

PSYCHOLOGICAL CORRELATES OF STUDENTS CAREER

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Abstract

The present investigation is an effective dimension of the environmental situation of different types of educational institutions and family backgrounds which have a differential impact on the career of a student. The present study is designed in the frame of "Ex-Post-Facto Research" on a sample of two hundred students. Selection of these students has been done on the basis of their academic success (MLNR, Engineering and PMT entrance examinations and failure (B.Sc. Students, who have not secured success in the mentioned examination) from two types of localities; namely, rural and urban, and two types of educational settings, i.e., semi-government schools and Public schools from Gorakhpur city. Results reveal that discipline, teachers' cooperation and behavior, parents' cooperation, and a favorable environment for learning were very helpful factors for academic success as attributed to success-oriented students for their success.

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Introduction

Family is the first institution of a child's learning and the very first child provides various new experiences to its parents. Thus it can be said that a child is a central subject between family environment and parents. "The foundations of children's social attitudes and skills are obviously laid at home. Patterns of trust-mistrust, dependence-independence, ascendance-submission, co-operation-competition and conservatism-liberalism have their genesis in early parent-child interactions within the home.

The environments of different individuals vary greatly, but the influence of environment on personality may be roughly classified into that of home, school and society. The significant interaction approach may be fruitful for an individual's success but a weak contribution of any factor among home, school and society creates a difficult problem in a person's successful life. Most of the things we do, think, and feel are strongly influenced by the conditions we grow up in and by our present social milieu. But society still attributes the causes of human behavior to such internal processes as "personality" and "character". So, if we find ourselves attributing motives and intentions to other people, perhaps that is merely a role we have been taught to play.

The present piece of work is designed in the "Ex-post-facto" framework. An individual's personality is the totality of nature and nurtures interactional effects in different domains of home, school and society experiences, and among these areas, school is the most important stage in which his/her behavior develops in a refined manner. In this investigation different strategies have been adopted like home environment, parental behavior towards their children, Children's perception toward their parents, teacher's perception towards their students, students' perception towards their teacher, the internal environment of school setting, and rural and urban contact of student to predict a student's career.

A number of studies have been made by earlier investigators in this field but a total approach except for a few factors, has been adopted by the present investigator. According to Shukla (1970) representation of teachers from various groups in the teaching profession is becoming increasingly egalitarian in independent India. This means that groups previously under-represented in the teaching profession such as those from the lower castes, the rural areas, and women have been steadily increasing their representation in the teaching force. Gore et al. (1970), clearly indicate that a majority of the teachers come from lower middle and middle-class families. In the same way, many other studies conducted in India like Pillai and Nair (1970) studied the living conditions of graduate teachers in Kerala, and concluded that a majority of the teachers were from the lower middle

class. Even from the point of view of the educational background of their parents and other members of their families teachers generally came from the middle-class or upper-middle-class families.

The factors which are more crucial in this field like socioeconomic status, values, attitudes, sentiments, likes and dislikes are likely to affect the inter-group academic interaction in and out of the classroom settings between teachers and students.

School life in its full sense is a complex combination of different factors—good, bad and indifferent teachers, realistic, unrealistic and confused personal, and social values, pleasant, unpleasant, and ambivalent feelings, good satisfaction, and the pain of continuous failures, interesting, dull and commonplace activities, congenial, hostile, and casual classmates. In view of the dynamic functioning of these and many other variables in school life, it would indeed be a rare child who could remain consistently indifferent to his school experiences (Witryol, 1950).

Misra, Agarwal and Tiwari (1992) conducted a study on college students with reference to success and failure to assess their attitude toward their teachers. They found that students belonging to the successful category had a positive attitude towards their teachers whereas a negative attitude was observed in the failure group. Khan (1991) conducted a study on students perception of teachers as a function of educational level, academic achievement and school background of students. His study indicates that the effect of school background of the students significantly affects students perception of teachers. A significant effect was seen on the academic achievement of the students on their perception of the teachers.

