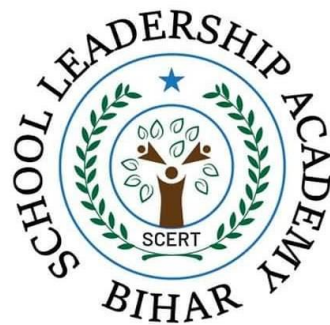


**ROLE OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP IN IMPROVING LEARNING ENVIRONMENT IN
SCHOOLS OF BIHAR**



School Leadership Academy

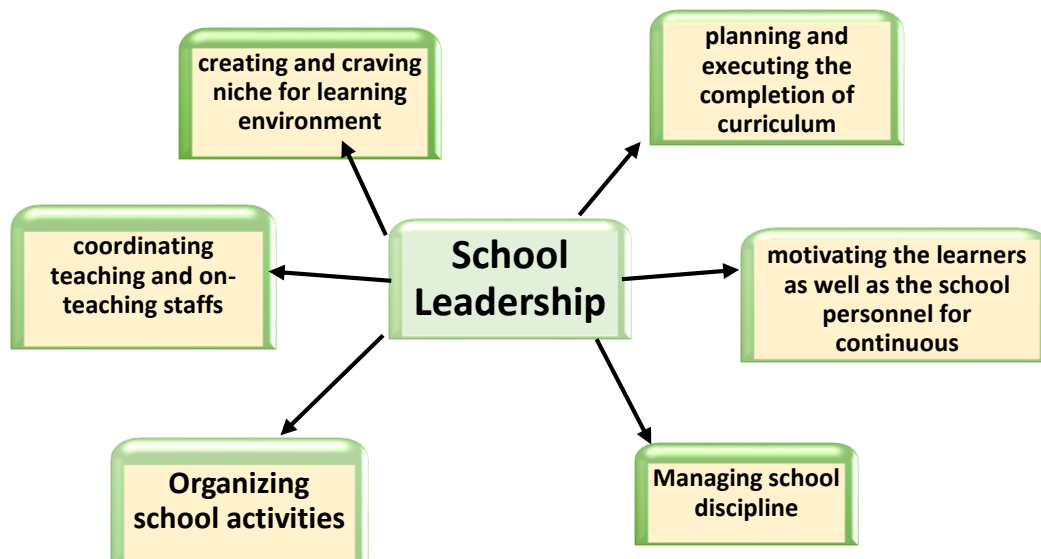
State Council of Education Research & Training, Bihar, Patna

ROLE OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP IN IMPROVING LEARNING ENVIRONMENT IN SCHOOLS OF BIHAR

Chanchala Tiwari

INTRODUCTION

Learners definitely do not constitute hundred percent (100%) population of any country but they definitely play hundred percent (100%) role in building a bright future of any nation. Accurate and adequate leadership can mold as well as give direction to anything and everything. Leadership inherit many qualities such as planning, organizing, managing, coordinating, cooperative, directive etc. As leadership play a vital role in any organization or institution, it has its impact on the school education as well with no exceptions. Schools being an organization, needs effective and efficient leadership not only to manage the teaching and non-teaching staffs but also for creating a soothing environment for the growth and development of learners academically as well as creatively, within the school campus and outside the school as well. The role of school leadership can be understood with given purview below.



Learning environment is an important key for the all-round development of students. When the role of school leadership is discussed with reference to improving the learning environment in schools, it become even more significant because the minimum one could expect from a school is to provide an adequate learning environment to the learners. This module will discuss the role of schools and their leaders in context to how the learning environment within the school can be

improved? What are the pre-requisites of learning environment, what are the barriers in creating appropriate learning environment, especially in schools of Bihar?

TITLE OF THE MODULE

Role of school leadership in improving learning environment in schools of Bihar

OBJECTIVES

Through this module, school leaders would be able to

- Understand the meaning of learning environment in school education.
- Understand the importance of learning environment in school education.
- Understand the pre-requisites for creating learning environment in schools.
- Understand the Impact of learning environment in achieving learning outcomes in school.
- Understand the co-relation between school leadership and learning environment.

