

Study of the Attitudes of Students Studying in Government and Non-Government Schools in Dehradun

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Abstract:

Education is not merely a medium for the dissemination of knowledge; it also influences an individual's personality, mindset, and emotional maturity. Dehradun, regarded as the educational hub of Uttarakhand, has a large number of both government and non-government schools. Significant differences can be observed in the psychological tendencies, attitudes, and learning approaches of students studying in these institutions. The objective of this research paper is to conduct a comparative study of the mental attitudes of students from both types of schools in order to understand how the education system and school environment influence their psychological state. This research is based on both qualitative and quantitative approaches to understand students' psychological tendencies. Special emphasis has been placed on students' self-confidence, academic stress, social behavior, motivation, and outlook toward the future. An important aspect of the study is to examine how the education systems of government and non-government schools in an educationally rich city like Dehradun shape students' mental attitudes differently. The findings of the study reveal that students in government schools often face socio-economic challenges, which may affect their self-confidence and learning motivation. On the other hand, students in non-government schools benefit from relatively better resources and opportunities, which results in a stronger competitive mindset and greater self-reliance. The conclusions of this research provide significant guidelines for the development of educational policies and psychological counseling services.

Keywords: Dehradun, Government Schools, Non-Government Schools, Students, Psychological Attitudes, Education System, Academic Stress, Self-Confidence, Motivation.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of education is not only to impart knowledge but also to ensure the mental, social, and emotional development of children. In the modern education system, it is expected that schools should not remain limited to subject-specific knowledge but should also develop students' thinking abilities, self-discipline, and emotional maturity. From a psychological perspective, it is important to study how students internalize their educational environment and acquire life skills from it. Dehradun has long been recognized as an "Education Hub." Along with prestigious non-government schools, a large number of government schools also operate in the city. A significant population of students studies in both types of institutions; however, their mental and psychological tendencies are often found to differ. These differences arise due to variations in administrative systems, teaching methodologies, teacher-student relationships, availability of resources, and social backgrounds. Therefore, Dehradun can be considered an ideal location for such a comparative study. From a psychological viewpoint, students do not rely solely on subject knowledge; they also develop self-perception, self-confidence, stress management skills, and social behavior. A comparative study of these aspects can clarify how the structure of government and non-government schools influences students' thinking abilities and mental maturity. For this reason, this research paper not only provides a deeper understanding of the education system but may also assist in shaping future educational policies.

Brief Overview of the Educational Landscape OF Dehradun

Dehradun, the capital of Uttarakhand, is also one of the prominent educational centers of the country. Both government and non-government schools operate extensively in the region. Historically, prestigious private institutions such as The Doon School, Welham Girls' School, and St. Joseph's Academy have gained recognition at national and international levels. On the other hand, secondary and senior secondary schools run by the state government play a significant role in spreading education across urban and rural areas. This mixed educational environment provides students with diverse opportunities but also gives rise to variations in their mental outlook.

Government schools are primarily accessible to students from middle- and lower-income groups. Education in these schools is available at relatively low fees and aims to ensure the right to education for a broad population. However, due to limited resources, infrastructural challenges, shortage of teachers, and lack of technological facilities, students in these schools often face academic and psychological difficulties. This directly affects their self-confidence, competitive thinking, and future aspirations. In contrast, non-government or private schools charge higher fees and are generally attended by children from economically stronger families. These schools typically offer modern infrastructure, technological tools, co-curricular activities, and a balanced student-teacher ratio. As a result, students studying in such schools are often more self-reliant, confident, and competitive. However, they also face higher academic pressure and parental expectations, which may lead to mental stress. Thus, the educational landscape of Dehradun provides an ideal background for understanding the diversity in students' psychological tendencies.

