnaire to know what the teachers think about the grammatical accuracy in writing instruction. Grammatical accuracy plays a vital role in writing something. If something is not grammatically correct, that cannot be considered as a good piece of writing. That is why language writers give immense importance to correctness in writing. In response to this question, 11 teachers out of 20 teachers agreed and only 2 teachers disagreed with this. There were 7 teachers who responded as ‘not sure’ because they did not know whether the writing instruction would lead to grammatical accuracy in students’ writing. But a majority of the teachers agreed that teaching writing would help students to improve their writing.

Statement 2: ‘I believe that teaching the elements of the basic paragraph writing would help students to develop good writing skills’. Teaching the basic elements is very important to develop students’ writing skill. There are several problems in students writing because students do not know the basic issues involved in writing. Knowing the basics of writing would help learners to understand about writing and that would lead them to developing good writing. A majority of the teachers agreed with this point but only one teacher disagreed with it. Six teachers said they were ‘not sure’ about it. The teachers’ responses illustrate that the basic issues in writing would help students to develop good writing skills.

Statement 3: ‘I believe that teaching students how to divide an essay into an introduction, body and conclusion is important in structuring an essay’.

Undesirably, many students do not know the organization of an essay. Whatever the reason, there is a problem in understanding the correct organization of an essay. Because
of this reason students are not able to organize their essays properly. Teaching the organization of essay can facilitate students to understand it and perform well in their writing tasks. Teachers’ responses for this were positive from 17 of them and at the same time nobody ‘disagreed’ with this statement. Only three teachers expressed doubt on this statement. It can be concluded that the teachers believed that teaching about introduction, body and conclusion of an essay would definitely bring the desired results in improving the students’ writing.

**Statement 4:** ‘I believe that teaching of connectives is the effective way to help students in bringing coherence in writing’. Connectives or linkers are very important to make a paragraph or an essay consistent and systematic in thought. A majority of the teachers agreed with this point of view that but two teachers disagreed with it. However, the responses from the teachers can be considered positive on majority basis. There were 8 teachers who gave their response as ‘not sure’. These responses imply that the teachers were not sure about the importance of linkers or connectives in writing. Though the responses to this question was positive, from the teachers’ ignorance about linkers or connectives may not be taken lightly but it needs a solution. Teachers’ awareness of linkers and planned teaching of writing would help students to overcome their problems. This will be possible only through well-planned teaching.

**Statement 5:** ‘I believe that the effective way to help students develop their writing ability is to engage them in frequent writing practices’.

The above statement was given to the teachers to find out their views on regular writing practice for students. ‘Practice makes perfect’ or ‘perfection is practice’ are the common
sayings. The more a student practices the more s/he becomes familiar with the activity or task. It also applies to the writing. Engaging themselves in writing activity makes students good writers because it needs a lot of involvement. So it was asked to the teachers to give their opinions on giving frequent writing practice to students, whereas the response from the teachers was not surprising. Sixteen teachers agreed with this statement but there were two disagreed with it and two teachers were not sure about it. We can understand that a majority of the teachers felt that more practice makes students good writers.

Statement 6: ‘I believe that students need explicit and specific guidance in order to improve their writing.’ Writing something on their own is a distant dream for many second language learners because writing is a complex skill. It needs to be taught by experts to make students independent writers. It is actually not happening in academic spheres these days in most cases. There should be an explicit and specific guidance by teachers to improve students’ writing. To understand the teachers’ views on this, this statement was given to them. In response to this, 15 teachers agreed that there should be explicit and specific guidance provided to students to improve their writing. There were 3 teachers who did agree with this statement and 2 teachers were ‘not sure’ about it. Though there were teachers who did not agree with it, the response of the majority was in favour of this statement.

The following table describes the teachers’ perceptions on giving feedback:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teachers’ perceptions on feedback (1=agree</th>
<th>agree</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>Not</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2=disagree</th>
<th>3= not sure</th>
<th>sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>It is important to check students’ writing regularly.</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>It is important to give feedback on students’ writing.</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>It is important to let students know the value of feedback.</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>It is important to write comments on students’ mistakes.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>It is important to ask students to re-write their essay after feedback.</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>It is important to motivate students to consult the teacher more frequently.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>It is important to complete the syllabus than giving attention to students’ writing.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>It is important to prepare students for exams than wasting time to improve writing.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8: teachers’ questionnaire: part 2

![Figure 16: Teachers’ responses to questionnaire](image-url)
Question 7: ‘It is important to check students’ writing regularly’. A teacher has an important role in developing students’ writing skills. Unless a teacher helps a student, s/he may not learn how to write in English correctly. Whenever students write on some topic, it is important to check students’ written drafts and provide feedback on them so that they are able to know the merits and demerits in their writing and try to improve on their limitation. The response to this statement was positive by a majority of the teachers i.e. 14 teachers agreed with it. Three teachers disagreed with it and the response of another three teachers was ‘not sure’.

Statement 8: ‘I believe that it is important to give feedback on students’ writing’.

This statement aimed to find out how far the teachers had understood the importance of giving feedback. There was an agreement by the majority of the teachers for this statement. Sixteen teachers ‘agreed’ and only four teachers ‘disagreed’ with this. This implies that the importance of feedback is known to everyone but there are problems in practice.

Statement 9: ‘I believe that it is important to let students know the value of feedback’.

There are some teachers who feel that students do not know the value of teacher’s feedback. Since students do not understand the value and hard work of teachers in giving feedback, some teachers are not interested to provide feedback on students’ writing. This is one of the main reasons why teachers are not keen on giving feedback. While responding to this statement, eighteen teachers agreed and only two teachers disagreed with this statement. Interestingly, there was no one responded for the option ‘not sure’.

Statement 10: ‘I believe that it is important to write comments on students’ mistakes’.
Writing comments on students’ drafts is not a simple task but is a laborious and intensive work. Teachers need to put in a lot of hard work on writing comments on students’ drafts. This statement intended to identify the teachers’ views on providing teacher feedback on students’ writings. It was found that as expected many teachers agreed with the statement. There were 15 teachers who agreed with it and 4 teachers disagreed with it. Only one respondent was not sure about giving comments on students’ writing. This implies that a majority of the teachers were in favour of providing comments on students’ drafts.

**Statement 11: ‘I believe that it is important to ask students to rewrite their essay after feedback’**

The responses by the teachers to this statement showed that majority of them agreed with this statement. It is generally observed that teachers do not ask their students to rewrite their drafts. Students’ rewriting their drafts surely brings the desired improvement in their writing. But the practice of providing feedback on students’ drafts is rare in these technical colleges. Unless students get feedback from their teachers and asked to their drafts they may not do it.

