

## A Study of Locale Differentials: Perception of Children towards their Psycho-Social Climate of School

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### Abstract

*The present study was undertaken to assess locale differences in perceived psycho-social climate of school among children. The present study was conducted in Ludhiana district of Punjab. The respondents of the study were school going children (aged 10-12 years) randomly selected from Government High School and Senior Secondary Schools located in rural and urban areas of Ludhiana district. For the assessment of the psycho-social climate of school of the selected respondents the School Environment Inventory (SEI) by K.s Mishra was used. The results revealed that Urban children scored significantly higher in almost all the dimensions of perceived psycho-social climate of school viz 'creative stimulation', 'cognitive encouragement', 'permissiveness', 'acceptance' and 'control' except 'rejection' dimension which was equally displayed by children irrespective of locale. Urban children perceived their psychosocial climate of school much better as compared to their rural counterparts.*

**Key words:** *Locale, Perceived psycho-social climate of school.*

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School is the primary setting where individual first encounter the world of work. Schools is the vital force in child's affecting development his motivation to learn the modes of remembering, reasoning, problem solving, social and moral understanding. School put emphasis on developing intellectual skills and concepts necessary for civic competence. In school the most important factor is the atmosphere existing there. School environment is a powerful force and plays a pivotal role in the all-round development of the child. A good school climate has been found to predict not only superior academic achievement but also positive self-esteem. The School environment can have a dramatic impact on how children perceive. It can affect mood, motivation, creativity and productivity of children positively or negatively. A school's environment is the thread that connects the multitude of activities on a campus. In many respects this thread is almost invisible, yet everyone experiences its influence.

The psycho-social school environment encompasses the attitudes, feelings, and values of students and staff. Physical and psychological safety, positive inter personal relationships, recognition of the needs and success of the individual, and support for learning are all part of the psycho-social environment. (Nazir and Seema 2012).

School experiences plays important role in the part of value formation. Schools take the children on a well guided tour into areas beyond the home circle. Schools are the microcosms of the world. The disorder of the world surfaces to school in many ways. The state of growing up of children and youth in our country has changed is further changing fast. Children indulge in crime, violence in school and outside. Thus the school has a role which is not only strategic but also indispensable in the development of healthy personality. The school serves as a testing ground on which the child develops and strengthens his sense of identity. School is

the primary setting where individual first encounter the world of work. Schools is the force in child's affecting development his motivation to learn the modes of remembering, reasoning, problem solving, social and moral understanding. School put emphasis on developing intellectual skills and concepts necessary for civic competence. In school the most important factor is the atmosphere existing there.

Education needs to be enriched with values. One of Gandhiji's famous social evil is "Education without character". In various formulations, he presents the goal of education as character building, which focuses on the development of courage, strengths, fearlessness, virtue and the ability to engage in selfless work directed at moral and spiritual aims. Values are the guiding principles of life. It may be operationally conceived as those guiding principles of life which are conducive to one's physical and mental health as well as social adjustment and welfare. One has to lay special stress on the teaching of moral and spiritual values (Nirankari 2012).

Education generally enhances the development of good moral conduct in the society. It is also the responsibility of moral education to strengthen the idea of morality as an important foundation for social order. Moral rules are the same throughout the whole world. It is for this reason that moral rules are referred to as being general or universal. The reason for this is that morality throughout the whole world is against cheating, stealing, while morality generally, supports honesty, truthfulness, fair play, respect for elders, kindness, hardworking, patriotism among others. Education is a value-laden activity. Values are the core to school, they come with the architecture and the furniture and decorations of the building itself. They are personified in the attributes of the teachers and in the standards of behaviour expected from the

students, they are made explicit in the rubrics and rituals, particularly in those that accompany tragedy or celebrate success. The examination of the values discourse suggests that there are a number of different kind of values, such as, moral, education, aesthetic, social, political and religious.

