

## Academic Learning Environment of Students from English and Kannada Medium High Schools

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**Abstract :** The present study was an attempt to investigate the academic learning environment at home and school, of coeducational high school students from English and Kannada medium schools and its influence on academic achievement. The study also aimed to know the influence of socio-economic factors on academic learning environment at home and school. The sample consisted of 240 students, selected from 8 coeducational high schools in Dharwad city, Karnataka state. The results revealed that students with English medium of instruction were significantly higher in students involvement, had higher qualified teachers in schools, received significantly better parental encouragement and care and had significantly better facilities in home (separate room to study, table, light, ventilation, and surrounding environment), had significantly better academic achievement than students of Kannada medium schools. Further, home learning environment had positive and significant influence on school learning environment of students among Kannada medium schools. Socio-economic status of the family exhibited positive and significant influence on home learning environment and school learning environment of students of both Kannada and English medium schools.

**Key words:** Academic learning environment, academic achievement, socio-economic status

### Introduction

The first post independence comprehensive study on the status of education in India completed in 1966 gave a major thrust to the idea of allround development of the child's personality and intellect.

One of the major aims of the education is the development of wholesome personality. Family is the socio-biological unit that exerts the greatest influence on the development and perpetuation of the individual's behaviour. Next to home, school is the most important experience in the process of development of children. Both the environments, share influential place in child's life and also contribute to the development of children. School is the second home to children. Teachers and parents have greater responsibility to foster mental health status of the students. At times in adverse conditions the school may also substitute the home situations and meets the emotional needs of those neglected in the home.

Pupils immediate environment in school is the classroom. Class room is a place where unique face to face group, marked by interpersonal relationships among its members. These interpersonal relationships essentially include teacher-student relationship and peer relationship. The general atmosphere within the academic activities that takes place influences the social relationships. Two types of social interactions occur in the classroom. Teacher vs. students and students vs. students. First one is the most referred one in educational context. However, the interaction going on amongst students is equally significant from a psycho-social view point.

In the present era, schools have a greater responsibility than even before to help the students to develop appropriate behaviour patterns. The school is charged with realization,

human relationships, economic efficiency and civic responsibility. The experience at school and school curriculum contribute to child's feeling of personal wealth, social competence, in winning acceptance from associates, satisfaction for the students to play and to accomplish purposeful tasks and develop interests and activities which would promote social values.

Home environment has been conceptualized as the quality of human interactions, from the point of view of the child. It includes those aspects which foster growth and development, such as family trust and confidence, sharing of ideas, parents support, parental approval, parenting, parental encouragement, care, affection and approval and support of siblings. Children living in rural or urban areas are exposed to different environment. Generally children from low socio-economic status attend government school while, children of well to do families attend private schools or public schools. These two types of schools have another major difference-difference in medium of instruction.

In addition, home learning environment, school learning environment and academic achievement may be influenced by various socio-economic factors like age, gender, family size, parent's education and occupation and also by economic status of the family. The study classroom environment is of great significance as learning is an outcome of this environment. As an agent of intellectual stimulation, conducive classroom environment is an important factor in strengthening the child's level of education. This leads to considerable significance to the study of critical issues of classroom teaching. Academic achievement is dependent on school learning environment as well as home learning environment. Thus the objectives of the study included comparison of academic learning environment

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at school and home, of students from English and Kannada medium schools and to study the influence of academic learning environment on academic achievement and to study the influence of socio-economic factors on academic learning environment at school and home.

### Material and Methods

The sample consisted of High school children from 8th, 9th and 10th class with an age range of 12-16 years studying in English and Kannada medium High schools of Dharwad city. A preliminary survey was carried out to collect information regarding the total number of English and Kannada medium schools in Dharwad city. The list of English and Kannada medium schools was obtained from the office of the District Education Officer, Dharwad. There were 5 schools with English medium, 20 schools with Kannada medium and 7 schools with both Kannada and English medium of instruction. Out of these 8 co-educational high schools were selected equally by medium of instruction with two each. From each of the selected High school and from each of the class (8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>) only one section of the students were selected randomly.

