



Causes of Academic Backwardness of Rural School Students

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ABSTRACT

One hundred fifty purposely selected rural school students from four operational villages of AICRP-Home Science project were selected and categorized as having academic backwardness based on their academic grade cards issued by the respective schools. D grade (34-40%) i.e. poor and E grade i.e. (21-34%) very poor grades were the cut of points decided for categorizing the students as academically backward students. Seventy five girls and 75 boys were selected, they were from 7th, 8th & 9th standards of schools of Pokharni, Daithana, Takali and Dharmapuri of Parbhani dist. From this study it can be concluded that the major causes for academic backwardness of rural school students were found to be belonged to low level of socio economic status, non conducive home associated factors academic associated incapacities and negative views, health associated factors and their below normal GQ and IQ. For this it can be advocated that socio economic status of family, family and school environment should be improved for developing interest of rural school students to learn better in classes and achieve better in examination.

Key words:

Rural School Students, Academic Backwardness, Socio Economic Status, Non Conducive Home, GQ and IQ.

INTRODUCTION

In a country where the majority of the population resides in rural areas, the dreams of millions of children often remain trapped within the four walls of poverty, lack of



opportunities, and social neglect. Education is not just about marks it is the key that unlocks doors to empowerment, dignity, and progress. Yet, while urban students race ahead with digital tools and exposure, rural students are often left behind not because of lack of talent, but because of lack of access.

The backwardness of rural students is not their fault it is a reflection of unequal systems. Poor infrastructure, shortage of teachers, language barriers, early dropouts, family financial burdens, and lack of proper guidance all these silently push them further behind. If a nation dreams of true development, ignoring the academic growth of rural students is like leaving the roots of a tree dry and expecting fruits. It's time for society to stop seeing rural students as "less capable" and start seeing them as future scientists, leaders, doctors, and innovators waiting only for equal opportunities to prove themselves.

It is widely accepted that while all children share some similarities, they differ in physical, mental, educational, and social aspects. In classrooms, many students struggle with standard teaching methods, which usually cater to average learners. Each student brings unique qualities background, intelligence, learning styles, interests, and parental support. Expecting all students to learn the same way or at the same pace is unrealistic. Academic achievement, influenced by these individual differences, reflects a child's overall development cognitive, emotional, social, and physical. It is shaped over time and is assessed through performance and teacher evaluations. These factors play a key role in contributing to educational backwardness.

Academic backward children are the children who have troubles with education and their capability of learning belongs to the lower level than it is required according to the general standards. In every country there is a problem with academic backward children and pedagogues work hard to create effective methods of teaching and improvement the



chances for children to receive normal education. There are many factors which influence the problem of the child's academic backwardness and they depend to the physical, genetic, psychological, social, economic and other fields. The first factor which can influence the child's learning abilities is a disease or physical injures of the essential organs, primarily the brain. If the child has fallen ill with something and takes medicine for the disease, they can have a negative impact on their intellectual abilities.

Academic backward children are the children who require specific approach towards education and the students are able to improve their knowledge on the issues and study the problem from all sides. It is better to reveal the problem on child backwardness on the definite example suggested by the professors and a case study will be a magnificent experience for every young professional. One should learn about the child as much as possible and find out about the causes of their backwardness and evaluate its effect on the quality of his education (ASERT report 2015)

Methodology

One hundred fifty purposely selected rural school students from four operational villages of AICRP-Home Science project were selected and categorized as having academic backwardness based on their academic grade cards issued by the respective schools. D grade (34-40%) i.e. poor and E grade i.e. (21-34%) very poor grades were the cut of points decided for categorizing the students as academically backward students. Seventy five girls and 75 boys were selected, they were from 7th, 8th & 9th standards of schools of Pokharni, Daithana, Takali and Dharmapuri of Parbhani dist. After enrollment of the students in this study their socio economic status was assessed by using SES scale developed by AICPR-HD unit and their academic associated capacities and views, health associated causes and home associated causes were assessed by using checklist on causes of academic backwardness developed by AICPR-HD unit. Their Growth Quotient (GQ) was assessed by taking their three anthropometric measurements

i.e. height, weight and head circumference as per standard procedure. Their Intelligence quotient was assessed by administering Standard Progressive Matrics developed by J.C. Ravens, J.H. Court & J. Ravens. The collected data was pooled and it was statistically analyzed .Correlation coefficient was assessed to find out the association between different background and personal variables with their academic achievements.

Tools used for the research

Socio-Economic Status Scale: The Socio-economic status scale consisted of parameters such as SES of family, types of family, sizes of family, age, gender, ordinal position and parental education. The summated score is categorized as low, medium and high.

