

Establishing clear directions about learning and achievement in Low SES Environments

The instrument below seeks teachers' responses to the socio-economic circumstances they see in the community in which their school is located .

The questions relate to the way in which a school responds to the needs of children from diverse socio-economic backgrounds (MacBeath and Mortimore, 2001).

You are asked first to respond to each of the items below on a four point Likert Scale ranging from Strongly Agree (SA) to Strongly Disagree (SD), before you examine anonymised simulated data from 'your' teachers.

ITEM	SA	A	D	SD
1. I feel that working in this low SES school is a positive challenge for me				
2. My work will make little difference to the children I teach in this environment				
3. The Low SES environment here has an overpowering influence on children				
4. I believe I can motivate my students to want to learn no matter their backgrounds				
5. Parents are unlikely to be able to help their children in the way I would like				
6. My teaching can raise the standard of achievement of low SES children at this school				
7. I can influence parents to play a positive role in their children's learning at this school				
8. There are few satisfactions for me working in this kind of school				
9. I really get a kick when my students improve in any way at all				
10. There is no way here of motivating children to behave themselves all day				

Simulated data from your school's teachers (N=40) are now presented in two clusters in percentages: (i) agree/strongly agree; and (ii) disagree/strongly disagree.

ITEM	Agree	Disagree
Positives		
1. I feel that working in this low SES school is a positive challenge for me	40%	60%
4. I believe I can motivate my students to want to learn no matter their backgrounds	25%	75%
6. My teaching can raise the standard of achievement of low SES children at this school	25%	75%
7. I can influence parents to play a positive role in their children's learning at this school	10%	90%
9. I really get a kick when my students improve in any way at all	40%	60%
Negatives		
2. My work will make little difference to the children I teach here	60%	40%
3. The Low SES environment here has an overpowering influence on children	90%	10%
5. Parents are unlikely to be able to help their children in the way I would like	90%	10%
8. There are few satisfactions for me working in this kind of school	60%	40%
10. There is no way here of motivating children to behave themselves all day	75%	25%

Having examined the findings, which of the statements below seems to apply to 'your' school staff? OR is there another statement you could make?

- A. There is an awareness of the potential influence of socio-economic factors on achievement but this is seen as a challenge. There is a strong staff commitment to raising standards, increasing pupil self-esteem and motivation and to raising parental and student expectations.
- B. There is a fatalistic attitude that socio-economic circumstances have such a powerful effect on learning and achievement that the school will not succeed in raising achievement no matter how hard the staff tries.

On what bases do you make your judgment?

What if anything, should you and 'your' school be doing about it?