

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF STUDENTS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS CO-EDUCATION FROM SINGLE-SEX AND CO-EDUCATIONAL JUNIOR COLLEGE FROM PUNE CITY

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ABSTRACT

The investigation compares and assesses the reactions of students from co-educational institutions with those students from single-sex institutions. The purpose of selecting such a survey is to explore attitudes of students and their untouched problems in these types of colleges. Such a survey calls for a questionnaire cum attitude scale approach as the main tool of research. The research investigated the attitudes of 1106 student's attitude towards their own type of college in few single-sex and co-educational junior colleges in Pune city. Using the questionnaire-cum attitude scale and interviews the researcher obtained quantitative as well as qualitative data. The results indicated that overwhelming majority pupils from co-education as well as single-sex institutions preferred the system of co-education with logical reasoning for their preferences.

Key Words: Coeducation, Single-sex, Attitude

Intoduction:

Education is the only field where a child spends his important years of his life, the formative years, and a maximum portion of his life. Many psychologists and experts from interdisciplinary sciences opine that education does affect the pupil's personal, social, emotional and psychological development. These years play a vital role in the child's overall development and his field of socialization. The field of education is not only offers knowledge but also gives opportunity to do interaction with teachers, friends of same-sex and opposite-sex. These agents of the society keep shaping the child either positively or negatively towards future life. Hence, the choice of an institution which a child or parent makes is determined by various factors and not alone by the factor whether an institution is a co-educational institution or a single-sex institution. Parents and students seem to be unaware of the merits and demerits of both the single-sex and co-educational institutions. The choice of an institution today is based on popularity factors, distance from home etc, ignoring the deliberate choice of single-sex or co-education system.

At the primary school level, and to some extent at secondary school level, the system of co-education is acceptable to parents and teachers. But coeducation takes a controversial form when it comes to higher secondary and junior college level. The reason for this is simply stated as being the period of adolescence!

Review of Related Literature:

Adolescence is the transitional period from late childhood to attaining the level of physical maturity; marked with sexual maturity. A child goes through physical and psychological changes to reach to puberty. During this period considerable changes are noticed bringing a complete transformation in the overall personality of the child. **StanleyHall** (1904)has accorded these changes to sexual maturity, biologically generated and socially accepted, since changes appeared to be more pronounced and rapid. Hall has described this period as 'flaming youth' and one of 'storm and stress', a time when the individual is erratic, emotional, unstable and unpredictable (Hall,1904) The adolescent suffers from an 'Identity crisis'. The adolescent is not sure of his status. He is neither a child nor an adult. These ambiguities in the status pose a problem to the adolescent regarding his identity. Hence it has been referred as 'Identity crises' by **Erikson** (1968) All these studies show that college going students needs special attention to cater their needs.

The present climate of the educational institutions needs to be rejuvenating the young ones. The need to change the present system of education is felt by experts in education too. **Usha Rao**(1999) states that instead of helping the student to develop the correct meaning and the correct purpose of life, education has placed them in such an environment where they are discriminated and accordingly it has developed a sort of disregard for the consideration of values. The existing system appears to be static and rigid to cope with the new situation existing in the society. At this changing state of physique and mind, teachers and parents are inclined to have single-sex institutions.

The research aims to study the teachers and student's attitudes and the influence the type of colleges has on their social attitudes and interpersonal behavior. The question, which arises, is: Why is there a sudden segregation at adolescent stage? Is it the type of institution and the environment, which affects the psyche of the pupils? The scholars debate effectiveness of single-sex and co-education institutions. For Example, **Jones**(1955)Girls attending all girls' school were less frequently truant than were boys in either boys' school or co-educational school and girls were more frequently truant than the boys' in co-educational schools. **Rosemary** (1984).Single-sex schools have children from a higher social class having better ability to mix than in a mixed school. In Mathematics boys and girls from single-sex modern school did consistently better than those from co-educational schools found by **King**(1959).The social structure of mixed schools may drive children to make even

more sex-stereotyped choices, precisely because of the constant pressure to maintain boundaries, distinctiveness and identity states **Shaw**(1995). **Howard** (1928) found that co-education in America has been attacked by English critics, on the ground that the divorce rate in America is alarmingly high. **Dale and Miller** (1969) found no relation between class of degrees awarded and attendance at mixed or single-sex schools.

The sufficient literature is available in support of system of co-education. For Example **Valentine** (1950) found an overwhelming majority of students that is 65 out of 72 who had been at co-educational schools favored the system of co-education. A questionnaire was sent to heads of all mixed secondary grammar schools and although under than 90% had taught in segregated schools 80% of the heads said mixed schools had marked advantages over segregated schools and only 8% were in favour of segregation. One of the replies in favour of co-education is quoted here, 'For 17 years I taught in a single-sex school then I became the head of a mixed school and saw the folly of segregation' by **Clarks**(1936). **Dale** (1969) found that that mixed schools were more successful than single-sex schools in every way academically, attitudinally and socially. He noted that in mixed schools the presence of girls made boys more amenable in their behaviour. The harsh discipline, obsession with academic work and high degree of concern with trivialities often complained by pupils and teachers of both sexes, was found in single-sex schools. Further, he noted that Pupils in mixed schools appeared to be less anxious about the school than pupils in single-sex schools and attainment was better in mixed schools than single-sex schools. Normal school adjustment was better in mixed schools observed by **Dale** (1946). **Davies** (1950) used an attitude scale to assess opinion among teachers in secondary schools of all types. He found a favorable attitude to co-education.

These studies signifies that there is need of research in this field to find out sex differences related to attitudes and also the effect of the type of an institution in which he is studying at present. The researchers study centers around these problems leading investigation to have a purpose.

