

**A STUDY ON SCHOLASTIC BACKWARDNESS IN
CHILDREN**

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Investigator

M.A. EDUCATION

Enrolment No.

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CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

Education is widely acknowledged as a vital cultural action that enables individual to transform himself into a complete and integral human being. Education surely is an agency of social change, which transforms the society into a better place to live. The right kind of education is undoubtedly a stimulus to think, question and inquire into the truth of life and thereby refine and purify the human consciousness. It is the function of education to impart the right kind of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values to children so that they become harmonious in themselves and resourceful citizens playing their role effectively in the development of the nation.

In the modern competitive world in which academic achievements are considered important, scholastic backwardness causes tremendous stress for the students. In our pedagogical practices followed in the school, the teachers find it difficult to cater to the needs of the individual differences in the class room situations. The individual differences forming a group of heterogeneous group is a reality. Various factors such as physical, psychological and even socio-economic status of the learner may contribute to the individual differences. This individual differences is a challenge to every teacher however resourceful she may be. It is comparatively easy to interact with the average or above average students.

It is not unusual to find in our classroom many students who do not profit much from the usual classroom teaching mostly designed for the normal or averages. Among such children there may lie a group of children who have relatively a quite lower rate of learning than most of their classmates. They always lag behind in terms of catching the usual pace of the class and consequently suffer in terms of their educational progress and

academic achievement. They are often seen to suffer from educational failure by playing truancy, repeating the class or leaving the school education in between as a drop out (Mangal, 2007).

Characterised with their lower rate of learning and educational impoverishment, such children are labelled as backward children or slow learners. Historically, the term slow learners is relatively a new term being used for the type of learners traditionally known as backward children. It was evolved and carried by the American educational psychologists for being used to a group of less able students with IQ between 70 and 85. In our country also we are making use of the term slow learners as an umbrella term covering fairly a large group of students whose rate of learning slowed down by one or more factors of which limited ability may be one. In this way backwardness in terms of rate of learning and academic performance of child in comparison to that of the classmates may be said as the main criterion for labelling a child as slow learner.

There are so many causes underlying scholastic backwardness. But if we observe these factors we find that all the factors can be divided into two categories. They are internal factors such as low intelligence, learning disability, attention deficit disorder and lack of motivation and external or environmental factors such as family adjustment issues, poor discipline, discordant environment in school, sibling rivalry and over expectation of parent etc.

Educationally backward or slow learners do not seem to differ much from the normal or average children in terms of their physical appearance, social and emotional behavior etc. It is difficult to test the general causes of backwardness as it is an individual problem and every individual problem is unique. But it is certain that the root of

backwardness of a child must lie within him or outside him within the environment. Moreover it is also found that usually many factors or causes operate together in a particular case of backwardness.

Scholastic backwardness usually provides feelings of anxiety and inadequacy in children. This in turn can have negative impact on the emotional and social functioning of the child. Scholastic backwardness is mainly caused by learning disabilities. Apart from learning disability there are so many factors which provokes learning disability and ultimately leads to Scholastic backwardness. Unrecognized and unmediated Scholastic backwardness has a life long impact on the child affecting school completion or higher education, interpersonal relations etc. Early identification, early intervention and adequate remediation is important and can make a big difference to the child's future.

CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

Education is a unique investment and academic achievement is a vital aspect of it. Academic achievement is considered as a key to judge one's potentialities and capacities. Hence, educators give paramount credence to the intellectual attainment of the child in the form of grades and scorings, and had equated education to the ageold idea of imparting knowledge to the disciples. In this hectic process of attainment, a significant number of children lag behind, leaving parents and teachers with so much of disappointment and queries as to where it went wrong!

The reasons for achieving low in academics are numerous. However, most of the sensory and physical disabilities are radically apparent to the observer, but handicaps of the under achiever or scholastically backward student are not always so obvious. Their handicap is not related to their cognitive ability alone. In fact, a number of other factors interplay each other, that they are not able to meet the normal demands of the educational system. The period at which their limitations are so obvious is that of the school years.

When they become adults, many of them will be absorbed into the community life and will contribute usefully without drawing undue attention to themselves.

The underachieving or scholastically backward children are classified into three broad categories: retarded students, who are very backward in normal curriculum, because of retarded milestones which may or may not be accompanied by additional handicaps, such as physical deficiencies, ill health, limited verbal expressions and emotional disturbances. Because of all these factors, they are in need of special curriculum and

specially trained teachers for those specific handicaps; slow learners, are those who have limited cognitive abilities.