**Statement 12: ‘I believe that it is important to motivate students to consult the teacher more frequently’**

This statement aimed to know the teachers’ perception on students consulting teachers frequently to discuss their doubts on writing. The response to this statement was positive only for 50% of the teachers. Six teachers disagreed with this statement and four of them...
were not sure. The reason may be because of their busy schedule from morning to evening.

At the end of the second part of the questionnaire, there were two negative questions intending to know teachers’ opinions on giving feedback and conducting conferences with students.

**Statement13:** ‘I believe that it is important to complete the syllabus than giving attention to students’ writing’.

Actually, syllabus coverage is very important for teachers who are working in engineering colleges because they get very little time to teach and the syllabus is very vast. The time given as per the JNTUH is not enough to complete the syllabus. So many teachers take extra classes to finish it.

The teachers expressed their opinions on syllabus coverage and how difficult it is to complete it. In response to this statement, 8 teachers agreed that it was important to complete the syllabus than correcting students written drafts. A majority of the teacher respondents disagreed with this statement. According to them giving feedback is more important for them than covering syllabus.

**Statement 14:** ‘I believe that it is important to prepare students for exams than wasting time to improve writing’.

The objective behind the statement was to elicit teachers’ responses on time constraints for giving feedback. There is a belief among some teachers that intensive preparation would bring good results and it will help the institute grow. So, the teachers and the
college management work together for achieving this objective. Sometimes teachers complete their syllabus in hurry and leave some topics without explaining clearly.

The third part of the teachers’ questionnaire was about teachers’ perceptions of or expectations from writing conferences. The following table describes the questions and the teachers’ responses. The numbers represent the number of the teachers who ‘agree’ or ‘disagree’ or who are ‘not sure’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I believe......</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15 conferencing with students along with the feedbacks on their write-ups will help them improve their writing.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 it helps students generate ideas and arguments.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 it will be of great help when students do not comprehend written feedbacks on their writing properly.</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 it encourages students to enhance their writing skills.</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 it helps the students to understand their strengths and weaknesses in writing.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 students can easily negotiate the meaning in the conference.</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 teacher can save his/her time by not giving lengthy comments.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 it helps the teachers in imparting confidence among students.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 it provides time to examine students’ re-drafted essays.</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 some students may not like to discuss their errors with teachers.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
25. Conferencing may not be helpful to students. Moreover, it will be a burden on teachers.  

26. Written feedback alone is enough.  

27. It may waste the valuable time of students and teachers.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 9 teachers’ questionnaire: part 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

There were 13 statements in the final section of the teachers’ questionnaire which were specifically designed to seek information on the teachers’ perceptions on writing conferences. In fact, it is a new area of research in this context. Many teachers never heard of this type of feedback. So there was no doubt that the teachers did not know anything about writing conference. It was tried to understand the teachers’ perceptions on
writing conferences so that it would be easy to understand how far such conferences were going to help students in developing writing skills.

**Statement 15** ‘I believe that conferencing with students along with the feedbacks on their write-ups will help them improve their writing’.

The purpose of giving this statement was to understand the teachers’ perceptions on both written feedback and writing conferences. In response to this statement majority of the teachers agree that it would help students improve their writing. Four teacher respondents ticked disagree and only one teacher’s response was ‘not sure’.

**Statement 16:** ‘I believe that it helps students to generate ideas and arguments’.

There were 50% of the teachers who responded that it was true but 25% of the teachers disagreed with it. There were 25% of the teachers who responded as ‘not sure’. Though majority of the teachers believed that it would help in generating ideas and arguments for writing something, there were others did not believe in it.

**Statement 17:** ‘I believe that it will be of a great help when students do not comprehend written feedbacks on their writing properly’.

This statement aimed to know whether teachers believed that writing conferences can be a great help when students do not understand teachers’ written feedback. 18 teachers agreed with this statement and none of them disagreed with it. Two of the teachers were not sure about it. This implies that majority of the teachers believed that writing conferences would help students to a large extent to know about their problems in writing.
Statement 18 ‘I believe that it encourages students to enhance their writing skills’.

For doing anything, encouragement or motivation plays a major role in getting the desired or expected results. This statement was to see whether writing conferencing is a motivational factor for students. Fourteen teachers gave a positive response to this statement and only three teachers opted for ‘disagree’, whereas another three teachers were ‘not sure’.

Statement 19: ‘I believe that it helps the students to understand their strengths and weaknesses in writing’.

The purpose behind this statement was to understand the teachers’ opinions if the writing conferences would enable students to know their own strengths and weaknesses in writing. There was a mixed response from the teachers to this statement. There were 50% of the teachers who agreed that it can help students to understand their strengths and weakness but there were 25% of the teachers who disagreed with it and other 25% of the teachers were ‘not sure’. It implies that the teachers were not confident to accept that writing conferences could help the students to find out their strengths and weakness.

Statement 20: ‘I believe that students can easily negotiate the meaning in the conference’.

For this statement, 12 teachers responded that students can negotiate the meaning in the conferences but 5 teachers did not agree with this statement and 3 teachers who were not sure about it. Writing conferences can provide a platform for students and teachers to discuss on an issue and they can come to a conclusion on it. Students can negotiate with their teachers about different issues.
Statement 21 ‘I believe that a teacher can save his/her time by not giving lengthy comments’.

A majority of the teachers disagreed with this statement. There were only 8 teachers who agreed that writing conferences can save teacher’s time by not giving lengthy comments. Many teachers believed that giving feedback is a time-consuming and labour intensive work. So they did not have any interest in providing comments. The teachers did not agree that writing conferences can save teacher’s time.

Statement 22: ‘I believe that it helps teachers in creating confidence among students’.

This statement was to know what the teachers think about conferences in terms of developing confidence among students to write something on their own. In response to this statement, 50% of the teachers agreed and 25% of the teachers disagreed with this. The remaining 25% of the teachers were ‘not sure’ about it.

Statement 23: ‘I believe that it provides time for the teachers to examine students’ re-drafted essays’.

Conferences can provide an opportunity for teachers to go through students rewritten drafts. A majority of the teachers agreed with this statement because it really provides time for examining the rewritten drafts.

Statement 24: ‘I believe that some students may not like to discuss their errors with teachers’.

It is common to find students who never discuss anything with their teachers. At the same time, these students may ask their friends for clarifications. It happens because students
are reluctant to talk to teachers. A majority of the teachers did not agree with this statement. This is because they thought that during conference time students would feel free and come forward to discuss with teachers about their errors in writing. There were 8 teachers who agreed with statement that some students may not like to discuss about their errors freely with the teachers.

