School Environment and Academic Achievement of Children

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Abstract—*One of the most important outcomes of any educational set up is achievement of the students. Depending on the level of achievement individuals are characterized as high achievers, average achievers and low achievers. Many studies indicate that the academic achievement is dependent on variables like school/college set up and its organization, socio economic status of the students, educational aspirations, well-adjusted behavior, etc. Besides, these personal characters, vocational aspirations, creativity, intelligence attitude, values, etc. also influence it.School environment plays a major role. Hence this study is confined only to identify the relationship of achievement with school environment. Hence, in view of the background as described above, the problem under study is taken.*
In the present study an attempt was made to investigate the strength of dimensions of School environment and the academic achievement. The study was carried with students studying I class X and were selected randomly. The data was collected using the standardized tool. To find out the strength of dimensions of school and academic achievement, Mean, SD and Percentage (Under Various Qualitative Norm Groups as per the Test Manual were calculated.

Keywords: *School Environment. Academic Achievement.*

Introduction

The problem of predicting high school success has probably received more public attention than any other single problem in education. It is assuming greater importance day by day. One reason for this is the tremendous growth in the student population. The increase has out stripped the expansion of facilities, consequently heightening the competition for admission, at least in the prestigious urban schools, college and universities .Academic achievement is the prime and perennial responsibility of a school or any other educational institution established by the society to promote wholesome scholastic growth and development of a child .Students acquire knowledge and develop skills in the school environment, and become competent in subjects which they study during academic session .Stagner (1962) defined achievement as a degree of proficiency or progress made by pupils in the mastery of school subjects. According to Crow and Crow (1969) achievements refers to the extent to which a learner gets profit from instructions in a given area of learning i.e. achievement is reflected by the extent to which knowledge or skill has been acquired by a person from the training

imparted to him. Good (1973) in Dictionary of Education has defined academic achievement as 'knowledge attained skills developed in the school subjects, usually designated by the test scores or by works assigned by the teacher or both'. Saxena and Dwivedi (1979) consider that the term scholastic achievement refers to the attainment or accomplishment in the field where a subject receives some instruction or training. Similarly, school which provide effective teaching learning environment in school contributes more to the pupil's achievement than any other factor.

Operational Definitions of the Key Terms Used:

Academic Achievement-It refers to the scholastic achievement of the students at the end of an educational program. It is reflected in terms of the percentage of marks obtained by class X students in the H.S.L.C. Exam.

School Environment: - It refers to the psycho-social climate of schools as perceived by the pupils. It provides a measure of the quality and quantity of the cognitive, emotional and social support that has been available to the students during their school life in terms of teachers-pupil interactions. School Environment consists the following six dimensions:

(i) Creative Stimulation- It refers to "teacher's activities to provide conditions and opportunities to stimulate creative thinking"

(ii) Cognitive Encouragement- It implies "teacher's behavior to stimulate cognitive development of student by encouraging his actions or behaviors".

(iii) Permissiveness- It indicates "a school climate in which students are provided opportunities to express their views freely and act according to their desires with no interruption from teachers".

(iv) Acceptance- It implies "a measure of teacher's unconditional love, recognizing that students have the right to express feelings, to uniqueness, and to be autonomous individuals. Teachers accept the feelings of students in a non-threatening manner".

(v) Rejection- It refers to "a school climate in which teachers do not accord recognition to student's rights to deviate, act freely and be autonomous person".

(vi) Control- It indicates "autocratic atmosphere of the school in which several restriction are imposed on students to discipline term".

Objectives of the Study:

(i) To find out the strength of the school environment with respect to its various dimensions as perceived by class X students.

(ii) To suggests the measures to improve the school environment

Methodology

Sample: The sample for the present study consist of 472 students studying in class X which were selected randomly by giving fair representation to all types of schools.

Tool: The School Environment Inventory (SEI) constructed by Karuna Shankar Mishra have been used which measures school environment with respect to different dimensions Viz: Creative Stimulation, Cognitive encouragement, Permissiveness, Acceptance, Rejection and Control.

Statistical Technique Used: The following are the statistical techniques were used Mean

Standard Deviation, Percentage

Analysis and Interpretation

(ii) Strength of School Environment.

For each dimensions of school environment Mean, SD and percentage (Under Various Qualitative Norm) were calculated.

A. Creative Stimulation:

To find out the strength of Creative Stimulation, Mean, SD and Percentage (Under Various Qualitative Norm Groups as per the test manual) were calculated. The same is given below in Table 2 A.

Table 2 A: Showing Mean, SD and percentage Under Various Qualitative Norm Groups as Perceived by Class X Students. (N=472)

Raw Score	N	M	SD	Percentage	Qualitative Norm AS Per Manual
57 above	120	62.5	4.43	25.42%	High
38 to 56	314	48.49	4.97	66.53%	Average
0 to 37	38	31.47	5.88	8.05%	Low

The research findings with regards to the strength of school environment and its Creative Stimulation shows that the majority of the students (66.53%) perceive that the creative stimulation at school environment as average followed by some students (25.42%) who perceive the same as high and few students (8.05%) as low. This shows that the creative

stimulation as perceived by the students, by and large, is average.

