Title: Factors associated with the performance of seniors in Adventist Academies in Indian Certificate of Secondary examinations

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Abstract:

The purpose of this study was to identify factors that are associated with the performance of senior academy students on the Indian Certificate of Secondary Education Examinations. The problem addressed in this study was, “What are the factors influencing academy seniors’ ICSE test scores?”

A total of 522 respondents participated voluntarily in this study representing 30 high schools out of 37 listed by the Education Department of the Southern Asia division of Seventh-day Adventists. Out of the 30 schools that participated in this study, ten schools were located in Central India Union; twelve schools in South India Union; while eight schools were located in Northern and Northeast India union. Respondents were all the senior students who took the 1998 ICSE examination. They rated their perceptions on a 66-item questionnaire on items associated with the student performance utilizing a 5-point Likert scale. The Factors Associated with Performance of Students (FASP) instrument used in this study was an adaptation from earlier instruments by Hebron (1991), and by Musumbi (1995).

The method used in this study was a correlational survey. Four research questions and three hypotheses were posed. The data collection was done from March 1998 to June
1999. The questionnaire response rate was 52%. Means and standard deviations were computed for each of the items on the questionnaire. Statistical treatment included one-way ANOVA, multiple regression, and Pearson product-moment correlation. The level of significance for all tests was set at alpha < .05.

The major conclusions of this study were as follows: (a) principal leadership is a positive predictor of test performance; (b) older students tended to perform better on the language test; (c) students from higher income families excelled in the history, civics, and geography subject; (d) male students excelled in history, civics, and geography while female students tended to excel in language; and (e) statistically significant predictors of test performance include the Parent Factor with total score, math score, and science score. However, the significant predictors, although reliable, accounted for a low amount of variance (.02).

Major recommendations include (a) that continued refinement of the research instrument be done by testing in other contexts and by using other response categories; (b) that the reliability of the Parent-Child Factor be improved by adding more items, testing, and refining items; (c) that a study be conducted to test the assumption that the ICSE examination is valid, reliable, sensitive, and discriminating; (d) that other predictors of student test performance be tested such as student personality, grade point average, hours of study per week, and career goals; (e) that the three Seventh-day Adventist Unions in India review their choice of high school completion exam; (f) that a predictive study be undertaken to determine the reliability of the ICSE exam as a predictor of post-secondary academic performance.