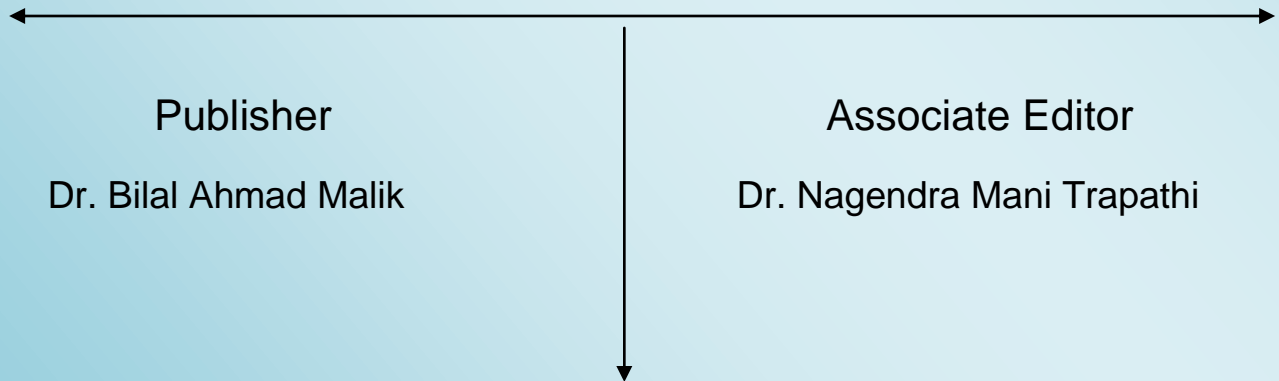# North Asian International Research Journal Consortium

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DEALING WITH STUDENT ALIENATION FOR ENHANCING LEARNERS ENGAGEMENT

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ABSTRACT

Student Alienation is a condition with in the minds of human beings that starts behaving in different manner when they are unable to cop up with the social environment. The present paper is a genuine attempt to present the various strategies for removing the feeling of student alienation. Education includes academic activities and programmes, other than classroom instruction of communicated information. Self is that organized system within the personality which is the collection of attitudes, opinions and beliefs and individuals holds about him. So it may be possible in college stage that the students may be alienated by the emotional stress and deprived physical setting which leads him towards the stage of alienation which will results in low achievement. The aim of education is also all round development of personality of the individual but major emphasis is on intellectual development. But now a day's students are quite alienated from the studying environment. The present discussions focused on various strategies that are helpful for removing the feeling of alienation for enhancing learners' engagement towards their learning environment.

Keyword: Student Alienation and Learners Engagement.

INTRODUCTION

In the life cycle of a person, student life is the important phase of life. This is the phase of adolescent which is a period of transition from childhood to adulthood. It is characterized by rapid biological, physical and hormonal changes resulting in to psychosocial, behavioural and sexual maturation between the ages of 10-20 years in an individual. Adolescence is often described as a phase of life that begins in biology and ends in society. Adolescents comprise a major part of reproductive group; they are likely to play a significant role in determining the future size and growth pattern of India's population. The quality of the relationship that students have in class

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with their peers and teachers is important to their success in life. Education includes academic activities and programmes, other than classroom instruction of communicated information. The aim of education is also all round development of personality of the individual but major emphasis is on intellectual development. But now a day's students are quite alienated from the studying environment. Alienation is a condition with in the minds of human beings that starts behaving in different manner when they are unable to cop up with the social environment. Student alienation is a global problem. Self is that organized system within the personality which is the collection of attitudes, opinions and beliefs and individuals holds about him. So it may be possible in college stage that the students may be alienated by the emotional stress and deprived physical setting which leads him towards the stage of alienation which will results in low achievement.

. Alienation is a type of Psycho-social problem, when the basic needs of the individual are fulfilled, he still feels unhappy and frustrated. It is due to the fact that he cannot choose his goals properly. .   In such cases some behavioural problems develop. Here, regression of needs take place and he remains moving across lower level goals. It is a condition with in the minds of human being that starts behaving in a different manner when they are unable to cope up with the social environment. 'Alienation' has been used by the philosopher, Psychologists and sociologists to refer to an extra ordinary variety of Psycho-social disorders, including loss of self anxiety state, anomic, despair, depersonalization,   ruthlessness, apathy, social disorganization, loneliness, atomization, powerlessness, meaninglessness, isolation, pessimism and the loss beliefs and values **(Josephson & Mary 1962, Seeman (1959)**.

From the foregoing account of alienation it becomes clear that alienation, regardless of types, is a dependent variable in sociological terms and the assumption should be made explicit that specific conditions give, rise to specific kinds of alienation.

Seeman (1959) has given five meanings of alienation. The same is given in Figure 1

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FIGURE 1
FIVE MEANINGS OF ALIENATION

1) **Powerlessness:**

    The perception that one cannot control what is happening to him.

2) **Meaninglessness:**

    The perception that one is unclear as to what one ought to believe.

3) **Normlessness:**

    A high expectancy that socially unapproved behaviour is required to achieve the given goals.

4) **Isolation:**

    The assignment of low reward value to goals or beliefs that is usually highly valued in a society.

5) **Self- Estrangement** :

    The failure to find self-rewarding activities.

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CAUSES OF STUDENT ALIENATION

Behaviors that indicate a student may feel alienated are numerous and varied. Such behaviors could include disruptiveness in class, absenteeism, missing homework, poor grades, lack of investment in the learning process, belligerent attitude, social withdrawal, and suspensions (**Schulz, 2007).** These behaviors are in response to a student's academic and social experience in school. A school environment may become toxic for some students, a constant source of failure and frustration, at a time of development when a sense of success and a growing, positive self concept is needed. How schools contribute. According to **Goodwin (2000),** there are specific ways in which schools and school personnel contribute to the alienation and academic failure of students. He identifies six main areas of concern:

- Weak or inappropriate curricula,
- Ineffective instruction,
- Disengaging classroom discourse,
- Poor student self-concept,
- Unsuccessful adjustment to school culture, and
- Prejudice of teacher towards students.