**Statement 25: ‘I believe that conferencing may not be helpful to students. Moreover, it will be a burden on teachers’**

Frankly speaking, conducting a writing conference with students is a time-consuming activity. As it takes a lot of time, it will become a burden to teachers. First, teachers have to give written feedback and ask student to come for the conference. By the time students come for a conference, teachers have to discuss, clarify their doubts and encourage them who do not open their mouths. So it is a tough job. But interestingly, only 4 teachers agreed with this statement and 14 teachers disagreed with it and two others were not sure. The response clearly tells us that though it is a tough job and labour intensive, teachers know that it can bring the expected results in students writing after attending three or four conferences.

**Statement 26: ‘I believe that written feedback alone is enough’**

In response to this statement, 6 teachers agreed and 14 teachers disagreed. This implies that majority of the teachers felt that written feedback on students’ writing was not enough and there was need for writing conferences.

**Statement 27: ‘I believe that it may waste the valuable time of students and teachers’**
The last statement was with regard to the value of time. This statement in teacher’s questionnaire was included to understand teachers’ views on spending some time on conducting conferences with students. The responses to this statement were more negative and less positive. A majority of the teachers disagreed with this statement, as they believed that writing conferences were not a waste of time for both teachers and students. This implies that many of the teachers recommended writing conferences to improve students’ writing.

4.2.4 Analysis of Teacher’s Diary

The teacher-researcher diary corroborates the enthusiasm of students for writing conferences. At the outset, the students in spite of being hesitant/shy and slow to start a conversation or ask a question, all of them demonstrated the readiness to take part in conferences and were enthusiastic for receiving inputs and feedback from the teacher on their individual written drafts. The teacher-researcher diary entries also showed that all the students could identify issues for which they needed extended explanation and that students were pleased for having this opportunity in teacher student conference.

However, in spite of students’ desire for individual attention including extended explanations on the mistakes they had made in writing, it was noticed during the informal discussions that the students, in general, were not quite at ease in the conferences. Some students did not give any response to the teacher-researcher’s questions. This supports students’ response that they wanted the teacher to tell them about all the corrections orally. The researcher was unknown to these students, and of course, this was a new situation. It should be noted here that the level of ease improved for two students namely
Vamsi and Lydia in the second conference. Interestingly, Lydia is the student who was vocally most negative about written feedback and was positive about the potential benefit of conferences.

It appears that continued experience in conference could lead to more active participation by the students. In addition, students were not yet prepared to take initiative in asking the teacher questions about their writing. They did not initiate talk about their concerns and only raised the questions when invited to do so. There was the very real possibility that this was related to local cultural expectations that students are not to speak before they are asked to do so as a matter of respect. Students thought that teachers should take a dominant role in deciding what students should learn. They had the impression that the conferences were mostly questioning and answering sessions rather than students taking any initiative to set the agendas for the sessions.

In general, the researcher diary notes did not find any contradictions to students’ responses to questionnaire. These students talked positively about the possibility for one-to-one interaction and the chance to clarify writing-related issues, in fact, they were found to be fairly passive in conferences. Positive views, then, were not necessarily linked to active participation. This was especially true for the lower proficiency students, who were very positive about the benefits of conferences, but the least active of the students in the conferences. There is evidence that generally, active participation improves over time and with more experience in conferences.
4.2.5 Analysis of Teacher Feedback and Writing Conferences

The general argument in the field of research done in the area of second language writing maintains that feedback is important, but researchers are not very clear whether the nature of feedback improves the quality of writing. Fathman and Whalley’s (1985) study found that students who received feedback on form improved their writing better than those who did not. Though feedback helps students to improve writing, Ferris (1995) argued that students may not understand completely the written feedback given by teachers. They may not go to a teacher to get it explained. Ferris suggests that writing conference can provide an opportunity to fill this gap. Such a conference brings students and teachers to one common platform to have dialogue and get the doubts clarified. The main objective of this study, therefore, was to use writing conferences as a tool to provide feedback on students’ writing and improve their writing skills. Analysis of the teacher’s feedback on student writing and writing conferences between the teacher and the students held as part of this present research are presented below task-wise and paragraph-wise.

4.2.5.1 Students samples written scripts with comments

Task 1, Draft 1

Topic: write an essay on ‘Smart phone: A boon or a bane’ in about 250 words.

First Paragraph of the essay

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Make it meaningful</th>
<th>Smart phones is usually used for communications &amp; technology to develop the country. The majority of</th>
<th>You are using capitals and articles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

130
Teacher feedback:

The mistakes were underlined and encircled and were provided error codes. Here only indirect feedback was provided on the written drafts so that students could think and guess the required answers instead of just copying from the teachers’ corrections. A list of error codes were given to the students before the intervention study was conducted.

Writing conference:

Student 1: Good morning sir. Thank you for correcting my essay.

Teacher: You’re welcome.

Student 1: I am not able to understand some comments on my script. I would like to know how to write an introductory paragraph. I have read your comments but no idea how to go about it. Could you please explain them? I want to know how to write an introductory paragraph.

Teacher: Sure. Do you want to say anything else?
Student 2: *I have some other doubts but I will ask you later.*

Teacher: *Ok. First of all, I appreciate your enthusiasm to know something which you don’t know.*

Student 1: *Thank you sir.*

Teacher: *(By showing the first paragraph) This is the introductory paragraph you wrote.*

Student 1: *Yes sir.*

Teacher 2: *The first paragraph should grab the attention of your reader. So you have to give an interesting fact or a quote in the introductory paragraph.*

Student 1: *Interesting fact?*

Teacher: *Yes. By writing an interesting fact or a quotation you can create interest to read your essay till the end.*

Student 1: *Ok. Then what is the thesis statement? How to write it?*

Teacher: *Well. A thesis statement is one sentence which sums up your entire essay.*

Student 1: *Means?*

Teacher: *You have to a sentence usually at the end of the introductory paragraph which summarizes your essay. It makes your readers understand the one point you want to develop.*
Student 2: Thank you sir. Now I can understand how to begin an essay and how to write a thesis statement. These are okay for me. But you have made so many corrections in my essay. Is it necessary to focus on grammar?

Teacher: Interesting question. But grammar helps us to convey the correct meaning to our readers. We write something and send it to the reader. We can’t go and explain it if s/he gets a doubt.

Student 2: Okay. I understood.

Teacher: Take care of grammar and punctuation. There are many punctuation errors in your essay.

Student 2: Okay sir. I will take care of them.

