

Teacher's perception about the effect of the whole-child approach on children's psychological and emotional development at primary level in Pakistan

Authors;

- 1. Huma Akbar**, M.Phil Scholar in Education, Air University Islamabad
- 2. Dr. Sadaf Zamir Ahmed**, Assistant Professor in Education, Department of Humanities, Education and Psychology, Air University Islamabad
- 3. Muhammad Abdul Wadood**, Educationist, University of Management and Technology, Lahore
- 4. Sajid Ali**, M.Phil Scholar in Education, Air University Islamabad
- 5. Sohail Ahmad**, M.Phil Scholar in English Linguistics, Khawaja Fareed University of Engineering and Information Technology, RYK, Pakistan

Abstract

A whole-child approach to education focuses on students' social, emotional, behavioral, physical, and cognitive growth. ASCD (Association Supervision Curriculum Department) established a whole-child approach to education as its central objective in 2007. It created five tenets based on child development theory that support the approach and state that every child in every school and community deserves to be healthy, protected, motivated, encouraged, and challenged. According to this study's findings, both perspectives affected each other. As a result, this study aims to assess both perceptions of WCA (whole-child approach) and CD (children development) to close a gap in Pakistan's educational system at the primary level. The objectives of this study are to explore the impact of the whole-child approach on childrens' psychological and social-emotional development. The key finding of this study is healthy school environment is important for a positive educational experience. The social-emotional and psychological conditions for effective learning are generated by the school environment.

1: Introduction

The whole-child approach can be described as a mechanism and strategy that can be used to assess the cognitive, social, and emotional development of children (Beckley, 2011). It can be further defined as relationships or practices that confirm every child in all schools and communities have supportive, healthy, engaged, and challenging (Zigler et al., 2006). And it additionally increases the liability away from development, approaches to attempts that indicate the comprehensive aspects affecting long-term success instead of short-term success (Slade & Griffith, 2013).

In 2006 ACSD connived a commission complying with leading thinkers, researchers, and practitioners to recall the definition of successful learners (Goossens & Petrucci, 2006). From a student who obtains a major solely through academics to a student who is mentally and

physically stable, familiar, and involved in the arts. Besides, they will be prepared for jobs and economic self-sufficiency, as well as the environment beyond formal education. Cole et al., 2013. The commission has raised this question, asking what would happen if we had to construct an education system from scratch today. What does it look like, how would it vary, and how would we operate differently under the new model? A whole-child approach to education has a solution. The word "whole-child approach" needs to be coined.

Moreover, the whole-child approach is not only essential for better academic performances but also contributes to their overall development. The aim of this approach to provide children's a formation to achieve long-term success in every step of life. When children would be healthy, safe, engaged, support, and challenged then they will be able to learn best in all skills of life. (Einstein et al., 2016). They are more likely to grow, develop and succeed. From this perspective evaluate tenets of WCA (whole-child approach) to education which ensures each child is healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged (Pande & Bharathi, 2020). The whole-child approach is an effort to transition and focus on narrowly defined academic achievements.

1.1: Problem statement

Individual differences in children and learning styles, in general, influence their school excitement and academic achievement. Children who have the encouragement of their teachers are more engaged in their education. Children who participated in school-based social and emotional learning received higher grades than their peers who did not (Payton et al., 2008). Children's emotional growth and management are strengthened by social and emotional learning.

However, Academic achievement, interpersonal skills, and social knowledge help to establish healthy relationships and assess rational decision-making and actions in school (Evans Heath, 2020). According to research, this helps students learn and grow in cognitive, physical, emotional, and psychological ways. The whole-child approach entails educating children to be well-informed, emotionally, and mentally balanced and prepared for life after formal education (Gallagher & Thordarson, 2018). From this viewpoint, this study has claimed that both perspectives influenced each other. It indicates that literature is ambiguous in supporting that both WCA and CD have a significant intertwine. Therefore, this study is designed to evaluate both perceptions (WCA and CD) to fill the gap in the educational system at the primary level in Pakistan.

Furthermore, this study is challenging based on WCA principles. While child development is measuring based on cognitive, social, emotional, and psychological domains. More precisely, prior research studies substantially focused on determining the role of WCA in overall CD (Gallagher & Thordarson, 2018), while this study argued that there are different areas of CD and how WCA substantially influences each area. In this regard, literature is ambiguous to support that WCA substantially influences each area. Therefore, this study is structured to evaluate the influence of the whole-child approach on social-emotional and psychological areas of children's development.

1.2: Objectives

The objective of this study is:

1. To investigate the impact of the whole child approach in children's social-emotional development.
2. To explore the impact of the whole child approach in children's psychological development.

1.3: Research question

The research question of this study is:

1. Does the whole child approach significantly impact children's emotional development?
2. Is the whole child approach significantly impacted on psychological development?

1.4: Hypothesis

1. H1: There is a significant impact of the whole child approach on children's emotional development.
2. H2: There is a significant impact of the whole child approach on children's psychological development.