Learning Environment

Learning environment has been formed with two of the very important terms ‘learning’ and ‘environment’. Learning refers to any change or modification in the behavior of the learners due to some intervention. Environment is the internal as well as external surroundings. Both learning and environment are wide terms and the progress of each depends largely on each other. Learning environment is the environment where there is an opportunity for the learners to learn in the way they want to learn. The environment must be conducive to adapt with the changing needs of the present era. The school must have an all-inclusive and all accommodating atmosphere within it. The learners who come to school must have the sense of security, safety, and freedom of putting their opinions about their emotions and feeling towards the environment in which they are put forth. The experience which a learner experience in the school environment have a lasting effect in their lives and career. In this module the learning environment would be delimited with context to the learning environment within the schools of Bihar.

Importance of learning environment in school education

School is the first place after home where a child socialized and learn to grow with different abilities in a community space. The time when a child enters into school education, they are in their tender age in which they could be molded in any shape. In order to develop the qualities of a good citizen, which is the ultimate goal of any education system, the environment

of the school plays a vital role. It is the prime duty of any school to provide appropriate and effective environment for the learners so that the learning could happen efficiently. It has been found in many studies that a learner tends to learn effectively if they have good learning experience during the teaching-learning process. A good learning experience can only be created by creating a good learning environment in the schools. The learning environment in school education leads to following;

- To achieve the learning outcome of syllabus
- To improve learning skills among students
- To develop and enshrine the qualities of a good citizen.
- To learn the life skills of leadership, inclusiveness, empathy, cooperation, coordination.

Pre-requisites for creating learning environment in schools

In order to understand the learning environment of a school, it is important to understand the factors which have its effect on the learning environment of a school. These factors built and improves the environment of a school to faster the learning of learners. The factors are discussed below.

- i. **Physical infrastructure:** Learning environment of any school would not be accomplished unless and until it had physical infrastructure to accommodate specified number of students and teachers. It had been revealed in many studies that a school having good physical infrastructures such as adequate number of rooms, library, laboratories, toilets, seating arrangements, playground, common room etc. have positive learning environment and learners also grow positively.
- ii. **Technological infrastructure:** one could not imagine the life without technology in the present era. In the field of education also technology play a significant role in learning and creating a positive learning environment as well. Technology widen the horizon of opportunities and possibilities for learners. Technology empowers learner to deep dive and get the best option from all. Internet facilities, smart class rooms, ICT (information and communication technology) are part of technological infrastructure and these are must for learning environment.
- iii. **Quality of teaching and non-teaching personnel:** the learning environment largely depends upon the quality of teaching and non-teaching personnel. The teachers who are

going to complete the syllabus and transact the curriculum with the students in the school need to be well versed and efficient enough to do their jobs.

- iv. **Social environment:** learning environment within the school have a vital impact of the social environment of the school. A healthy social environment of the school allows healthy learning environment. A sense of equality and inclusion among the learners who are coming from diverse social backdrops in the school makes the learning environment soothing for the learners.
- v. **Community participation:** schools are an integral part of its community and thus it is very important that the schools and community have parallel growth with each other participation and involvement. The line of interference and involvement must be drawn between them. It has been evident from many studies that the schools which have positive involvement and participation of the community had better learning environment then compared to the opposites.
- vi. **Sense of safety and security among learners:** there could be no learning among the learners if they do not have the sense of safety and security among themselves within the school campus. Constant threat from the school authority or teachers or from the classmates, or from the seniors make the learners conscious and they could not involve themselves completely into the studies only.

Perception about the learning environment in schools of Bihar

The studies conducted about the learning environment in the schools of Bihar shows that the learning environment is not much favorable for learners due to which the problems of dropouts, low literacy rate in comparison to other states of India, gap between the male and female dropouts and literacy rate as well are few of the much discussed phenomena in the country. The outcome of various studies also emphasis that there is a need of changing things at policy level as well as at ground level. The results of these discussion leads to drastic change in the school environment as the policy makers are working towards mantra of quality education for changing the perception towards the learning environment in the schools so that the problems of dropouts, gap in gender literacy rate can be tackled and changed.

Impact of learning environment in achieving learning outcomes in school

Achieving learning outcomes of the syllabus and curriculum are the goals of any school. Learning outcomes are different for different classes and in order to achieve them the learners

need to learn and show the changes in behavioral terms so that these learning outcomes can be measured. Learning environment of the school plays a significant role in achieving these learning outcome. Learning environment allows the learners to achieve learning outcome by giving the following situations

- Allows learners to learn at their pace and comfort.
- Make learners feel safe and secure and focus only on their learning.
- Motivates learners to achieve the learning outcome of the lessons.
- Allow learners to be creative.
- Allows learners to grow in an inclusive and conducive environment.

