



A comparative study of school environment of 9th grade students in relation to their academic anxiety

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Abstract

School environment is a powerful force \$ play a pivotal role in all round development of the students. School climate would influence students academic achievement \$ level of anxiety among them. The present study is an endeavour to investigate school Environment in terms of organisation \$psychological climate. It further analyses the academic anxiety differences in gender \$ different schools. Findings of the study revealed insignificant gender differences among boys \$ girls in relation to academic anxiety. Public school students experienced more academic anxiety than government school students.

Keywords: comparative, environment, academic anxiety, achievement

Introduction

School environment plays a pivotal role in the all-round development of the students. If the school environment is important, it will induce the students for better response. A few factors which affect the anxiety level of a student at school are: a school atmosphere with an absence of school phobia, positive attitude towards education, better adjustment through interpersonal contacts with friends, classmates and teachers and motivation level.

During early adolescent years, the school can provide opportunities to develop their intellectual capacities to experience a sense of competence and belonging and to interact with peers and supportive non-partial adults. But unfortunately, school often fails to provide a safe and personalized environment. Students may be dissatisfied with the numerous situations in class or institution in relation to their gender. Gender differences may exist in relation to satisfaction with fellow students, teachers or teaching methods as well as institution itself. All these aspects of gender may have specific relation to various dimensions of school environment.

Academic anxiety is a mental distress respect to some anticipated frustration associated with Academic failure or even an awareness of possibility of such failure. In the context of school, academic Stress means a pervasive sense of urgency to learn all those things which are prescribed by school. Both boys and girls experience and comprehend the world in different ways. This difference may also exist in academic anxiety experienced by students due to stressful or anxiety provoking school environment.

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine adolescent's perception of school environment with respect to adolescent's perception of school organizational climate.
2. To examine adolescent's perception of their relationship with teacher's positive and negative relationship, biased and corporal punishment on the part of teacher.

3. To examine adolescent's perception of their relationship with peers, reliance on peers for studies, positive and negative relationship with them and relationship with the members of opposite sex.

Key terms used in the study

School organisational climate

School environment refers to the conditions forces and external stimuli that foster development of individual characteristics. School organisational climate is a delicate blending of interpretation by pupils in the organisation of their roles in relation to others and their interpretation of the role of other organisations.

Anxiety

In encyclopaedia Americans, the meaning of anxiety is "anxiety is a state of emotional and physical disturbance induced in a person by a real or imagined threat. In psychiatry the term refers to the disturbances caused by threat that are only apparent to the patient and caused him to behave in a way that not relevant to the true situation.

Academic Anxiety

Academic anxiety is a state of emotional and physical disturbance induced in a person by real or imagined academic stress.

Methodology

In the present study, the descriptive survey method was followed to make a comparative study of school environment of 9th grade students in relation to their academic anxiety.

- a. **Sample:** The method of selecting sample was simple random sampling. Students of 9th grade of Karnal city constituted the population of the study. As a result, three public and three government schools from Karnal city were selected at random and a sample of 10 students (5 boys and 5 girls) from 9th class, were selected from each school. Thus, the total sample consisted of 60 adolescents

(30 boys and 30 girls) from 6 schools.

b. Tools

1. **Socio personal performa:** It was used to access the socio personal characteristics of the subjects. It taps on age, sex, religion, number of siblings, birth order, types of family, father’s qualification, mother’s qualification, father’s occupation, mother’s occupation and annual income.
2. **School environment questionnaire:** The gender differences of perception of their school environment were measured by school environment questionnaire (Varma and Paul, 1999). It consists of 27 items pertaining to different aspects of the school environment in terms of free periods and frequency of group and extra-curricular activities, academics at school, student’s feelings about the school and the class room psychological climate, pupil’s relationship with teachers, relationship with peers, ease in making friends, reliance on peers for studies and relationship with peers of opposite sex. The questions are both open-ended and closed ended questions.
3. **Academic anxiety scale for children:** The academic anxiety of the students was measured with the help of standardise scale, academic anxiety scale (AASC) by Singh and Sengupta (1996). It consists of 20 items, tapping on various factors which may lead to anxiety in the children. The medium of the scale is Hindi. The items are printed on a sheet. Each item consists of a statement

with corresponding ‘yes’ and ‘know’ options to be encircled.

- c. **Statistical techniques used:** For analysis of data, frequency distribution, percentage distribution and t-test was employed by the investigator.

Main findings of the study

- a. **Organisational and psychological climate of school: (Table-1)**
 - Girls show a positive response towards chatting with friends and boys preferred to play games in a free period than indulging in serious group discussions, going to library or just sitting idle as the free period activities.
 - Girls participate more actively in extracurricular activities than boys.
 - Girls report that learning is made more resourceful by the teachers using modes of communications e.g. simple discussions, field trips/excursions than boys.
 - Girls have more positive feelings of belongingness towards schools than boys.
- b. **Gender and school difference in academic anxiety experienced by adolescents:(Table-2 and Table -3)**
 - In significant gender differences were found in relation to academic anxiety experienced by them.
 - Public school students experienced more academic anxiety than government school students.

