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COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS OF GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS WITH RESPECT TO SCORES OF CRITICAL THINKING, PROBLEM SOLVING ABILITY AND PARENTAL PRESSURE

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ABSTRACT :

The important aim of education is to bring the child from darkness to light. Individual development occurs physically and psychologically through education. School education is the foundation upon which the edifice of whole educational system rests. In teaching and learning, critical thinking plays an important role in maximizing students' academic achievement. The study emphasises that the quality of secondary education should be evaluated not only through academic achievement but also through students' ability to think critically, solve problems independently, and cope with educational expectations. If meaningful differences are found between government and private school students, appropriate interventions should address the underlying educational and socioeconomic factors. At the same time, parental expectations should be transformed from excessive performance pressure into supportive guidance and encouragement. A coordinated effort involving schools, teachers, parents, counsellors, and educational authorities can help students in both sectors develop into confident, independent, and capable learners.



KEYWORDS: Parental pressure, Critical thinking, Problem solving ability.

1) INTRODUCTION:

The important aim of education is to bring the child from darkness to light. Individual development occurs physically and psychologically through education. School education is the foundation upon which the edifice of whole educational system rests. In teaching and learning, critical thinking plays an important role in maximizing students' academic achievement.

1.1 CONCEPT OF CRITICAL THINKING

Critical thinking is the intellectually disciplined process of actively and skilfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action.

Critical thinking is a manner of thinking that employs curiosity, creativity, scepticism, analysis, and logic, where:

- ✚ Curiosity means wanting to learn,
- ✚ Creativity means viewing information from multiple perspectives,

- ✚ Scepticism means maintaining a “trust but verify” mind-set
- ✚ Analysis means systematically examining and evaluating evidence, and
- ✚ Logic means reaching well –founded conclusions.

1.2 concept of Problem solving:

Problem solving is the process of achieving a goal by overcoming obstacles, a frequent part of most activities. Problems in need of solutions range from simple personal tasks to complex issues in business and technical fields.

In order to effectively range and run a successful organisation, leadership must guide their employees and develop problem-solving techniques. Finding a suitable solution for issues can be accomplished by the following the basic four-step problem solving process and methodology outlined below.

1. Define the problem
2. Generate alternative solutions
3. Evaluate and select an alternative
4. Implement and follow up on the solution

1.3 Parental Pressure:

Parental pressure is the emotional stress parents tend to put on their children and is often related to academic success, cultural and social standards, and other factors. The leading cause of concern for the welfare of their children and their employment.

Academic parental pressure will only make kids worry. When they get a high grade on a test, they will worry about the next one or that someone has gotten an even higher grade. If the grade is not the top one, kids will be left with the feeling that they are just not good enough.

2) REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE:

Critical thinking

A longitudinal study conducted by joint researchers from the University of Texas, Austin, Huazhong University of Science; Technology, and **Zhejiang University (2015)** found that children with high critical thinking skills went on to perform better in academic environments. Their finding suggests that critical thinking can, in fact, act as a better predictor than even cognitive ability.

Thalib, corebima and Ghogur (2017) conducted a study on students with a high and low level of academic success and showed a negative relationship between critical thinking and academic achievements.

Problem solving

Chang et al (2001) investigated the pedagogical practices within primary mathematics classrooms in four Singapore schools. In all, a traditional teaching approach predominated among the primary teachers-expository teaching, followed by the students practicing routine exercises to consolidate the concepts, knowledge and skills. Anecdotal evidence further suggested that such an approach to teaching was prevalent in most primary schools. Somehow the emphasis on problem solving did not quite filter through, as it were, to classroom teaching practice.

Gupta (2014) found that the students' academic performance and their construction of the concepts there was no difference in the performance of students in the different ability levels after the treatment. The findings showed that students' ability have significant influence on problem – solving task.

Parental pressure:

Murayama et al (2007) found that high parental aspiration led to increased academic achievement, but only when it did not overly exceed realistic expectation. When aspiration exceeded expectation, the children's achievement decreased proportionately.

B.Patel,Bhoomika Patel (2021) Assessment of the parental pressure and peer factors affecting the academic performance of nursing students studying in selected nursing college of Vadodara concluded that majority of the students are having average intensity in their academics and some students are having high intensity in the academics.

3) NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY:

The investigator has sought to examine the relationship between the Critical thinking, Problem solving ability and Parental pressure among Government and Private Secondary school students. The investigator on the basis of his finding also aimed at providing few tips and suggestions in order to excel the academic performance of the students.

4) OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

1. To analyse Government and Private Secondary school students' Critical thinking, Problem solving ability and Parental pressure

5) METHODOLOGY:

Variables:

Independent Variables to be considered in the study:

- i. Critical thinking
- ii. Problem solving ability
- iii. Parental pressure

Dependent Variable to be considered in the study:

- i. Government and Private Secondary school students

6) RESEARCH HYPOTHESES:

Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is no significant difference between Government and Private Secondary school Students with respect to scores of

- Critical thinking
- Problem solving ability
- Parental pressure

7) DESIGN OF THE STUDY:

The present study is the descriptive study where a survey will be undertaken to measure the scores of Government and Private Secondary school students' Critical thinking, Problem solving ability and Parental pressure of Kalaburagi District.

Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is no significant difference between students of Government and Private secondary schools with respect to scores of

- Critical thinking
- Problem solving ability
- Parental pressure

To evaluate the null hypothesis, an independent samples t-test was conducted on the two groups, and the findings are presented in the table below.

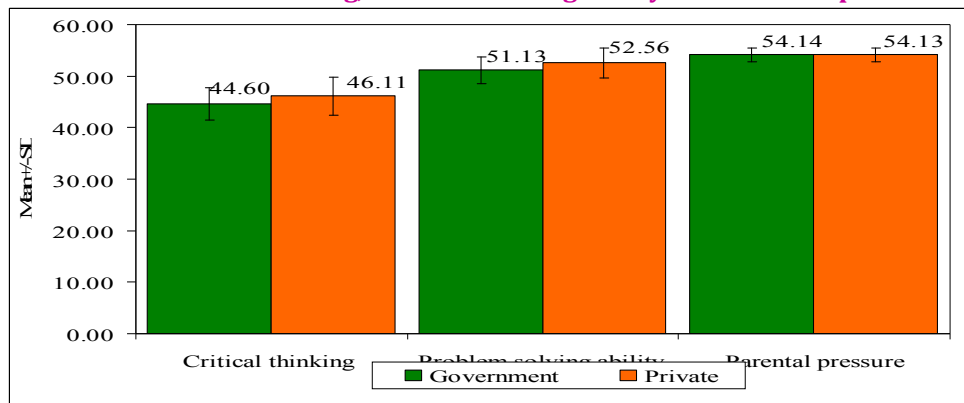
Table: Comparative analysis of students of Government and Private secondary schools with respect to scores of Critical thinking, Problem solving ability and Parental pressure

Variable	Management	n	Mean	SD	df	t-value	P-value
Critical thinking	Government	302	44.60	3.21	602	5.3922	0.0001,S
	Private	302	46.11	3.66			
Problem solving ability	Government	302	51.13	2.61	602	6.3294	0.0001,S
	Private	302	52.56	2.93			
Parental pressure	Government	302	54.14	1.32	602	0.1241	0.9012,NS
	Private	302	54.13	1.30			

From the results of the above table, it clearly shows that

- The Government (44.60 ± 3.21 , $n=302$) and Private (46.11 ± 3.66 , $n=302$) students of secondary schools differ statistically significant with respect to their Critical thinking scores ($df=602$, $t=5.3922$, $p=0.0001$) at 5% level of significance. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. It means that the Government students of secondary schools have significant and lesser Critical thinking scores as compared to Private students of secondary schools.
- The Government (51.13 ± 2.61 , $n=302$) and Private (52.56 ± 2.93 , $n=302$) students of secondary schools differ statistically significant with respect to their Problem solving ability scores ($df=602$, $t=6.3294$, $p=0.0001$) at 5% level of significance. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. It means that the Government students of secondary schools have significant and lesser Problem solving ability scores as compared to Private students of secondary schools.
- The Government (54.14 ± 1.32 , $n=302$) and Private (54.13 ± 1.30 , $n=302$) students of secondary schools do not differ statistically significant with respect to their Parental pressure scores ($df=602$, $t=0.1241$, $p=0.9012$) at 5% level of significance. Hence the null hypothesis is accepted and the alternative hypothesis is rejected. It means that the Government and Private students of secondary schools have similar Parental pressure scores. The mean and SD of Critical thinking, Problem solving ability and Parental pressure scores between Government and Private students are also presented in the following figure.

