



A STUDY PSYCHO-SOCIAL CORRELATES OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF SECONDARY LEVEL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Education competence in the present world is interwoven with the progress of every society. The most significant agency of education is school, where an individual should learn not only academics but to adjust with the surrounding in specific and society at large. The social standing of an individual is strongly characterized by the predominant features of his or her family background. School achievements are considered to be the most important in determining the career of a student. Analysis of data collected shows that the adjustment pattern is similar among students in boys, girls and co-education state board schools at the secondary level. It is also further seen that the co-education students are better than the boys in the socio-economic status of state board schools. It is also concluded from the study that co-education students are better than boys and girls in their academic achievement of state board schools. This can be due to the competitive spirit between the opposite genders with each of them trying to perform better than the other.

Keywords: Adjustment Pattern, Socio-economic Status, Academic achievement, Secondary level.

INTRODUCTION

Education competence in the present world is interwoven with the progress of every society. Educationists have sensitized people in comprehending that education serves as knowledge inputs, for the individual to use his potentials as a vital resource, in the direction of progress to meet the demands of the society. Learning in a classroom depends a great deal on the structure and pattern of inter-personal relationship particularly pupil-pupil relationship, existing at a given point of time within the learning group. According to the modern concept of education, best adjustment is the ultimate goal of education. The most significant agency of education is school, where an individual should learn to adjust. Good adjustment makes the

students proud and self- satisfaction motivates them for future success, encourages them to be of independent thinking and builds their self- confidence.

Adjustment means reaction to the demands and pressures of social environment imposed upon an individual. The personality of a child develops in a continuous process of interaction with his family environment. Adjustment may be defined in several ways. In the words of Shaffer (1991), adjustment is the process by which a living organism maintains a balance between its needs and the circumstances that influence the satisfaction of these needs. According to Newman and Newman (1981), the concept of adjustment refers to active, creative efforts to live effectively. This requires gaining skills through interaction with one s world acquiring a degree of control over one s daily life successfully meeting life s challenges, self understanding and the ability to make accurate judgments about people and places.

The ultimate aim of education is to train the youth to make proper adjustments to the different types of environment in which they have to live. Psychologists and psychiatrists have brought to light on the basis of their researches that making proper adjustments to the changing nature of the environment is the most important prerequisite condition for a happy and successful life. An individual is not born adjusted or maladjusted.

It is as his physical, mental and emotional potentialities are influenced and directed by the factors of the environment in which he finds himself adjusted or maladjusted. The social standing of an individual is strongly characterized by the predominant features of his or her family background. Academic achievement of a student is greatly influenced by several factors such as attitude, teacher effectiveness, adjusting ability, socio-economic status, home and school environment. Adolescence is the crucial stage where adjustment changes rapidly fluctuate; social standing influence the peer group one is in. The above said factors have a bearing on achievement. Hence, a need is felt to study the relationship between adjustment pattern, socio-economic status and achievement among students at the secondary level.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

- Ganai and others (2000) conducted a study with a sample of 80 students at the higher secondary level in Baramulla District. The findings of the study revealed that the male and female adolescents differ significantly on mental health. However the two groups showed no difference in academic achievement. Further the two groups showed difference on various dimensions of the Mental Health Battery including Emotional Stability (ES), Overall Adjustment (OA), Security Insecurity (SI) and General Intelligence. The main difference favored the male adolescents in case of these dimensions. However, the two groups showed no difference in Autonomy (AY) and Self-concept dimension (SC). Based on the findings of the study recommendations were made to provide guidance and counseling facilities in the higher secondary schools of Baramulla District.

- Poor school adjustment leads to low academic achievement, behavioral problems, discordant educational aspirations and even school dropout. The study by Adhiambo and others (2001) investigated the levels of school adjustment and its relationship with academic achievement. Gender differences in school adjustment were also examined. A cross-sectional research design was employed. The sample consisted of 450 secondary school students and the results showed no significant differences between girls and boys in school adjustment and significant differences between high achievers and low achievers in dedication, absorption, engagement and school adjustment.
- Hodges (1980), White (1982), Guestafson (1992), Million (1993) and Minakshi (2000) have all reported socio-economic status of the family condition to be significantly correlated with achievement of students. Mc Neal (2000), Jeynes (2002) and Eamon (2005) have also pointed out that socio-economic status has overridden other educational influences such as, family size, parental involvements and educational level of the parents.
- The study conducted by Mahmood Shah and others (2000) investigated the impact of socio-economic status of family on the academic achievements of students on two important aspects. Firstly, it studied the relationship between socio-economic status of the family and academic achievements of their family members. Secondly, it investigated the impact of socio-economic status on the academic achievements of children. For this study, eight colleges and two higher secondary schools were selected from Derai Ismail Khan District. A sample of 20 students was selected from each college and school. The findings showed positive and strong correlation between SES and academic achievements of the children.
- In the study conducted by Mih il Teodor (2012), investigating the influence of socio-economic status on school performance, it is concluded that socio-economic status has a significant impact on school performance and it is seen as a good indicator of school performance. The sample comprised a group of 100 young students aged between 18 and 24 years old being in their fourth year of high school. The tools used were Socio-economic Status Questionnaire (Burt verde & Mih il , 2011) to measure the socio-economic status. In order to measure academic performance, the average grades of the students were taken. After the results were analyzed, it was seen that school performance is, indeed, influenced by the hours spent learning, free time, the presence of siblings in the family and the family home place, (in the rural or urban area), all of which are metrics for socio-economic status.