Second Paragraph of the essay

write a topic sentence and add supporting sentences your paragraph should have a concluding sentence

Usually the mobiles are developed so fastly by generation. It has great features & camera expert’s. By using smart phones we can know what is good & what is bad. By using smart mobiles there are good & bad things. But the usage is more for the good one & to spend the time & more in social networking.

What is it?

Rephrase it and make it grammatically correct.

Take care of spellings
Teacher: Okay. Now look at the teacher comments on the second paragraph.

Student 2: Okay sir.

Teacher: Any questions?

Student 2: Sir, Could you explain us about topic sentence, supporting sentences and concluding sentence? Teacher: Ok let me explain you. Listen carefully. Actually, paragraph should be developed around an idea. Many students do not know about it so they write whatever they like.

Student 2: Ok

Teacher: Topic sentence is the main of the idea of a paragraph. Once you decide on the topic sentence, then you have to add some supporting sentences to it. For example, if you say mobile phones help us to communicate, you must give some reasons how mobiles help us to convey message to others. The reasons you add are called supporting sentences. Okay.

Student 2: Then, What is a concluding sentence? Please explain us.

Teacher: Concluding idea or sentence is the restating the topic sentence at the end of the paragraph. For example, if your topic sentence is ‘I like to study in America’. After adding some supporting sentences, you can say ‘that’s why I like to study in America’.

Student 2: Ok sir.

Teacher: In addition to these, you have to take care of spellings. Look at the underlined words and write correct spellings.
Student2: Sure sir. I will correct them.

Third paragraph of the essay

| You need to rephrase these sentences to make sense | Now, coming for its negative things mainly the terrorism gets more & more development by Smart phones, it is so easy to attract in them. Hacking of Bank accounts & cheating other, misbehaving the social networking sites. These are just small issues being happen in recent times. main cause is used for Bomp blast. | Unnecessary capital. Remove it. Avoid Symbols. |

Teacher feedback

Written comments were provided on the students’ written drafts with error codes on the mistakes for the revision.

Writing conference

Teacher: Let’s look at the third paragraph. See there are many issues you need to address.

Student 3: Yes. But I don’t know how to modify them. Some grammatical errors are ok but how to change other things based on your comments.
Teacher: Did you understand the grammar related errors that you made?

Student 3: Yes sir.

Teacher: Okay. Look at the first sentence in this paragraph. ‘Now, coming for its negative things mainly the terrorism gets more & more development by Smart phones, it is so easy to attract in them’. What do you want to say here?

Student 1: Sir, I want to say that there is problem with smart phones. And I think it helps to terrorists.

Teacher: Good! Make it clear when you write. Use simple and short sentences, if you are not able to write complex sentence. It’s not a problem. First, write down a topic sentence and then add some supportive sentences.

Student: Okay sir.

Teacher: Did you get it?

Student 1: Yes sir.

Teacher: Now look at the next sentence. It is ‘Hacking of Bank accounts & cheating other, misbehaving the social networking sites’. You have a listed out three things but they are not written properly. It is not a complete sentence. It does not give the exact idea you want to express. Avoid unnecessary capital letters and symbols. Do you know how to use capitals?

Student 1: I’m not sure. I use it in the beginning of sentences and for names of people, places, and proper nouns.
Teacher: You wrote ‘Bank’, right?

Student 1: Yes sir. But I don’t know why I wrote just I did it.

Teacher: Can you tell me whether it is right or wrong?

Student: I think it’s wrong.

Teacher: You should not use capital in the middle of a sentence. Capital letters can be used for proper nouns, names of days and months, abbreviations and acronyms, festivals, places and monuments etc. Please go through the materials I have given you.

Student: Okay sir. Thank you sir.

Teacher: Write carefully when you revise it.

Student: Ok Sir.

Fourth paragraph of the essay

Keep this next paragraph. Use capital letter

lastly, smart phone are Boom in some cases & it is also Bane in some cases based on usage of it.

Same mistakes are repeated.
Writing conference:

Teacher: Now we have come to the last paragraph of the essay. The same mistakes are repeated here. Make changes as I have already told you. But you have written only one sentence, add some more points to it. Think of it first and plan well. Have a mind map of the ideas you are going to write in the essay.

Student: Okay sir. Can I change some sentences in this essay? And I want to add some sentences.

Teacher: You can do it. It is free writing. You can add anything that you want to add. But remember to organize well. Make sure that you have five paragraphs in your essay.

Student 1: Thank you sir. I will revise it and submit it to you.

Task 1

Draft 2 (student’s revised draft)

| Smart phones are usually used for communication. A majority of smart phones are used by students. These smart phones are really a boon for us because they are used for contacting people and they can be carried wherever we go. But the cost is so expensive. In some cases smart phones are useful to know whatever the incidents are happening the world wide. |
Smart phones are developed by this generation. It has great features like camera experts. By using smart phones we can know what is good and what is bad. By using smart mobiles there are good and bad things. But the usage is more for the good one and to spend time and more bad in social networking.

Now, coming for its negative things, mobile are also use for illegal activities like posting abusive images. Terrorist can easily find out the ways to our country through Google maps on their smart phones, it is so easy for them to attack us. Hacking of bank accounts and cheating other, misbehaving the social networking sites. These are not big issues being happened in recent times. Main cause is used for bomb blast.

Lastly, smart phones are boon in some cases and it is also bane in some cases based on usage of it. It depends on users. We must be careful and should not waste time. So smarts phones are useful, at the same time dangerous.

**Improvement observed in the second draft.**

The student was able to make corrections based on the teacher’s corrections and comments. He made corrections in grammar, vocabulary and punctuation marks. It is clear that whatever the errors were pointed out by the teacher, he corrected them.
Certainly there is some improvement, though he was not able develop it to a good essay. But there should be improvement in organization and using connectives.

Feedback on the revised draft.

Teacher’s comments on the revised draft.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Try to write some attention grabber.</th>
<th>Smart phones are usually used for communication. A majority of smart phones are used by students. These smart phones are really a boon for us because they are used for contacting people and they can be carried wherever we go. But the cost is so expensive.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You don’t need this sentence here.</td>
<td>In some cases smart phones are useful to know whatever the incidents are happening the world wide.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You should have a thesis statement at the end</td>
<td>I appreciate your improvement in 2nd draft. Write an introduction to your essay in this first paragraph</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Writing conference on revised draft.

Teacher: Good morning. How are you?

Student 1: Good morning sir. I am fine. Thank you, sir.

Teacher: Did you enjoy correcting your draft?

Student 2: Yes sir. Thank you for your valuable suggestions and time.
Teacher: You are welcome. I am always ready to help you and I appreciate your participation in this study. Now let’s look at the first paragraph of the second draft revised by you. You have revised it but the corrections are all on grammar and punctuation related. You have not changed the sentences. You have also not organized the paragraphs.

