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Academic Interest among Higher Secondary Students

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Abstract:

When a person is relatively stable or possess enduring predisposition, positive affective orientation, and tendency to persevere when working on certain specific academic content or task domains he is said to have interest. Theoretically, interests are often defined as the focused interaction between an individual and an object that results in an enduring affective disposition or orientation towards the object. Individual interests are conceptualized as consisting of feeling and values. In the context of school learning, the development, maintenance, and enhancement of positive student-academic interests can improve the quality of learning and promote intrinsic motivation. Thus, academic interests should not only be considered important facilitators of academic outcomes, but also as valued educational outcomes in their own right. The present study attempts to find out the level of Academic interest among students and the emergence and development of this feature will enable them to perform better in school.

Results: Female students, English medium students, Science students, Type of school and Fathers qualification have more Academic Interest than their counterparts.

Conclusion: Better Life skills programme may be implemented in Teacher Training institutions so that the future teacher can handle students better.

Keywords: Academic Interest, Learning, Home and School Environment

1. Introduction

Education functions in an atmosphere largely determined by the attitudes, interests and values of pupils, teachers, administrators, parents and school board members. The child determines his receptivity within this atmosphere, whereas the teacher and others, with their particular biases, determine the material and procedures of the educative process. The basic purpose of this process is to influence the development of an individual to produce personal qualities of physical, social, intellectual and emotional readiness to meet a complex array of life situations. Whenever teachers attempt to influence the development of children, they encounter numerous conditions. Some of the states that already exist in children inhibit the intended response, whereas other predispositions have a positive and reinforcing effect. Certain behavioral characteristics are noticed as life experiences are encountered, and from these it is inferred that the individual has a particular attitude, interest, or value. Interests seem to develop out of satisfying activities, and they tend to stimulate further activity. Learning is decided from these experiences, and it is directly influenced by the enthusiasm.

2. Objective of the Study

To investigate the significant difference Academic Interest owing to differences in Gender, Stream of Study, Age, Region, Medium of Instruction, Type of School, Fathers Qualification, Mothers Qualification and Family Income.

3. Hypothesis

Based on the objectives the following hypothesis was formulated.

There is no significant difference between the Academic Interest owing to the differences in

- Gender
- Stream of Study
- Age
- Region
- Medium of Instruction
- Type of School
- Fathers Qualification
- Mothers Qualification
- Income

4. Sample

The sample constituted 570 higher secondary students. Due representation were given to Gender Stream of Study, Age, Region, Medium of Instruction and Type of School.

5. Tools Used

The Academic Interest inventory constructed by Thara Sebastian (1997) consisted of items that reveal children's attitude towards education in general, the importance of their studies in particular, their interest in studies, and the stress related their studies and examination. The inventory consisted of 35 items, both positively and negatively worded ones. Reliability was computed by Pearson product movement correlation. The reliability co-efficient was found to be 0.76.

5.1. Personal data sheet

To collect the information of selected variables such as gender, stream of study, age, region, medium of instruction, school type, qualification of Father and Mother and Family income personal data sheet was prepared.

6. Statistical Analysis

Critical ratio and Analysis of variance were used to verify the hypotheses.

7. Academic Interest

Variable	Group	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value	Level of significance
Gender	Male	271	32.86	8.26	568	4.77	Significant at 0.01 level
	Female	299	35.89	6.87			
Stream of Study	Arts	250	32.52	7.83	568	5.43	Significant at 0.01 level
	Science	320	35.97	7.28			
Age	up to 17	103	35.27	8.41	568	1.18	Not Significant
	Above 17	467	34.27	7.54			
Region	Urban	501	34.26	7.54	568	1.60	Not Significant
	Rural	69	35.85	8.81			
Medium	English	227	35.63	6.93	568	2.97	Significant at 0.01 level
	Tamil	343	33.68	8.10			

Table 1: Academic Interest with respect to Gender, Stream of Study, Age, Region and Medium

7.1. Gender

From the above table 4.3, it is evident that the t-value 4.77 is significant at 0.01 level. So the null hypothesis is rejected. Thus there is significant difference between male and female students in their academic interest and female students are having higher academic interest than the male students.

7.2. Stream of Study

From the above table 4.3, it is evident that the t-value 5.43 is significant at 0.01 level. There is significant difference between Arts and Science students in their academic interest Science students are having higher academic interest than the Arts students.

7.3. Age

From the above table 4.3, it is evident that the t-value 1.18 is not significant at even 0.05 level. There is no significant difference between age up to 17 and above 17 students in their academic interest.

7.4. Region

From the above table 4.3, it is evident that the t-value 1.60 is not significant at even 0.05 level. Thus there is no significant difference between rural and urban students in their academic interest.