#### Tools of the study

1. Academic learning environment scale
  - a. School learning environment schedule
  - b. Home learning environment schedule
2. Academic achievement
3. Socio-economic status schedule a combination of items developed by Aaron *et al.* (1969), Venkataramaiah (1983) and Hauser (1994).

a. School learning environment schedule : A full pledged schedule was developed to study the school learning environment. The schedule consists of 130 items with 10 components, viz., goal orientation, study habits of students, school environment of the students, involvement of students in school activities, physical facilities in the school, teaching materials used by school, teacher-student interaction, equality, method of teaching by schools and qualification of teacher. Each of the statement with a response as 'yes' or no with score of 2 and 1, respectively. Spilt half method was used to test the reliability of the schedule. The reliability of the tool was 0.65. b. Home learning environment schedule: Home learning environment schedule was developed to know the home learning environment of students and its influence on academic achievement of high school students. The developed version has 37 items categorized into five components viz., parental encouragement and care, facilities provided at home, parental guidance and support, parenting and co-curricular activities. All statements were positive and score of '2' and '1' for 'yes' or 'no' responses were given respectively. Spilt half method was used to test the reliability of the schedule. The reliability of the tool was 0.63.

Data collection was made by using pre-tested questionnaires. Prior permission of the Principal or Headmaster's was taken from the aided and unaided coeducational High schools to conduct the study. Among each section 5 boys and

5 girls were selected randomly. After establishing a rapport with subjects, school learning environment schedule and home learning environment schedule was self administered to students. All the selected students from classes 8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> were clubbed in one classroom and tool was administered. The students were given instructions.

Students 't' test was carried out to know the differences in the school learning environment and home learning environment among English and Kannada medium High schools. Karl Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient analysis was used to measure the relationship between school learning environment, home learning environment, academic achievement and socio-economic status of the family of high school students.

### Results and Discussion

The results of study are presented in Table 1, that students with English medium of instruction were significantly better on involvement in school activities and had significantly higher qualified teachers than students from Kannada medium schools. But, students of Kannada medium schools had higher mean scores on study habits and these schools had better method of teaching. School learning environment was significantly better for students in schools with English medium (Table 1). In English medium schools teachers were highly qualified than Kannada medium schools. This may be because in English medium schools while recruiting teachers, the schools emphasized or gave more weightage to the teacher's knowledge, their 'teaching effectiveness and their innovativeness and creative methods in teaching. The selection based on these criteria was demonstrated by the interviewers at the time of recruitment. In Kannada medium schools, the recruitment might have been only on the basis of qualification.

Students from English medium schools of both aided and unaided received more parental encouragement and care had significantly better facilities in home (Table 2) significantly better home environment than students from Kannada medium schools. It could be noticed from the Table 3 that, students from English medium schools were significantly higher on academic achievement than students from Kannada of instruction. It was observed that Kannada medium schools mostly attracted students from low socio-economic status and most of the students from English medium schools were comparatively from higher socio-economic status. This condition might have elevated their scholastic performance. So students of higher socio-economic status had better avenues for academic growth not only in their home, but also in the schools. They had better academic environment than Kannada medium schools. The findings of the present study showed (Table 4) significant and positive relationship between home learning environment and school learning environment among Kannada medium students. There was a positive relationship between home learning environment among English medium students. Devi, K.T. (1997) reported that home and school environment significantly influenced the cognitive styles of school children. Table also indicates that, there was positive relation between school learning environment, home learning environment and academic

Table 1. Comparison of mean scores of components of school learning environment between English and Kannada medium of instruction

Sl. No.	Components	Kannada (n=120)		English (n=120)		't' value
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
1.	Goal orientation	18.13	1.73	18.13	1.51	0.00
2.	Study habits	29.11	2.46	28.58	2.51	1.64
3.	Co-operation	31.43	2.27	31.48	2.17	-0.20
4.	Involvement of students	24.80	2.14	25.40	2.01	2.24*
5.	Physical facilities in school	25.38	3.89	26.16	3.13	-1.70
6.	Teacher-student interaction	47.29	4.26	47.73	3.28	-0.88
7.	Equality	20.19	2.06	20.49	1.89	-1.18
8.	Method of teaching	14.98	1.35	14.76	1.30	1.31
9.	Qualification of the teacher	7.80	0.73	8.17	0.78	3.76**
10.	Teaching materials	19.80	1.78	19.89	1.62	-0.42
Total school learning environment		235.23	15.64	234.29	15.62	0.46

\*- Significant at 0.05 level      \*\*- Significant at 0.01 level

Table 2. Comparison of mean scores of home learning environment between English and Kannada medium of instruction