Student 1: I tried to do but couldn’t do it. Tell me how to do it, and then I will try. How to write an introductory paragraph?

Teacher: I explained to you in the first meeting. I think you did not understand what I told you. Ok. No problem. Let me tell you. The first paragraph should provide an outline to your essay. Remember, your readers must understand what you are going to say in the following paragraphs. For example, you are writing on ‘smart phones’, right? How do you write your introductory paragraph? It should have an attention grabber or an interesting fact, back ground of the topic and a thesis statement. Think of some interesting fact of smart phones and its background and finally a statement which is a summary of your essay. Okay guys, you have to think about it and plan an outline before you start writing.

Student 2: Sir, background of the topic means?

Teacher: Here, you can talk about origin and importance of smart phones briefly. Do not write a long story.

Teacher: *Summary does not mean that you have to write some sentences but only one sentence is enough. Okay?*

Student 1: *Okay sir. I understand that I need to write something which attracts readers’ attention and give background. Thank you, sir.*

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Here you can write about advantages of smart phones.</th>
<th>2nd paragraph of the draft II</th>
<th>You mixed up different ideas. Talk about only one. Same phrases are repeated.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Connect your ideas with linkers?</td>
<td>Smart phones are developed by this generation. It has great features like camera experts. By using smart phones we can know what is good and what is bad. By using smart mobiles there are good and bad things. But the usage is more for the good one and to spend time and more bad in social networking.</td>
<td>It’s not clear.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Teacher feedback:**

The focus of the Teacher feedback on the second paragraph is on the content. The students were asked to use only one idea in one paragraph. Since this student had mixed up the different ideas, he had been asked to focus only on the ‘advantages of smart
phones’ so that he got some idea on what to present in this second paragraph. Some sentences were not clear. So he was asked to make rephrase them. It was found that there were still some grammatical errors. These were pointed out by encircling and underlining them.

**Writing Conference:**

Teacher: *Let’s move to the second paragraph. Just go through the comments and corrections made. You can ask me about the comments you did not understand.*

Student: *Okay sir. Give some time to look at the comments once again.*

Teacher: *why not?*

(After sometime)

Student: *Sir, what is this ‘one idea in one paragraph’?*

Teacher: *Good question. Actually a paragraph should contain information about one idea. To put it simply, it should be relevant to the present essay. In this second paragraph, you have written advantages of smart phones and at the same time disadvantageous also. But you need to stick to only one idea and keep the second idea in the next paragraph. You can develop the second idea in the next paragraph.*

Student: *I should not write both the things in one paragraph. I will keep them in the next paragraph. Then, what are these linkers?*

Teacher: *What do you think about it?*
Student 2: Linkers? I think..... linking words? Ok. What are the linking works in English? I don’t know. Please explain me.

Teacher: Linkers are nothing but conjunctions.

Student: Ok. I got it. Thank you, sir. I should use them to connect words and sentences.

Teacher: Yes.

Teacher feedback:

Teacher feedback was provided with comments on the third paragraph. There was a considerable improvement in the third paragraph and it was better than the first and the
second. In this third paragraph, some sentences were to be modified as per the teachers’ comments. One sentence did not have a verb, so it was pointed out and asked to be revised.

Writing Conference:

Teacher: Okay. Now look at the third paragraph. Do you want to ask me anything on this third paragraph?

Student: Yes sir. First of all, thank you for your help here. I hope I can improve my writing skills under your guidance through these meetings.

Teacher: You are welcome. I also hope the same thing should happen and you are going to improve your writing soon. Now ask me questions you want to ask.

Student: Okay sir. I don’t have many questions on this paragraph because you have cleared almost all important questions. So here I want to ask you a question on the ‘subject’. Please look here. ‘Hacking of bank accounts and cheating other, misbehaving the social networking sites’. This is the sentence I wrote but you commented that it does not have a subject. What is the problem with it? I want to know.

Teacher: Good. Actually, in your sentence ‘Hacking of bank accounts and cheating other, misbehaving the social networking sites’ your meaning is not clear. So you have to modify it.

Student: Please tell me how can I modify it? I don’t know.
Teacher: It’s okay, no problem. I will let you know about it. You want to say people can use smart phones to hack bank accounts, cheat others. Put it like this ‘smart phones can also be used to cheat people by getting personal information related to banks and social networking passwords etc.’

Student: Ok sir. I will modify it.

Teacher: Any other question?

Student: The first sentence ‘Now, coming for its negative things, mobile are also use for illegal activities like posting abusive images’. What is the problem with ‘for its’?

Teacher: Instead of writing ‘coming for it’, replace it with ‘coming to its negative things/disadvantages’.

Student: Okay sir. Thank you

Can you rephrase it?

4th paragraph of the II draft

Lastly, smart phones are boon in some cases and it is also bane in some cases based on usage of it. It depends on users. We must be careful and should not waste time. So smarts are useful, at the same time dangerous.

You have to summarise the points you have told in your essay

Leave a final impression on the reader

We must be careful and should not waste time. So smarts are useful, at the same time dangerous.
**Teacher feedback:**

The last paragraph had only one sentence in the first draft. The student was able to add two more sentences as the teacher directed him. The errors in the second drafts were pointed out and provided with comments for the improvement in the next draft. Since it was the last paragraph or concluding paragraph, the student was asked to restate the thesis statement and summarise the points discussed in the essay. The last comment was on leaving a final impression on the reader about the essay.

**Writing conference:**

Teacher: Look at the comments.

Student: Okay sir. You have encircled the ‘it’ in this paragraph. Is it wrong?

Teacher: It’s wrong because ‘it’ refers to ‘smart phones’ that you mentioned in the first sentence. Ok. Since the word the ‘phones’ is plural, you have to use plural pronoun ‘they’. Understand?

Student: Yes sir. Then what is restating the thesis statement?

Teacher: Formulate a thesis statement for the instruction. As I have already told you, the thesis statement is the brief summary of your essay in one sentence. That thesis statement must be restated in the end of the paragraph.

Student: Should I write all the important points here in this final paragraph?

Teacher: Yes. You have to give a brief summary of all the points you have mentioned in the body of the essay.
Student 1: Okay sir. Thank you for spending time with us for providing clarifications for our doubts.

Teacher: You are welcome. It’s my pleasure.

Revised Draft 3

Do you know that the present mobile phones have more computing power than the computers used for the Apollo 11 to land on the moon? Actually phones are used for communication but today the use of mobile phone has different purposes. India has just moved to from 3G mobile services to 4G services which provide a high speed internet on out phones. Many people are seen with their smart phones in their hand and it is impossible to find them without phones. They have become a part and parcel of life which used for many purposes. Interestingly, they have both advantageous and disadvantageous so they can be a blessing or curse.