Classification of Academic Achievement of school students (Provided By Education Department)

Grades	Percentages of marks	Remarks
A + grade	91-100%,	Excellent
A grade	81-90%	Very good
B+ grade	71-80%	Good
B grade	61-70%	Average
C+ grade	51-60%	Below Average
C grade	41-50%	Very Below Average

D grade	34-40%	Poor
E grade	21-33%	Very poor

Note: Children with D and E grades are considered as academically backward students

Checklist to assess causes for academic backwardness of rural school students Checklist consists of three main causes for academic backwardness of children i.e. academic associated capacities and views causes, home associated causes and health associated causes. In each area statements regarding academic, home & health causes were given. Academic associated capacities and views causes comprised of 18 statements, home associated causes-12 statements & health associated causes comprised of 9 statements of Yes or No responses.

Anthropometric measurements: To assess the anthropometric measurement height, weight & head circumference were measured as per standard procedure and that are compared with the NCH standards.

Standard Progressive Matrices by J.C. Ravens, J.H. Court & J. Ravens: To assess IQ this scale is used for assessing developmental/mental age as well as perceptual capabilities of children (5-18 yrs) for clinical work satisfactorily with normal children. SPM is designed to accurately assess a person's present clarity of observation and level of intellectual development. The SPM manual (booklet) having set of problems i.e. A, Ab, B. Client have to complete A set problems, Ab set problems & B set problems. There is no time limit but clients are to response as fast as possible. Compare the replies/responses of the client with the scoring key of the manual & calculate the right responses. These responses/raw score to be converted into mental age as per the table in the manual.

Findings

Table 1 indicates that majority of the selected rural school students belonged to low socio economic status group 67.3 per cent and remaining i.e. 32.6% belonged to low middle socio economic status. Sixty six per cent of them belonged to nuclear type of family while remaining were belonged to joint family. Relatively a higher percentages of their mothers & fathers were just literate (54% and 51.0%) respectively and others are up to



primary educated only. Out of 150 sample, 33.3 per cent of each belonged to Std 7th, 8th & 9th standards. Majority of the sample i.e. 72.0 per cent were second born.

Background Variables	Percentages of the respondents (n-150)
SES of the Family	
Low	67.3 (101)
Medium	32.6 (49)
Types of family	
Nuclear	66 (99)
Joint	34 (51)
Sizes of Family	
Small (1-4)	12.6 (19)
Medium (5-8)	69.3 (104)
Large (>9)	18 (27)
Education of the sample	
7 th	33.3 (50)
8 th	33.3 (50)
9 th	33.3 (50)
Gender	
Female	50 (75)
Male	50 (75)
Ordinal position	
First born	32 (48)



Second born	48 (72)
Third born	12 (18)
Forth born	8 (12)
Maternal education	
Just literates	62.66 (94)
Primary educated	27.33 (41)
High school educated	18 (15)
Paternal education	
Just literates	59.33 (89)
Primary educated	28 (42)
High school educated	12.66 (19)

Table 1 Background information of the academically backward rural School



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students n=150

Table 2 shows the grades and ranges of percentages of marks of academic achievement of academically backward school students. Fifty seven per cent of selected academically backward rural students were come under E grade (very poor) category i.e. (21-33%) while 42.66 per cent of them were come under D grade (poor) category i.e. (34-40%) on the basis of academic achievement grade cards provided by their respective schools.

Table 2 Grades and percentages ranges of academically backward school students

Grades & percentages of school students	Percentages of respondents
D grade (34-40%)	42.66 (64)
E grade (21-33%)	57.33 (86)

Figures in the parentheses indicates number of the responses

Table 3 indicates the categories and ranges of growth quotient (GQ) of academic backward rural school students. Majority (75.33%) of them were belonged to fair category of growth quotient followed by 10.6 per cent each were under poor and good category of growth quotient while very few i.e. 3.33 per cent were come under very good category

Table 3 Categories and ranges of growth quotient of academically backward rural school students

Categories & ranges of G Q	Percentages of respondents
Very good (90-95)	3.33 (5)
Good (85-90)	10.6 (16)
Fair (80-85)	75.33 (113)
Poor (below 80)	10.6 (16)

Figures in the parentheses indicates number of the responses

Table 4 shows the categories and ranges of intelligence quotient of selected academically backward rural school students. Majority of the sample i.e. 84.0 per cent of them were come under below normal IQ category while 16.0 per cent of them come under normal IQ category.

Table 4 Categories and ranges of intelligence quotient of academically backward school students

Categories & ranges of I Q	Percentages of respondents
Normal (101-110)	16.0 (24)
Below Normal (90-100)	84.0 (126)

Figures in the parentheses indicates number of the responses

Table 5a depicts the academic associated capacities and views reported by rural school students for their academic backwardness. Majority of rural school students i.e. (84%) reported poor revision/practice classes (no remedial classes) followed by strong dislikes for

few subjects (77.3%), poor attention and comprehension (76.66%), irregular study habits (74.66%), irregularity in study (72%). While 68% of them were reported that they were unable to answer in the exams, feels study as burden, dislike and fear of studies. Forty-nine to 67 per cent of them reported about the improper loudness of teachers, poor relationship with classmates, inappropriate writing speed and feel some subjects are tough. Very few i.e. (32%) were reported about the biased behavior of teachers.

