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Educational aspiration and school climate of secondary school students: A study of district Lucknow

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Abstract

Educational aspiration may be regarded as an important factor for keeping the learners motivated and directed towards attaining their academic goals. The present research was conducted with the objective of studying the educational aspiration and school climate of secondary school students. In addition to this relationship between educational aspiration and school climate have also been studied. A sample of 250 (129 males, 121 females) secondary school students was selected through simple random sampling technique. Analysis of the collected data was done with the help of t-Test and Pearson's product moment correlation. Results revealed no significant difference in the educational aspiration and school climate of secondary school students on the basis of gender. Further, the correlation analysis revealed a significant and positive correlation between educational aspiration and school climate of secondary school students.

Keywords: Educational aspiration, school climate, school students, and healthy school climate.

Introduction

Aspiration may refer to ardent desire and efforts to achieve the goal an individual sets for himself/herself. According to Hurlock (1967) ^[17] as cited in Kumari, (2015) ^[11], "aspiration means the goal an individual sets for himself in a task, which has intense personal significance for him or in which he is ego-involved." When this aspiration is primarily focused on education it is called educational aspiration (Alam, 2018) ^[11]. According to Chawla, (2018) ^[6], "Educational aspiration reflects educational goals an individual sets for himself/herself". Ali (2018) ^[2] defined educational aspiration as, "an expression of the will to achieve and improve in the domain of learning". In other words, educational aspiration may be defined as the ardent desire of the learner that keeps her/him motivated and directed towards achieving their academic goals. It may be said that learner's pursuit of academic success is influenced by their level of educational aspiration.

The educational aspiration of the learners is affected by various factors; one of them is school climate. According to Frieberg (1999) ^[9] school climate is, "the quality of a school that creates healthy learning places; nurtures children's and parents' dreams and aspirations, stimulates teachers' creativity and enthusiasm, and elevates all of its members". Maxwell *et al.* (2017) ^[13] defines school climate as the "social characteristics of the school in terms of relationship among students and staff/teachers, learning and teaching emphasis, values and norms, and shared approaches and practices". From the definitions it may be said that, school climate is a broad concept, it refers to the complete atmosphere of the school which includes, physical environment, teaching-learning practices, relationship among teachers, students, principal, office staff and parents, discipline style, availability of developmental opportunities, emotional and social support to students as well as to staff members during their school journey.

The climate of school has been associated with shaping learner's educational experiences (Vats, 2019) ^[16]. Developing positive school climate has been emphasized for attaining desirable learning outcomes and promoting higher educational aspirations (Dimitroval *et al.*, 2018) ^[18]. Students spend considerable amount of time in schools it is observed learner friendly school climate leads to higher educational aspiration and better learning outcomes (Pobbi *et al.*, 2018; Mathialahan & Govindarajan 2019) ^[14, 12].

Therefore, the present research also focuses on studying the relationship between educational aspiration and school climate of students and suggests measures for creating healthy school climate.

Objectives of the study

1. To compare the mean scores of educational aspiration of male and female secondary school students.
2. To compare the mean scores of school climate of male and female secondary school students.
3. To study the correlation between educational aspiration and school climate of secondary school students.

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference in the mean scores of educational aspiration of male and female secondary school students.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean scores of school climate of male and female secondary school students.
3. There is no significant correlation between educational aspiration and school climate of secondary school students.

Methodology

Sample: A sample of 250 (121 females 129 males) students studying in secondary schools of District Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh (U.P.) was selected through simple random sampling technique.

Tools:

- Level of Educational aspiration Test (LEAT) by Khan (2011) ^[19].
- School Climate Scale by Singh and Imam (2015) ^[20].

Statistical techniques: t-Test and Pearson's coefficient of correlation.

Results and Interpretation

Gender wise comparison of mean scores of educational aspiration of secondary school students

The first objective was to compare the mean scores of educational aspiration of male and female secondary school students. The data were analyzed with the help of t-Test and the results are given in Table 1.

Table 1: Gender-wise N, M, SD and T-Value of educational aspiration of secondary school students

Gender	N	M	SD	T-Value	Remark
Males	129	21.56	3.762	0.172	Not significant
Females	121	21.48	3.450		

Interpretation: From Table 1, it is evident that the t-value is .172 which is not significant. It indicates that the mean scores of educational aspiration of male and female secondary school students did not differ significantly. Thus, the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the mean scores of educational aspiration of male and female secondary school students is not rejected. Therefore, it may be said that male and female secondary school students were found to have similar level of educational aspiration.