Goodwin describes the situation as a self-fulfilling prophecy. Certain profiled students aren't expected to learn as much and as a result they don't. For example, less experienced teachers are more likely to be assigned to classrooms of underrepresented students. The tremendous power a school staff has to shape the perceptions and attitudes of a student body is awesome when used to promote and criminal when applied poorly and without regard to consequences. Peer to peer relations given the social and emotional development of secondary students, peer relations also has a discernable impact on a student's educational outcome (**Berk, 2007); Hawkins et al., 2000).** Peers who associate with other alienated students are recipients of negative peer pressure, have a low resistance to peers, are considered high-risk adolescents, and tend to follow their peers are likely to exhibit rebellious behaviors and attitudes and be at-risk for academic failure (**Dryfoos,1991).**

The need to belong is powerful, and when feeling rejected an adolescent is not likely to respond well to adult intervention (**Smokowski & Kopasz, 2005).** Bullying, teasing, and harassment are intentional and can be considered precursors to teen suicides and homicides (**Hazler & Denham, 2002).** In a hostile or toxic school

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climate, many students become victims to such abuse unchecked or unobserved by adults, become isolated, untrusting and alienated.

- **Targeting Alienating School Factors**

    Schools and the adults who work in them contribute to some students' sense of alienation from the overall school program. **Goodwin (2000)** identified six specific ways in which schools and school personnel contribute to the alienation and ultimate academic failure of students. Four of the six areas pertain to the appropriateness of curricula, teaching methodology, and the prejudicial attitudes of teachers

- **Targeting Curricula and Teaching Methods**

    By using their consultative and collaborative skills, school counselors can work with teachers and administrators to increase overall student performance **(Brigman, Mullis, Webb, & White, 2005).** Given that group consultation has been reported as effective when stakeholders are able to address concerns through active group participation **(Marlow, Bloss, & Bloss, 2000),** it is logical to conclude that counseling programs that devote time and energy to consultative and collaborative practices with other professionals may benefit students. Providing professional development opportunities to staff concerning culturally responsive pedagogy and teaching practices can enhance teachers' multicultural awareness and capacity to create relevant learning for all students.

- **Targeting biased and outdated curricula**

    Creating new curricula which is relevant to and inspires culturally and linguistically diverse learner's leads to higher scores and elevated graduation rates **(Center for Research on Education, Diversity, & Excellence [CREDE], 2003).**Curricula containing career education and future career planning opportunities are deemed more relevant and valuable to students. There is a significant body of research **(see: Blackhurst, Auger, & Herting Wahl, 2003; Lapan, Tucker, Kim, & Kosciulek, 2003; Mau, Hitchcock, & Calvert, 1998)** which indicate school counselors are very effective in assisting students in the area of career development. Supportive behaviors and high expectations on the part of school personnel positively impact student academic performance and career development thus increasing student engagement **(Dunham & Frohm, 2003; Whiston & Quinby, 2011).** This can be true as well for school counselors who incorporate

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strategies into their program which promote and encourage development of curricula and methodology which reduce alienating factors.

WAYS TO ENHANCE STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

McPartland (1994) suggest four broad intervention components to enhance student engagement: providing opportunities for success in schoolwork, creating a caring school and supportive environment, communicating the relevance of education to future endeavors, and helping students with personal problems within the school environment. The following factors impact engagement in learning:

1. School Policies and Practice - School practices and policies such as tracking, retention, suspension, and rigid rule structures negatively affect student engagement, whereas policies and practices such as smaller schools, opportunities for creativity as student choice, and highlighting the relevance of curricula to personal life goals enhance levels of engagement

2. Schools with Caring Classroom Environments - Evidence shows that schools with committed faculty, positive teacher-student relationships, orderly, warm and caring supportive environments are associated with greater academic success. In addition, teaching practices that foster student autonomy, student participation and feeling of competence are also critical (MCPartland 1994).

3. Relationships Between Students - Students who are more socially integrated have a greater sense of belonging than those with less peer acceptance.

4. Family Support and Involvement - Students who perceive greater parental support i.e. discussion about school, less monitoring of homework but greater academic resource in the home have greater success in school. MCPartland, 1994.

SUGGESTIONS

1 Students were more likely to have a positive identification with school and participate in their tasks when teachers offered positive and improvement-based praise and emphasized effort while avoiding pressuring students for correct answers or high grades.

2. Competitive learning environments decreased school participation, undermined the development of a sense of school belonging, and diminished the value students placed on school.

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3.   In order to become engaged with learning, students who are competent but either   alienated from school or less intrinsically motivated may need more autonomy support in the form of more interesting and relevant activities and decision-making opportunities.

4.   Students who are passive or anxious about exercising autonomy or attempting novel tasks may need more structured scaffolding of tasks, more guidance, and more explicit instruction in effective strategies to become fully engaged with classroom learning.

5.   Students reported higher levels of school identification and use of self-regulatory strategies when they were encouraged to interact and discuss ideas with each other in class.

6.   When teachers create a caring and socially supportive environment, students are more likely to participate in school and bond with school.

7   Separate orientation programme should be provided by the institution for the parents of the wards.

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Dreams are not what you see in sleep,

it is the thing that doesn't let you sleep.

- APJ Abdul Kalam