7.5. Medium of Instruction

From the above table 4.3, it is evident that the t-value 2.97 is significant at 0.01 level. There is significant difference between Tamil and English students in their academic interest and English medium students are having higher academic interest than the Tamil medium students.

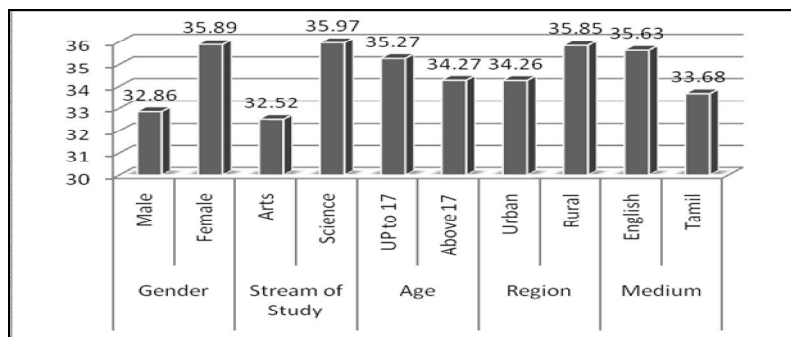


Figure 1: showing Academic Interest with respect to Gender, Stream of Study, Age, Region and Medium of instruction

Group	Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	MSS	F-value	Level of significance
Type of School	Between groups	1228.68	2	614.34	10.67	Significant at 0.01 level
	Within groups	32640.80	567	57.56		
	Total	33869.48	569			
Father's Educational Qualification	Between groups	780.95	4	195.23	3.33	Significant at 0.01 level
	Within groups	33088.53	565	58.48		
	Total	33869.48	569			
Mother's Educational Qualification	Between groups	125.15	4	31.28	0.52	Not Significant
	Within groups	33744.33	565	59.72		
	Total	33869.48	569			
Income	Between groups	187.11	4	46.78	0.78	Not Significant
	Within groups	33682.37	565	59.61		
	Total	33869.48	569			

Table 2: One Way ANOVA showing the Differences in the Academic Interest of students with respect to Different types of school, Parents qualification, and income

From the above table, it is evident that the F-value is significant at 0.01 level. Thus there is significant difference between Government, Government Aided and private school students in their Academic Interest. Also there is significant difference in academic interest with respect to fathers' educational qualification. However there is no significant difference in academic interest among higher secondary students with respect to Fathers occupation and income.

8. Results and Discussion

The present study reveals that there is significant difference between male and female students in their academic interest and female students are having higher academic interest than the male students. Science students are having higher academic interest than the Arts students. There is significant difference between Tamil and English students in their academic interest and English medium students are having higher academic interest than the Tamil medium students. Also there is significant difference in academic interest with respect to School Type and fathers' educational qualification.

The female students' possess higher academic interest perhaps because they are more responsible and goal oriented than males and they are able to adapt themselves to any environment. This may be due to the fact that female students are more receptive and would have acquired Academic Interest through reading and motivation from parents and teachers.

This study also reveals that English medium students, Science students, Type of school and Fathers qualification have Academic Interests than their counterparts. Science students are more task oriented and thereby show more Academic interest. English medium students have more opportunities to acquire knowledge through the internet, library, television and other media which may be lesser among the Tamil medium students creating interest in specific areas. Hence it is required to provide more opportunities to the Tamil medium students through various awareness programme and informative sources. The medium of instruction plays a vital role in academic interest. The English medium students' possess better Academic interest than the Tamil medium students. This is because the English medium students are mostly from private managements. The managements are able to provide a better school environment for their students. To improve the Academic interest of the Tamil medium students the government can improve the infrastructure and the curriculum according to students' interest. The atmosphere created in the schools and home play immense role in creating Academic interest among students.

This findings needs warrant to concentrate on the improvement Motivational strategies in order to create Academic interest in and thereby improve achievement among the students especially those who have the low level of these attributes. Hence the government, educational authorities, teachers and parents take necessary steps to improve these attributes through proper counseling and tutorial sessions and several programmes.

8.1. Implications of the study

- The institutions should create better environment to enable students to develop interests so that they can perform better.
- The curriculum should be based on the need and interests of students.
- Students must be trained to introspect themselves and develop new strategies to mould themselves to the changing conditions in schools.

9. Conclusion

The study is useful to identify the level of Academic Interest of students and helps to evolve effective steps to enhance where Academic Interest is low. The study may also be useful in analyzing the reasons why it is low among males, Arts students and Tamil medium students. It is therefore important to develop not only the cognitive aspect but also the overall development of the individual.

10. References

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