PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN RELATION TO THEIR SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Education is the primary agent of transformation towards sustainable development. People irrespective of any discrimination, rich and poor, advantaged and disadvantages, literate and illiterate, therefore, are geared to invest in education of their children. Students who attend schools with a positive, respectful climate are able to focus on learning and realize their academic, interpersonal and athletic potential. Such schools have clearly, explicitly communicated policies and procedures that set clear boundaries for respectful, nonviolent treatment of school community members and support an environment that is free of negative and harmful physical, social, emotional and intellectual language and actions. Today, good academic achievement is becoming more and more pressing for the individual to have. Academic achievement is of paramount importance, particularly in the present socio-economic and cultural contexts. The achievement score of a student indicates towards the future success of the individual. Teachers in school are the chief architect of the children. They provide affection guidance and encouragement granting children the security and social skills i.e. they needed encouragement to enterinto the world of competition. Students, who feel safe, cared for, appropriately supported and sensitively encouraged to learn in challenging and meaningful ways experience increased academic achievement. Hence, when school environment has been an inevitable part of student's achievement, the investigator has made an attempt to study the "academic achievement of public and private secondary school students in relation to their school environment".

KEYWORDS: Academic Achievement, School Environment, Private School, Public School, Student's Performance

INTRODUCTION

Education has always played a major role whenever the need for a renaissance has arisen. In the 21st century, the challenges of education are pressing towards the search for knowledge that sheds light upon possible ways of restructuring the system of education relevant to the modern needs. A modern democratic society cannot achieve its aim of economic growth, technical development and cultural advancement without fully harnessing the talents of its citizens, because enlightened citizens are said to be the most valuable assets of society, who cherish democratic values and preserves basic human freedom. People irrespective of any discrimination, rich and poor, advantaged and disadvantages, literate and illiterate, therefore, are geared to invest in education of their children. The present century has been visualized as a technologically advanced world. The mushroom growth of coaching centre both in rural and urban areas in the field of professionally rich coursed like engineering, medicine, computer application and management courses stand testimony to that effect. Parents irrespective of any socio- cultural bias offspring for highly competitive examinations for recruitment in the so-called lucrative jobs. Therefore, a high standard of academic achievement from the school years is given due to Importance. It is regarded as the potential instrument of national development.

A modern society cannot achieve its aim of economic growth, technical development and cultural advancement without fully harnessing the talents of its citizens. Educationists thus strive to develop fully the intellectual potential of the students and make efforts to see that their potentialities are fully recognized and channelized for the benefit of the individual and that of the society. So, education is the process of bringing out the talents and potentialities of an individual and to unfold the natural abilities and interest before the society. It proceeds from birth to death and schools exert greater influence in educating the child and promoting academic achievement. Therefore, the level of academic achievement of a child at any stage depends on the extent to which its natural potentialities have developed. Academic achievement is the core of the entire educational growth .It is regarded as an important goal of education. Academic achievement is the outcome of the instruction provided to the children in schools which is determined by the grades, or marks secured by the students in the examination. It generally indicates the learning outcomes of pupil which requires a series of planned and organized experiences.

Academic achievement is the prime and perennial responsibility of a school or any other educational institution established by the society to promote whole scholastic growth and development of a child. Academic achievement plays a very significant role in the attainment of the harmonious development of the child. The prediction of academic achievement has assumed enormous importance to its practical view. In our society, academic achievement is considered as a key criterion to judge one's total potentialities and capacities. It forms the main basis of admission and promotion in a class. It is also important for obtaining a degree or getting a job. Therefore it is more pressing for the individuals/students to have high academic achievement. For a student, value of academic achievement is important not only for higher education on one hand and finding valuable job on the other, but also for bringing personal satisfaction and social recognition.

Today, good academic achievement is becoming more and more pressing for the individual to have. Individual differences in abilities of achievements are reflected in the academic progress of the students even though all students are exposed to a similar educational facilities, environment, aspiration and even intelligence in the school environment. Each student may vary in respect of their academic achievements by showing different levels of competence. Such variations may be attributed to a host of factors innate as well as environmental. Further, an individual may also vary in achievement with passage of time. That is why we sometimes find students who do not maintain consistency in their academic achievement as they progress. Many a times we often find students who pass the examination, yet they fail to achieve as much as they can in terms of their abilities. This has drawn the attention of the researchers who have attempted to unravel the complex determinants of academic achievement. They have indicated that student's academic achievement depends to a large extent on their adjustment. These adjustment patterns determine the quality and efficiency of academic striving. Thus, the study of academic achievement of students has assumed a lot of significance in this modern educational system as the efficiency and deficiency of a student is chiefly determined by the quality of his academic achievement. The role of academic achievement in the educational system in particular and in the development of the nations in general is assuming greater proportion. So, there are countless numbers of studies that have been undertaken which either focused exclusively on academic achievement