Smart phones are developed by this generation. It has great features like camera experts. By using smart phones we can know what is good and what is bad. By using smart mobiles there are good and bad things. But the usage is more for the good one and to spend time and more bad in social networking.
Now, coming for its negative things, mobile are also use for illegal activities like posting abusive images. Terrorist can easily find out the ways to our country through Google maps on their smart phones, it is so easy for them to attack us. Hacking of bank accounts and cheating other, misbehaving the social networking sites. These are not big issues being happened in recent times. Main cause is used for bomb blast.

Lastly, smart phones are boon in some cases and it is also bane in some cases based on usage of it. It depends on users. We must be careful and should not waste time. So smarts are useful, at the same time dangerous.

4.3 Analysis of Informal Discussions with Students

Informal discussions with students were held during their free time to triangulate the information obtained through different tools used for this study. To have informal discussions with students, ten participants were chosen from among the students who participated in this experimental study. Five of them were those who performed well in the intervention study and five of them were average performers. Discussions were conducted to get more information from the students.

The following table describes the questions asked to get the basic information about the participants during the informal discussions.
Table 10 questions used in informal discussions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Did you finish schooling in English medium?</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Do you read novels, story books, magazines in your free time?</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Do you write to e-mails to your friends and relatives?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Do you communicate through social media?</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Do you like to write something in English? If yes, what do you like to write?</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above table describes the basic information about students, their interests and habits. In many cases, students’ performances depended on their habits and how they spent their free time. Students who read more in their free time may perform well. The participants who took part in the informal discussion were from English medium background. It seems that their schools were good.

The very next question was on their reading habit which was responded by seven students as ‘no’ for reading in their free time. Only three students answered that they read during their free time. So 70% of the students do not read during their free time. Actually, the people who read more can easily master the language, especially English because it is a second language in our context. Reading novels, stories and newspapers, students can to improve their vocabulary and language expressions which are used in day to day life. But it was found through this enquiry that many students do not read regularly but read only for examination purposes.
The third question was about writing in their day to day life to communicate with parents and relatives. The answers really stunned the researcher because only one student among ten responded that he wrote e-mails to friends and relatives to communicate. The remaining nine students did not use e-mail as a means of communication. It shows that these students did not understand the importance of e-mail to improve their writing skills.

The fourth question was ‘Do you communicate through social media?’ Surprisingly, ten students responded as ‘yes’ because they always use it. Students could not be seen without mobile except during the class. Teachers complain that they use it during the class. Students are happy to use social media and share pictures and course materials. They use Whatsapp and snapshots and Facebook chat. They sometimes use these social media short codes in examinations.

The final question was to know whether they liked to write something on their own. Only two students answered that they liked to write something but eight students said they did not like to write something on their own. It was observed that many students did not like to write and asked the researcher to change the task into speaking task so that they could perform well. The responses received from the students inform that students do not like to write because it takes a lot of time and they need to write something accurately which will be read by someone. Some students have the fear that they may not perform well in writing something.

During the informal discussions, the aim was to find out the students’ opinion on different modes of feedback such as written feedback and writing conferences. When these students were asked how they felt the moment they received feedback on their
written drafts with red ink marks, they answered that they felt bad. Some being from English medium background, did not expect to make these mistakes in their writing. In the beginning, they had no interest in taking back their drafts because that was never the practice of their teachers. They said that at first they wanted to escape from the classes if it was not interesting because the researcher was asking to write something carefully and he was going to read it and point out their mistakes. They did not want someone to read their drafts and judge their writing and find out their mistakes. A student told the researcher that he was disappointed the moment he saw so many corrections on his written draft.

In response to the question how the written feedback was useful in making correction, students responded that it was not enough to understand all the errors made by them and moreover they felt that similar mistakes might be made in future. However, there were some students who were positive about the written feedback and felt that it saves students and teachers’ time. But some students did not agree with this statement and replied that meeting with teachers would give more clarity than only having written feedback. They were of different opinions among students but the majority felt that writing conferences could help students to identify their problems exactly and fix them with the help teachers’ guidance and support. Theoretically speaking, it was the mediation by the teacher to help students to understand their problems and find solutions to those mistakes made by students in their drafts. One student felt that though the teacher feedback made him understand the error he had made, during the conference he understood how to make corrections, and the reasons behind the corrections. He also said that it was a nice opportunity to meet the teacher and talk about his writing which he never got at any point.
of time. Students had a positive opinion on writing conferences, though they take so much of their time, attention and effort to listen and revise their drafts.

There was discussion on the use of error codes on their written drafts. Some students were happy that the error codes allowed them to think of their mistakes and do the corrections. They said that if there were corrections by the teachers, they would not have thought of the correct answers. They had full satisfaction on giving the error codes. One of the students commented that he did not understand the error codes and they were not useful to him to correct the mistakes. It took a lot of time to think of the right answers. He complained that they were confusing to him. He finally could not do corrections with the help of the given error codes. So he took the help of his friend to make corrections.

There were some students who talked about the comments given by the teacher-research on their written drafts. A student commented that teacher’s comments helped him to get motivated to write something because he had pointed out his weaknesses as well as strengths. He expressed his gratitude towards the researcher for helping him to understand his mistakes. There were some students who felt the same kind of emotion on teacher’s written comments. One of the students expressed that she could not receive any positive feedback on her first draft and felt disappointed that she could not perform well like her classmates.

When the students were asked how they attempted to do the correction based on the teachers’ written feedback, it was found that the students with good proficiency in English were able to do the corrections but the students who did not have proficiency did
not do on their own but took the help of the classmates. Some students did not approach their classmates because they were not sure if they were correct or not.

When asked about the interaction during the writing conferences, some participants felt happy about it because it had helped them to come to their teacher without any fear. They also expressed that conferencing method enabled them to negotiate the meaning they wanted to express in their written drafts. One student commented about his friend that he had fear to discuss his doubts because he was not able to express it in English. The interaction between the students and the teacher-researcher actually was successful but there were some who did not speak and the researcher was not able to know that they had something to express. Since it was a small group conference, some students could not speak openly with the researcher.

Regarding the views of the students on ways to improve the effectiveness of teacher’s comments on students’ writing, students appreciated the oral feedback. Many students expressed that verbal feedback helped them to understand their mistakes when it was provided along with teacher’s comments. A student claimed that he would be able to make great progress, if his teachers could provide verbal feedback by reminding him of the problems he had to solve in his writing because he could discuss with the teacher in case he did not understand anything during the writing conference. So the verbal feedback or writing conference could build confidence among students by helping them to write well by correcting their drafts with feedback.

