

## I N T R O D U C T I O N

For the preservation of democracy and for the creation of a suitable environment for the growth and perpetuation of democratic principles education may be said to have been instituted. In fact the Secondary Education Commission (Government of India, 1953) had recommended that the major aims of education should be "the training of character to fit the students to participate creatively as citizens in the emerging democratic social order; the improvement of their practical and vocational efficiency so that they may play their part in building up the economic prosperity of their country; and the development of their literary, artistic and cultural interests, which are necessary for self-expression and for the full development of human personality, without which a living national culture cannot come into being" (p. 19). Yet education conceived in this sense, is a far broader term than schooling, that is, the formal education commonly provided in a school. Indeed, if one considers man's entire experience toward social betterment since the dawn of time, the school has not had a particularly large part in his advancement. Other institutions, like the home, have played and are playing an enormous part in the educational process. More recently the movies, the radio, the newspaper, the magazine and other cultural social agencies have influenced the individual to an extraordinary degree.

Although the school is but one of many institutions exerting powerful influence, it performs for society a unique function. This function is one of formal education in contrast with the incidental educational nature of other social institutions. Thus the school is designed to perform those tasks for the growing child which no other social institution is performing or is performing inadequately.

After a crucial period of personality development in the home, an average Indian child, until he is approximately seventeen years of age, is subjected to the moulding influences of the school. Education helps him to manifest and regulate his natural interests and abilities during developmental phases. It aims to develop in him an appreciation of the expanding nature and forms of civic responsibility, and a better understanding of the nature of social living. The final phase of this process tends to lead to the development of rich and multi-faceted types of personalities, educationally and psychologically equipped for participation in an evolving democratic social pattern, involving the achievement of broader and deeper ideals of our nation. Viewed in this light, the focal point of an efficient school administration should always be located nearest to those vital purposes for which the school exists,

as envisaged here. Every act of teaching and every aspect of organising, administering, and supervising should contribute directly to that end. It is thus essential that the administration of education in all its aspects be in harmony with the attainment of the above objectives with focal emphasis on the worth and dignity of the individual, and the full development of his personality in the society.

In the Indian school system, the Principal is the head of both the educative and the administrative processes. The Principal plans what is to be done and how; he attempts to organize interdependent elements into a functional or logical whole; he directs the forces in the school to get solution of the common problems of the institution; he seeks to coordinate all the phases and aspects into a unified programme to achieve a common objective; he evaluates the programmes to get at the reason of failure or success; he has to keep the public as well as the authorities informed through records, research and inspection, as to what is going on in the school. In short, on the performance of the Principal, as an educational leader, and an administrator, depends the success of a school system and the achievement of its goals.

Studies conducted under non-educational settings suggest that the interaction between a leader and members of the group generate a social climate which in turn influence

not only the behaviour of group members but also the productivity of the group (Lewin, Lippitt, and White, 1939; Roethlisberger and Dickson, 1939). Now, the question arises, whether in a school system the social climate generated by the interaction between a Principal and the teaching faculty also influences the student behaviour and student achievement, which have often been employed as criteria to evaluate the productivity of a school.

Some studies on educational groups have investigated the relationship between some environmental variables and student achievement at college or university level (Knapp and Goodrich, 1952; Knapp and Greenbaum, 1953; Holland, 1957; Thistlethwaite, 1959a, 1959b; and 1960; Heist, 1961; Stanford, 1962; Stern, 1962; and Pace 1963)\*. The problems at the school level, however, do not appear to have had adequate coverage, except for a few discrete studies which were mainly concerned with the formal and informal structures of the school, and the administrative interactions (Gross, Mason, and McEachern, 1958; Carlson, 1961, 1962; and Halpin, 1956). These studies have rarely touched on the bearing of these observations on differential educational output of the school, in terms of student behaviour and scholastic achievement.

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\* These and other related studies have been reviewed in the next section of the report.

In the context of research needs and achievement in the area so far, as briefly referred to above, the study, reported here, was undertaken to probe into the influence of social interactions between the Principal and teachers in a school system, on the student behaviour and scholastic achievement. More specifically, the study aimed at finding out the effect of social climate generated by different styles of leader behaviour adopted by the Principal in a school on selected personality characteristics and scholastic attainment of students.