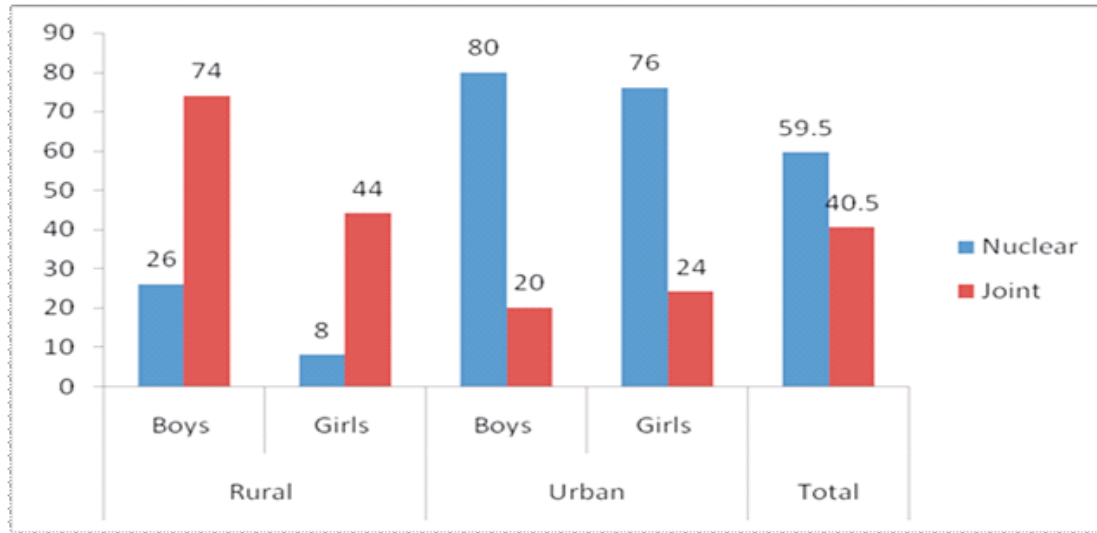
## **METHODOLOGY**

The sample consisted of 200 school going children (100 rural and 100 urban) in the age group of 10-12 years, belonging to the rural and urban area of Ludhiana district. The sample was randomly selected from four Government High Schools and Senior Secondary Schools located in rural and urban areas of Ludhiana district. From each school a sample of 50 children equally distributed over two sexes (25 boys & 25 girls) was selected. 'School Environment Inventory' (SEI) by (Mishra, 1984) was used for assessing the perception of children about their psycho-social school climate.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Socio-personal characteristics of the respondents**

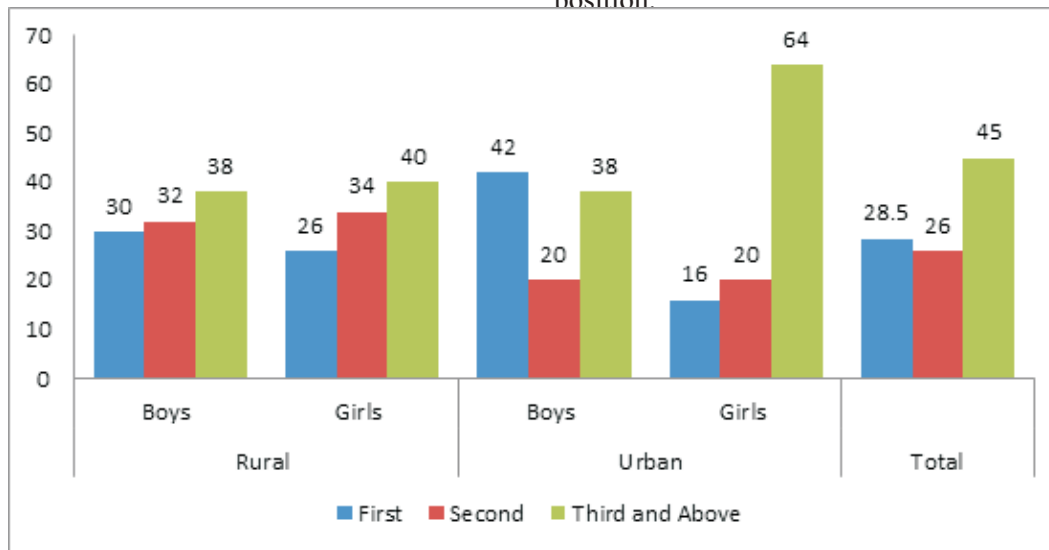
Data pertaining to the distribution of children according to family type revealed that more than half (59.5%) of the respondents were from nuclear family setting while 40.5 per cent respondents were residing in joint families.



