

Research Scholar: Nuzhat Praveen

Supervisor: Prof. Janaki Rajan

Co-Supervisor: Dr. Farah Farooqi

Department: Institute of Advanced Studies in Education (IASE), Jamia Millia Islamia New Delhi

Title of the Thesis: A Study of Home Environment, School Environment and Academic Stress

Associated with the Underachievement of Secondary School Students in

Gurgaon District

ABSTRACT

The present study is an attempt to ascertain the effect of home environment, school environment and academic stress if any, on the underachievers in Social Studies. The present study was a qualitative study which required an iterative process of visiting and re-visiting students, teachers and parents. This was not always possible. To overcome the limitation, interviews were audio recorded and transcribed in detail after listening multiple times. These recordings of open ended interview, schedules conducted on students, parents and Social Studies teachers were also studied multiple times. Care had been taken in presenting and interpreting all aspects related to home environment, school environment and academic stress that the interviews yielded.

Findings related to Home Environment

It is found that from 20 under-achievers, 19 are having their own houses irrespective of the size and only one is living in a rented house, although there were differences in their home conditions, locality and basic facilities. It was found that despite low monthly income, it is observed that all the parents are ready to spend major part of their earning in the education of their children. They accept the worth of education.

It was investigated that parents who were illiterate or had low levels of education were clear about the value of education. They all have positive attitude towards the education of their all children. The present study revealed that though parents themselves did not have good jobs, they are still looking forward for the bright future and better placement of their children. This seems to suggest that occupation of father is not found directly connected with the underachievement of the sample students.

It was realized that labour including invisible labour was visible. Many children worked for economic gains. Others, especially girls, engaged in non-remunerative activities and did not consider it work. Most children, at such a young age, felt responsible towards helping their parents in shouldering their liabilities.

It was found that all the students were treated in the same way; ignoring their birth orders. In respect of their sibling order, not a single student made any complaint against any partial or biased attitude of their parents. In the present study, a male child's education and his career are found to be more important and valuable than a girl child.

Findings related to School Environment:

It was found that most teachers did not want to adopt teaching profession by their choices. They are in this profession causing when no other choice was left. It was revealed from this study that most teachers were graduates or post graduate in one/two subjects related to Social Studies. But he/she has to teach all four parts of Social Studies. This is mainly due to the way disciplines are structured in higher education.

Most teachers stated that they divided their students in form of ability grouping. They formed such groups of students in which intelligent students or good performers were kept in one group while weak students or bad performers in other group. The major finding of this study was that this kind of students' division can have an adverse affect on their performance in Social Studies. Besides this, Teachers also are very appreciative students in private schools rather than students in government schools.

Findings related to academic stress:

It was found that 19 students' parents insist them for study but do not pressurize them. It was revealed from this study that only one student admitted that he felt uneasiness during examinations. He found himself in a dilemma regarding the content of the subjects what to study and what to leave out.

We can conclude that there are rich possibilities for further research on Social Studies education in general and students' engagement with the subject with particular reference to their socio cultural contexts.