Gender-wise comparison of mean scores of school climate of secondary school students

The second objective was to compare the mean scores of school climate of secondary school students. The data were

analysed with the help of t-Test and the results are given in Table 2.

Table 2: Gender-wise N, M, SD, and T-Value of school climate of secondary school students

Gender	N	M	SD	T-Value	Remark
Males	129	67.34	11.800	0.487	Not Significant
Females	121	66.63	11.333		

Interpretation: From Table 2, it can be seen that the t-value is 0.48 which is not significant. It indicates that the mean scores of school climate of male and female secondary school students did not differ significantly. Thus, the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the mean scores of school climate of male and female secondary school students is not rejected. Therefore, it may be said that male and female secondary school students were found to have similar perception of their school climate.

Correlation between educational aspiration and school climate of secondary school students:

The third objective was to study the correlation between educational aspiration and school climate of secondary school students. The data were analyzed with the help of Pearson's Product Moment Correlation and the results are given in Table 3.

Table 3: Correlation coefficient between educational aspiration and school climate of secondary school student:

Variable	School Climate	Remark
Educational aspiration	0.650	$p < 0.01$

Interpretation: From Table 3, it is evident that correlation coefficient educational aspiration and school climate is 0.650 which is positive and significant at 0.01 level with $df = 248$. It shows that educational aspiration and school climate were positively and significantly correlated. Thus, the null hypothesis that there is no significant correlation between educational aspiration and school climate of secondary school student is rejected. Further the percentage of commonness between educational aspiration and school climate is 42.25% which is moderate. Therefore, it may be said that educational aspiration and school climate were found to be moderately related.

Discussion

In the present study male and female secondary school students were found to have similar level of educational aspiration. Other studies like Bora (2016) ^[3]; Chawla (2018) ^[6]; Prajapati and Desai (2019) ^[15]; Debnath & Singh (2020) ^[7] and Kaur & Gupta (2020) ^[10] also reported the similar finding. In addition to this the present study also found that male and female secondary students had similar perception of their school climate. The finding is consistent with the findings of Mathialahan & Govindarajan (2019) ^[12]. Furthermore, the present study also found a significant and positive correlation between educational aspiration and school climate of secondary school students. The finding is in line with the findings of Bashir & Kaur (2017) ^[5] and Gupta & Bashir (2017) ^[4] who also reported significant and positive correlation between educational aspiration and school climate of secondary school students. In this era of stiff academic competition, a healthy and positive school climate may have acted as a catalyst for raising educational

aspiration of the learners and have encouraged them towards achieving their life goals.

Findings of the study

1. Male and female secondary school students were found to have similar level of educational aspiration.
2. Male and female secondary school students were found to have similar perception of their school climate.
3. Educational aspiration and school climate were found to be moderately related.

Suggestions for creating a healthy school climate

1. For a healthy school climate, it is necessary that everyone should feel physically and mentally safe in the school premises. Additionally, efforts must be made to avoid any case of harassment and bullying. If such incidences happen, they must be dealt with thoughtful action.
2. A learner friendly atmosphere where students feel free to ask questions and express their opinions may be encouraged.
3. An inclusive learning environment that caters to the needs of differently abled learners and makes them feel included must be promoted
4. Achievements, progress, good behavior of the learners and small steps towards achieving goals must be reinforced and celebrated.
5. Learners must be encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities for their overall development. Every learner must get equal opportunity to engage and participate in school activities.
6. Teaching-learning must be made interesting and engaging by incorporating innovative learning strategies.
7. A discipline style which is neither too rigid nor too flexible must be followed.
8. A relationship of mutual respect among all the stakeholders of education must be promoted.
9. Guidance and counseling services must be made available in school premises so that students could get professional assistance for their career as well as personal development.
10. Professional development opportunities must not only be limited to students rather teachers must also be provided with developmental opportunities in form of seminars and workshops to accelerate their career growth.

Conclusion

Educational aspiration is an important factor that keeps the learner goal directed and helps in attaining desirable learning outcomes. The present study found that educational aspiration is positively related to the school climate of the learner. School climate is a broad concept which encompasses the physical infrastructure, safety, disciplinary style, pedagogical structure, emotional environment, developmental opportunities, inclusive environment, relationship among the learners and with all the stakeholders etc. Efforts must be made to take care of all the aspects of school climate to provide a healthy school climate to the learners that will in turn raise their educational aspiration and help in attaining desirable learning outcomes.

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