

Psycho-social environment of Secondary Schools with reference to Academic Achievement

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Introduction

Environment is complex and consists of many contexts such as school, home and community. All of these contexts have an impact on the development and must be taken into consideration when identifying factors that inhibit or support social and emotional development. In the changing scenario, children and adolescents spend a significant part of their life in school. This makes the school environment a common point of entry to provide services to children across many age groups (Farmer et al, 2003).

Psycho-social environment is an important avenue for improving the school environment and nurturing positive relationships between and among students and staff. It is a process through which we learn to recognize and manage emotions, care about others, make good decisions, behave ethically and responsibly, develop positive relationships, and avoid negative behaviors (Elias et al. 1997). It is the process through which students enhance their ability to integrate thinking, feeling, and behaving in order to achieve important life tasks.

In the school learning context, the process for integrating thinking, feeling and behaviour to achieve important social/life tasks, meet personal and social needs and develop the skills are found necessary to become a productive and contributing member of society.

Rationale

Multiple, robust research studies in recent years demonstrate that strong social and emotional skills facilitate academic development, enhancing a student's success both at school and in the life pursuits that follow. Educators, researchers and policy makers are increasingly aware of the importance of Psycho-social environment as an integral part of education. This strategic inclusion will ensure that the school's main purpose and mission– 'development of the whole person (spiritually, intellectually, morally, physically, socially and emotionally)' is fulfilled.

Statement of problem

The present study is stated as, *Psycho-social environment of Secondary School with reference to Academic Achievement.*

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Objectives of the Study

The investigator framed the following specific objectives related to the present study:

1. To study the relationship between Psycho-social environment and Academic Achievement of secondary school students.
2. To compare the mean score of Psycho-social environment of school with respect to gender.
3. To compare the mean score of Psycho-social environment of school with respect to medium of instruction.
4. To compare the mean score of Psycho-social environment of school with respect to type of school management.

Method of study

In the present study, the investigator has adopted descriptive survey method to collect the data for analysis and its interpretations based on results.

Population and Sample of the Study

The population of the study consisted of all the students from classes 6th, 7th and 8th studying in aided and unaided co-educational secondary schools of Varanasi city. In present study, quota sampling technique was used to draw a representative sample for the study. Total 240 students were selected from both aided and unaided coeducational secondary schools. So in this study, total 480 secondary school students from co-educational schools were selected as sample.

Tool used

The investigator of the present study used the School Learning Environment Questionnaire (SLEQ) tool for the data collection.

Statistical Techniques Used

For the analysis of the data product moment correlation coefficient and descriptive statistics such as Mean and SD were used.

Findings and Result

Table 1: Showing Correlation between Psycho-social environment and Academic Achievement of secondary school students.

S No	Variables	N	r	Table Value
1	Psycho-social environment and Academic Achievement	480	0.328*	0.09

* Significant at .05 level

Table 1, shows that there is a positive relationship ($r=0.328$) between Psycho-social environment of school and academic achievement of students. The school

having poor Psycho-social environment leads to continuous tensions and conflicts among the teachers, between the head of the institution and teachers which is directly or indirectly passed on to the students. Improvement in school environment motivates the students to acquire higher moral values and academics performance. In Australia and the United Kingdom, factors like relationships between teachers and students in classrooms, opportunities for student participation and responsibility, and support structures for teachers, have consistently shown to be associated with student progress (Patton et al, 2000). Macintosh theorizes that "positive reactions to school may increase the likelihood that students will stay in school longer, develop a commitment to learning, and use the institution to their advantage". Thus, a positive, supportive climate at school can make a critical contribution to the academic achievement.

Table 2: Showing Comparison of Mean Scores of Psycho-social environment of school with respect to Gender

Variable	Girls (240)		Boys (240)	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Psycho-social environment of school	9.22	1.79	10.1	1.54

The table 2 shows the comparison of mean scores of Psycho-social environment of school with respect to Gender. The result reveals that boys mean score was higher (10.1) than girls (9.22). It may be concluded from the result that boys perceive better Psycho-social environment than girls.

Table 3: Showing comparison of Mean Scores of Psycho-social environment of school with respect to Medium of Instruction

Variable	Hindi medium school (240)		English medium school (240)	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Psycho-social environment of school	9.3	1.4	10.9	0.77

Comparison of mean scores of Psycho-social environment of school with respect to medium of instruction is shown in table 3. The result reveals that mean score of

Hindi medium schools was lower (9.3) than that of English medium schools (10.9). It may be concluded that students studying in English medium schools perceive better Psycho-social environment i.e better facilities, infrastructure and support from teachers and classmates which in turn enhances their learning.

Table 4: Comparison of Mean Scores of Psycho-social environment of school with respect to Type of School Management

Variable	Aided schools (240)		Unaided schools (240)	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Psycho-social environment of school	8.24	1.12	11.0	0.8

Comparison of mean scores of Psycho-social environment of school with respect to Type of School management is shown in table 4. The result reveals that mean score of aided schools was lower (8.24) than that of unaided schools (11.0). It may be concluded from the result that Psycho-social environment of unaided schools are better as compared to aided schools. The reasons which may be attributed to these results perceiving favorable to highly favorable socio-emotional school climate may be that now a days there is a competition amongst the schools to attract more number of the students. The attraction can only be created by providing quality facilities for the overall development of the child in all spheres, that is, not only education but also extracurricular activities. Comparatively the private schools offer more facilities than government schools for their survival, which improves the perception of students toward the school environment of private schools.

Conclusion

A health-promoting and child-friendly school gives children emotional and social support and helps them acquire the confidence they need to speak freely about the school and their life within it. An important component of emotional and social well-being is feeling accepted for who you are. Feeling excluded or less than equal (especially for reasons that are beyond control) is damaging self-esteem and dignity. Students who are treated as equals and believe that the chance of success is as accessible to them as to the next person, are not only more likely to reach their intellectual potential but will value their school for its friendly and supportive environment and be more tolerant of others who are 'different'. Schools need to find their own ways to acknowledge and welcome ethnic,

religious and cultural diversity, as well as those who have special needs due to disability, poverty or being orphaned.

References

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