Against this background, the present study has been formulated to assess the effect of interactional variables on the academic career of a student.

Hypotheses

In this context, the following hypotheses have been formulated :

- H₁ ‘Rich environment, the co-operation of parents, the co-operation of teachers and seat position will be effective factors in a student’s career.
- H₂ ‘Significant interactional approach to the above-mentioned factors will definitely play a significant role in helping students achieve success.’

Method

Sample

Two hundred students have been selected for the present investigation. Selection of these students has been done on the basis of their academic success (MLNR, Engineering, and PMT examinations) and failure (B.Sc. students, who have not achieved success in the above competitive examinations). All selected students were found similar in their mental ability (tested by Asthana and Verma intelligence test).

Tools

1. Socio-Economic Status Scale: A 5-point rating scale of socioeconomic status, developed by Singh (1986) was used. It consisted of 11 items related to economic status. The reliability of the test was estimated at .85.
2. Verbal Test of Intelligence: This test was developed by Asthana and Verma (1983). It consisted of 100 items in the form of a reusable booklet. It covers eight areas of general mental ability. These are- Best answers, Reasoning, Similar, opposite, Analogy, Mathematical series, Mathematical instruction and classification. The test was standardized on a sample of 1200 students from Eastern U.P. The test-retest reliability is .85 and criterion validity is .74.
3. Perception of Teachers: A 5-point interval scale for gauging the perception of teachers developed by Agarwal, Misra and Pandey (1992) was used. It consisted of 45 items related to teachers expectations, students expectations, perception of classroom environment, perceptions of teachers and perception of various school organizations. The reliability of the scale was .96.
4. Perception of Parents : It is a 5-point scale developed by Agarwal, Misra and Pandey (1992). It consisted of 56 items with various aspects of family environment. The reliability of the scale was estimated at .86.
5. Attributional Questionnaire : The students were asked as to which factors had contributed to their success and which to their failure.

Procedure

In the beginning, the students were told of the purpose of the study. After seeking their cooperation and consent, SES, perception of teachers, Perception of parents scale and attributional questionnaire was administered. After tabulation and coding of the data, it was decided to conduct analysis on the basis of differences among groups and content analysis.

Results and Discussion

Socio-Economic Status

It is clear from an analysis of the socio-economic status score that both the groups (Rural and Urban) are almost similar in their socio-economic position. Though, students of semi-government schools and public schools in Urban settings, have shown their economic status differently in both the situations (success and failure), in the rural context a similar pattern was found whether they belonged to semi-government schools or public schools. Therefore, it can be stated that economic and social enrichment is one of the most important keys to solving several problems, but in relation to educational and academic achievement, it is not as effective as we feel because we find that achievement-oriented and intrinsically motivated people

achieve their goals despite hardships and barriers. Ramkrishna (1991) also has indicated, on the basis of his findings, that the achievement of low SES was greater than that of high socio-economic status in the non-first generation.

Seat Position

It has been found that most students belonging to successful groups, always seated themselves in the first row, middle place of the first, second and third row, and back benches. The present finding is supported by Power (1971) who studied the interactions of four male science teachers with 150 eighth graders. He found that bright and successful students who responded to questions were frequently chosen by the teacher and received more positive reinforcement than their classmates. The low achievers who were likely to be seated at the rear benches of the classrooms were individualistic and were found to give less response to the teachers.

Students Perception of Parents

Obtained results clearly indicate that respondents of public schools (rural areas) show a more favorable attitude toward their parents (M = 205. S.D. 22.12) than their counterparts in semi-government schools (M = 189.1 S.D. 22.88). A similar pattern was found in Urban areas. It is clear from the two-way analysis of variance that two groups (rural and Urban) significantly differ in perception score (F = 424.63). Both the groups (Semi-Government and public schools) significantly differ in perception score (F= 46.81) and their interaction is also significant (F 197. 47). Thus, it can be said that rural and Urban environments, Semi-government and Public School environments are more effective in forming an attitude toward their parents. It can be seen in Table 1.