Table 1: Percent of Boys and Girls Adolescent’s Perception for Feeling and Psychological Climate of Schools

Response	Boys		Girls		Total	
	(f)	(%)	(f)	(%)	(f)	(%)
Feel being a student of this school-secure						
Not at all	3	5	2	3.3	5	8.3
A little	5	8.3	2	3.3	7	11.7
Somewhat	9	15	6	10	15	25
Pretty much	8	13.4	10	16.7	18	30
Very much	5	8.3	10	16.7	15	25
Feel being a student of this school-confident						
Not at all	2	3.3	2	3.3	4	6.7
A little	5	8.3	4	6.7	9	15
Somewhat	7	11.7	9	15	16	26.7
Pretty much	6	10	8	13.4	14	23.3
Very much	10	16.7	7	11.7	17	28.3
Feel being a student of this school-ashamed						
Not at all	8	13.3	10	16.7	18	30
A little	6	10	8	13.3	14	23.3
Somewhat	6	10	5	8.3	11	18.3
Pretty much	6	10	4	6.7	10	16.7
Very much	4	6.7	3	5	7	11.7
Feel being a student of this school-competent						
Not at all	3	5	3	5	6	10
A little	3	5	6	10	9	15
Somewhat	9	15	9	15	18	30
Pretty much	8	13.3	7	11.7	15	25
Very much	7	11.7	5	8.3	12	20
Feel being a student of this school-tense/worried						
Not at all	9	15	3	5	12	20
A little	8	13.3	4	6.7	12	20
Somewhat	6	10	6	10	12	20
Pretty much	4	6.7	9	15	13	21.7
Very much	3	5	8	13.3	11	18.3

Feel being a student of this school-ignored						
Not at all	8	13.3	4	12	12	20.1
A little	8	13.3	3	11	11	18.3
Somewhat	7	11.7	8	15	15	25
Pretty much	4	6.7	7	11	11	18.3
Very much	3	5	8	11	11	18.3
Feel being a student of this school-bored						
Not at all	3	5	6	9	9	15
A little	2	3.3	7	9	9	15
Somewhat	9	15	7	16	16	26.7
Pretty much	9	15	7	16	16	26.7
Very much	7	11.7	3	10	10	16.7
Feel being a student of this school-feeling of belongingness						
Not at all	5	8.3	3	8	8	13.3
A little	6	10	4	10	10	16.7
Somewhat	9	15	6	15	15	25
Pretty much	5	8.3	8	13	13	21.7
Very much	5	8.3	9	14	14	23.31
Class room's psychological climate-demanding						
Not at all	2	3.3	4	6	6	10
A little	8	13.3	4	12	12	20
Somewhat	9	15	8	17	17	28.3
Pretty much	6	10	8	14	14	23.3
Very much	5	8.3	6	11	11	18.4
Class room's psychological climate-competitive						
Not at all	5	8.3	3	5	8	13.3
A little	6	10	5	8.3	11	18.4
Somewhat	11	18.3	8	13.3	19	31.7
Pretty much	4	6.7	7	11.7	11	18.3
Very much	4	6.7	7	11.7	11	18.3
Class room's psychological climate-warm						
Not at all	4	6.7	2	3.3	6	10
A little	6	10	2	3.3	8	13.3
Somewhat	7	11.7	9	15	16	26.7
Pretty much	8	13.3	8	13.4	16	26.7
Very much	5	8.3	9	15	14	23.3
Class room's psychological climate-anxiety						
Not at all	8	13.3	3	5	11	18.3
A little	8	13.3	4	6	12	20
Somewhat	6	10	7	11.7	13	21.7
Pretty much	5	8.4	7	11.7	12	20
Very much	3	5	9	15	12	20
Class room's psychological climate-stressful						
Not at all	7	11.7	4	6.7	11	18.3
A little	8	13.4	8	8.3	16	26.7
Somewhat	5	8.3	6	10	11	18.3
Pretty much	5	8.3	6	10	11	18.3
Very much	5	8.3	6	10	11	18.4
Class room's psychological climate-boring						
Not at all	5	8.3	7	11.7	12	20
A little	6	10	6	10	12	20
Somewhat	6	10	11	10	17	28.3
Pretty much	6	10	3	5	9	15
Very much	7	11.7	3	5	10	16.7

Table 2: Mean score of perception about gender difference in academic anxiety experienced by adolescents

Dependent variable	Statistical tool	Independent variable		SE _D	't' value
		Boys	girls		
Academic	Mean	13.533	13.166	0.692	0.530
Anxiety	SE	2.723	2.642		

Table 3: Mean score of academic anxiety in different types of school (N60: 30 public school and 30 government school adolescents)

Dependent variable	Statistical tool	Independent variable		SE _D	‘t’ value
		Boys	Girls		
Academic	Mean	15.4	11.1	0.452	9.513
Anxiety	SE _D	1.748	1.758		

Educational Implications

School environment has been recognised as an important factor in academic performance. To overcome academic anxiety among students there should be a balanced approach as school can provide with opportunities to develop adolescent’s intellectual capacities and overall development. So, there is a need of enriched school environment to ensure high multidimensional aspects in a positive way.

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