Table 5 a Academic associated capacities and views reported by rural school students for their academic backwardness

n-150

Academic associated capacities and views	Yes		No	
	no	%	no	%
Unable to write answers in the exams	102	68.00	48	32.00
Inappropriate writing speed	95	63.33	55	36.66
Poor attention & comprehension	115	76.66	35	23.33
Poor relationship with classmates	81	54.00	69	46.00
Irregular study habits	112	74.66	38	25.33
Irregularity in study	108	72	42	28.00
Feel study as burden	102	68.00	48	32.00
Inability to complete academic tasks	115	76.66	35	23.33
Dislike and fear of studies	102	68.00	48	32.00
Unable to grasp the teachings in classroom	106	70.66	44	29.33
Boring Teaching methods	102	68.00	48	32.00
Biased teachers	48	32.00	102	68.00
Improper loudness of teachers	74	49.33	76	50.66
Strong dislikes for few subjects	116	77.3	34	22.6

Feel some subjects are tough	101	67.33	49	32.66
Poor revision/practice classes (No remedial classes)	126	84.00	24	16.00

Could not read written on writing boards	11	7.3	139	92.2
Noisy classrooms	25	16.66	105	70.0

Table 5 b indicates the home associated causes reported by rural school students for their academic backwardness. Majority of rural school student (90%) were reported that there was no support from family in their studies followed by uneducated parents (83.33%) domestic responsibilities (76.66%) improper facilities for studies at home (73.33%), no value and motivation for education from family members (72%), care of younger siblings and non conducive home environment (69.33%) each. While 50% to 62.66 % of them reported about the family fights & clashes, disinterest of parents in child studies, interruption of studies due to parental occupation and work with family members for earning. Very few i.e. (33.33%) of them reported the cause of health issues of family members.

Table 5 b Home associated causes reported by rural school students for their academic backwardness

n-150

Home associated causes	Yes		No	
	no	%	no	%
Non conducive home environment	104	69.3	46	30.6
Work with family members for earning	94	62.66	56	37.33
Interruption of studies due to parental occupation	90	60.00	60	40.00
Domestic responsibilities	115	76.66	35	23.33

Improper facilities for studies at home	110	73.33	40	26.66
No value and motivation for education	108	72	42	28
Care of younger siblings	104	69.33	46	30.66
Disinterest of parents in child studies	75	50.00	75	50.00
No support from family in studies	135	90.00	15	10.00
Uneducated Parents	125	83.33	25	16.66
Family fights & clashes	85	56.66	65	43.33
Health issues of family members	50	33.33	100	66.66

Table 5 c depicts the health associated causes reported by rural school students for their academic backwardness. Eighty per cent of rural school students reported health issues

due to long distance of school from their respective homes followed by lack of concentration (76.66%), general weakness (63.33%), abdominal pain (43.33%), feel tired (31.33%) while in the ranges of 20.6 % to 27.3% of rural school students reported health causes like cough and cold, insufficient intake of food due to health problem, headache and feel stressed.

Table 5 c Health associated causes reported by academically backward rural school students for their academically backwardness

n-150

Health associated causes	Yes		No	
	no	%	no	%
Feel stressed	41	27.3	109	72.6
Feel tired	47	31.33	103	66.66

Headache	40	26.66	110	73.33
Abdominal pain	65	43.33	85	56.66
General weakness	95	63.33	55	36.66
Lack of concentration	115	76.66	35	23.33
Insufficient intake of food due to health issues	35	23.33	115	76.66
Health issue due to long distance of school	120	80.00	30	20.00
Cough and cold	31	20.6	119	79.3

Table 6 clearly depicts that there is no correlation between background and personal variables of academically backward rural school students with academic achievement as the majority of the sample students' family and personal background variables found to be similar therefore non significant correlation is found between these rural school students' variables and their academic achievement.

Table 6 Correlation between selected background and personal variables of academically backward rural school students with academic achievement

Background and personal variables	Academic achievement of students
Mother education	-0.102 ^{NS}
Father education	-0.117 ^{NS}

SES of the family	-.0.027NS
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Academic associated capacities and views	-0.066 ^{NS}
Home associated causes	-0.05 ^{NS}
Health associated causes	-0.062 ^{NS}
Growth quotient (GQ)	0.008 ^{NS}
Intelligence quotient (IQ)	-0.098 ^{NS}

Conclusion

From this study it can be concluded that the major causes for academic backwardness of rural school students were found to be belonged to low level of socio economic status, non conducive home associated factors, academic associated incapacities and negative views, health associated factors and their below normal GQ and IQ. For this it can be advocated that socio economic status of family, family and school environment should be improved for developing interest of rural students to learn better in classes and achieve better in examination.

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