1.5: Significance of the study

The role of the whole-child approach in children's development will be investigated in this report. This research makes an important theoretical and practical contribution to the body of research knowledge. The position of WCA and its five tenets, which were used in this analysis, contribute to the development of the children. The previous study (Alford, G. ACEL/ASCD, 2007) used an ASCD (2007) WCA model to perform empirical studies on domains related to children's development (cognitive, social, emotional, and psychological). However, a thorough

search of the literature area failed to turn up any longitudinal studies specifically related to children's learning and development in Pakistan. (2014) (Suleman and Hussain).

Besides, the findings of this study also impact many developmental areas of children at the primary level in Pakistan. The main practical contribution is as follows: first, this study would help Pakistani schools in developing approaches to reduce the specific risk found to negatively influence children's development at the primary level. Second teachers would be able to use WCA in the light of ASCD's tenets to children's development. Thirdly this study will provide useful input to assist approach developers in the design of attractive and effective content in the curriculum for the primary level. The last education section and policymakers can use this information to promote WCA at the primary level by improving the teacher's training and skills.

1.6: Delimitations

The meaning of the variable that is used in this study is the whole-child approach with five tenets and children's development with two domains. This study is limited to Pakistan's respondents. The study will only use teachers at primary schools in the private sector. While children's development can also be assessed from the student's perspective. Therefore, focusing on teachers solely has become the ultimate limit of this study. Furthermore, there are five tenets of the whole-child approach such as safe, healthy, challenged, engaged, and supported. Each tenet has a different level of association with children's development. While this study is measuring the whole-child approach as a single construct, therefore, it also a limitation of the present study.

2: Literature review

We are in a phase that students need to be able to work mutually censoriously, productively, and need to assess huge quantities of material, explain composite difficulties, and convey properly. However, our education systems continue devoted to time forms, homework, educational approaches, and valuations planned more than a centennial ago (Slade & Griffith 2013). A solid basis in understanding, literature and other main topics is valuable equally forever, but not enough for long-lasting success. These 21st-century requirements involve a modern and healthier system of imminent educational approach whole- child approach to studying and schooling. (OECD, 2008).

2.1 Concept of the Whole child-approach

Educational and learning methods that discourse, encourage, and attract with the whole child are important to make certain value nurture and learning for our youngest learners. Frequently as we discuss the whole-child approach, the central point is that to talk about children’s learning and development along with cognitive, psychological, emotional, and social perspectives. Moreover, it states the foundation for the involvement of children, certifying that children with optimistic methods of educational achievements (Hargreaves & Sahlberg, 2013). The overall sense of the concept of children’s development, to find out all the areas of willingness. However, we find out that they contain linguistic and learning progress, calculation and discipline identifications, physical well-presence, societal and emotive growth, and approaches to learning.

2.2: Relationship between whole-child approach and children’s development

The present children ought to be trained to think analytically, logically, and do acting with modernism and innovation. However, now children who join educational institutes must be connected in professions that have not yet been identified. Collaboration and collective decision-creating would be necessary to solve complicated questions in society (ASCD, 2007)ASCD came to a related decision and because of the Commission’s work, formed the Whole Child Plan, which, at its foundation, is based around five key principles:



ASCD Model

1. Healthy: Each student joins the school in good physical shape and learns about and practices a nutritious lifestyle. (Chiang et al., 2015).

2. Safe: Every student is taught in an atmosphere that is physically and passionately innocuous for students. (Chiang et al., 2015).

3. Engaged: Every student is energetically participated in learning and is linked to the school. (Chiang et al., 2015).

4. Supported: Every student has admission to individualized learning and is encouraged by competent, attentive teachers. (Chiang et al., 2015).

5. Challenged: Each student is faced logically and equipped for achievement in school or additional study. (Chiang et al., 2015).

2.3: Importance of whole-child approach in children's development

The whole-child approach has developed supplementary observable in the U.S schooling debate meanwhile the paper of an editorial (Noddings, 2005). Noddings asks, "Why teachers teach the WCA?" In the new paper that was published in the same year, her reply was placed within her concepts of attention and caring in schools. Noddings states, "In an independent society, schools must go beyond teaching central abilities" (2005b).

Fergus & Noguera (2010), investigating the situations that formed productive, deprived educational institutes offering frequently settler learners, concentrated on conversion to a full-maintenance public school. Along with the contribution of stakeholders and parents to investigate what is the achievement of school considering the WCA (2010). Also involved in this perception of discussion the requirements of the WCA were basic values of school regard, accountability, patience, also compassion (2010). Moreover, with the concept of WCA in the classroom, the children can gain more than their academic achievement, such as developmental skills.

The WCA has a concentrates on children's development. However, the stakeholders plan to provide a healthy and fresh environment and concentrating on the social way of life (Emerson, 2018). The WCA considered as student-centered approach, and from these prospective children involve keeping mind at the center of key decision (Jill Gildea, 2018). As well as the WCA

centralize in religious education. The mission of Catholic school to educate the whole child, permeate religion all over disciplines (Smith, 2018).