Figure: Comparison of students of Government and Private secondary schools with respect to scores of Critical thinking, Problem solving ability and Parental pressure



Educational Implications:

The findings can help teachers, parents, school administrators, and educational authorities understand how school type and parental expectations may influence students' intellectual development and educational experiences.

- ✚ Both government and private schools should provide opportunities for students to analyse information, evaluate evidence, question assumptions, develop arguments, and reach independent conclusions. Classroom teaching should move beyond memorisation and encourage higher-order thinking.
- ✚ Teachers should incorporate problem-based learning, projects, experiments, case studies, puzzles, discussions, and real-life situations into classroom instruction. These activities can help students develop reasoning, decision-making, creativity, and independent problem-solving skills.
- ✚ If differences are observed between government and private school students, educational authorities should identify whether these differences are associated with resources, teaching practices, infrastructure, socioeconomic background, or other contextual factors. The findings should be used to promote quality and equitable education rather than simply labelling one school sector as superior.
- ✚ Where inadequate resources are identified, government schools may require greater support in terms of libraries, laboratories, digital learning facilities, teaching-learning materials, internet connectivity, and co-curricular opportunities.
- ✚ Neither school type should depend exclusively on traditional lecture-based instruction. Teachers in government as well as private schools should adopt learner-centred, experiential, inquiry-based, collaborative, and activity-oriented teaching methods.
- ✚ Teachers should receive regular training in critical-thinking strategies, problem-based learning, questioning techniques, formative assessment, differentiated instruction, and methods of encouraging students to reason independently.
- ✚ Parents should be sensitised to the possible negative effects of excessive pressure concerning marks, examinations, ranks, competition, and career choices. Parents should encourage children to perform to the best of their ability without creating fear or unrealistic expectations.
- ✚ Schools should organise parent-awareness programmes dealing with adolescent development, academic expectations, positive communication, examination stress, career selection, and supportive parenting. Parents should be encouraged to recognise individual differences in children's abilities and interests.
- ✚ Secondary schools should provide adequate guidance and counselling facilities. Counsellors can help students manage academic pressure, parental expectations, examination anxiety, career-related concerns, and difficulties in learning.
- ✚ Students differ in their learning abilities, interests, motivation, family circumstances, and educational needs. Teachers should therefore identify individual strengths and weaknesses and provide appropriate academic and emotional support.
- ✚ Assessment should measure more than students' ability to remember information. Examinations and classroom assessments should include questions involving application, analysis, evaluation, reasoning, interpretation, creativity, and problem-solving.
- ✚ Students should be given opportunities to set learning goals, conduct investigations, access different sources of information, complete projects independently, and reflect on their own learning. Such practices can strengthen both critical thinking and problem-solving ability.
- ✚ Digital learning resources can support critical thinking and problem-solving when they are used for research, simulations, collaborative learning, presentations, and creative tasks rather than merely for accessing ready-made answers.
- ✚ Parents and teachers should guide students in selecting future educational and career pathways according to their aptitude, interests, abilities, and aspirations. School type should not determine the opportunities available to a student.
- ✚ Students should be encouraged to ask questions, express alternative viewpoints, discuss mistakes, and propose different solutions without fear of criticism. Such an environment is essential for the development of critical thinking.

- ✚ Debates, quizzes, science exhibitions, mathematics clubs, literary activities, social-service programmes, competitions, and leadership activities can provide practical opportunities for students to develop reasoning, communication, decision-making, and problem-solving skills.
- ✚ Regular interaction between teachers and parents can help identify students experiencing excessive academic pressure. Parents and teachers should work together to establish realistic academic goals and provide consistent encouragement.
- ✚ Educational policymakers should use the findings to improve the quality of secondary education across both government and private sectors. Policies should focus on equitable resources, teacher quality, higher-order learning, counselling, assessment reform, and parental awareness, rather than focusing only on differences in examination scores.

CONCLUSION:

The study emphasises that the quality of secondary education should be evaluated not only through academic achievement but also through students' ability to think critically, solve problems independently, and cope with educational expectations. If meaningful differences are found between government and private school students, appropriate interventions should address the underlying educational and socioeconomic factors. At the same time, parental expectations should be transformed from excessive performance pressure into supportive guidance and encouragement. A coordinated effort involving schools, teachers, parents, counsellors, and educational authorities can help students in both sectors develop into confident, independent, and capable learners.

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