In Educational system all over the world is increasingly making schools to be accountable to the taxpayers. The school is expected to provide necessary information on the performance of the school so that the public can compare the effectiveness of the school with external criteria. As a result, series of mandatory indicators have being developed by the

school system to take care of the psychosocial and academic domains. It is thus expected of the school to collect and analyze relevant data on predetermined domains and make available the findings to necessary educational agencies and the public. Such reported findings are expected to form the basis for future school planning and for improvement purpose. Most often, school engagement has been primarily measured by observable behaviours directly related to academic effort and achievement. Indicators of students' school engagement that are relatively commonly noticed in literature include participation in school- related activities, achievement of high grades, amount of time spent on homework, and rate of homework completion. Beyond these researched measures of school engagement, definitions of engagement also include affective and cognitive elements. Positive school environment is a significant factor in determining students' sense of belonging and satisfaction. It is thus, expected that students who feel connected with the school are more motivated to achieve academically and less motivated to engage in anti- social behaviour than students who feel disconnected from it. Good education proper care and provision of opportunities for creative expression inspire, stimulate and sharpen creative minds. Creativity encourages and demands complete freedom to accept and express the varied responses.

A positive school environment can have a dramatic impact on how students learn. It can affect mood, motivation, creativity and productivity of students- positively or negatively. On the other hand, a closed society, culture or situation may act as a strong deterrent to the development of initiative within the individual. A school's environment is the thread that connects the multitude of activities on a campus. In many respects this thread is almost invisible, yet everyone experiences its influence. A school's physical environment includes the school building and the surrounding environs such as noise, temperature, and lighting as well as physical, biological, or chemical agents. The psychosocial school environment encompasses the attitudes, feelings, and values of students and staff. Physical and psychological safety, positive interpersonal relationships, recognition of the needs and success of the individual, and support for learning are all part of the psychosocial environment. Other factors that can affect a school's environment include: the economy.

Education is the primary agent of transformation towards sustainable development. It increases people's capacities to transform their visions for society into reality at any education level, the quality of education depends upon several factors such as: school facilities, teachers' qualifications, teachers' motivation, management and administration, etc. In other words, a quality school is a school where: pupils respect their peers, their teachers and their school management; have a voice in decision-making, are interested and engaged in their learning; accept responsibility; receive feedback and encouragement from their teachers and feel valued. In addition, teachers work together and share ideas, feel valued and are given support to be innovative, employ teaching strategies that are varied and personalized to meet the needs of all learners. Others are that administrative and support staff work as valued partners with principals and teachers to ensure that students are supported in their learning and that school systems work effectively to support teaching and learning.

The school as a whole is committed to continuous improvement and forms learning partnerships within and beyond the school. It develops plans and targets that address its goals, seeks feedback on its performance, uses data to reflect on its outcomes, reports openly and honestly and celebrates its achievements. It is known that an individual's quality of life and the wellbeing of the society depend on the quality of education. Pupils' performance in primary leaving examinations will greatly depend on the quality of education that pupils have gained in school. The physical school environment has a strong influence on children's health for several reasons. The environment is one of the primary determinants of children's health: contaminated water supplies can result in diarrhoeal disease; air pollution can worsen acute respiratory infections and trigger asthma attacks; and exposure to lead, arsenic, solvents, and pesticides can cause a

variety of health effects and even death.

DEFINITIONS

The different key terms used in the title of the study and used in the body of the report are operationally defined as follows:

Academic achievement: In the present study Academic Achievement refers to the success obtained by the individual during the academic session in terms of aggregate marks secured in various subjects in the annual examination of previous class conducted by the school.

Public schools: In the present study Public schools refers to the schools for the children of the general public by the state government of Sikkim.

Private schools: In the present study Private schools refers to as independent schools, non-governmental, or non-state schools which are not administered by local, state or national governments.

Secondary school students: In the present study Secondary school students refers to the students studying in class 9th of Public and Private schools of east district of Sikkim.