2.4: Teacher's perception of Whole-child approach

Teacher's perception of WCA has been accepted as an essential element affecting teachers' educational methods. As well as Self-effectiveness refers to individuals' opinions about their skills to accomplish a specific program of achievement (Beauchamp et al, 2019). Higher-level skilled and confident teachers can make lectures interesting (Duran et al., 2009) and can achieve education of higher-level (Guo et al., 2010). They also proved that identity is situational set down and is motivated by the teamwork of teachers and level of effect in the assessment procedure.

Furthermore, highly educated, and well-paid teachers have been trained to work successfully with a diverse population of children and assist them in achieving success in school and life. Teachers must have the expertise, skills, and dispositions required to apply current early development science and a variety of evaluation methods to better understand children's development. Children will be at the heart of the structure in this way. A student-centered approach to learning is known as a whole-child approach. (2019, Matt Mingle). Furthermore, educating the whole-child approach means making a child physically well, socially, and emotionally knowledgeable. Teachers support children to engage in educational activities and face challenging situations. The whole-child approach advocates that teachers should realize children safe, secure, and recognized. (Diamond, 2010).

2.5: Children's psychological development

The analysis of children's behaviour is one of the psychological aspects of development. Teachers must be aware of children's psychological dimensions, which is the most critical part of teaching. It also influences children's learning abilities. Checklists for developmental milestones are used as a guide to what is standard for a given age group. It's important to remember, though, that although child development follows a predictable pattern, each child's path is special. 2017 (Domingues).

Furthermore, child psychology includes not only physical growth but also mental, emotional, and social development. Understanding child development assists in early identification of problems, behavioural issues, and the detection of a child's failure to communicate, among other things. Erikson (1950) believed that children transition through three phases of social and

emotional growth between the ages of one and five years: confidence versus distrust, autonomy versus shame and doubt, and initiative versus guilt. Children grow lifelong manners of expectation, obtaining, and willpower as their interactions with adults contribute to the expansion of hope, freedom, and imagination (Dunkel, & Harbke, 2017).

Theoretical framework

Psychological and social-emotional development

Psychosocial development consists of a set of stages designed to increase the relationship of the child with the social environment.

- Trust vs mistrust
- Autonomy vs shame and doubt
- Initiative vs guilt
- Industry vs inferiority
- Identity vs Role confusion
- Intimacy vs isolation
- Generativity vs stagnation
- Integrity vs Despair

The Erikson theory (1994) of psychosocial development discovers a wide range of emotions and revolves around the growth of the child. This theory provides a better understanding of the stages of social-emotional development, impact, interconnected skills, and the aspects that influence emotional aptitude.

This theory reflects the age period, expressive behavior, and relationship building. Children will perform ever more complex tasks during the industry versus inferiority period. They, therefore, try to learn new competencies. This is a grade-schooler step in Erikson's theory. However, this stage is crucial for building self-confidence, according to Erikson. Children are praised and paid attention to different tasks such as valued, motivated to learning interaction of student-to-student, social-emotional and problem-solving during schools and other social events.



Conceptual framework

In the whole-child approach, the central point is that to talk about children’s development along with cognitive, psychological, emotional, and social perspectives. The whole-child approach has a concentrate on children’s development. Moreover, with the concept of WCA in the classroom, the children can gain more than their academic achievement, such as developmental skills. Furthermore, educating the whole-child approach means making a child physically well, socially, and emotionally knowledgeable. Teachers support children to engage in educational activities and face challenging situations. The whole-child approach advocates that teachers should realize children safe, secure, and recognized.

Moreover, psychological development consists of manage behavior, motivation to learning, and decision-making skills. Social-emotional skills consist of interaction to student-to-student, Adult-to-student, and behavioral expectations. Developing social-emotional skills can help a child's trust and success in school, at work, and in life. As well as the Association supervision curriculum development (ASCD) present five tenants to provide a safe, healthy, engaged, supported, and challenged environment for children in school.

Variables

WCA (IV), Psychological, and Social-emotional (DVs)