Table - 1

Summary of 2 × 2 ANOVA of Perception of Parents by Students Scores as a function of living place and various school's environment.

| Source of Variance | SS | df | Mean SS | F-Ratio | Inference |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|-----|-----------|---------|-----------|
| Living Place (Rural and Urban) | 129387.89 | 01 | 129387.89 | 24.63 | P < .01 |
| Schools (Public and Semi-government) | 14263.6 | 01 | 14263.6 | 46.81 | P < .01 |
| Living Place x Schools | 60169.79 | 01 | 60169.79 | 197.47 | P < .01 |
| Within treatment | 59723.08 | 196 | 304.71 | | |

Another criterion has been adopted to analyze perception scores given by successful and failed students on the basis of a two-way analysis of variance. In this analysis, two areas, i.e., rural and urban, and two types of students, i.e., successful and failure, have been selected. The obtained result, clearly shows that students belonging to urban areas have a more positive attitude toward their parents than the rural students. Students belonging to urban settings have scored a higher mean (214.08) on the perception scale and students belonging to rural settings have scored a lower mean (197.19) on the perception scale. It is also clear from the factorial analysis that successful students have not given much importance to their parents for their success whereas failed students have shown more positive perceptions towards their parents. It means successful students attribute to the internal causes of their success more than to the external factors. Interactional effects of environmental factors and academic career are also found significant ($F=12.26$). It seems that environmental enrichment is not a dominating and leading factor for a competitive examination and for getting success because students belonging to the successful category have not accepted the positive contribution of their parents whereas failed students have shown a more positive attitude and accepted their full cooperation. Various investigators have found in their studies that intrinsic motivation is the main factor for success because an individual who always seeks full cooperation from his parents, teachers and friends and is not intrinsically motivated, does not reach his goal. It can be seen

Table - 2

Summary of 2 × 2 ANOVA of Perception of Parents by Students Scores as a function of living place and academic achievement.

| Source of Variance | SS | df | Mean SS | F-Ratio | Inference |
|--|-----------|-----|----------|---------|-----------|
| Living Place (Rural and Urban) | 8964.69 | 01 | 8964.69 | 7.76 | P < .01 |
| Academic Achievement (Success and Failure) | 14263.64 | 01 | 14263.6 | 12.35 | P < .01 |
| Living Place x Academic Achievement | 14162.35 | 01 | 14162.35 | 12.26 | P < .01 |
| Within treatment | 226353.72 | 196 | 1154.87 | 12.26 | P < .01 |

Students' Perception Toward Teachers

The effect of an environmental factor (birthplace) is significant $F(1, 196) = 178.42$. The participants belonging to the rural areas were found to have a more

positive attitude toward their teachers (M = 183.48) than their urban counterparts (M=145.28). The effect of school settings is also significant: $F(1, 196) = 236.77$. Students belonging to public schools have scored a higher mean (180.96) in their perception of their teachers than their counterparts in semi-government schools (M 147.80). It means students of Public Schools have a positive attitude toward their teachers. Its (living place and school environment) interaction is also significant $F(1,193) = 89.76$. It can be seen in Table 3.

Table - 3

Summary of 2 x 2 ANOVA of Perception of Teachers by Students Scores as a function of living place and various school's environment.

| Source of Variance | SS | df | Mean SS | F-Ratio | Inference |
|------------------------------|----------|-----|----------|---------|-----------|
| (Rural and Urban) Schools | 54979.36 | 01 | 54979.36 | 178.42 | P < .01 |
| (Public and Semi-government) | 72962.04 | 01 | 72962.04 | 236.77 | P < .01 |
| Schools | 27659.48 | 01 | 27659.48 | 89.76 | P < .01 |
| Within treatment | 60396.24 | 196 | 308.15 | | |

The present findings indicate that students belonging to the rural areas and public schools have shown a positive perception of their teachers. Perhaps, these results are very much true in the sense of cultural development. It has been observed that the standard of teaching and learning in semi-government schools is at an unimaginable low. As far as the standard of education in public schools is concerned, it is very high or at least better than the standard of education in rural settings. Education in the public schools is much better and very effective.

