



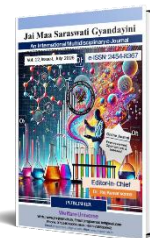
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Impact of School Environment on Children's Holistic Development

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KEYWORDS	ABSTRACT
Holistic Development, Effectiveness, School Environment, Cognitive development, Social development, Emotional development, Physical Development.	Holistic development refers to balanced development in children's cognitive, emotional, social and physical aspects. In today's education, it is not enough to focus only on academic achievement, but also the development of every aspect of the personality of children is also important. The school environment plays an important role in the holistic development of children, because school is a medium where children spend as much of their day and gain various educational and social experiences. A positive school environment contributes significantly to increasing the interest in learning, increasing self-confidence and developing social values in students. Facilities like school resources, cleanliness, educational instruments, games and co-curricular activities increase the physical and mental development of children. Moreover, the classroom environment, the teacher's teaching method, positive teacher-student relationships and interaction between school friends, affect the emotional and social development of students. This thematic paper analyses various factors of the school environment and the impact it has on the holistic development of children. It promotes how school culture, discipline, cooperation, inclusive education and student-centred teaching methods help develop creativity, leadership, cooperation and moral values in children. The paper shows that a supportive and inspiring learning environment created by teachers and school management is very important for the development of qualities such as children's academic performance as well as their emotional well-being.

Introduction:

Education plays a very important role in the holistic development of children. Education is not just a process of acquiring knowledge, but it is also

an important tool for the development of person's personality and skills. The main goal of education is not only to provide text book-based knowledge to the students, but also to promote that

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intellectual, emotional, social and physical development.

This type of development is known as “Holistic Development”. Holistic development means different aspects of a child’s life are developed equally. It includes thinking, creativity, reasoning, the ability to understand and control emotions, organising social relationships as well as physical health and fitness. When a child gets the right opportunities for development in all these areas, he grows up as a responsible and sensitive person. Many factors, like family, society, culture, home environment and educational system, affect the development of children. However, the school environment has a special impact on the development of children. Because the child spends most of the day at school, there he gains various experiences. Such as academic, social and mental experiences.

At the school, children are constantly in contact with teachers, friends and educational equipment. The teaching method of teachers, the classroom environment, the school culture, discipline and behaviour with classmates all together create the school environment. If the school environment is positive and helpful, it helps in developing curiosity for learning, confidence, creativity and a sense of adjustment in children. It also helps students discover and develop their abilities. It motivates children to express their new ideas, participate in the learning process and ask questions. It also helps in developing values, a sense of cooperation, and respect among students. On the other hand, if the school environment is stressful and unsafe, it can have a negative impact

on the academic performance and mental health of students. In such an environment, students’ self-confidence may decrease, while fear, lack of trust, frustration, and unconcern towards studies may increase. As a result, they cannot reach their full development. Therefore, creating a positive, safe and motivated school environment is essential for the overall development of children.

Background and development

The school environment has more impact on the holistic development of children. A child’s development is not only limited to academic knowledge, but also includes intellectual, social, emotional and physical development. The theories of various teachers and psychologists help in understanding this. Firstly, Urie Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) Ecological systems Theory says that a child’s development is influenced by the various environments around him. The school environment is an important role of a child’s microsystem, where teachers, classmates and subjective activities play an important role in the development of a child’s personality. Secondly, Lev Vygotsky’s Sociocultural Theory states that the learning process develops through social interaction and cooperation. The interaction between teacher-student and student-student in school affects the cognitive and social development of a child. According to Jean Piaget’s Cognitive Development Theory, a child acquires knowledge through their own experience and actions with the environment. A positive and promoting school environment provides children with new experiences and learning opportunities. Along with this, Howard Gardner’s Theory of Multiple Intelligences shows

that every child has different types of intelligence. In a positive school environment, children's various skills are developed through art, games, music and other co-curricular activities. According to John Dewey's ideas of the education, education should be connected to the life experience. Democratic and collaborative environment of the school motivates children to learn actively and develop their holistic personality.

Cognitive development

Cognitive theory developed by Jean Piaget, explains how children's thinking, problem-solving abilities and reasoning skills evolve at different stages. In this theory, students learn through their environment. When schools provide activities, challenges and discussions, it supports students' cognitive and intellectual development. A child learns new information from his/her environment and learns to understand and use it. It is known as cognitive development. School provides a key environment for the development of pupils. Students' thinking skills are developed through a positive and encouraging learning environment. Students' ideas are developed through the teacher-student relationship, discussion-based learning, project work and group activities. Furthermore, students are able to develop their understanding and analytical ability through the library and textbooks as well as through their classmates' discussion. Thus, suitable and supportive school environment plays a significant role in supporting students' development in all aspects including cognitive development.

Social Development

Social Development is an important part of the

holistic development of students. Social development promotes the development of cooperation, communication, understanding, responsibility and the ability to create positive relationship with other students. The child learns the values and behaviours necessary to live in society through school. The school environment plays an important role in the social development of students because in school, students get the opportunity to be in continue conversation with teachers and classmates. Through group activities, sports, discussions and qualities like teamwork and respect are developed in students from school. In addition, good teacher-student relationship and a positive school environment develops the social qualities of students and plays an important role in developing them as responsible and cooperative people in society, which is crucial for their holistic development.