Co-relation between school leadership and learning environment

School leadership and learning environment have a positive correlation. As it has been mentioned earlier that school leadership play a vital role in all the aspects of any educational system. One of the important function which school leadership need to do is planning and execution of different goals for the growth and development of the learners. Thus it is understood that the proper learning environment within the school is not possible to create without the initiation of school leadership. How school leadership and learning environment go hand in hand can be understood from the following explanation;

- **The communication chain:** In order to improve the learning environment, there are many prerequisites which need to be fulfilled. These prerequisites can only be fulfilled when there is a proper communication chain between the school leadership and different stakeholders of school education. The school leadership can bring the fundamental infrastructure into the school and can work towards using those infrastructures for improving learning environment in school among learners.
- **As continuous process:** Creating an adequate and appropriate learning environment in school education is a continuous process. Unless and until school leadership pay proper attention in maintain the discipline and decorum in the school education, it will be difficult for the teachers or other leaders to create a good and supportive learning environment in the school.
- **Integrated approach:** one of the important function of school leadership is to seek coordination and cooperation from all the stakeholders in any education system so that the education system can function smoothly. In order to create a sense of security and

safety among learners which is one of the pre requisite of learning environment, school leadership need to take action and execute its planning. Creating learning environment by bringing the physical as well as technical infrastructure together and making them function in sync is mostly depends upon the school leadership.

Here it can be said that school leadership and school environment has a positive correlation. Improvement of learning environment depends on good leadership of a school. The leadership of the school plays a vital role in improving the learning environment of the school which has been discussed in the following paragraphs.

Role of School leaders in improving learning environment in the schools

The school leader plays significant role in improving learning environment in the schools. As it has been discussed previously there are various pre-requisites for creating learning environment in any school. The school leaders need to make sure that these pre-requisites are fulfilled. At the policy level there are many such programs which are meant to improve the learning environment for the school, the school leaders need to execute these programs so that soothing and conducive environment can be prepared for the learners to learn. The role of a school leader can be understood with the following discussion.

- i. Role of a planner:** In order to create and improve the learning environment of school education, the school leadership need to play the role of a planner continuously. They need to plan different activities, different means of communication, the role of the teaching and non-teaching staffs, and also how to implement the planning at the school level.
- ii. Role of an executor:** Once the planning part is completed, the school leadership has to play the role of an executor of that planning so that actual work can be done at ground level to achieve the decided goals. The school leaders need to continuously be in contact with the stakeholders of school education so that they can execute the planning.
- iii. Role of an organizer:** The school leadership need to play the role of an organizer to improve the learning environment in the school education. Whether it is organizing of any meeting for community participation, for conducting activities based classes, for communicating the information and notices in hierarchy for well execution of the plans, school leaders need to do it all for improving the learning environment.

- iv. Role of motivator:** Role as a motivator is one of the most important role of school leadership in improving the learning environment in school education. This whole discussion about the learning environment in school education is started so that the learning conditions of learners can be improved and more and more number of student opt for school education so that the number of drop outs can be minimized. If the school leaders will motivate the learners, teachers, and other stakeholders in doing their share of role in true spirit, the learning environment can be improved flawlessly. Especially learners and teachers need motivation to do their works. The school leaders can motivate them with praising words, with some rewards as well by presenting various examples and instance through anecdotes.
- v. Role of coordinator:** Another important role which school leadership can play in improving the learning environment is that of a coordinator. The leaders need to coordinate with the community for its participation in learning environment, it need to coordinate with the teaching and non-teaching staffs, with the government, and most importantly with the learners so that a healthy environment can be created where the learning opportunities can be created as well as developed in the school education system.
- vi. Role of a facilitator:** Another important role which the school leadership need to play is that of the facilitator. There are several government and NGO programs which helps in improving the learning environment of the school education. In order to execute and implement such government lead programs, the school authorities and leaders need to facilitate and make these programs successful at school levels so that the goal of good education system and good learning environment can be achieved.