The distribution of children according to their ordinal position as reported by them among the urban respondents large proportion (38%) of boys had third and above birth order followed by 32 per cent who were second born while, 30 per cent boys were first born. Similarly in girls higher percentage(40%) had third and above ordinal position followed by 34 per cent girls who were second born and 26 per cent who were first born. while rural respondents indicated that approximately equal percentage

of boys had first(42%) and third and above(38%)ordinal position while 20 per cent boys were second born. Among girls 64 per cent had third and above ordinal position followed by first born (16%)and second born (20%).

It is ascertained from the data that in totality highest proportion of respondents (45%) were having third and above birth order followed by 28.5 per cent who were first born and only 26.5 per cent of the respondents were in the category who were having second ordinal position.



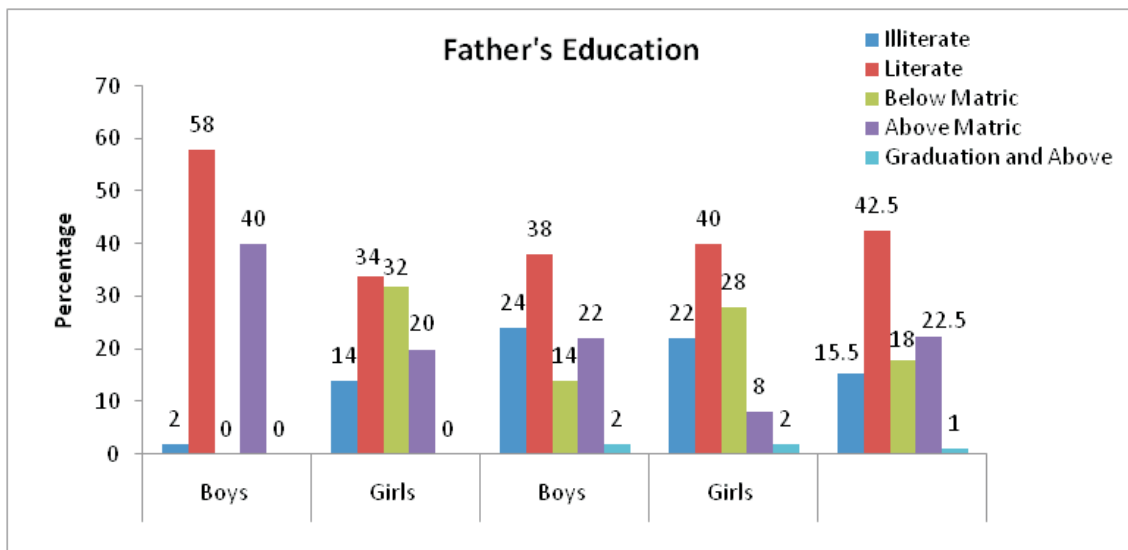
**Distribution of children by ordinal position**

In case of girls of urban area, majority of the fathers of the respondents were literate (34%) followed by 34 percent who were educated up to below matric while (14%) were illiterate and only 20 per cent were had their education upto above matric. However in rural area, a different trend was seen .Majority of the fathers of the respondents (40%) were literate while (22%) were illiterate, eight per cent were above matric followed by (28%) who were below matric while only 2 per cent were graduate.