When asked about the major issues they wished to improve their writing. A majority of the students responded that they wanted to improve in the area of grammar and
organization. The reason was that there were several grammatical errors found in their writing during the intervention study. Since they saw these grammatical mistakes in their written drafts, they developed an opinion that grammar is an essential area. In addition to grammatical issues, they wanted to improve in how to organize ideas in an essay properly. One student explained that he had never heard of ‘topic sentence’ and ‘supporting sentences’. He also added that he used to just write something without knowing whether they were relevant in that context or not. Thus, the students felt that grammatical errors and organization of ideas were of more concern for them.

The following chart is about how many students were familiar with writing conferences.

**Figure 18: students familiar with conferences**

In response to the question, as shown in the above chart, all the students who participated in the informal discussions answered that they did not know about it before they came and participated in this experimental study. So it can be concluded that they were not familiar with writing conferences and it was the first time they heard and participated.
4.4 Analysis of the Informal Discussions with Teachers

To conduct informal discussions with teachers, six teachers were chosen from the college where the study was carried out. The purpose of informal discussions with the teachers was to find out the teachers’ perceptions on giving feedback and conducting writing conferences with students. During the intervention study, it was found that these teachers and students were not aware of writing conferences. Moreover, the students informed the researcher that their teachers rarely gave them feedback. So this information was a great help for the researcher to discuss with the teachers to find out the reasons for not providing feedback.

At the outset, it was tried to find out which language skills were given more importance in their teaching. The chart below describes teachers’ preference of language skills for teaching at engineering colleges. The numbers shown in the chart are number of teachers who responded.

![Figure 19: most important language skill](image)

**Figure 19: most important language skill**
The responses were taken from the six teachers during the informal discussions. When asked about their opinions on which language skill should be considered the most important for engineering students, the majority of the teachers responded that speaking was most important for engineering students. However, one teacher gave his opinion that both speaking and writing were important skills to be taught at engineering colleges. It is perhaps because of the fact that some passed out engineering students had not been able to perform well in their job interviews due to lack of fluency. It was found that many teachers and students consider speaking skill as the most important skill for them to teach and learn. Though there was importance attached to writing in their academics as well as in professional life, it seemed that they did not understand the importance of writing skills. The teachers’ perceptions on teaching writing play a vital role in giving feedback on their students’ writing. Unless one recognizes the importance of something, he/she cannot focus on that particular thing. Teachers consider speaking as more important than writing; as a result it leads to neglecting writing skill. It may be concluded that their perception may be one of the reasons why many teachers do not give feedback on students’ written drafts.

When asked about their feedback practices, teachers responded that giving feedback was very important but it was difficult for them to spend such a long time on students’ written drafts. One teacher said that the teachers who were working at engineering colleges did not have sufficient time to read and correct their students’ drafts. According to them, the time was main factor which does not permit them to go through students’ writing to provide feedback and ask for a revision. They gave a number of reasons for insufficient time i.e. vast syllabus given by the JNTU Hyderabad, heavy workload and non-teaching
works like students’ counseling and other responsibilities they had to take up as a part of their job. Everyone commonly complained that the time they spent on teaching was very little but maximum time was spent on works other than teaching. They said there were many reasons but they did not want to disclose. Since they had to depend on their jobs, they could not expose everything.

Then the researcher tried to explore other reasons for not providing feedback to students. One teacher explicitly said that his idea of giving feedback was to show only the students’ mistakes on their written drafts. He also expressed that he did not know how to provide teacher comments on students writing. So many teachers were not able to give feedback because some of them did not know how to give comments.

The next question was about writing conferences. At first the researcher tried to know how many of them knew about writing conferences. The answer from all the teachers was ‘no’. The teachers never heard about the writing conferences at any point of time. Probably this was the new area for them. But these teachers were present while the intervention study was going on and felt happy to see the students’ participation and improvement in their writing. They said that it was great to see the students’ active participation in writing activities.

When asked about their perceptions on the use of the writing conferences to develop writing skills for engineering students, the teachers gave their opinions. A teacher expressed his views by saying that it was a fantastic method of giving feedback to help students especially who were dull and introverts. According to him it helped the students to take teachers help and suggestions on their writing to make a good piece of writing.
Some students never approached him before for any kind of help or advice regarding their writing. The same students were happy to meet the researcher to finetune their written drafts. He also added that as their drafts were improving, the happiness was clearly seen on their faces. So writing conferences made the students to come to the teacher without any kind of hesitation. It created a platform for them to share their views and learn something in a small group. Introverts even came up with different doubts to discuss with the teacher and get their clarified. Another teacher said that at first he thought that it would not help their students because they might not come with doubts to discuss with the teacher-researcher. Surprisingly, many students spent much time to share their views, ask for clarifications, and listen to the other group members and the teachers. For him it was a nice experience to see his students in such an active participation. So, writing conferences gave a nice experience to the students who had participated.

One teacher said that it was useful and interesting but it was also a time-consuming activity. So there was no doubt that it might waste the valuable time of both teachers and students. According to him, practically it is difficult to implement. He also said that he would get a little time for teaching and make students ready for semester examinations. Unless students prepare well, they cannot write well. It seems they worry about semester examinations more than the students’ improvement. When asked to know why the teachers worry about the semester examinations, they said the teachers’ performance was assessed by the semester results. If one gets better results in his subject, he/she is considered as a sincere and hard working teacher. The teachers, who fetch good results in their concerned subject, get increments and promotions. There is no doubt that administrative issues can influence the performance of the teachers. At this stage,
teachers obviously focus on getting good results because it helps them to grow financially.

4.5 Measuring the Growth

The analysis of the writing tasks showed that there was not much improvement across these two tasks which became six drafts. However, the analysis also revealed that the students had attempted to write on their own. Though there were problems in their writing, the best part of the study was that they tried their best to write something. In order to capture the growth they achieved in individual writing, it was necessary to analyze in detail the individual essays written by the students. To do this, two kinds of analysis were undertaken. One was a quantitative, non-parametric analysis based on un-grouped and grouped frequency tables of three sets of test scores. This was supported by a mean, median, mode of analysis. The other analysis was a qualitative one, which attempted to compare and contrast the scripts of the students, who were seen as representatives of the group. The analysis used basic linguistic categories like vocabulary, spelling, punctuation and nature of linkers used.