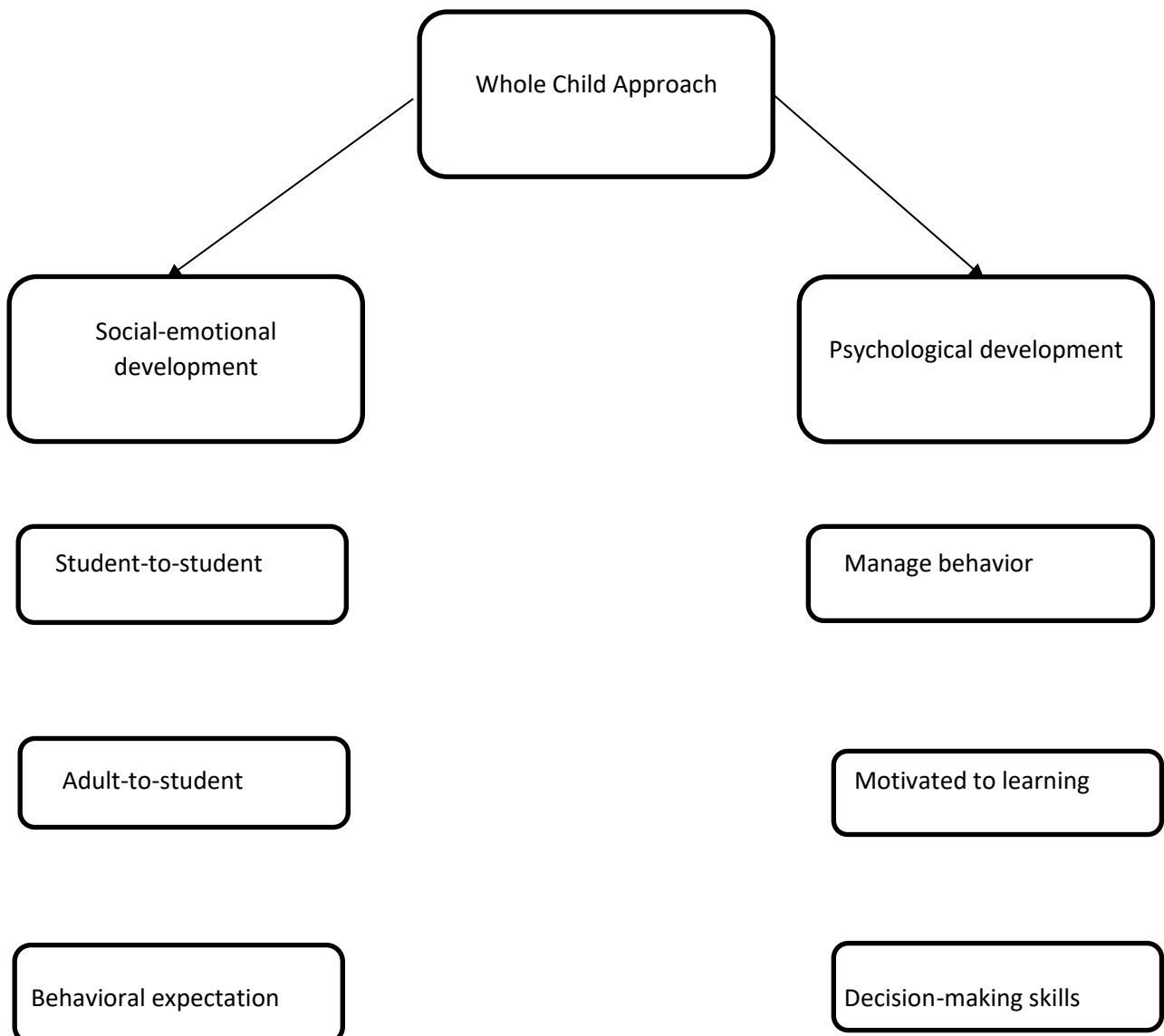


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

3: Methodology

3.1: Research Design

A research design deals with the way of data collection. This study utilized a cross-sectional research design because data will be gathered at a single point of time, analyze, and present statistical findings.

3.2: Research Approach

The research Approach deals with the foundations of the study. This study followed a deductive approach because the foundations, objectives, and hypotheses of the study were based on existing literature and theories.

3.3: Research Type

In this study, a quantitative research method is utilized because data has been gathered in numeric forms.

3.4: Population and Sampling

The populations of the present study are teachers of primary level in private schools of Pakistan. However, it is hard to gather data from the entire population, so, it is beneficial to rely on the sampling method. In this regard, the study utilizes the non-probability snowball sampling method, because this sampling technique allows researchers to request the participants to refer their questionnaire to their peers.

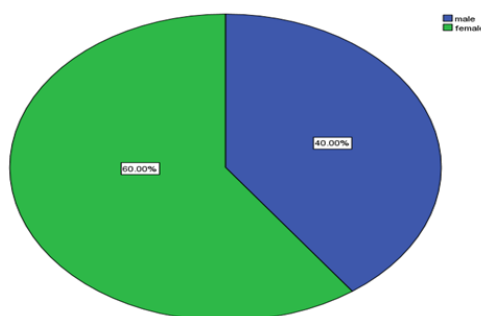
3.5: Data Collection Process

A questionnaire for this study was developed by adopting the measurement scales from prior research studies. This study formulates a survey research questionnaire on google docs and spreads the link of the questionnaire by using personal contacts and social media. The snowball sampling techniques were utilized to get data from maximum respondents. However, after gathering data, it is structured in an SPSS file and analyze to present findings.

4 Data Analysis

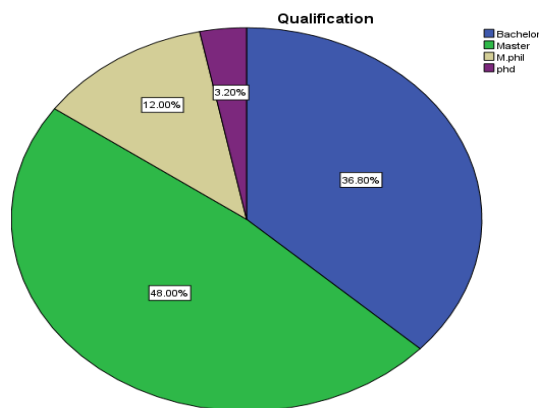
The first question of my questionnaire is related to gender where two options were given to respondents like male and female, and respondents have to select any one option in which they fall. The following table is representing that the maximum respondents are females i.e., 60%, while 40% are males.