Efforts have been made to investigate the effects of success and failure in two different frames, rural and urban, for receiving attributional patterns regarding teachers. It is clear from Table 4 that the effect of an environmental factor (living place) is highly significant $F(1, 196) = 103.35$. Students belonging to the rural and urban areas see the role and contribution of their teachers differently. Students belonging to rural areas have shown a positive, favorable and stronger attitude toward their teachers (Mean = 180.96) whereas a weaker and less positive attitude was observed in urban students (Mean=147.80). The effect of academic achievement is not significant, $F(1,196) = .02$. However, it interacted significantly with the environmental factors (living place), $F(1,196) = 6.78$.

Table - 4

Summary of 2 x 2 ANOVA of Perception of Teachers by Students Scores as a function of living place and academic achievement.

| Source of Variance | SS | df | Mean SS | F-Ratio | Inference |
|--|-----------|-----|----------|---------|-----------|
| Living Place (Rural and Urban) | 72962.04 | 01 | 72962.04 | 103.35 | P < .01 |
| Academic Achievement (Success and Failure) | 8.89 | 01 | 8.89 | .02 | N.S. |
| Living Place x Academic Achievement | 4665.75 | 01 | 4665.75 | 6.78 | P < .01 |
| Within treatment | 138306.44 | 196 | 705.92 | | |

Attribution in relation to Academic Success and Failure

It has been found that students belonging to the successful group of public schools have attributed to “hard work, good internal environment, discipline, cooperation from teachers and parents, awareness of responsibilities among teachers, future orientation, and instability of jobs of teachers for their success. In semi-government schools, students belonging to the successful group have been given credit for hard work, cooperation from teachers and parents, and future orientation for their success. Factors that were responsible for a student’s failure were lack of hard work, bad environment, not-so-good discipline, lack of cooperation from teachers and parents, unawareness concerning responsibilities among teachers and lack of future orientation among students. It can be seen in Table 5.

Table - 5

Attributions regarding to success and failure elicited by students (in %)

| | Public Schools | | Semi-Government | |
|---|----------------|---------|-----------------|---------|
| | Success | Failure | Success | Failure |
| 1. Hard work | 90 | 62.45 | 75 | 52.3 |
| 2. Internal environment | 96 | 15.25 | 22 | 86.25 |
| 3. Discipline | 86.5 | 22.5 | 27.4 | 75.00 |
| 4. Cooperation, of teachers | 67.4 | 26.5 | 46.3 | 67.5 |
| 5. Awareness of responsibilities among teachers | 78.5 | 10.25 | 33.5 | 78.5 |
| 6. Cooperation of Parents | 92 | 26.5 | 90.5 | 38.5 |
| 7. Future Orientation | 81.5 | 33.5 | 56.25 | 59.5 |
| 8. Instability of Jobs among teachers | 59.25 | 00.0 | 00.00 | 00.00 |

On the basis of the results, it can be summarized that the internal environment of schools, cooperation from teachers and parents, and seat position are very important factors in getting success because most students belonging to public schools (rural and urban) have achieved success and they have a more favorable attitude towards resources of their schools. It's high time that the administrators and teachers of semi-government schools did a little introspection.

Significance of the Study

It will be advantageous to those people who are administrators, teachers and policymakers of effective education in school settings. Needless to say, such resources were not available in the schools and things have greatly deteriorated in the past one and a half decades. The present piece of work will prove extremely helpful in reviving and upgrading the level of teaching-learning effectiveness.

The present study will be fruitful for those who have a favorable attitude towards culture-based education. Because on effective education determines the direction and status of a country. In this connection, parents and students, awareness and responsibilities should not be belittled or deprecated. The findings reported in the paper will have a wider significance for guidance and counseling and thus be helpful to psychologists, sociologists and educationists.

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