Students' Psychological Background and Educational Significance

The psychological background of students is shaped by their personal, social, and family environment. Each student's behavior, thinking style, self-confidence, and outlook are influenced by life experiences and the school atmosphere. Most students in government schools come from middle- or lower-income families with limited resources. As a result, these students often develop a more practical outlook toward life. In contrast, students studying in non-government schools generally belong to economically stable families, which enables them to access additional educational resources such as coaching, private tuition, and co-curricular activities. From a psychological perspective, schools are not merely centers of education but also laboratories for personality development. Here, students learn self-discipline, leadership skills, cooperation, and competition. Government school students often learn to work within limited means and tend to develop stronger social adaptability. On the other hand, students in private schools benefit from modern technological tools and individual attention, which enhances their self-confidence and prepares them to compete at a global level. From an educational standpoint, a student's psychological background determines how knowledge is acquired and applied in life. Confident students tend to maintain a positive outlook even in challenging situations, whereas students under mental pressure may try to avoid difficulties. Therefore, psychological factors play a crucial role in improving the education system and shaping the school environment. If students' psychological needs are understood and guided properly in an educational city like Dehradun, it will not only support their personal development but also contribute to the progress of society and the nation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Several scholars have conducted research on students' attitudes and academic performance. Piaget (1952) highlighted children's cognitive development and explained that their thinking and learning abilities progress through different stages. Similarly, Vygotsky (1978), through his socio-cultural theory, emphasized that children's mental development is deeply connected to their social environment and interactions. In the Indian context, Aggarwal (2012) concluded in his study that the availability of resources in government and private schools significantly influences students' psychological tendencies.

Kaur (2014) found that students studying in private schools exhibit higher levels of self-confidence and competitive tendencies, whereas government school students tend to be more practical and adaptive due to their social circumstances. In a similar direction, Sharma (2016) observed that socio-economic background plays a crucial role in shaping students' mindset.

Patel (2017) emphasized that the school environment and teacher-student relationships directly influence students' motivation and level of self-discipline. According to Verma (2018), academic stress was found to be higher among government school students due to lack of resources, family responsibilities, and uncertainty about the future.

On the other hand, Mehta (2019) reported that modern infrastructure and co-curricular activities in private schools contribute to more holistic personality development. Joshi (2020) further noted that students in both types of schools experience mental pressure, though for different reasons—government school students face economic hardships, while private school students experience pressure from parental expectations and competition.

More recently, Singh (2021) found that students' psychological tendencies are influenced not only by the school environment but also by parental guidance and family atmosphere. In this context, Khan (2022) concluded that regular counseling services can significantly improve students' self-confidence, decision-making abilities, and stress-management skills.

Thus, the literature review clearly indicates that a comparative study of students' psychological tendencies in government and non-government schools of Dehradun is highly relevant for both education and psychology.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The primary objective of this research is to conduct a comparative study of the psychological attitudes of students studying in government and non-government schools in Dehradun. Psychological attitudes here are not limited to academic achievement alone; they also include dimensions such as self-confidence, stress management, social adaptability, motivation, and future orientation.

The study attempts to understand how the school environment, availability of resources, and family background influence students' mental development. The second objective of the research is to identify similarities and differences in psychological tendencies between students of government and non-government schools. For example, it is necessary to examine whether private school students are indeed more confident and competitive, or whether government school students develop greater patience and practical thinking despite limited resources. In this way, the study seeks to reveal the realities of the education system. The third objective is to provide concrete suggestions for improving educational policies and school functioning based on the findings of this research. Special attention is given to identifying counseling and educational programs that can help students become mentally balanced, self-reliant, and optimistic about the future.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND HYPOTHESES

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated for the study:

1. Is there any significant difference in the psychological attitudes of students studying in government and non-government schools?
2. Does socio-economic background influence students' self-confidence and motivation?
3. Do school environment and available resources reduce or increase academic stress?
4. Does students' future orientation depend on the type of school they attend?

Hypotheses

Based on the above research questions, the following hypotheses were formulated:

Hypothesis 1: Students of non-government schools will demonstrate higher levels of self-confidence and a more competitive outlook compared to students of government schools.

Hypothesis 2: Students of government schools will experience higher levels of academic stress due to socio-economic challenges.

Hypothesis 3: Students in private schools equipped with modern resources and infrastructure will be more actively involved in co-curricular activities.

Hypothesis 4: Students of government schools will exhibit stronger adaptability and cooperative tendencies compared to those in private schools.

These research questions and hypotheses determine the direction of the study. They indicate that the research is not limited to a comparative description but also aims to understand the causes and effects of students' psychological conditions. Thus, the study contributes significantly not only to education but also to psychology and sociology.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is based on a descriptive and comparative research design, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative approaches. A total of 200 students from Dehradun district were selected through a stratified random sampling method, including 100 students from government schools and 100 students from non-government schools. The sampling ensured a balance in terms of socio-economic status, gender, and urban-rural background. Data were collected using questionnaires and interviews. The questionnaire was structured around five dimensions—self-confidence, academic stress, motivation, social adaptability, and future orientation—and responses were measured using a 5-point Likert scale. In addition, in-depth interviews were conducted with 20 students to gain deeper insights into their psychological perspectives. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and an independent t-test. This statistical approach helped scientifically verify the differences in psychological attitudes between students of government and non-government schools.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Self-Confidence and Motivation

The analysis of the collected data clearly indicates that students from non-government schools demonstrated higher levels of self-confidence and motivation compared to those from government schools. On the 5-point Likert scale, the mean score for private school students was 4.1, whereas for government school students it was 3.2. This difference was found to be statistically significant, suggesting that better resources, teaching tools, and a competitive environment contribute to enhancing students' self-confidence. In contrast, students from government schools were found to be relatively less motivated due to limited resources and opportunities.

