

Attitude of Secondary School Students towards Gender Responsive School Environment

Jyoti Bala and Ritu Bakshi

Department of Educational Studies, Central University of Jammu, J&K, India

Corresponding author: Jyotiverma2082@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

A gender responsive school environment is one where the academic, social and physical environment and its surrounding community take into account the specific needs of both girls and boys. This study was designed to study the attitude of secondary school students towards gender responsive school environment. The sample of the study was selected by random sampling method which includes 100 secondary school students of Kathua district. For data collection the investigator has used self-developed attitude scale for knowing the attitude of secondary schools student towards gender responsive school environment. The collected data was analyzed with the help of t-test. Research finding revealed that there exists significant gender difference in attitude of secondary school students towards gender responsive school environment. Finding also revealed that there exists significant difference in attitude of secondary school students towards gender responsive school environment with respect to type of schools. The study is also reflects the percentages of students having positive negative attitudes towards gender responsive school environment.

Keywords: Attitude, gender responsive school environment

Education is a basic human right for everyone. All girls and boys, men and women have the right to quality education, with fair access and without discrimination. The gender inequities pervading society are carried into the school environment. This is evidenced in school processes such as teaching, teacher-student interaction, school management, and the plan and design of the physical infrastructure. Gender equality in education addresses the different needs of girls and boys and ensures their enrolment, participation and achievement in the learning environment. It involves restructuring the culture, policies and practices in education interventions to meet the different needs and capacities of all male and female learners. Current practices in our schools make it apparent that gender bias and sex discrimination are alive and well. Examples include the different types of feedback boys and girls receive from their teachers. Boys get feedback for academic subjects, whereas girls get it for being neat, quiet, and having good handwriting (Brodkin, 1991).

Gender-responsive education is essential if we are to achieve quality education for all. Gender-responsive education system is crucial to ensure male and female learners of all ages have access to quality, relevant and protective educational opportunities.

School environment play an important part in teaching, modelling, and reinforcing gender roles. Evans (1999) examined that school climate is vital in gender-based empowerment: School practices such as corporal punishment and insults have a negative impact on children's academic performance. Boys and girls do not always receive the same educational opportunities because their teachers and schools may unintentionally reinforce gender stereotypes. Many teachers may be completely unaware that they treat girls and boys differently. Kane (2004) indicated that girls seem to be more sensitive to school quality than boys and that the quality of teachers has a greater impact on the demand for girls' education than for boys'.

Some schools also undertook gender sensitisation with the students, which directly challenged gender stereotypes, lower academic expectations of girls, and beliefs that girls should carry out domestic chores such as cleaning Wanjama and Njuguna (2015). A study of 30 government secondary schools in Bihar, India, found that the quality of school infrastructure (buildings, toilet facilities, drinking water, classroom furniture, playgrounds and electricity) had no impact on learning outcomes for boys or girls Santhya, Zavier and Jejeebhoy (2015). The study also indicated that girls had been regularly characterized as “dull, second-rate students incapable of answering questions” and boys were assigned high status tasks like timekeeping and ringing the school bell, whereas girls were responsible for sweeping and arranging furniture (Kendall 2006).

Education plays an important role in the progress of an individual’s mind. The school is an environment in which young people learn about social relationships, about norms, values. The challenge of education is to make students more humane and function as better human-beings. Promoting gender equity in education is important for many reasons, both at the level of the individual and at family, community, and country levels. A gender responsive school environment is one where the academic, social and physical environment and its surrounding community take into account the specific needs of both girls and boys. Gender-responsive education is essential if we are to achieve quality education for all.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the difference in attitude of secondary school students towards gender responsive school environment with respect to gender and type of school.
2. To compare the percentages of secondary school students having positive and negative attitudes towards gender responsive school environment.

Hypotheses of the Study

1. There will be no significant gender difference in attitude of secondary schools student towards gender responsive school environment.

2. There will be no significant difference in attitude of secondary schools student towards gender responsive school environment with respect to type of school.