Gender

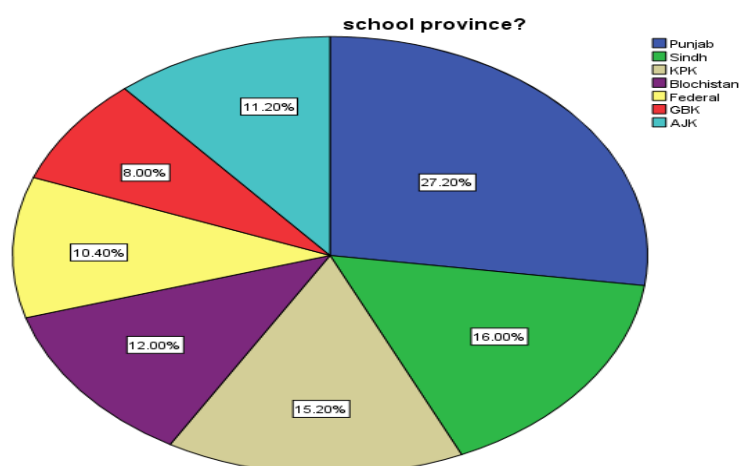


The second question of my questionnaire is related to qualification where four options were given to respondents, and respondents have to select any one option in which they fall. The following table is representing that the maximum respondent has a master's degree i.e., 48%, while 36.8% have a Bachelor's degree, 12% have M.Phil., and 3.20% Ph.D. holders.

Qualification

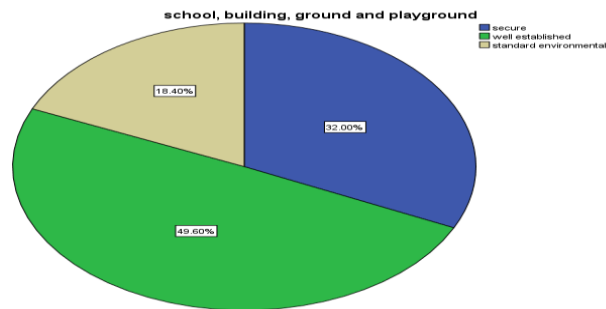


The third question of my questionnaire is related to school province where seven options were given to respondents, and respondents have to select any one option in which they fall. The following table is representing that the maximum respondent 27.20% belong to Punjab, 16% belong to Sindh, 15.20% belong to KPK, 12% from Baluchistan, while 11.20%, 10.40%, and 8% respondent belong to AJK, Federal, and GBK

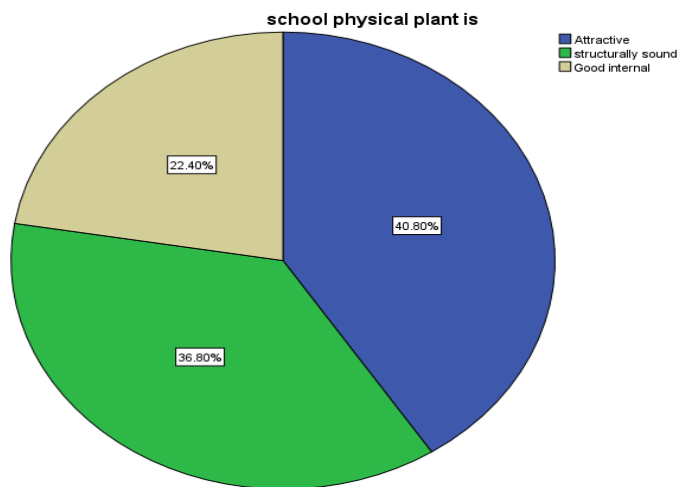


This study asked about the building, ground, and playground equipment to respondents. Three options were given to respondents like secure well-established, and standard environmental. The following figure is indicating that maximum respondents like 48.6% agree with well-established, while 32% and 18.4% considered secure and standard environmental, respectively.

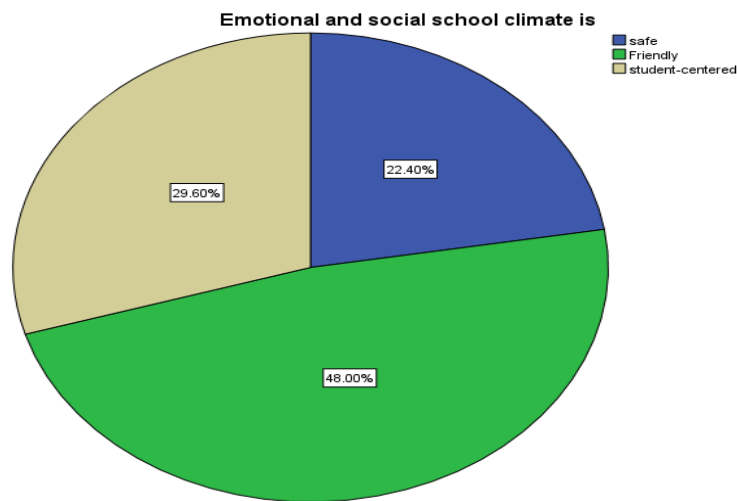
From this perspective, this study confirmed that school building in the study’s context is well-established.



