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**Title of the Thesis:** School Ecology in relation to Learning Environmental Studies at Primary Level- A Comparative Study of Innovative Schools and Mainstream Schools

**Keywords** School Ecology, Innovative Schools, Mainstream Schools, Learning processes

### **Abstract**

The study aimed to assess the role of different kinds of school learning environments on student learning outcomes and learning processes. For this purpose, the school environments of two types of schools - innovative and traditional- were compared. The school environment has emerged as one of the crucial academic constructs that has captured much attention over the past two decades in educational research. The school environment significantly impacts several factors, including student attendance and dropout, mental and physical well-being, teacher retention, and safety. The importance of the school environment is stressed in SDG goal 4 by establishing enabling and safe environment. Unlike past studies, the current research takes a comprehensive account of the school environment into the picture by including infrastructural, socio-emotional, and academic aspects.

In total 613 students (463 students from Mainstream schools and 150 students from Innovative schools) formed the sample for this study. Data was collected from students at age

11-12. The research is a quantitative study. For the purpose of data collection, three questionnaires on – School Ecology, Learning Processes, and EVS Achievement Test were administered to the students. Data collection involved the development of a standardised Likert scale for studying the perception of students on their school ecology. An achievement test was used to assess the learning outcomes of students in EVS, and a rating scale was used to investigate learning processes. Various statistical techniques were used to analyse data these included – Pearson correlation, T-test, and Step-wise regression.

With respect to findings, a significant difference was found in school ecologies of innovative schools and mainstream schools. School ecology as a whole showed a significant contribution to the dependent variable learning achievement for the total sample and mainstream schools. The learning processes of students were found to be a significant correlate of students' learning outcomes for the total sample with correlations with the surface approach, deep approach, and achieving approach.