Delimitations of the Study

1. The study is delimited to Kathua district only.
2. The study is delimited to higher secondary school students only.
3. The study is delimited to the sample of 100 higher secondary school students only.

Method

The investigator has adopted descriptive survey method for conducting the study.

Sample

The study was conducted on 100 secondary school students of 11th standard randomly selected from schools of Kathua District. Out of the selected students 50 were from the government schools (25 female and 25 male) and 50 from private schools (25 female and 25 male).

Tool Used

In the present study Self-made scale was used to measure the attitude of secondary school students toward gender responsive school environment.

Statistical Techniques to be Employed

In order to achieve the above mentioned objectives the investigator has employed following statistical techniques i.e. Mean, S.D, ‘t’ test and Percentage.

Hypothesis 1: There will be no significant gender difference in attitude of secondary schools student towards gender responsive school environment:

Table 1: Values of Mean, S.D., SE_{DM} and ‘t’ for male and female secondary schools student towards gender responsive school environment.

Variable	Group	N	Mean	S.D	SE _{DM}	T	Significance
Gender responsive School environment	Male	50	162.26	13.32	1.91	1.98	significant
	Female	50	166.04	12.49			

Review of table 1 reveals that the computation value of 't' for male and female secondary schools student towards gender responsive schools environment is 1.98 which is equal to 1.96 the table value of 't' at 0.05 level of significance. The calculated value thus, equal to the table value. The value of 't' is therefore, significant. It can therefore, said that there exists significant gender differences in attitude of secondary schools student towards gender responsive schools environment.

Hence, the (Hypothesis H1) that there will be no significant gender differences in attitude of secondary schools student towards gender responsive school environment is not retained. From the table it is noticed that the mean value of female is higher than that of male indicating the attitude of gender responsive school environment of female is higher than the male.

Hypothesis 2: There will be no significant difference in attitude of secondary schools student towards gender responsive school environment with respect to type of school:

Table 2: Values of Mean, S.D., SE_{DM} and 't' for government and private secondary schools student towards gender responsive school environment.

Variable	Group	N	Mean	S.D	SE _{DM}	T	Significance
Gender responsive School environment	Govt	50	159.71	9.98	1.84	4.79	significant
	Private	50	168.56	14.10			

Review of table 2 reveals that the computation value of 't' for government and private secondary schools student towards gender responsive school environment is 4.79 which is greater than 2.58 the table value of 't' at 0.01 level of significance. The calculated value thus, greater than the table value. The value of 't' is therefore, significant. It can therefore, said that there exists significant difference in attitude of secondary schools student towards gender responsive school environment with respect to type of school.

Hence, the (Hypothesis H2) that there will be no significant difference in social maturity of secondary schools student with respect to type of school is not retained.

Table 3: Showing percentages of secondary schools student students having positive and negative responses towards gender responsive school environment

Students having positive attitude towards gender responsive school environment	Students having negative attitude towards gender responsive school environment	Students having in between responses	Total
27%	28%	45%	100%

Review of table 3 reveals that the 27% of the secondary schools student had positive attitude towards gender responsive school environment while 28% had negative attitude towards gender responsive school environment and 45% of the secondary schools student had showed neutral attitudes towards gender responsive school environment.

CONCLUSION

Therefore, it may be concluded from the present study that there were significant gender differences in attitude of secondary schools student towards gender responsive school environment. It was also found that there was significant difference in attitude of secondary schools student towards gender responsive school environment with respect to type of school.

The present study reported that the more student have a negative attitude towards gender responsive school environment. There is a need to spread the awareness regarding gender responsive school environment because the male student exhibit less positive attitude towards responsive school environment in comparison to their female counterparts.

There is also need to develop awareness about gender responsive school environment among government schools student as they revealed less positive attitude towards gender responsive school environment than the private school students. School personnel may take steps to decrease or eliminate gender bias in schools, thereby creating a more positive gender environment for all students. In order to raise awareness there should be awareness campaigns via media, posters, conferences and training.

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