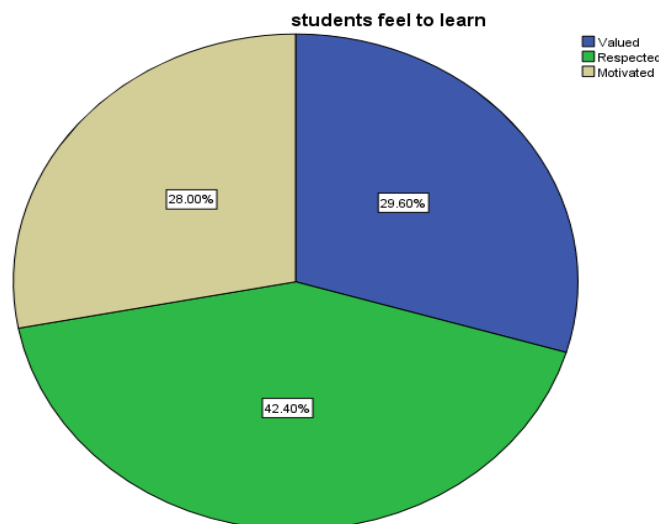
Respondents were asked about the physical plant of the school in this study. Respondents were given three options: attractive, structurally sound, and good internal. The graph below shows that the majority of respondents, 48.8 percent, agree with attractive, while 36.8 percent and 22.4 percent agree with structurally sound and decent internal, respectively. From this vantage point, the report confirmed that the school physical plant in the study's sense is appealing.



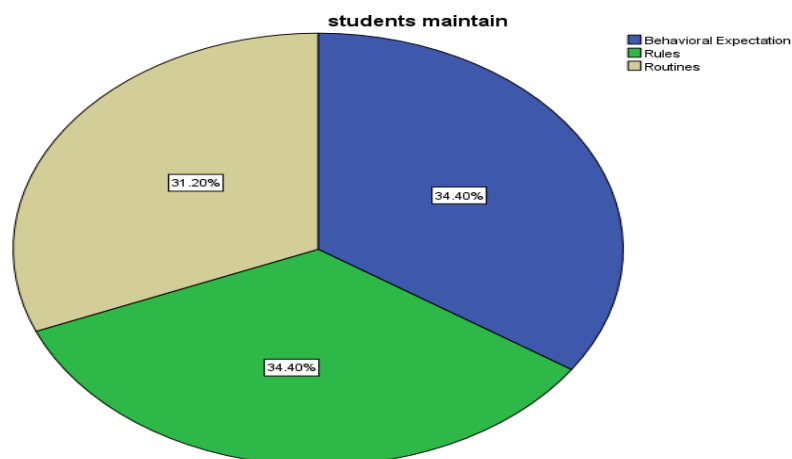
Respondents to this survey were asked about their school's social-emotional environment. Safe, friendly, and student-centered were the three options provided to respondents. The following graph shows that the majority of respondents agree with friendly, with 48 percent agreeing, and 29.6 percent and 22.4 percent agreeing with student-centered and safe, respectively. This research indicated that the social-emotional environment in the study's sense is supportive in this regard.



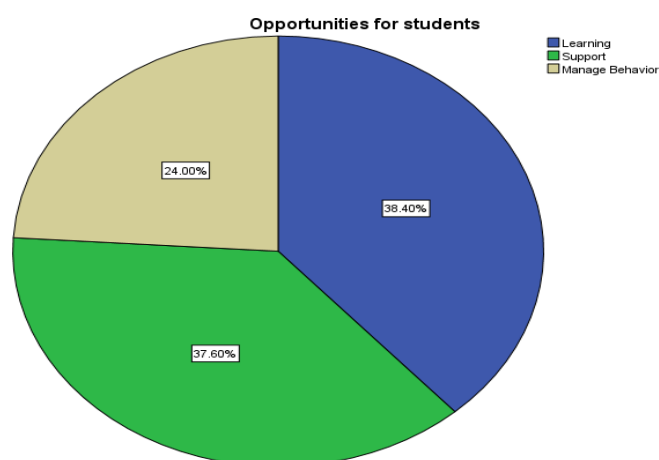
This study asked about the student's feel to learn from respondents. Respondents were given three options: appreciated, respected, or inspired. According to the graph, the majority of respondents (42.2%) agree with appreciation, while 29.6% and 20% consider themselves respected and inspired, respectively. This research confirmed that students' desire to learn in the study's sense is valued in this regard.



