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Research Paper

Influence of Gender on Parental Encouragement of Higher Secondary Students

Education

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ABSTRACT

This article focuses on the status of parental encouragement of higher secondary students as many of them having problems related to their academic failure or to stereotype them as loud, lazy, athletic, deprived, or some time dangerous and deviant. The present study was based on survey method. The sample consists of 621 Std. XI students from Thiruvannamalai District of Tamilnadu. Parental Encouragement Inventory of Mohana Sekar (1980) was adopted in addition to a Basic Data Sheet developed by the investigators. The study reveals the moderate level of parental encouragement to higher secondary biology students and also significant difference was observed between the boys and girls in parental encouragement.

Introduction:
Everyone is indebted to many people who played inspirational roles in shaping their lives. Among them right from the childhood, the greatest motivators are the parents. Parents play an important role in the life of children in the development of attitudes and motives. Strong and supportive parents contribute to the growth of strong and success oriented achievement drive in their children. Rashmi Garg et al. (2002) stated that positive family climate and parental encouragement fostered a positive academic self-schema. Therefore parental role and influence plays a vital part in the development of child's education and their whole life. Outside the school, the home is the most significant source of learning for a child. Parents have prime responsibility to play in allowing them to explore their wider social environment and to encourage the development of acceptable social skills. The way the parents encourage their children in cognitive learning is by exposing them to different cognitively stimulating activities and materials like pictured comic books, electronic media and day-to-day customs/events in the home (Sekar. P, 2013). Parents who are highly motivated and oriented lead to pivot the right learning environment at home. A variety of studies indicates that such parents are likely to place a high value on autonomy and independence, mastery, competence and achievement generally. According to Kathleen V. Hoover-Dempsey et al. (2001), "parents' encouragement activities take many forms, from establishing structures for homework performance to teaching for understanding and developing student learning strategies. Operating largely through modeling, reinforcement, and instruction, parents' homework involvement appears to influence students' success in so far as it supports student attributes related to achievement (e.g., attitudes about homework, perceptions of personal competence, self-regulatory skills)". Laurence Steinberg et al. (1992) stated that the parental encouragement is much more likely to promote adolescent school success when it occurs in the context of an authoritative home environment. Henry Codjoe (2007) focused on the educational experiences of African-Canadian youth and observed that factors such as the home environment and parental encouragement contribute better academic success of students.

Need for the Study:
In the school education, the higher secondary stage is the most significant and a decision-making point in the educational life of students. The marks he/she scored in the higher secondary examinations lay the foundation for his/her future career. To concentrate on their study and come out with glittering stars in the academic field, the higher secondary students need to be encouraged and motivated by their parents in all endeavours of their children. Hence, a study on the influence of gender on parental encouragement of higher secondary students emerges.

Statement of the Problem:
The present study is entitled as "Influence of Gender on Parental Encouragement of Higher Secondary Students".

Objectives:
The objectives of the present study are as follows:

1. To find out the level of parental encouragement of higher secondary students.
2. To find out whether there is any significant difference in parental encouragement of higher secondary students with respect to gender.

Hypotheses:
The following are the hypotheses of this study:

1. The level of parental encouragement of higher secondary students is high.
2. There is no significant difference in parental encouragement of higher secondary students with respect to gender.

Research Design:
Survey method is adopted by the researchers.

Population:
The population of this study comprises of the first year higher secondary students in Thiruvannamalai District of Tamilnadu.

Sample and Sampling Procedure:
Six hundred and twenty one Std. XI Biology students were randomly selected from the higher secondary schools located in Thiruvannamalai District of Tamilnadu State.

Instruments for Data Collection:
The researchers used the following tools.

1. Personal Data Sheet developed by the investigators.
2. Parental Encouragement Inventory (PEI) prepared and validated by Mohana Sekar (1980) was adopted by the investigators.

Data Analysis:
Descriptive and differential analysis was used to compute the data and to verify the hypotheses formulated in this study by using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The results of the analysis are presented in Tables 1 to 2.

Results:
Table 1: Shows the level of parental encouragement of higher secondary biology students.

Level of Parental Encouragement	N	%
Low	178	28.7
Moderate	276	44.4
High	167	26.9
Total	621	100.0

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Table 2: Shows the significant difference in parental encouragement of higher secondary students with respect to gender.

Gender	Mean	SD	't' value	Significance at 0.05 level
Male	42.01	9.920	4.080	S
Female	45.35	10.008		

Note: S - Denotes significant.

Findings:

From the analysis, the following findings are observed:

Table -1 reveals that among higher secondary students about 44.4% of them are having moderate level of parental encouragement, 26.9% of them are having high level parental encouragement and the remaining 28.7% of them are having low level of parental encouragement.

From Table – 2, significant difference is observed as the obtained t-value (4.080) is greater than the table (1.96) at 0.05 level. Therefore, it is inferred that there exists significant difference between the boys and girls of higher secondary students in their parental encouragement. In this case, the girl students gained more encouragement (Mean=45.35) than the boys (Mean=42.01).

Discussion:

The present study indicates the moderate level of parental encouragement to higher secondary students, who opted for biology subjects. This finding is concurrent with the study of Therese Bouffard et al. (2005). The investigation also reveals gender differences in parental encouragement, which is just opposite to the findings of Jennifer Kerpelman et al. (2008). Moreover the present study shows more parental encouragement to girls than boys, which is also supported by the studies of Narmatha & Archanakumari (2013); Francisca (2013); and Alfgeir Logi Kristjansson & Inga Dora Sigfusdottir (2009), but this is not supported by the study of Sandra Yu Rueger & Christine Kerres Malecki (2011).

Conclusion:

The present study shows the moderate level of parental encouragement to students who opted for biology subject at the higher secondary level. Further, more parental encouragement to girls than the boys at this stage, indicates a change in the attitude of parents in the Indian cultural set up. However parents need to understand their crucial role in shaping the future of their wards, and they should come forward to extend all possible support to children enable them get success not only in academic domain but also in all sphere of their life.

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