CRITIQUE

Review of the related study provides a strong background for initiating an investigation about adjustment pattern, socio-economic status and achievement among students at the secondary level. The review helps in

locating comparative data useful in the interpretation of results. From the review collected, it is seen that a number of studies have been undertaken to assess the relationship between adjustment and academic achievement and socio- economic status and academic achievement separately but there is a dearth of studies on all the above mentioned variables put together. Hence the investigator felt the need to undertake this study.

HYPOTHESIS

- There will be a significant relationship between the select variables among students at the secondary level.
- There will be no significant difference between boys, girls and co-education students of the state board at the secondary level with respect to the select variables.

METHODOLOGY

The study involves multiple variables necessitating multiple permutations and combinations. The investigators took utmost care to establish a sound research methodology, linking psychological and educational variables pertaining to academic achievement. The variables identified have been classified hereunder as independent, dependent, intermediate and control.

THE VARIABLES

- Independent: Adjustment Pattern and Socio-economic Status
- Dependent: Academic Achievement
- Controlled: Age - 12-14 years, Level of Education - Secondary level, Environment Level Urban, Type of Board - State board

POPULATION AND SAMPLE SELECTION

The target population for the present study is the students at the secondary level in state board schools. Keeping in view, the objectives of the study, 96 students at the secondary level in state board schools are selected randomly.

MEASURE OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

The marks scored by the students in the half-yearly examination are taken as a measure of academic achievement.

Pilot Study The pilot study is done with 30 subjects randomly chosen from schools belonging to State board in Chennai. The selected questionnaires, namely, Adjustment Pattern Inventory (Bhattacharya and

others, 1967) and Vasanthi s Adaptation of Kuppaswami s Socio-Economic Scale (Vasanthi, 1991) are given to the subjects.

- **Validity:** The instruments are given to experts for their judgment of relevance and irrelevance. After careful examination of the opinion by the selected experts, the content validity for all the instruments is established.
- **Reliability:** Reliability of the instruments is established using the Cronbach s Alpha method (Cronbach, 1951), as it is a more robust test of reliability compared to the simple test-retest method or parallel form reliability. The reliability estimated for Adjustment Pattern Inventory (Bhattacharya and others, 1967) is 0.76 and Vasanthi s Adaptation of Kuppaswami s Socio-Economic Scale (Vasanthi, 1991) is 0.81.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

It is evident from Table-1, that though adjustment pattern and socio-economic status are significantly positively correlated with each other, adjustment pattern does not correlate significantly with academic achievement. On the other hand, socio-economic status and academic achievement are positively correlated with each other significantly.

In Table-2, from the F-ratio value it is seen that adjustment pattern does not differ significantly among students in boys, girls and co-education state board schools at the secondary level. The analysis of variance, pertaining to socio-economic status of students in boys, girls and co-education state board schools at the secondary level, it is seen that a significant difference exists between the students (Table-3).

In order to establish the actual degree of difference between the students belonging to different types of gender, namely, boys, girls and co-education schools of the state board at the secondary level, critical ratios are worked out and the actual difference between the mean scores are established.

Students have several problems peculiar to themselves and to the academic institutions they are studying. Academic adjustment has been often defined as the adjustment of the students as measured through their scholastic success. This is only a narrow view.

In the present investigation, it is seen that the adjustment pattern is similar among students in boys, girls and co-education state board schools at the secondary level. This may be attributed to the fact that students from state board schools irrespective of their gender encounter the same class environment with a uniform syllabi and evaluation pattern as prescribed by the state government. They are tuned to working in an almost similar way and hence their adjustment pattern is similar too. It is also further seen that the co-

education students are better than the boys in the socio-economic status of state board schools at the secondary level.

Table.1 Analysis of Correlation among Select Variables for Students in State Board Schools at the Secondary Level

Adjustment Pattern	Adjustment Pattern	Socio-economic Status	Academic Achievement
	1	0.18**	0.01
Socio-economic Status	–	1	0.17**
Academic Achievement	–	–	1

Table.2 Analysis of Variance of Adjustment Pattern among Students in Boys, Girls and Co education State Board Schools at the Secondary Level

Source of variation	df	Sum of squares	Mean of sum of squares	F-ratio
Between groups	2	13.32	6.66	0.02 ^{NS}
Within groups	93	25584.17	275.11	
Total	95	25597.49		

NS-Not Significant

Table.3 Analysis of Variance of Socio-economic Status among Students in Boys, Girls and Co-education State Board Schools at the Secondary Level

Source of variation	df	Sum of squares	Mean of sum of squares	F-ratio
Between groups	2	2.76	1.38	4.88**
Within groups	93	26.29	0.28	
Total	95	29.05		

** Significant at 0.01 level

It is also concluded from the study that co- education students are better than boys and girls in their academic achievement of state board schools at the secondary level. At the secondary level, the students have to concentrate more and students belonging to co-education schools achieve better. This can be due to the competitive spirit between the opposite genders with each of them trying to perform better than the other. These students in co-education schools thus always seem to perform better in their academics than their counterparts in single gender schools.

CONCLUSION

An adjustment problem arises when a person confronts a demand made by his environment which he cannot fulfill. Adjustment may be described as a state of harmony between the needs, abilities and resources of a person on one hand and the conditions obtaining from his environment on the other. There are many factors within and without that have a bearing on the achievement of the individual. Attitudes begin to take deep roots from the adolescent stage and remain almost unchangeable through the life span. Parents and teachers have thus a crucial role to play in creating a conducive environment for children.

Future studies can be extended to other boards of education, namely the matriculation and central board schools. Studies pertaining to these variables can be extended to the higher secondary level also.

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