Purpose:

1. To study the relationship between the type of college (Single-sex vs Co-educational) and students' attitude towards co-education.
2. To study the relationship between the sex (Boys vs Girls) of the student and his / her attitude towards co-education.

Methodology:

Sample:

A sample was chosen for this research. The colleges were selected on the basis of type of an institution single-sex and co-educational for this investigation. One thousand one hundred and six students and one hundred and eighteen teachers from co-education and single-sex schools participated in the study.

Students

Table 2

Type of the Institution and Sex

Type of College	Male	Female	Total
Single-sex Boys	309	-	309

Single-sex Girls	-	290	290
Co-educational	240	226	466
	31	10	41
Non-Indians			
	580	526	1106
Grand Total			

Tools Used

The tools of investigation included the review of related literature, findings and observations based on the data collected with the use of the questionnaire-cum-attitude scale and interviews. The data was both qualitative and quantitative. The percentage of the two groups was calculated and the formula for S.E. (Standard Error) was used. Then the CR (Critical Ratio) was calculated. The percentage was calculated on the basis of type of college (Single-sex vs Co-education Colleges) and sex of the student (Boys vs Girls),

Results and Discussion:

Test of Hypothesis 1: Type of an Institution and Attitude

The first purpose of this study is confirmed, that boys and girls from co-educational institutions differ in their attitude towards coeducation as compared to boys and girls from single-sex institutions. For instance, girl pupils from co-education institutions opine regarding the co-education, that 'Boys wear chains, bangles and earrings to attract girls. They however should avoid this behavior because we do not get attracted to such feminine behavior.' The boy pupils from co-education institutions report 'Girls need attention, in the name of women's liberation, girls are misusing their rights' 'Girls' sense of respect towards the opposite-sex is reduced due to the influence seen on the T.V., western culture etc.' whereas girl pupils from single-sex institutions report 'Because of fashion, boys don't dress up properly and neatly' 'I try to attract boys and make them jealous of the fact that they are not girls' 'It depends on the boy's mentality. Some girls purposely attract boys. They do get attracted. These comments. For Example: It not only shows that pupils from both types of institutions differ but also have extreme thinking about the opposite-sex. The research reveals that the type of institution in which the pupil studies, does affect their attitudes. Available research (Dale, 1969; Valentine, 1950; Clarks, 1936; Davies, 1950) appears sufficient to support the conclusion that type of an institution in which the pupil is studying does have influence on his/her attitude. The informal interviews and comments received show that, co-educational students do differ from single-sex students in their thinking. Hence this hypothesis was confirmed.

Test of Hypothesis 2: sex of the pupil and Attitude

The second hypothesis assumes that the attitude towards self, opposite-sex, teachers, parents and college depends on the sex of the pupil. For Example the responses from the questionnaire show that male pupils have more conflict with their fathers as compared to girls. Whereas, girls were reported to have more conflicts with their mothers than with their fathers. In addition, the comments received in informal interview supports this hypothesis. Even the well-known Psychologist Dr. Sigmund Freud has presented a concept of 'Oedipus' complex in boys and 'Electra' complex in girls. It mentions that

girls have more attachment towards their fathers but have more conflict with same-sex that is their mothers and vice versa. This research supports Dr. Freud's concept. The investigation reveals and verified by numerous researchers that boys do have different thinking as compared to girls. Hence the second hypothesis was confirmed.

Conclusion:

1. The pupils from single-sex institutions had an unfavorable attitude towards themselves as compared to the pupils from co-educational institutions.
2. The pupils from co-educational institutions had a positive attitude towards opposite-sex as compared to the pupils from single-sex institutions.
3. The pupils from co-educational institutions had a positive attitude towards teachers as compared to the pupils from single-sex institutions.
4. The pupils from co-educational institutions had a better and positive attitude towards parents as compared to the pupils from single-sex institutions.
5. The pupils from co-educational institutions had a favorable attitude towards the system of co-education as compared to the pupils from single-sex institutions.
6. Boys had a positive attitude towards themselves as compared to girls.
7. Girls had a negative attitude towards the opposite-sex as compared to boys.
8. Boys had a negative attitude towards male teachers as compared to girls.
9. Girls had favorable attitude towards female teachers as compared to boys.
10. Boys had positive attitude towards parents as compared to girls.
11. Boys had positive attitude towards the system of co-education as compared to Girls.
12. Teachers from co-education institutions had a negative attitude towards themselves as compared teachers from Single-sex institutions.
13. Teachers from co-education institutions had a negative attitude towards pupils as compared to teachers from single-sex institutions.
14. Teachers from co-education institutions had a positive attitude towards male teachers as compared teachers from single-sex institutions.
15. Out of the total sample of 111 teachers, 72% teachers were in favour of Co-education whereas 27.9% teachers were not in favour of co-education. (Table 3)
16. Out of a total sample of 1106 students, 79.6% students were in favour of co-education whereas 20% of the students were not in favour of co-education. (Table 4)
17. Both boys and girls from co-education Junior Colleges had significantly higher and better attitude towards self, opposite-sex, teachers, parents and college as compared to boys and girls from single-sex junior colleges.
18. Boys had a significantly favourable attitude towards self, opposite-sex, teachers, parents and colleges as compared to females.

Suggestions and Recommendations:

1. At the college level there should be co-education as they are healthy systems for the overall development of students.
2. Training courses for teachers should be based on psychological and sociological principles.

3. At least one counselor must be appointed in each and every college.
4. The pupils from single-sex colleges should be given orientation towards the Man-Woman relationship to enable them to develop healthy attitudes towards the opposite-sex.

Table 3
Response Categories for Students

	Students from Co-education	Students from Single-sex	Non- Indian	Total
In favour of co-education	418	442	21	881
Not in favour of co-education	48	115	16	179
Total	466	557	37	1060

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