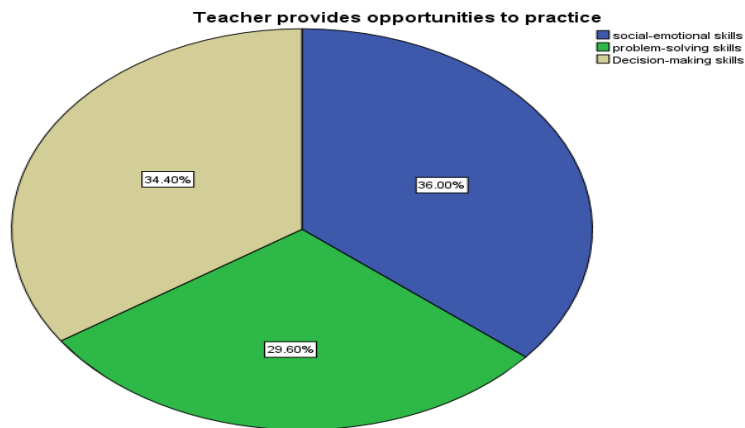
Respondents to this study were questioned about the student's behavior. Respondents were given three choices to choose from: behavioral expectation, rules, and routines. The following graph shows that the majority of respondents (34.4 percent) agree with behavioral expectations and rules, while 31.2 percent consider routine. From this viewpoint, the study confirmed that students uphold behavioral expectations and rules in the study's context.



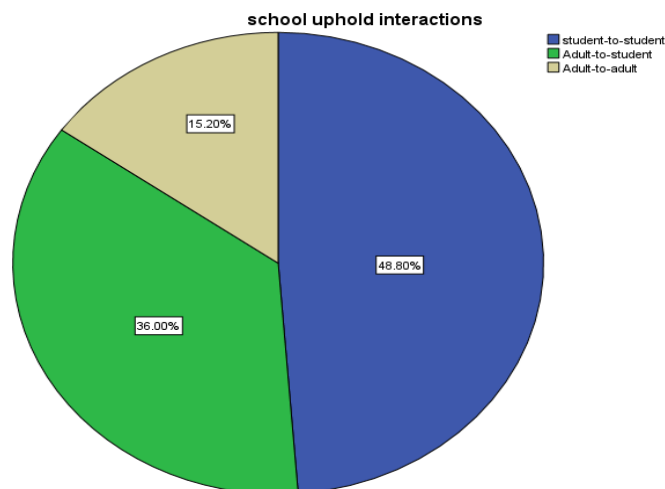
This study aimed to find out about the opportunities for students to respond. Respondents were given three options: learning, support, and behavior management. The following graph shows that the majority of respondents (38.4%) agree with learning, while 37.6% and 24% suggest help and behavior management, respectively. From this standpoint, the report confirmed that learning opportunities exist for students in the study's context.



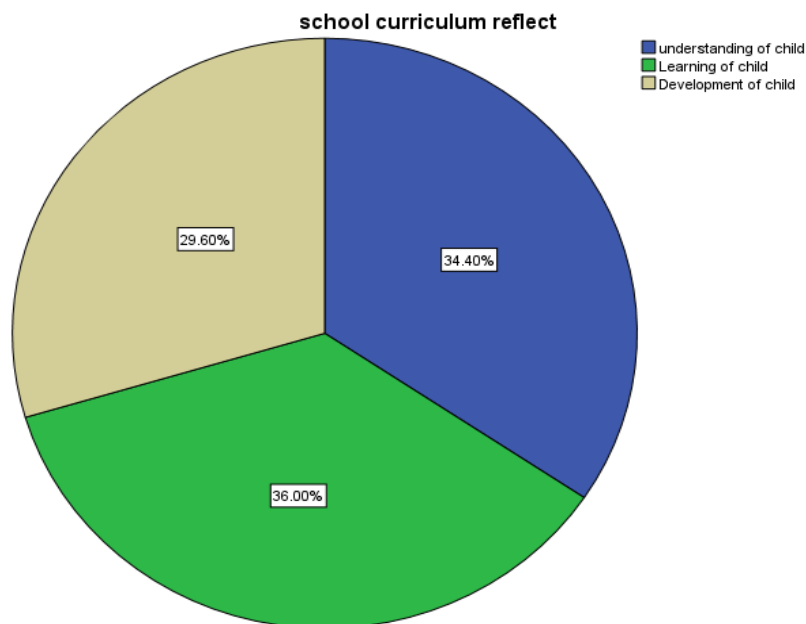
Respondents to this survey were asked about opportunities for students' psychological growth. Social-emotional skills, problem-solving skills, and decision-making skills were among the three choices presented to respondents. According to the graph, the majority of respondents agree with social-emotional skills (36.4%), while problem-solving skills (34.4%), and decision-making skills (29.6%), respectively. This research concluded that social-emotional skills learning is a key component of psychological development in the study's context.