School Environment: In the present study school environment refers to the scores obtained by the "School Environment Inventory" developed by K.S.Mishra.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the study are as follows:

- To compare between the public and private secondary school students with respect to the mean scores on the variable academic achievement.

- To compare between the male and female secondary school students with respect to their mean scores on the variable academic achievement.

- To compare between the public and private secondary school students with respect to the mean scores on the variable school environment.

- To compare between the male and female secondary school students with respect to their mean scores on the variable school environment.

- To compare between the variable academic achievement and school environment with respect to their mean scores of secondary school students.

- To find out the relationship between the variable academic achievement and school environment with respect to their mean scores of secondary school students.

HYPOTHESIS

The hypotheses formulated and tested in the present study are as follows:

- Public and Private secondary school students do not differ significantly with respect to their mean scores of academic achievement.

Public and Private Secondary School Students Academic Achievement in
Relation to Their School Environment: A Comparative Study

105

- Male and Female secondary school students do not differ significantly with respect to their mean scores of academic achievement.

- Public and Private secondary school students do not differ significantly with respect to their mean scores of school environment.

- Male and Female secondary school students do not differ significantly with respect to their mean scores of school environment.

- There is no significant difference between the mean scores obtained by the academic achievement and school environment of secondary school students.

- There is no significant relationship between the mean scores obtained by the academic achievement and school environment of secondary school students.

RESEARCH METHOD

To carry out any type of research, the researcher must gather data to test the hypotheses or answer the questions. Manny different methods and procedures have been developed to aid in the acquisition of data. For the present study, the investigator decided to adopt descriptive survey method. In order to accomplish the objectives of the present study, the descriptive survey method was considered appropriate for gathering data about academic achievement of public and private school students in relation to their school environment.

Descriptive survey method is designed to obtain pertinent and precise information concerning the current status of phenomena and whenever possible, to draw valid general conclusions from the facts discovered.

Sample

The representative proportion of the population is called sample. A good sample ensures three things; freedom from bias, representativeness of population, characteristics and adequacy in terms of population qualities. In view of the objectives of the present study, the investigator decided to collect data from Gangtok, East district of Sikkim. As such 160 students of 9th class 80 Boys and 80 Girls (40 Boys from public school and 40 Boys from private school, 40 Girls from public school and 40 Girls from private school), constituted as the sample of the present study. As the sample has been selected purposively hence, it comes under purposive sampling. A detailed structure of the sample has been provided in the following table 1.

Table 1

Sr. No.	School Name	Boys		Girls		Total
		Public	Private	Public	Private	
1	KabiSukanta High School.	10		10		20
2	Hatighisa High School.	10		10		20
3	MatigaraHaroSundor High School.	10		10		20
4	Sri Guru High School	10		10		20
5	ST. Vincents High School		10		10	20
6	ST. Thomas High School.		10		10	20
7	West Point High School.		10		10	20
8	Royal Academy		10		10	20
	Total	**40**	**40**	**40**	**40**	**160**

Instrumentation

In conducting a research many data gathering tools are required. The tool selected must be appropriate for the collection of certain type of evidence or information or data from the relevant field. Thus the research tools are the data gathering devices. Keeping in view the above mentioned requirement of effective research tools, the investigator, in the present study selected and used "School Environment Inventory" Developed by K.S. Mishra.

Statistical Techniques Used

The main objective of the study is to study the academic achievement of public and private secondary school students in relation to their school environment. The technique of the study is therefore testing through questionnaire. Scoring is done as per the scoring procedure. After data collection for the purpose of analysis of the obtained data, the investigator has taken the help of both the descriptive as well as inferential statistics. Here in the present study 't' test is used to find out the differences in between groups.

Interpretation of Data

The major objective of the present study is to find out the academic achievement of public and private secondary students in relation to their school environment. Here the investigator utilized both descriptive as well as inferential statistics for analysis and interpretation of the obtained data:

Comparison among Public and Private Secondary School Students with Respect to Their Mean Score of Academic Achievement

The obtained statistics pertaining to the comparison among public and private secondary school students with respect to their mean score of academic achievement has been given in the table 2.

