



ISSN NO. 2320-5407

Journal homepage: <http://www.journalijar.com>

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL
OF ADVANCED RESEARCH

RESEARCH ARTICLE

ACADEMIC BACKWARDNESS AMONG RURAL ADOLESCENTS: CHALLENGE FOR SOCIETY

Gaytri Tiwari¹, Ruchi Galundia².

1. Junior Scientist and Technical Coordinator, AICRP (All India Coordinated Research Project), ICAR, Department of Human Development & Family Studies, College of Home science, MPUAT, Udaipur.
2. Senior Research Fellow, AICRP (All India Coordinated Research Project), ICAR, Department of Human Development & Family Studies, College of Home science, MPUAT, Udaipur.

Manuscript Info

Manuscript History:

Received: 17 January 2016
Final Accepted: 19 February 2016
Published Online: March 2016

Key words:

Academic backwardness,
Adolescents

*Corresponding Author

Ruchi Galundia.

Abstract

Academic achievement has always been the interest of educationist, school psychologist and school social workers. Parents, teachers and school too are concerned about the academic achievement of their children. Academic performance is given prime importance in Indian society as it is an important way to come up in one's life. Now-a-days due to various factors, academic backwardness among rural adolescents is rising. There is an increased awareness in the parents, teachers and other professionals working with academic backward children. Present study is also an effort to find out the reasons of academic backwardness among school going rural adolescents. The sample from three villages of Udaipur district viz. Lakhawali, Bhilwara, and Dangio Ka Guda were selected from three classes i.e. 7th, 8th, and 9th consisted of 150 adolescents. A checklist was prepared to find out the reasons of academic backwardness among school going rural adolescents. Results revealed that most of the rural children had academic backwardness was due to familial reasons followed by academic and health reasons. In case of all familial reasons, few school going children said that their family members do not contribute much in their study, do not provide much cooperation, inspiration and guidance which is due to their parents lack of education, money and other necessary resources. Few respondents said that their parents engage them more in the activities other than studies. Regarding health reasons of academic backwardness it was noted that majority of them do not consider health problems a reason for academic backwardness.

Copy Right, IJAR, 2016. All rights reserved.

Introduction:-

Scholastic achievement has become an index of child's future in this highly competitive world. Academic backwardness is one of the commonest educational problems encountered in rural children and consists of the fact that the child's performance at school falls below the expectations i.e. according to the level of intelligence. Academic underachievement of children is a big concern among parents and teachers in present day competitive society. Evaluation and judgment of students' performance is largely based on the grades achieved by them. Several factors determine the scholastic levels of students. These factors include environment, parental motivation, dedication of teachers etc.

Academic stress in children can present as physical, behavioural or emotional problems. Unrecognized and unresolved, scholastic backwardness has a lifelong impact on the child and adolescent, affecting school completion, higher education, interpersonal relationships, prospects for employment, marriage etc. It is reported that around 20% of school children have scholastic backwardness (Karande S, Kulkarni M., 2005). Scholastic backwardness contributes to school dropout, especially after the primary school years (Kamat VV., 1934) and should be recognized and remedial measures initiated, in the primary classes itself for best results. At present, children are identified much later and as a result, optimum benefit of remedial education is not obtained. It is important to

identify the risk factors for scholastic backwardness so that these children can be identified early and corrective measures can be initiated at school, familial and societal level.

The causes for a child being poor in academics are varied and range from physical causes to psychological causes the later being more common. Studies confirm that a large percentage of school dropouts in India are due to unsatisfactory academic performance (Pratinidhi et al., 1992). Various emotional, environmental and medical factors can also affect the academic performance of adolescents. Emotional disorders such as anxiety, obsessive-compulsive, mood disorders, depression, and psychosomatic disorders are common in students. Poor school performance may also be due to environmental factors especially at home, school, friends and neighbourhood surroundings. The 'behaviour problems' are having major impact on child's bodily and social development. The family provides emotional support to an individual as well as plays a major role in the formation of one's personality. The quality and nature of the parental nurturance that the child receives will profoundly influence his future development. The knowledge of these family factors associated with behaviour problems may be helpful to identify at risk children.