Sl. No. Components	Kannada (n=120)		English (n=120)		't' value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
1. Parental encouragement and care	14.28	1.37	14.72	1.32	2.54*
2. Facilities in home	9.98	1.38	10.93	1.05	5.99**
3. Parental guidance and support	13.35	1.49	13.39	1.44	1.28
4. Parenting	21.88	1.62	21.83	1.86	0.18
5. Co-curricular activities	7.53	0.72	7.67	0.63	1.63
Total home learning environment	67.09	3.83	68.68	3.65	3.28**

\*\* Significant at 0.01 per cent level

Table 3. Comparison of mean scores of academic learning environment and academic achievement of high school students with English and Kannada medium of instruction

Sl. No. Variables	Kannnada		English		't' value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
1. School learning environment	235.23	11.64	234.29	15.62	0.46
2. Home learning environment	67.09	3.83	68.68	3.65	3.28**
3. Academic achievement	67.89	11.26	74.48	11.35	4.51**

\*\* - Significant at 0.01 level

Table 4. Correlation co-efficient between school learning environment, home learning and academic achievement of students

Group		N	'r' between HLE x SLE	'r' between SLE x AA	'r' between HLE x AA
Medium of instruction	Kannada	120	0.19*	0.07	-0.08
	English	120	0.01	0.05	0.07
	Total	240	0.09	0.05	0.08

\* Significant at 0.05 per cent level

SLE – School learning environment

HLE – Home learning environment

AA - Academic achievement

achievement among English medium students. Academic achievement is a product of various factors namely family and school backgrounds and the development of personality. Many researcher reported that, type of school (Wangoo and Khan, 1992, Panda, *et al.*, 1995), class room environment (Gayani, 1998), teacher's role (Singh and Saxena, 1987 and Gayani 1998) teaching experience (Taj and Haseen, 1985) were effective factors in academic achievement.

Table 5 reveals that, socio-economic status was positively and significantly correlated with school learning environment of high school students among entire group of students and among Kannada medium students. School learning environment was positively and significantly related to socio-economic status among entire group of students and among English medium students. This may be due to the fact that the students of high socio-economic group seek admission to good

Table 5. Correlation co-efficients between socio-economic status of the family, school learning environment, home learning environment and academic achievement of the students

	Group	N	'r' between SLE x SES	'r' between HLE x SES	'r' between AA x SES
Medium of instruction	Kannada	120	0.25**	0.30*	0.07
	English	120	0.18*	-0.06	-0.03
	Total	240	0.18**	0.21**	0.14*

\* Significant at 0.05 per cent level      \*\* Significant at 0.01 per cent level  
 SLE – School learning environment      AA- Academic achievement  
 HLE – Home learning environment      SES- Socio-economic status

Table 6. Influence of parent's education on school learning environment, home learning environment and academic achievement of students

Sl. No. Socio-economic characteristics	School learning environment 'r'	Home learning environment 'r'	Academic achievement 'r'
1. Father's education	0.10	0.12	0.19**
2. Father's occupation	0.11	0.19**	0.20**
3. Mother's education	0.12	0.20**	0.14*

\* Significant at 0.05 per cent level      \*\* Significant at 0.01 per cent level

schools, with good reputation as they can afford the fees and the educational materials. Parents who are educated may interact and involve better and seek good learning environment in school. Table also reveals that, socio-economic status was positively and significantly related to academic achievement of high school students among entire group of students. Gill and Sidhu (1988) also reported socio-economic status of parents influenced the school performance of students. Similarly Devi and Mayuri (2003) reported that socio-economic status significantly contributed to academic achievement.

It could be noticed from the table 6 that, father's education, occupation and mother's education were positively related to school learning environment. This may be because of the fact that, parents of higher education and occupation tend to seek admission of their children to better schools with higher fees who may be better in providing conducive learning environment. The results of the present study also revealed that, father's occupation and mother's education was positively

and significantly correlated to home learning environment and academic achievement of high school students. Cherian and Cherian (1995) reported that children of more educated parent were exposed to a more stimulating and richer environment than those of less educated. Vijayalaxmi and Natesan (1992) also reported that socio-economic status influenced academic achievement. Conclusion of the study indicate that students from schools with English medium of instruction were significantly higher in student's involvement, these schools had higher qualified teachers, received significantly better parental encouragement and care, had significantly better facilities in home and had significantly better academic achievement than students from Kannada medium schools. Home learning environment had positive and significant influence on school learning environment of Kannada medium high school students. Socio-economic status of the family exhibited positive and significant influence on school and home learning environment of high school students among both English and Kannada medium schools.

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