Table 2: T-Value for Public and Private Secondary School Students with Respect to Their Mean Score of Academic Achievement

Group	N	M	S.D.	SE_D	T-Value	Remarks
Public	80	79.66	13.63	1.84	1.17	N.S
Private	80	77.51	9.30			N.S

NS-Not Significant

It is evident from the above table 2 that the mean values of the public and private secondary school students on academic achievement are found to be 79.66 and 77.51 respectively. Further, when both the mean values were subjected to the testing of their significance of differences the 't' ratio was found to be 1.17. The table value of 't' with 158 degrees of freedom is reported to be 2.61 and 1.98 at 0.01 and 0.05 level of significance respectively. As the calculated value of 't' is found to be less than at both the levels, therefore the calculated value of 't' ratio is found to be not significant. Hence, the hypothesis "Public and Private secondary school students do not differ significantly with respect to their academic achievement" is accepted.

Comparison among Male and Female Secondary School Students with Respect to Their Mean Score of Academic Achievement

The obtained statistics pertaining to the comparison among male and female secondary school students with respect to their mean score of academic achievement has been given in the table 3.

Public and Private Secondary School Students Academic Achievement in
Relation to Their School Environment: A Comparative Study

107

Table 3: T-Value for Male and Female Secondary school Students with
Respect to Their Mean Score of Academic Achievement

Group	N	M	S.D.	SE_D	T-Value	Remarks
Male	80	75.78	10.30	1.81	3.09	NS
Female	80	81.38	12.45			NS

NS- Not Significant

It is evident from the above table 3 that the mean values of male and female secondary school students on academic achievement are found to be 75.78 and 81.38 respectively. Further, when both the mean values were subjected to the testing of their significance of differences the 't' ratio was found to be 3.09. The table value of 't' with 158 degrees of freedom is reported to be 2.61 and 1.98 at 0.01 and 0.05 level of significance respectively. As the calculated value of 't' is found to be less than at both the levels, therefore the calculated value of 't' ratio is found to be not significant. Hence, the hypothesis "Male and Female secondary school students do not differ significantly with respect to their academic achievement" is accepted.

Comparison among Public and Private Secondary School Students with Respect to Their Mean Score of School Environment

The obtained statistics pertaining to the comparison among public and private secondary school students with respect to their mean score of school environment has been given in the table 4

Table 4: T-Value for Public and Private Secondary School Students with
Respect to Their Mean Score of School Environment

Group	N	M	S.D.	SE_D	T-Value	Remarks
Public School	80	161.43	17.94	12.55	0.19	N.S
Private School	80	163.78	19.82			N.S

NS-Not Significant

It is evident from the above table 4 that the mean values of the public and private secondary school students on school environment are found to be 161.43 and 163.78 respectively. Further, when both the mean values were subjected to the testing of their significance of differences the 't' ratio was found to be 0.19. The table value of 't' with 158 degrees of freedom is reported to be 2.61 and 1.99 at 0.01 and 0.05 level of significance respectively. As the calculated value of 't' is found to be less than at both the levels, therefore the calculated value of 't' ratio is found to be not significant. Hence, the hypothesis "Public and Private secondary school students do not differ significantly with respect to their school environment" is accepted.

Comparison among Male and Female Secondary School Students with Respect to Their Mean Score of School Environment

The obtained statistics pertaining to the comparison among male and female secondary school students with respect to their mean score of school environment has been given in the table 5.

Table 5: T-Value for Male and Female Secondary School Students with
Respect to Their Mean Score of School Environment

Group	N	M	S.D.	SE_D	T-Value	Remarks
male	80	157.38	60.24	7	1.49	N.S
female	80	167.83	17.30			N.S

NS- Not significant

It is evident from the above table 5 that the mean values of the male and female senior secondary school students on the variable school environment are found to ben157.38 and 167.83 respectively. Further, when both the mean values were subjected to the testing of their significance of differences the't' ratio was found to be 1.49. The table value of't' with 158 degrees of freedom is reported to be 2.61 and 1.98 at 0.01 and 0.05 level of significance respectively. As the calculated value of't' is found to be less than at both the levels, therefore the calculated value of 't' ratio is found to be not significant. Hence, the hypothesis "Male and Female secondary school students do not differ significantly with respect to their school environment" is accepted.

Comparison among Secondary School Students with Respect to Their Mean Score Obtained by Academic Achievement and School Environment

The obtained statistics pertaining to the comparison among secondary school students with respect to their mean scores obtained by academic achievement and school environment has been given in the table 6.