4.5.1 Quantitative Analysis

The test scores of the 30 students who did all the three round of individual writing are presented in the table below in the form of an un-grouped frequency table. It needs to be remembered that the pre-test and post-test were evaluated and awarded marks by two teachers; the average of these two scores is presented below. A quick examination shows that there is growth in the students’ writing because there is a change in their scores. The
highest score in the pre-test was 6 marks out of 10 achieved by 4 students, whereas the highest score in the post-test was 8 out of 10. There were two students who scored 8 marks in the post-test.

### 4.5.2 Comparison of Pre-test and Post-test Scores

To arrive at the conclusions about the students’ improvement in their writing, the pre-test and the post-test scores were compared. Mean, median and mode were used as statistical tool to measure the improvement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Pre-test scores</th>
<th>Post-test scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 11: pre-test and post-test scores

In order to capture this growth in a more graphic manner, the same information is presented in the form of grouped frequency chart.
The analysis shows that there is comparatively a favorable change recorded in the post-test scores. No student has got 2 marks in the post-test. Moreover, there were five students who got 3 marks in the pre-test but the number was reduced to 2 who got 3
marks. In addition to these, there were none in the pre-test, who got eight marks. It was recorded that there were two students who 8 marks.

Similarly, the mean score also increased from 4.2% to 5.8 % and that the median score also increased from 4.5 to 6. There was improvement in mode also which indicates the frequently occurred number. The mode was 5 in the pre-test but it was moved to 6 in the post-test. This was a clear indication for the students’ growth in terms of their scores and performance in writing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Mode</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-test</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-test</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 12 percent of mean median mode

4.5.3 Qualitative Analysis

As stated earlier in the section, in order to capture individual growth in writing, three scripts have been analyzed. There three scripts represent, in a sense, these three levels of proficiency in that class. The three students were those whose marks were the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>test</th>
<th>Pre-test scores</th>
<th>Post-test scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student A</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student B</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student c</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 13 three students’ scores
The following categories were used for the analysis:

a) Number of paragraphs/sentences
b) Nature of topic sentences
c) Nature of linkers
d) Punctuation

The table below shows that one student has written all the essays with the same number of sentences, whereas the other two exhibit a different pattern. One of them has decreased and then increased the number of sentences, while in the second draft has been able to progressively write more sentences. This could be an indication of the nature of growth. Student C is the one who shows the most growth shown in the table above. His marks increased from a basic 2 to 5, all in short period of time.

The number of paragraphs written by these students again shows differing patterns. Student A has actually decreased the number of paragraphs by one in her final essay. Students B and C have been able to write more as time progressed, and they have been become comfortable with writing in English.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Student A</th>
<th>Student B</th>
<th>Student C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Test</td>
<td>T1</td>
<td>T2</td>
<td>T1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of sentences</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of paragraphs</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 14 students number of paragraphs and sentences in pre-test and post-test
Nature of topic sentences

Writing a topic sentence is not easy for many students. Some students never heard about the topic sentences but they usually write something based on their knowledge. The following analysis is about how the students write topic sentences in the both pre-test and post-test.

Student A: the topic sentences written by this student in the pre-test are all general in nature. For example, Student A wrote some topic sentences in the pre-test. They are:

1. “Nowadays Facebook is waste but Whatsapp best”.
2. “Facebook helps students to find friends”
3. “In India most students spend time with Facebook”

These are the sentences Student A used in the pre-test. When he wrote the essay on ‘Facebook’ He did not know about formulating a topic sentence to write a paragraph. The same student was able to write topic sentences in a better way in the post-test. They are:

1. “Studying in private schools have some benefits”
2. “Private schools work systematically.”
3. “Day by day, the value of government schools is decreasing”.
4. “People say private education may have some bad effects on children”.

The above examples show that the Student A has displayed a tremendous growth in terms of writing topic sentences. Formulating these topic sentences helped the student to add supporting ideas systematically. There was change because he had planed before hand for
every paragraph. In the same way, the other students were also able to improve in writing topic sentences.

**Student B:** This student wrote the following sentences in the pre-test.

1. “*In our country Facebook is fashion for students*”.
2. “*Facebook is disturbing students by sending messages and chats.*”
3. “*Facebook is like time wasting for us*”
4. “*Why Facebook instead of course book?*”

Some ideas he expressed in the above sentences are not coherent and not upto the mark. Though he could not perform well in the pre-test, he did his best in the post-test. He wrote some topic sentences coherently and meaningfully. For example;

1. “*People believe that private schools provide better education*”.
2. “*Students of private schools are provided with the best environment*”
3. “*Public school do not have good infrastructure.*”
4. “*Many people accuse private schools of discriminating students to the social status.*”
5. “*Studying at private school is a costly affair.*”

The above performance of the student shows that Student B was able to write topic sentences in a better way. At first he was not able to write on any idea clearly but in the post-test his performance was improved.
Nature of Linkers

The growth captured in the analysis of the topic sentences used by the three students is reflected in their use of linkers. The students used very few linkers in the pre-test but in the post-test, the range of linkers increased. Though, the range of linkers was very few, it was a considerable change in their style of writing. The following table describes the linkers they used in the pre-test and post-test.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Linkers used in pre-test</th>
<th>Linkers used in post-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student A</td>
<td>but, and, since, also, moreover, finally,</td>
<td>Though, since, to summarise, so, moreover, as well as, firstly, secondly,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student B</td>
<td>And, but, firstly, so, still</td>
<td>Not only but also, since, too, in addition, still, and, secondly,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student C</td>
<td>Instead, though, and, but. although</td>
<td>In spite of, yet, however, Besides, since, but, next, And, initially,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 15 linkers used by students

The above table describes the linkers the three students used in both the pre-test and post-test. There was a considerable difference in using linkers at in the pre-test. Student A used only six linkers in the pre-test but nine linkers such as ‘to summarize’, ‘firstly’ and
‘as well as’. So the growth can be seen in terms of the linkers. In the same way, Student B also used five linkers in the pre-test, seven in the post-test. Similarly, Student C got improved from five linkers to nine in the post-test.

**Punctuation**

Punctuations were common in these students writing. The numbers of errors were reduced by the time they wrote the post-test. Student A had made a several mistakes in using capital letters. Moreover, there were symbols in his essay’

For example:

*Error:* Nowadays Facebook is waste but Whatsapp Best. Peoples like to Spend time on their Phones

Almost all the students made these types of mistakes. The reason could be that they did not have awareness about the importance of punctuation marks in writing.

**4.6 Summary**

The analysis of the main study clearly shows that there is a considerable difference in the performance of both the groups. The use of writing conferences was significant after every redraft among the students. This suggests that the use of the writing conferencing to provide feedback on students’ writing has an impact on the overall development of the students’ writing.