Children from broken homes, alcoholic parents, physical and verbal abuse at home show poor academic performance. Underachievement can also be related to psychological factors like lack of motivation, low self-esteem, poor self-confidence, and defeatist attitudes. Medical factors may have the direct effect on the condition itself or due to effects leading to recurrent school absenteeism, adverse effects of medication, poor self-esteem affecting motivation and performance. Common chronic conditions such as asthma, allergies, repeated otitis media, lead poisoning, cancer, epilepsy, cerebral palsy type 1 diabetes mellitus, hypothyroidism, hearing loss even unilateral and visual impairment are known to be associated with poor academic performance.

Academic backwardness usually engenders feelings of anxiety and inadequacy in children. This in turn can have negative impact on the emotional and social functioning of the child. Hence learning problem is an issue of concern not only for students, but also for parents and all the professionals involved in child welfare. Poor school performance is a common problem faced by schools and parents. Poor school performance (PSP) can be defined as a school achievement below the expected for a given age, cognitive skills and schooling (Rebollo et al., 2007; Fonseca, 2008). It not only results in the child having a low self esteem, but also causes significant stress to the parents. It is usually a reflection of a larger underlying problem in children hence poor school performance should be analyzed systematically so that proper interventions can be given in this direction. Also, majority of India still lives in villages and so the topic of rural education in India is of utmost importance. This paper reviews with the

Major objective:-

1. To find out the reasons for academic backwardness among rural students.

Methodology:-

Sample & Locale

A sample of 150 adolescent (with equal number of boys and girls) in the age range of 11-17 years from schools of three operational villages of AICRP on Home Science viz Lakhawali, Bhilwara, and Dangio Ka Guda was selected. The sample was selected from three classes i.e. 7th, 8th, and 9th.

Tool and its description:-

1. Socio-economic status performa: Socio- economic status performa was developed for the study which included name, class, age, gender, parental monthly income, education, occupation, number of family of members, type of family, family possessions, land acquisition, number of animals etc.
2. A checklist developed by AICRP-CD scientists on reasons of academic backwardness of students was used to find out reasons in three areas viz. academic, familial and health area which consists 16, 13 and 14 statements respectively. The academically backward children were selected on the basis of two following criteria:
 1. Teacher's assessment/opinion
 2. Academic performance of children in the previous year on the basis of following table:

Grade	Percentage	Remarks
A+ Grade	90-100%	Excellent
A Grade	76-89%	Very Good
B+ Grade	60-74%	Good
B Grade	50-59%	Average
C+ Grade	40-49%	Below Average
C Grade	≤39	Poor Average

Data Collection and Analysis:-

Respondents were contacted at their schools for data collection. Coding and analysis of data were done as specified by Technical Coordinator of C.D. unit. Mainly frequency and percentage distribution were calculated.

Results and discussion:-

Table 1: Frequency and percentage distribution of academic backwardness of school children

I Academic Reasons:

N=150

S.no	Statements	Yes	%	No	%
1	I don't understand what teachers teach in the class.	35	23.3	115	76.6
2	I don't like few subjects that's why I am lagging behind.	70	46.6	80	53.4
3	I feel that some subjects are hard.	107	71.3	43	28.7
4	Studies seems to be beyond to my capacities.	50	33.3	100	66.7
5	I postpone studies for examination time.	110	73.3	40	26.7
6	I feel that studies is burden.	65	43.3	85	56.7
7	I am unable in continuing the tasks related to study.	95	63.3	55	36.7
8	I am unable to give answers to all questions in the exams.	34	22.6	116	77.4
9	I write slowly.	26	17.3	124	82.7
10	I am afraid of studies.	21	14	129	86
11	I find teaching methods in class room are boring.	24	16	126	84
12	Schools hours seem long to me.	36	24	114	76
13	My written and oral language is not good .	46	30.6	104	69.4
14	I feel difficulty to understand my teacher's language.	15	10	135	90
15	My teacher's behavior seems to be bias.	18	12	132	88
16	Behavior of my classmates is not good with me.	10	6.6	140	93.4

II Familial Reasons:

S.no	Statements	Yes	%	No	%
1.	My home environment is not conducive for studies.	9	6	141	94
2.	My siblings disturb me in my studies.	34	22.6	116	77.4
3.	My family members engage me more in activities other than studies.	45	30	105	70
4.	I have to do other work due to financial constraints.	08	5.3	142	94.7
5.	Actually my parents don't want that I should continue my studies.	00	00	150	100
6.	My family occupation interrupts me in my studies.	22	14.6	128	85.4
7.	Due to some family reasons I can't spare time for studies.	41	27.3	109	72.7
8.	There is no contribution of my family members in my studies.	58	38.6	92	61.4
9.	Due to lack of education , the expected cooperation from family members is lacking.	52	34.6	98	65.4
10.	My studies are affected due to family disputes.	05	3.3	145	96.7
11.	I can't study because of ill health of family members.	20	13.3	130	86.7
12.	Proper facilities for studies are not available in my home.	26	17.3	124	82.7
13.	There is no inspiration and guidance in my home for studies.	49	32.6	101	67.4

III Health Reasons:

S.no	Statements	Yes	%	No	%
1.	My frequent illness hinders my studies.	04	2.6	146	97.4
2.	Sufficient food is not available for me.	00	00	150	00
3.	Due to depression I am unable to study properly.	01	0.6	149	99.4
4.	As my school is far from my home so I get tired.	60	40	90	60
5.	Often I feel tired so I am unable to concentrate on my studies.	40	26.6	110	73.3
7.	My frequent absentia in school because of illness affects my studies.	01	0.6	149	49.4
8.	I frequently suffer from headache.	02	1.3	148	48.7
9.	I frequently suffer from stomach ache.	04	2.6	146	97.4
10.	I an unable to study properly because of vision problems.	00	00	150	100
11.	I feel physically weak which affects my studies.	00	00	150	100
12.	My studies are affected due to lack of concentration.	34	22.6	116	77.3
13.	My studies are affected because of my worries and restlessness.	12	08	138	92
14.	I am unable to hear properly in the class room.	00	00	150	100

It can be seen from the table 1 that majority of the respondents do not have academic reasons as a problem for academic backwardness. The major two problems faced by majority of children were that they found some subjects hard to study and their habit of postponing studies to examination time period. The percentages in these were 73.3 and 71.3 respectively. Majority (63.3%) of respondents found themselves unable in continuing the tasks related to study. About 47 percent expressed that they do not like few subjects and 30.6% felt that their written and oral language is not good. The percentage range in the other academic problems was from 6.6 to 23.3 which show that majority of the students does not have academic related problems. The academic reasons that can affect the academic performance of the child are overcrowded classrooms, language barrier (not able to understand in English or Hindi), uninteresting curriculum, rote based learning methods and poor study skills result in lack of motivation and disinterest in academic achievement. Most textbooks are in English and since people in rural areas either speak their native language or Hindi, but not English that defeats the purpose. This results in lack of their interest in studies. Results in the similar lines were reported by (Nair et al., 2003) wherein daily study patterns, family environment, education status of parents, personal distractions and attitude towards studies were observed as factors affecting scholastic performance. Poor concentration in studies, lower studying daily lesions, lower education status of father and unhappy family were predictor variables of poor scholastic performance.

Regarding the familial reasons of academic backwardness it can be seen from the table 1 that in case of all familial reasons majority of respondents felt that they do not have problems. The four familial problems which had percentage range from 30 to 38.6 were that family members do not contribute much in their study, they do not provide much cooperation, inspiration and guidance and engage them more in the activities other than studies. It may be because of their lack of education, role overload, lack of time and lack of necessary resources.

Poor school performance may also be due to environmental factors such as lack of adequate facilities for studying, adverse family situations, lack of encouragement for studying and lack of role models, unrealistic academic expectations by parents and school. At times parents can have great expectations from their child and can push the child unnecessarily leading to fall in academic levels.

A similar trend of having majority of respondents in the category of not having problem was also observed in case of health reasons of academic backwardness of students. Forty percent of students gave reason that their school is far from their home and because of that they get tired and unable to concentrate on studies. Every village is not provided with school which means that students have to go to another village to get education (Ramandeep kaur,2013). Only few (6-8%) respondents felt that because of their depression, worries and restlessness their study is affected. All students felt that they do not have any kind of problem related to availability of food, vision, physical weakness and hearing. The reasons of the results which reveal that majority of students do not have health problems as a cause of academic backwardness are their young age and physical fitness. Various researches studied the study habits, health factors and the social influence affecting scholastic performance of adolescents. (Saraswati et al., 2009) recognized the social influence, study habits and health factors affecting scholastic performance of

adolescents. A child in a good state of health will achieve better as compare to child who is not physically fit. Therefore it is feasible and worthwhile to identify the determinants of scholastic performance and plan intervention strategies at school.