B. Cognitive Encouragement:

To find out the strength of Cognitive Encouragement, Mean, SD and Percentage (Under Various Qualitative Norm Groups as per the test manual) were calculated. The same is given below in Table 2 B.

Table 2 B: Showing Mean, SD and percentage Under Various Qualitative Norm Groups as Perceived by Class X Students. (N=472)

Raw Score	N	M	SD	Percentage	Qualitative Norm AS Per Manual
33 above	201	36.15	2.26	42.58%	High
27 to 32	209	29.9	1.65	44.28%	Average
0 to 26	62	20.71	5.13	13.14%	Low

The research findings with regards to the strength of school environment and Cognitive Encouragement shows that the majority of the students (44.28%) perceive that the cognitive encouragement at school environment as average followed by some students (42.58%) who perceive the same as high and few students (13.14%) as low. This shows that the cognitive encouragement as perceived by the students, by and large, is average.

C. Acceptance and Caring.

To find out the strength of Acceptance and Caring, Mean, SD and Percentage (Under Various Qualitative Norm Groups as per the test manual) were calculated as given below in Table 2 C.

Table 2 C: Showing Mean, SD and percentage Under Various Qualitative Norm Groups as Perceived by Class X Students. (N=472)

Raw Score	N	M	SD	Percentage	Qualitative Norm AS Per Manual
29 above	236	31.87	2.32	50%	High
19 to 28	190	24.6	2.71	40.25%	Average
0 to 18	46	14.5	3.51	9.75%	Low

The research findings with regards to the strength of school environment and Acceptance and Caring shows that the majority of the students (50%) perceive that the nature of acceptance and caring at school as high followed by some students (40.25%) who perceive the same as average and few students (9.75%) as low. This shows that the cognitive encouragement of the home environment as perceived by the students, by and large, is high.

D. Permissiveness:

To find out the strength of permissiveness, Mean, SD and Percentage (Under Various Qualitative Norm Groups as per the test manual) were calculated as given below in Table 2 D.

Table 2 D: Showing Mean, SD and percentage Under Various Qualitative Norm Groups as Perceived by Class X Students. (N=472)

Raw Score	N	M	SD	Percentage	Qualitative Norm AS Per Manual
25 above	202	28.57	2.71	42.8%	High
15 to 24	232	20.72	2.65	49.15%	Average
0 to 14	38	11.79	2.39	8.05%	Low

The research findings with regards to the strength of school environment and Permissiveness shows that the majority of the students (49.15%) perceive that the permissiveness at school as average followed by some students (42.8%) who perceive the same as high and few students (8.05%) as low. This shows that the permissiveness of the home environment as perceived by the students, by and large, is high.

E. Rejection:

To find out the strength of rejection, Mean, SD and Percentage (Under Various Qualitative Norm Groups as per the test manual) were calculated. The same is given below in Table 2 E.

Table 2 E: Showing Mean, SD and percentage Under Various Qualitative Norm Groups as Perceived by Class X Students. (N=472)

Raw Score	N	M	SD	Percentage	Qualitative Norm AS Per Manual
20 above	116	23.40	3.26	24.58%	High
14 to 19	256	16.25	1.63	54.23%	Average
0 to 13	100	10.17	2.8	21.19%	Low

The research findings with regards to the strength of school environment and Rejection shows that the majority of the students (54.23%) perceive that the rejection at school as average followed by some students (24.58%) who perceive the same as high and few students (21.19%) as low. This shows that the rejection of the home environment as perceived by the students, by and large, is average.

F. Control:

To find out the strength of control, Mean, SD and Percentage (Under Various Qualitative Norm Groups as per the test manual) were calculated. The same is given below in table 2 F.

Table 2 F: Showing Mean, SD and Percentage Under Various Qualitative Norm Groups as Perceived by Class X Students (N=472).

Raw Score	N	M	SD	Percentage	Qualitative Norm AS Per Manual
29 above	120	31.43	2.05	25.42%	High
22 to 28	261	25.26	1.90	55.3%	Average
0 to 21	91	17.02	4.3	19.28%	Low

The research findings with regards to the strength of school environment and Control shows that the majority of the students (55.29%) perceive that the control at school as average followed by some students (25.43%) who perceive the same as high and few students (19.28%) as low. This shows that the control of the home environment as perceived by the students, by and large, is average.

(iii) Suggestions

To strengthen the quality of school environment so that the same may help in enhancing the academic achievement of children

- School should provide favorable conditions and opportunities to stimulate creative thinking in the school.

- Children should get more parental encouragement and a supportive home environment.

- There should be good school climate where students will get the opportunities to express their views freely and act according to their desires with no interruption from teachers.

- Teachers in school should provide unconditional love, accept them with their unique needs and interests, give them right to express their feelings and accept their feelings in a non-threatening manner.

- To achieve more the students need not to worry if they were rejected in the school.

- To achieve more, the students need not to worry if several restrictions are imposed to discipline the students.

Conclusion

In the present study various dimensions of school environment, like creative stimulation, cognitive encouragement, acceptance, rejection, control etc. constitute important determinant of academic achievement. The knowledge of various school dimensions contributing to academic achievement may be useful to the teachers and educators to understand those who are academically low in their performance and influence pupil's academic achievement. Therefore it becomes necessary that all the dimensions of school environment should be improved to enhance the academic achievement of the school children.

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