Table 6: T-Value for the Mean Score Obtained From Academic Achievement and School Environment of Secondary School Students

Group	N	M	S.D.	SE_D	T-Value	Remarks
Academic Achievement	160	173.28	16.09	3.35	0.50	N.S
School Environmet	160	171.6	13.76			N.S

N.S-Not Significant

It is evident from the above table 6 that the mean values of academic achievement and school environment of secondary school students are found to be 173.28 and 171.6 respectively. Further, when both the mean values were subjected to the testing of their significance of differences the't' ratio was found to be 0.50. The table value of't' with 320 degrees of freedom is reported to be 2.59 and 1.97 at 0.01 and 0.05 level of significance respectively. As the calculated value of't' is found to be less than at both the levels, therefore the calculated value of 't' ratio is found to be not significant. Hence, the hypothesis "Academic achievement and School environment of secondary school students do not differ significantly" is accepted.

Studying the Relationship between Academic Achievement and School Environment of Secondary School Students

The table 7 presents the relationship in terms of product moment correlation between the variables of Academic Achievement and school Environment adolescent students of secondary school students.

Table 7: the 'r' value of the product moment correlation between Academic Achievement and School Environment of Secondary school students

Variables	N	Df	R	Remark
Academic Achievement	160	158	0.045	NS
School Environment	160			

It is revealed from the table 7 that the relationships between Academic Achievement and School Environment in terms of product moment correlation come out to be 0.045 which is not significant and that change in School Environment in this group is not associated with a change in their Academic Achievement. Hence, the hypothesis that "There is no significant relationship between scores on the variables of Academic Achievement and School Environmentof secondary

Public and Private Secondary School Students Academic Achievement in
Relation to Their School Environment: A Comparative Study

109

school students" is accepted.

FINDINGS

On the basis of the statistical analysis the investigator has arrived on the following findings:

- Public and Private secondary school students do not differ significantly with respect to their academic achievement

- Male and Female secondary school students do not differ significantly with respect to their academic achievement.

- Public and Private secondary school students do not differ significantly with respect to their school environment.

- Male and Female secondary school students do not differ significantly with respect to their school environment.

- Academic achievement and School environment of secondary school students do not differ significantly

- There is no significant relationship between Academic achievement and School Environment of secondary school students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings from this study, the following recommendationsare made for the improvement of the student's school environment fordeveloping their academic achievement:-

- Teacher-parent meeting should be made by the schools, for counselingthe parents about how to provide a proper school environment to theirchildren.

- Many parents may not be aware of the influence of various school environmental factors on the academic achievement of their children. It isrecommended that, teachers, educationists and leaders should try to createawareness in parents on the importance of the school environment onacademic achievement which can improve the children's performance.

- Parents need to be informed that they can contribute to the education oftheir children through encouragement, provision of learning facilities, andactive assistance among other strategies

- Parents need to know their role in the education of their children so thatthey do not put the blame entirely on teachers when their children do notperform well in school.

- Special care should be taken when it comes to school environmentsince poor environment in school may cause anxiety andfear of failure which may affect the child's academic performance negatively.

Suggestions for Further Research

A meaningful research always provides cause and paves the way for the further investigation. Every investigator after accomplishing his or her task may feel inspired to do more researches through his or her own efforts. The researcher may feel greatly motivated, for showing the new areas of the research to the future researchers. The present study is confined to only two variables namely school environment and academic achievement. But school environmentis not the only variable which affects the academic achievement. Research is never ending process and as such the following

suggestions may be made for further study or research:

- In this study the investigator has taken 160 students as sample for the study from Gangtok, East district of Sikkim.

- In this connection for ensuring better sampling more students can be taken from more schools on district or state wise basis.

- The further study can be done by taking tribal, non-tribal areas.

- This study is done on secondary students. The further study can be conducted by taking other class students and colleges also.

CONCLUSIONS

As pointed earlier, good education does not happen by chance. It is aproduct of effective teaching and learning, coupled with the conscious effort of the teacher, the school, the students, parents and their various school environments. Therefore, a child for excellent academic performance requires in addition to other factors a good school environment. Children vary in their ability and attitude to learn, parents should therefore recognizethis and attend to their children as an individual. They should also try to establish and maintain a good school environment where love, hard workingand excellence are encouraged in order to bring out the children's best academic performance. Teachers in school are the chief architect of the children. They provide affection guidance and encouragement granting children the security and social skills i.e. they needed encouragement to enterinto the world of competition. However teachers need to understand theircrucial role in shaping the future of their students, and they should comeforward to extend all possible support to children enable them get successnot only in academic domain but also in all sphere of their life.

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Public and Private Secondary School Students Academic Achievement in
Relation to Their School Environment: A Comparative Study

111

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