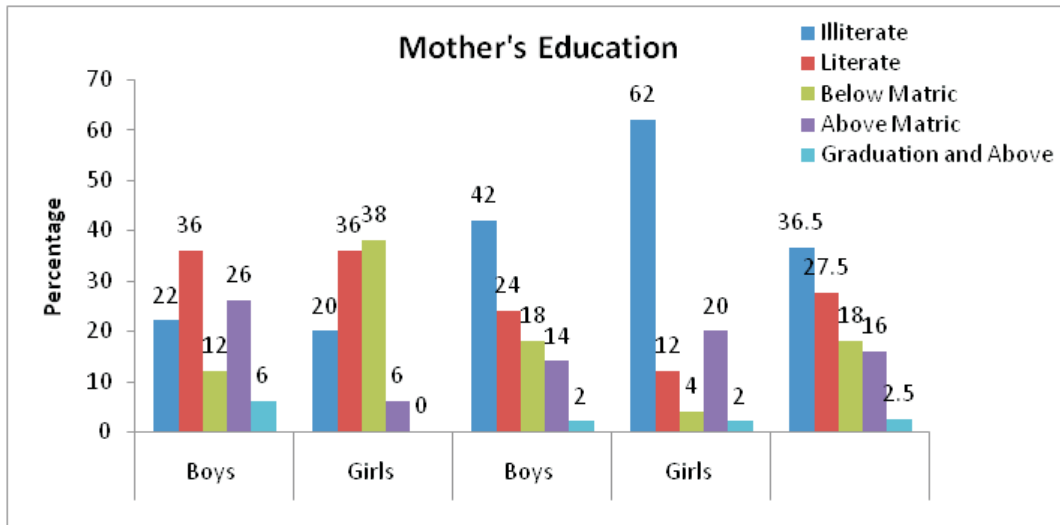
Perusal of the table reveals educational qualification of mothers which revealed that in urban area majority of the mothers of the boys were literate (36%), followed by 22% of the mothers of the were illiterate, while 26% per cent mothers who were above matric and below matric 12 % however mother of only six per cent

of the boys were graduate and above. Following similar trend, in rural area, majority of the mothers of were illiterate (42%) while 24% percent were literate, followed by 18% were educated up to below matric and above matric 14% per cent whereas only two per cent were graduate.

Perusal of the table depicts the educational qualification of mothers which revealed that in urban area, mothers of the girls respondents 38% had their education below matric followed by (36%) mothers who were Literate while (20%) were illiterate and only six per cent were above matric. The similar trend, in rural area, majority of the mothers of the respondents were illiterate (62%), rest (20%) of the mothers of the respondents were above matric, while only (12%) were below matric, very less number of mothers were below matric four per cent and only two who were graduate and above.



Distribution of children by father's education



Distribution of children by mother's education

#### Locale differentials of respondents across various dimensions of perceived psychosocial climate of school

Locale wise distribution of respondents across various dimensions of perceived psychosocial climate of school is depicted in the table 1. In all the dimensions of perceived psychosocial climate except 'rejection' showed significant differences among school children irrespective of locale. The mean scores of urban children were comparatively higher than rural children in all the dimensions. In the 'creative stimulation' dimension of psycho-social climate urban children perceived their school environment in better way ( $70.50 \pm 4.86$ ) as compared to rural children ( $M.S=65.46$ ). The calculated t-value was found to be significant ( $t=5.28$ ;  $p<0.01$ ). Similar pattern was seen in 'cognitive encouragement' dimension, where urban children's perception was found to be better ( $37.05 \pm 3.18$ ) as compared to rural children ( $33.98 \pm 7.86$ ). The calculated t-value was significant ( $t=3.62$ ;  $p<0.01$ ). The mean scores for the urban children in the dimension of 'acceptance' was found to be higher ( $34.93 \pm 3.94$ ) as compared to rural children

( $31.31 \pm 9.07$ ). The calculated t-value ( $3.66$ ;  $p<0.01$ ) showed a significant differences between the two ( $p<0.01$ ) level.