The causes of their failure range from specific perceptual difficulties to emotional maladjustments. These are students who need some kind of special or remedial teaching to make a marked progress; low achievers, are those whose ability is not quite so limited, but who nevertheless have more difficulty in learning than average children.

Low achievement is defined as a discrepancy between the child's actual ability and achievement. It may be related to poor self concept, lack of family involvement and encouragement, damaging peer pressure, cultural deprivation, study skill deficiency, emotional problems, physical illness, lack of academic motivation or lack of interest in school subjects and curriculum. Absence from school, unfortunate personal circumstances and life events or inadequate environmental conditions further limit their progress. Failure to recognize problems and provide solutions are also reported to be contributory factors for their continuing backwardness. (Thompson and Rudolph, 1992).

The low achiever differs from an average youngster in many, different ways. In very simple terms, such a child may have problems or concerns related to his own personality, study skills, lack of motivation, squabbles in family life or school related issues.

The very fact that they are normal children having only school related problems, especially the achievement related ones, makes the study of low achievers a colossal task. The inherent ambiguities, inconsistencies and unknowns are to be taken into account, in any study of human beings. In the case of a child who deviates from the norms, one must multiply all the mysteries of normal human behaviour and development

by those pertaining to the child's unique exceptionality. Because there is no single accepted theory of normal child development and accomplishment, it is not at all surprising that no definite statements could be made about the quantification of low achievement.

It is true that in the vast majority of cases it is unable to identify the exact reason why a child is achieving low. But progress is being made in determining the causes of some of the cases. Research is bringing a more complete understanding of the ways in which the low achieving child's psychological, social, and educational environment are related to the learning problems. Although researchers constantly lament that all the questions are not answered, it is known more today about how to tackle these children than it was 10 - 15 years ago. A low achiever is thus thought to be one who is not able to exploit fully his or her innate capacities and does not register or show up educational success, commensurate with his or her abilities. This builds up stress and tension in the child. Much of his potentials may be burned up merely handling the stress. There could be internal stress, of not understanding his feelings; of wanting to present a more positive image of himself or herself to his significant ones on one hand; and the external stress of peer pressure, criticism from the teachers etc on the other hand.

This combination can wreak havoc on the child's performance. The requisites for academic excellence could be adequate cognitive functioning; motivation to learn; age appropriate skills in reading, writing, language, comprehension, and numerical operations; uninterrupted attention; parent mediation; and school situations.

Learning is a complex dynamic process that is been affected by bio psycho-social factors. A student develops and utilizes the knowledge and skills to acquire his

maximum potentiality, based primarily on the biological functions of the nervous system, the psychological make up of the child such as his motivational level of achievement, his personality traits, his study skills and certain important social factors such as family interaction, teacher effectiveness, and peer pressure. In turn, home and school have cooperative duties in enhancing the individual potentials of an individual child.

The generally accepted individual factors conducive for academic achievement are intelligence, personality, study skills, and motivational level of the concerned student. Youngman (1980) examined various pupil characteristics that might determine subsequent academic performance on 640 students and intellectual characteristics showed the stronger effects: Further a study by Linn, Hampson and Magee (1983) also reported that the important predictor of educational attainment was intelligence. Possession of certain personality traits are considered to be essential for better performance but extreme degree of certain traits are considered to be detrimental (Shaughnessy, 1993; Rothstein, 1994). Various studies show that high degree of neurotic traits has a negative effect on academic achievement of an individual (Eysenck, 1992; Anand, 1998).

In India, various studies have revealed that 5% to 35% of children suffer from some kind of maladjustment, which is generally termed as neuroses. These types of behaviours are more in school settings (Verma, 1981 ; Mehta and Kumar, 1985). Mental health and success are closely related. Emotionally maladjusted students often exhibit symptoms of impaired efficiency in learning and in problem solving situations.

In general, the documented data obtained from various studies showed a positive trend linking high performance on the achievement and good study habits (NAEP Facts, 1997; Snyder, 2000; Rao, Moely and Sachs, 2000; Hammers, Onweugbuzie and Slate, 2001 ; and Kovach, Fleming and Wilgosh, 2001). Wu and Lin (1982), Teachman (1987), and Anand (1998) reported that high degree of achievement motivation was observed in high achievers. The family and the school are considered to be * the important social factors contributing to academic achievement. It is often observed that in spite of having a range of similar intellectual levels, there are differences in academic achievement, among students coming from different families. Among the various related factors, the influence of the family in a child's learning is undoubtedly the most significant one (Bronzaft, 1996; Lam, 1997; and Deal, Wampler, and Ha Iverson, 1 998).