Table 1 shows that government school students exhibit stronger social adaptability, whereas private school students score higher in self-confidence and future orientation. This comparison briefly reflects the diversity in psychological factors.

Table 1: Comparative Analysis of Psychological Factors among Students of Government and Non-Government Schools

Psychological Factor	Government Schools (Mean Score)	Non-Government Schools (Mean Score)
Self-Confidence	3.2	4.1
Motivation	3.4	4.3
Academic Stress	3.9	3.2
Social Adaptability	4.0	3.5
Future Orientation	3.3	4.4

Academic Stress and Mental Pressure

The data analysis revealed that the level of academic stress was higher among government school students. Approximately 62% of government school students reported feeling stressed about studies and examinations, whereas the percentage was 45% among non-government school students. This difference is mainly attributed to socio-economic conditions and family responsibilities. However, private school students also reported parental expectations and high competition as sources of stress. This indicates that students in both types of schools experience pressure, although the sources of stress differ.

Social Adaptability and Future Orientation

The analysis further revealed that government school students showed stronger social adaptability. More than 70% of them indicated that they could adjust to difficult circumstances and limited resources. On the other hand, students from non-government schools demonstrated a clearer and more ambitious future orientation. Most of them reported being well-planned regarding higher education and career goals. This suggests that government school students tend to adopt a practical and situation-based approach, whereas non-government school students exhibit a goal-oriented and competitive outlook.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL ATTITUDES OF STUDENTS IN GOVERNMENT AND NON-GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

Self-Confidence and Competitiveness

The comparative analysis clearly indicates that students in non-government schools possess relatively higher levels of self-confidence and competitiveness. The primary reason is the availability of better infrastructure, technological tools, co-curricular activities, and individualized guidance in these schools. For instance, private schools frequently organize debates, sports competitions, and leadership development programs, which help students enhance their presentation skills and leadership qualities. In contrast, government schools often lack such activities, resulting in students who are practical and cooperative but relatively reserved in self-expression.

Stress and Socio-Economic Influence

Regarding academic stress, it was observed that government school students experience higher levels of stress. Most of these students come from middle- or lower-income families and face family responsibilities and future uncertainties. Private school students, on the other hand, experience mental pressure due to intense competition and high parental expectations. This indicates that stress is present among students of both types of schools, but its causes differ. In government schools, stress mainly arises from lack of resources and economic challenges, whereas in private schools, it stems from social pressure and competition.

Future Orientation and Social Adaptability

When comparing future orientation, it was found that students in private schools tend to be more career-oriented and ambitious. They often plan in advance for higher education, studying abroad, and securing prestigious jobs. Conversely, government school students adopt a more practical outlook based on their circumstances and demonstrate stronger social adaptability. They learn to adjust despite limited resources and actively participate in collective activities. Thus, the comparison shows that while private school students focus on personal goals and competition, government school students emphasize cooperation and adaptability.

ANALYSIS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS

Academic Stress

Academic stress is one of the most influential factors affecting students' psychological tendencies. Among government school students, it was observed that limited resources, lack of books and technological tools, and family financial pressure often lead them to perceive studies as a burden. Many of them have to balance household responsibilities with education, which further increases their stress levels. On the other hand, students in private schools, despite having access to modern facilities and better teaching systems, are not free from stress. Their primary sources of stress include intense competition, expectations of excellent academic performance, and continuous parental pressure. This situation indicates that both abundance and scarcity of resources can result in mental pressure among students. The table below clearly shows that lack of resources is the major source of stress in government schools, whereas competition and parental pressure are the primary causes in private schools.