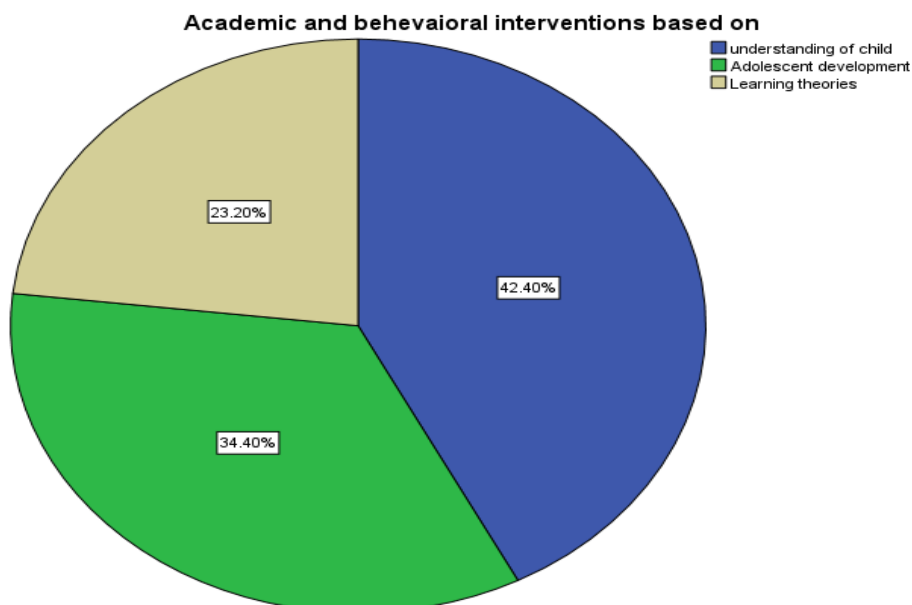
Respondents to this study were asked about their school uphold interactions. Respondents were given three options: student-to-student, adult-to-adult, and student-to-adult. The following graph shows that the majority of respondents (48.8%) agree with student-to-student, while 30% and 15.2 percent, respectively, consider adult-to-student and adult-to-adult. From this standpoint, this research confirmed that school encourages student-to-student contact in the study's context.



This study aimed to find out how respondents felt about the school curriculum. Respondents were given three options: understanding of the child, learning of the child, and child development. The following graph shows that the majority of respondents (36%) agree with a child's learning, while 34.4 percent and 29.6 percent consider the child's understanding and development, respectively. From this standpoint, this research confirmed that the school curriculum represents a child's learning in the study's context.



Based on the responses, this study obtained information about academic and behavioral approaches. Respondents were given three options: child understanding, adolescent development, and learning theories. The following graph shows that the majority of respondents (42.4%) agree with the child's understanding, while 34.4 percent and 23.2 percent, respectively, found adolescent development and learning theories. This research confirmed that the key to academic and behavioral intervention in the study's context is a thorough understanding of the child.



Findings

This study aims to see how the whole-child approach affects children's social, emotional, and psychological development. For starters, this study discovers that school buildings are well-established for student safety. Second, the physical plant of the school is found to be appealing to students in this study. Furthermore, according to the results of this study, the social-emotional environment of the school is friendly for students, and students feel valued when they learn. Students adhere to behavioral expectations, and the school offers opportunities for learning as well as a holistic approach to education. Furthermore, this research finds that teachers provide opportunities for students to learn social-emotional skills and communicate with one another. The school program represents the child's learning and behavioral experiences centered on the child's perception. The findings support the hypothesis that there is a significant impact of the whole-child approach on the social-emotional and psychological development of children.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to analyze the outcomes of the whole-child approach to children's social-emotional and psychological development. These outcomes were examined in the term of teacher's perception about the effect of whole-child approach. This data was selected based on its relation to the safety tenets specified by ASCD for the whole-child approach. These tenets are linked back to Erikson's psychosocial theory. The fourth stage of this theory is schooling grade that defines the industry vs inferiority development of the child which has been shown to reflect on the students' development in school.

The selected site has primary schools in Pakistan. The data examined the teachers' perception about the implementation of the whole-child approach at the primary level for the social-emotional and psychological development of children. The results of this study have a wide range of effects for all stakeholders, from individual students to national educational institutions. Implementation and adherence to whole child approach standards are positively related to improvements in the school setting. Potential gains will be achieved if these implementations are adequately supported and discussed at the primary level in school. These findings indicate that these implementations have a positive impact on students and their development.

Recommendations

- Adopt standards for social- emotional, and psychological development that clarify the types of opportunities that students should be offered and the activities that will help them achieve their goals.
- Integrate professional skills and experience in social-emotional, and psychological development, as well as restorative techniques, into certification and qualitative difference for instructors, administrators, and counseling staff.
- Educators and policymakers should design schools for strong, personalized partnerships such that students are well-known and encouraged to provide safe development settings within a productive policy context.
- Create frameworks for safe, effective classroom environments that provide students with a sense of physical and psychological safety, encouragement, and engagement while also allowing them to develop social, emotional, and cognitive skills.
- Pre-service training programs should design for both teachers and administrators which provide a strong foundation for development in children and adolescents

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