In fact, Wu and Lin (1982), Teachman (1987), and Anand (1998) further reported that it is the quality of the family interaction pattern that is responsible for achievement motivation. Economic and social status of the family (Lam, 1997); parental education (Nord, 1998); the emotional environment at home (Bronzaft, 1996); the motivation of the family towards the child's education (Cooksey and Fondell, 1996) are the essential factors that help the child to make use of his potentials in a maximum productive way. Children of higher status are provided with better amenities and have greater opportunities to come in contact with the first hand knowledge and more often their home have a more stimulating environment for learning. A dysfunctional family cannot provide a harmonious environment and it can only create an unfavourable home condition, which is not conducive for a student's achievement. It is found that a peaceful home environment, quality of maternal care, relationship between the parents, the extent

to which reading books is a habit among the family members all play a significant role in a child's academic achievement (Jill, 1992; Moore, Andres and Pepler, 1997; and Westerman and La-luz, 1998). Paternal attitude to education, parents showing interest in school activities, encouragement to children and aspiration for children's education and career are yet other variables, which emerge as being of out standing importance (Finn, 1998; Marcon, 1998; and Nord, 1998). A conducive school atmosphere and effective teaching are other important variables (Ellsworth and Monahan, 1991; and Tymms, 1994). Teacher effectiveness is an area of research which is considered with relationships between the characteristics of teachers, teaching activities, the professional qualities, the teacher student relationship and their effects on educational outcomes.

During the last couple of decades, there has been an increasing appreciation of these issues related to academic achievement. The awareness among the adult world to improve the learner's quality is on the rise now! The reviewed research findings, with regard to individual and social factors of academic achievement, that is been precisely highlighted in the initial part of this chapter gives a segregated coverage of various factors in a very segmented way. However, a comprehensive coverage of all these variables only would give an overall understanding of the problems of a low achiever.

The various aspects do reveal that diagnosis means determining the variables. The variables could contribute to the ability or to the emotional aspect. This does not imply that the child is to be labeled and stored permanently as a low achiever. The variables are to be probed to determine the pathways to overcome the low achievement. It is preferable to think that there is hope for eventual eradication of many of the disabling

forms of the variables. Conclusively, it is hoped that the effects of all these variables may be altered through appropriate intervention strategies.

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RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

In the yester years, education was primarily for learning. But today the main purpose of education is for earning (Bhatti, I 993). In this world of industrialization and globalization, education has become highly commercial and academic excellence has gained through tough competitions. The educational status of an individual is highly depicted through the academic achievement. Academic achievement of students has been a great concern to educationist since time immemorial. Now a days, this trend has been intensively felt by the academicians, parents and students. Strikingly, academic achievement has become a detrimental index in determining a child's future. This speaks a lot about the significance of taking up the present investigation. Going higher up in the social status by means of academic achievement is universally accepted and the most important determinant of a person's adult status is his career.

From crayons to career, the academic grading speaks a lot about one's academic achievement. Academic achievement is generally an expression, when the individual learns to utilize his energies with the given innate potentials and a particular pattern of socializing pressure. Considering the fact that both innate potentials and environmental factors play equally important roles in academic achievement, it is imperative to look into the interplay of both these factors. Innate potentials, in terms of academic achievement is exhibited mainly through the intellectual functions, and of course there is a positive correlation between intellectual functions and academic achievement. However, there are certain confounding factors which mask the effect of this innate potential and in turn, hamper the child's academic achievement in the course of his studentship. Specifically this group of students are those who have more inner cries. The

parents and teachers are also not devoid of this, because in the absence of all external handicaps and with the presence of adequate and required intellectual abilities, they fail to achieve. In the present study this felt need has been met by assessing the intellectual functions and tapping various environmental factors which could be responsible for this turmoil. It has been seen that personality of the child is a very radiant and an influential factor that aids a child in academic excellence. Hence, its effect has been assessed in this study by assessing it comprehensively and sensitively using a highly reliable and valid questionnaire which is developed on the basis of a strong theoretical construction. However, the very fact that family is the basic socializing unit, that fine tunes the formation and existence of a child, forces the investigator to become sensitive to include it as a major variable. The objective has been met with the administration of a standardized tool that taps the processes that are going on in a child's family. And a number of other family related variables have been incorporated in the socio-demographic data sheet to make the picture all the more clear to the world of research. Though these are the two major propelling forces that act on a child toward academic excellence, there are other equally stronger intrinsic forces that leave its significant marks on academic achievement. Study skills or study habits and academic achievement motivation are those intrinsic factors that in turn act as a self rewarding system in one's forward movement with scores.