Emotional Development

Emotional development is one of the important aspects of student's overall development. Emotional Development: The ability of a student to acknowledge, comprehend and appropriately express emotions. It also encompasses self-confidence, self-control, empathy and the understanding of the feelings of others. The role of the school is important to the emotional development of the pupils. When there is a positive, safe and supportive environment in the school, students can express their emotions without any restrictions and gain self-confidence. Teacher-student relationship of trust makes student emotionally strong. Students are also given the opportunity to develop their sensitivity,

understanding and social understanding through friendship with their classmates, group activity, games and group learning process. A positive school environment promotes the emotional development of students, which helps them decrease stress, increase self-confidence and develop and improve their personality. Hence, it is said that the emotional development is a vital aspect of students' all-round development.

Literature Review

Joy Byrne (2025) studied how the implementation of children's agency impacts their academic attainment and holistic development within their educational environment. In this paper, it is studied how children's agency affects their academic achievement and holistic development in early childhood education. In this research, he used mixed method approach with interviews of two teachers and 4-year-old children in a preschool. The findings of this research are that teachers involve students in the activities and includes children's interests in learning, which improves their cognitive, emotional and social development. In conclusion, empowering children to take on agency in classrooms promotes children's learning and overall growth; however, teachers must balance children's agency with academic demands. This paper by (Ayushi Sharma & Richa Verma, 2025) builds the concept of a child friendly school, discusses the models of child friendly schools that were developed by UNICEF in the context of improving school environment in India and how these models can be used to transform the school environment for holistic child development. The emphasis of the model was on child centred

schools, safe and inclusive schools where children's physical, mental, emotional and cognitive development is nurtured. The paper emphasizes active involvement of students, teachers, families and communities, positively impacts teaching and learning and contributes to the reduction of school drop-out. It also provides an overview of inclusive education, gender sensitivity and health and well-being of children. The study concludes that there are difficulties in the implementation of the Child Friendly Schools Model, including lack of infrastructure and teachers' training, however Child Friendly Schools Model has great potential in changing the school environment and improving learning outcomes and child development in general.

In a study titled A critical study of holistic educational technology leadership for the development of secondary school students Hiakanyane (2025) explored the subject. Education Technology Leadership (ETL) becomes an important element in enhancing teaching-learning processes through its contribution to the whole development of secondary school students. The challenges of good technology leadership are to set a clear vision for technology, supply ICT infrastructure, train teachers and support student involvement in technology-related activities. Research also indicates that effective leadership support and appropriate ICT resources enhance teachers' ability to use technology in the classroom and students' engagement and learning.

Priyabrata Priyadarshi Behera (2024) has carried out a Research on Evaluation of ECCE Based Interventions on Holistic Development of Early

Grade Learners in Odisha. The aim of the study was to explore the practices of ECCE programmes and their effects on the overall development of the early grade learners. In this the researcher adopted descriptive survey method and involved children from Anganwadi and primary schools of tribal and non-tribal districts in Odisha. The results showed that children's cognitive, language, social and emotional, and physical outcomes were highly improved due to the ECCE interventions using activity-based learning, storytelling and interactive classroom practices that promoted the development of foundational literacy and numeracy skills. This thesis can be summarized as follows: Teacher training, parental involvement, community participation and infrastructure for children are important elements in the effective implementation of ECCE programmes. However, there were variations observed in the region as a result of the differences in resources, infrastructure and socio-cultural context. The study suggested that there is a need to enhance teacher capacity building, awareness programs in the community and monitoring to increase the effectiveness of ECCE interventions and to facilitate all aspects of child development.

Rekha Rani, Sukanta Kumar Mahapatra and Prerita Bahri (2023) highlighted how socio-emotional perspective of students is being developed and how it can be explained by a positive school culture. Culture in the school is the values, beliefs, norms and relationships that are shared by teachers, students and the school community. The authors point out that emotional health, social development and learning gains of students can be positively

impacted by a supportive and inclusive school climate. The paper also aligns with the national educational policy, 2020 which focuses on holistic development, mental health and value-based learning. It recommends socio-emotional approaches including positive teacher-student relationships, inclusion and student engagement to create a healthy school environment.

Conclusion

The school environment plays a very important role in the overall development of children. A child's development is not enough to academic knowledge only, but it also includes cognitive, social, emotional and physical development. A positive, safe and motivated environment in the school provides children with a moral environment to learn, think and develop their abilities. Teacher-student relationships, cooperative educational activities, sports and various co-curricular activities develop more confidence, adjustment and responsibility in children. The educational resources are available in the school, library, sports facilities, and a clean environment states the academic and personal development of students. When there is understanding, equality and a motivated environment in the school, creativity, problem-solving ability and positive behaviour develop in students. Therefore, it can be said that a proper and well-organised school environment is essential for the development of an equal personality of children and their overall development.

Endnotes:

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