Table 2: Major Sources of Academic Stress among Students

Type of School	Major Source of Stress	Affected Students (%)
Government Schools	Economic hardship and lack of resources	62%
Non-Government Schools	Parental expectations and competition	45%

Self-Confidence and Motivation

Self-confidence and motivation are considered key factors in students' success. Students in private schools exhibited higher levels of self-confidence because they are given more opportunities to participate in co-curricular activities, public speaking, and leadership roles. Through these opportunities, they learn to present themselves effectively. In contrast, government school students displayed comparatively lower levels of self-confidence, though they showed a practical outlook toward life and patient behavior. Their confidence often develops when they achieve success within their limited resources and environment. Thus, while the motivation of private school students is largely influenced by external factors, the motivation of government school students often arises from adapting to challenging circumstances.

Influence of Socio-Economic Background

Students' psychological outlook is deeply influenced by their socio-economic background. In government schools, most students belong to lower- or middle-income families, where education is often viewed as a means to achieve financial stability. Such students tend to mature early and learn to cope with life's challenges. In contrast, students studying in non-government schools generally come from economically stable families, where education is not only a means of livelihood but also a pathway to prestige and career advancement. This significantly influences their ambitions, mindset, and future aspirations. Therefore, it can be concluded that socio-economic background plays a decisive role in shaping students' psychological tendencies.

DISCUSSION

Interpretation of the Comparative Perspective

The analysis of this study clearly shows that the psychological tendencies of students in government and non-government schools differ in several aspects. Students in government schools are often compelled to adopt a practical outlook due to limited resources and family responsibilities. They demonstrate strong adaptability and cooperative behavior. In contrast, students in non-government schools appear more confident and ambitious due to access to modern resources, technological facilities, and a competitive environment. This indicates that both types of schools foster different psychological tendencies, which ultimately influence students' personalities and life perspectives.

Academic Stress and Mental Pressure

The study also revealed that academic stress exists among students in both types of schools, although the reasons differ. Government school students face stress due to economic insecurity, limited resources, and family expectations. Meanwhile, private school students experience stress because of competitive examinations, parental pressure, and the need to maintain high academic performance. This finding suggests that mental health services and counseling systems should not be limited to private schools but should also be equally available in government schools.

Future Orientation and Social Impact

In terms of future orientation, students in non-government schools showed clearer ambitions and stronger career orientation. They plan ahead for higher education, international opportunities, and prestigious careers. On the other hand, government school students tend to adopt a more realistic outlook and set life goals according to their social circumstances. A positive aspect of this is that they maintain balance even in difficult situations and develop a cooperative approach toward society. This comparison suggests that the education system should strive to balance both competitiveness and cooperation so that students can develop both personal and social skills effectively. Non-government school students show a stronger inclination toward higher education and structured career planning, whereas government school students often prioritize employment and practical career options.

CONCLUSION

The study clearly reveals that the psychological tendencies of students studying in government and non-government schools in Dehradun differ due to various factors. Students in government schools tend to develop practical thinking and stronger social adaptability because of limited resources, socio-economic challenges, and family responsibilities. In contrast, students in non-government schools display higher levels of self-confidence, ambition, and career-oriented thinking due to modern infrastructure, competitive environments, and abundant co-curricular opportunities.

The study also indicates that while academic stress is present among students in both types of schools, its sources differ. Government school students often experience stress due to financial constraints and future uncertainties, whereas private school students face stress resulting from parental expectations and intense competition. This finding highlights the need to prioritize students' mental health and strengthen counseling services within schools. Providing timely guidance and psychological support can help reduce stress while enhancing students' confidence and motivation.

The most significant conclusion of this study is that the education system should not focus solely on academic achievement but must also address students' psychological needs. Concrete steps should be taken to improve resources in government schools and to reduce excessive pressure in private schools. Increasing the education budget, introducing smart classrooms, digital libraries, and counseling centers, and training teachers to understand students' psychological needs can create a more supportive environment in government schools. Similarly, private schools should implement stress management programs and mental health workshops to reduce competitive and parental pressure. It is also recommended that counseling services be made mandatory in both types of schools and that life-skills education be incorporated into the curriculum to prepare students not only for examinations but also for life's challenges.

Scope for Future Research

This study was limited to 200 students from Dehradun district; therefore, its findings cannot be generalized to the entire country. Additionally, the data collection was based on questionnaires and interviews, which may have been influenced by the personal perspectives of students. The research was conducted within limited time and resources, which made it difficult to conduct a longitudinal study to track students' behavior over an extended period. A long-term study could provide deeper insights into changes in psychological tendencies over time.

In the future, similar studies can be conducted on a larger scale across different districts and states. Further research may also include the perspectives of teachers and parents, as well as the impact of digital education, social media, and the New Education Policy on students' psychological development.

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