After having discussed the role of school leadership in improving learning environment it can be said that school leadership lay the foundation of learning environment in the school and it can also transform school environment for better learning and better co-existence of learners from different background in a school. There are different government projects and programs which are designed to improve the learning environment of the school education with special reference to Bihar school education. These are discussed in the following paragraphs.

Government programs for improving learning environment in schools of Bihar

The government of Bihar through Bihar Education Project Council (BEPC) has initiated many projects and programs for teachers as well as for learners in association with various organizations such as UNICEF India, SCERT Bihar, Education Ministry of India, and also with many non-government institutions such as Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) so that quality education can be provided to the learners especially to those who are learning in government schools in better learning environment. There are many such projects and programs initiated from Government of Bihar for improving learning environment in the schools of Bihar. Some of them are briefly explained below.

- **Adolescent program for Girls:** This program has been initiated in schools so that the girls can be empowered with awareness of menstrual health and hygiene, gender equality, gender sensitization, financial literacy, child marriage, dowry system etc. so that a safe learning environment can be created in school so that the girls can have better learning environment in the school.
- **Safe Saturdays:** This program has been initiated so that the learners can be enlighten with the awareness of various safety measures which can be taken during any kind of natural as well as man-made calamities.
- **Beg less Saturday:** This beg less Saturdays has been initiated so that the learners can get one day at school where they can only learn through activities and they can learn various other life skills such as yoga, communication, painting, drama etc. to enrich their learning experiences as a whole.
- **Learning through Chehak Module:** This is the module started across the length and breadth of Bihar to make the teaching-learning process activity based especially in primary education system in school education. Chehak module is one of the effective and widely implemented modules used in the primary education in Bihar.
- **Use of blended learning:** One of the important indicator which has contributed largely in improving the learning environment of school education is the use of blended learning approach. E-content has been created and circulated to be used for improving learning interest among learners. Use of many portals like 'E-lorts' (electronic library of teachers and students), DIKSHA, DoorDarshan, etc. are the carrier of these e-content in the school.

- **Organizing Olympiads for different subjects:** In order to develop a sense of competition and to improve the quality of education at par with national level of education there are many Olympiads of different subjects at different levels are organized to enhance and encourage the merit of students. A well planned eco-system is developed to acquaint with new developments through improving the learning environment of the school education.
- **Tarang Medha utsav:** In order to improve the learning environment many co-curricular activities such as painting, speech, extempore, crossword, spelling bee, quiz competition is organized not only at school level but also at block, district, divisional and state level. These competitions encourage learners to be more focused in learning.
- **Youva mahotav:** Along with academic competitions, game competitions such as kho-kho, kabaddi, football, race, volleyball, javelin throw, etc. are organized to enhance the sporting spirit for all round development of the learners which play a vital role in improving learning environment of the school education.
- **Kala mahotsav:** Art and culture are core part of any education system and the active participation of learners in these activities makes them emotionally and mentally connected with their aesthetic core. Classical dance competition, musical instrument playing competition, singing, acting, drama competitions are organized at various levels to enhance the learning environment of school education.
- **Launch of Bihar Career Portal:** Starting a portal for high school and intermediate students which can empower them with multiple career opportunities which they can pursue and earn their livelihood is a visionary approach by the government of Bihar for their learners. Every year more than five lakh students are availing benefits with this portal. Students are conscious about the career choices and thus start learning with known goals of life.
- **Making smart classrooms in every school:** One of the most important steps taken towards improving the learning environment of school education in Bihar is making every school smart by providing smart classrooms to them. The learners as well as teachers are developing various skills by using these smart class rooms. It has improved the learning environment at schools evidently.

- **Improving the quality of sanitization and making available water at every school:**
To make the school education a safe and secure place health wise also, many water hygiene projects, ensuring water and toilets at schools were started and done also. These are the prerequisites for improving learning environment of school.

Conclusion and Policy Implication

After this long discussion it can be concluded that school leadership is a key for improving the learning environment in school education. Many steps are being taken to improve the learning environment but there are many more steps which need to be taken for making the school environment a best place for learning and developing learners' various abilities. School leaders are the pillars who can definitely bring changes in the school education system. They need to be groom and developed professionally so that they can understand their roles and responsibility towards school education. Continuous professional development programs, training schedules and modules can be developed for providing support to the school leaders for improving learning environment in the school education.