All the other dimensions also showed that the mean scores of the urban children were higher than the rural children with significant differences. Mean scores of 'permissiveness' in urban children ( $29.76 \pm 4.95$ ) was found to be significantly higher ( $t=5.88$ ;  $p<0.01$ ) than the mean scores of rural children ( $25.43 \pm 5.45$ ). Congruently 'control' came out to be significantly higher ( $2.80$ ;  $p<0.01$ ) in urban children with mean scores of ( $32.74 \pm 4.99$ ).

Overall, highly significant differences were found between the perception of psychosocial climate of school among rural and urban children. The total mean score of urban children ( $227.99 \pm 17.30$ ) was higher than rural children ( $212.04 \pm 23.82$ ) with highly significant differences ( $t=5.42$ ;  $p<0.01$ ). All the dimensions of school environment were headed by urban children. The result is consistent with the findings of Okech (1987) who observed that urban students were more positive in their attitude towards their psychosocial climate of school. Similarly Grewal and Singh (1987)

found significant difference in urban and rural student's perception about their school climate.

**Table 1 : Locale differentials of respondents across various dimensions of perceived psycho-social climate of school**

elementary aged children whose teachers claimed to have close personal relationships stated that teacher's involvement in child's activities, the disciplinary technique adopted had influence on children perception about their

Perceived Psycho-social Climate	Rural(n=100)		Urban(n=100)		t-value
	Mean	SD (±)	Mean	SD (±)	
Creative Stimulation	65.46	8.22	70.50	4.86	5.28**
Cognitive Encouragement	33.98	7.86	37.05	3.18	3.62**
Acceptance	31.31	9.07	34.93	3.94	3.66**
Permissiveness	25.43	5.45	29.76	4.95	5.88**
Rejection	25.35	8.84	23.01	8.70	1.89
Control	30.51	6.22	32.74	4.99	2.80**
Total	212.04	23.82	227.99	17.30	5.42**

\*\*Significant at 1% level

**Locale wise distribution of respondents across various levels of perceived psycho-social climate of school**

Table indicates locale wise distribution of respondents as per different levels of perceived psychosocial climate of school. Majority of the respondents (urban and rural) reported high level of perception about their school climate followed by medium and low. Chi square value depicted locale differences to be significant. Though locale differences were found to be significant yet higher percentage of urban respondents perceived high level of school climate. The results are supported by the findings of the study Mehta (1994) who Therefore, it can be concluded that urban children perceive their school climate better than their rural counterparts. Urban children experience relatively more supportive, caring relationships with their teachers were more satisfied with school. Skinner and Belmont(1993)also reported that upper

school climate. Similarly Ghanihar (2005) revealed that the students of high effective schools were more adjusted to schools than the students of average and low effective schools. Students of high effective schools were involved more in schools activities than the students of average and low effective schools.

**Table 2: Locale wise distribution of respondents across various levels of perceived psycho-social climate of school**

Levels of Perceived Psycho-social climate	Rural(n=100)		Urban(n=100)	
	f	%	f	%
High	51	51.00	81	81.00
Medium	41	41.00	18	18.00
Low	8	8.00	1	1.00
$\chi^2$	33.63**, d.f 1			

\*Significant at 1% Level.

## CONCLUSION

Therefore, it can be concluded that urban children perceive their school climate better than their rural counterparts. Urban children experience relatively more supportive, caring relationships with their teachers were more satisfied with school. Skinner and Belmont(1993)also reported that upper elementary aged children whose teachers claimed to have close personal relationships with them felt socially connected in the classroom. A close and comfortable relationship with their teachers, which is very important for children during their stay in school.

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