Many studies are conducted to explain the role of multiple factors for poor school performance. (Krande & Kulkarni, 2005) reported the following reasons for children to underperform at school such as medical problems, below average intelligence, specific learning disability, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, emotional problems, poor socio-cultural home environment, psychiatric disorders and even environmental causes, which implicated that multidisciplinary evaluation is usually necessary before making the final diagnosis and to come up with a treatment plan early so that child can perform up to full potential.

Children from rural background may have single teachers for many classes, lack of basic classroom materials and overcrowding may also contribute to the problem to certain extent. Medium of instructions, multilingual subjects apart from the child's mother tongue, socio- economic status, the child being first generation literate and psychosocial stressors, like family disorganization, child abuse and neglect also play a significant role in undermining the academic performance of the child.

Schools play a crucial and formative role in the intellectual, cognitive, emotional, social and moral development of a child. Sometimes, school itself becomes a problem for some children at some point of time and some children become problems to their school. The kinds of problem the children undergo need interventions at different level at right time according to the magnitude and the intensity of the problems.

The foundation to turn India into a strong nation has to be laid down at primary and rural levels and so the quality of education right from the beginning should be excellent. Education and text books should be made interesting. For rural students textbooks related to their culture, their traditions and values should also be there so as to create their interest in studies. The reasons behind so many drop-outs in spite of free education should be found out as this is a hurdle on the road to progress. Improvement in the condition of government schools, education quality, committed teachers should be part of development.

Conclusion:-

Hence, it can be concluded from the study that rural children were facing familial problem as a cause for academic backwardness followed by academic and health problem. But these problems which are affecting their academic performance can be resolved through proper interventions at school and family level. Early recognition and adequate remediation is important and can make a big difference to the child's future. The family environment is one of the most important factors for a child doing well in academics and parents play a very important role. Proper study environment, appropriate encouragement, spending quality time with their children will give the desired result.

Recommendations:-

Further study can be done on parents and teachers to know their opinion about academic backwardness. A study on identifying the underlying causes of academic backwardness among school going rural children and its remedial solutions can be given. Further study can be conducted on rural girls and boys separately to find out their views on academic backwardness. Similar study can be conducted in urban or tribal locale.

Acknowledgement:-

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to the principal's of Lakhawali, Bhilwara and Dangio ka Guda who permitted us to collect data from their school children and contributed in the smooth functioning of the research work. We would also like to extend our thanks to all the respondents who spare their precious time and patiently filled the questionnaire and tried to give their honest views.

References:-

1. Fonseca V. (2008). *Cognição, neuropsicologia e aprendizagem: abordagem neuropsicológica e psicopedagógica*. Petrópolis, RJ: Editora Vozes. p.1-83.
2. Kamat VV. A revision of the Binet scale for Indian children (Kanarese and Marathi speaking). *Br J Edu Psychol*. 1934; 4:296-309.
3. Krande S and Kulkarni M, (2005). Poor school performance. *Indian J Pediatr*, 72, (11): 961-967.
4. Nair MKC, Mini Paul K, Padmamohan J. (2003). Scholastic performance of adolescents. *Indian J Pediatr*, 70: 629-631.
5. Pratinidhi AK, Kurulkar PV, Garad SG, Dalal M. (1992). Epidemiological aspects of School dropouts in children between 7-5 years in rural Maharashtra. *India J Pediatr*, 59: 423-7.
6. Rebollo MA, Rodríguez S, Morel S, Montiel. (2007). Evaluación del desarrollo neuropsíquico em el pre-escolar y el escolar. In: *El desarrollo neuropsíquico y su evolución*. Montevideo: Prensa Médica Latinoamericana.
7. Ramandeep kaur, (2013). Rural education in India.
8. Saraswati S, Chandrika R, Radhakrishna H. (2009): Factors affecting scholastic performance of Adolescents. *Indian Journal of Pediatrics*, 76 (5): 495-499.
9. Sharif I, Wills TA, Sargent JD. (2010). Effect of visual media use on school performance: a prospective study. *JRNL Adolescent Health*, 46 (1)