The investigator had felt a need that the study would be comprehensive only when such innermost factors are taken into consideration.

Another significant area that has been powerfully intertwined with all the above said factors and yields the ultimate crop is the school factor. This broad area has a number of

break-ups and the teacher student relationship is the core aspect of it. Hence, it forms a part of the present investigation. Other physical parameters that are related to school are assessed through the items that are specifically designed in the socio demographic data sheet.

Conclusively saying, academic achievement is an index as well as an affair that has its roots from nervous system to neighbourhood and only a thorough and comprehensive assessment would be able to point out the detrimental factors that are responsible for the dilemma of academic low achievement. Hence, all possible care has been taken to be sensitive to investigate all the needed information, so as to give a consolation to the inner cry of many, who are associated with this silent childhood disability. It is ironical to note that though abundant amount of literature tries to describe the existence of the condition and the processes that are involved with this condition, yet silent so far to determine the epidemiological distribution of this condition in any context. In fact, this scarcity exists through out the world scenario. In India, one of the major problems presented in schools by teachers and in the clinics by parents is, that of academic low achievement of children. About 39% of the normal and 44% of the disturbed, 12 to 16 years old are reported to have scholastic backwardness (Rozario, 1988).

However, the epidemiology would only be increasing while considering the causal factors. This again indicates the pressing need of today's society, to take up this issue as a research topic.

Different researchers regarding scholastic backwardness in general have taken up various studies. However, a comprehensive, yet concise research work, focusing those closely related psychosocial variables in low academic achievement could not be located

even in the world research scenario. Hence, much work needs to be done with reference to each variable and its interaction with each other, as suggested by the theories as well as the empirical findings of the earlier researchers. Thus, this study aims at a new perspective, with an earnest attempt to satisfy the need of presenting an epidemiology of the condition, and the factors related to it. Hope the findings of the study would equip the professionals with the information about the required strategies in alleviating the condition of low achievement. Conclusively, this is a study, which is in its nascent stage but could be of use to various others who are related to the condition of low academic achievement.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The statement of the problem is “A STUDY TO IDENTIFY REASONS OF SCHOLASTIC BACKWARDNESS IN CHILDREN.”

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

High achievers: Students whose intellectual functioning are of the average grade when assessed by a standardized intelligence test and who have scored an average of 60% and above in each of the three consecutive terminal examinations as considered as high achievers. It is specified that they have scored 60% marks and above in each subject for all these examinations.

Low achievers: Students whose intellectual abilities are in the average range on a standardized intelligence test but who nevertheless have more difficulty in achieving pass marks in all the subjects are considered as low achievers. For the present study, they are selected as those students who fail in one or more subjects in any or all of the terminal examinations and whose total marks in each of the three consecutive terminal examinations or on any one examination fall below 35% in aggregate. Their levels of intelligence were in the average grade as assessed by a standardized intelligence test.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Following objectives are formulated for the proposed study:

Main Objective

- To identify factors causing Scholastic Backwardness in Children and suggest measures to help them in mitigating scholastic backwardness;

Minor Objectives

- To collect objective data and systematic record regarding factors effecting Scholastic Backwardness in Children.
- To study the effect of Educational background of parents on scholastic backwardness in children;
- To study the effect of place of residence (Rural / Urban) on scholastic backwardness in children;
- To study the effect of Gender on scholastic backwardness in children;
- To study the effect of category of schools (viz.- Privately managed / Government Schools)
- To formulate remedial measures in the context of teaching methods;

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

- There is no significant difference in scholastic backwardness in children between wards of educated parents and uneducated parents.
- There is no significant difference in scholastic backwardness in children residing in rural or urban area.
- There is no significant difference in scholastic backwardness between male and female children.
- There is no significant difference in scholastic backwardness between children studying in privately managed school and government school.

DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- Time is the major research constraint.
- Research area is restricted to district of Gurgaon (Haryana) region.
- Constraint of population size.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study is expected to throw light on the various aspects on one of the most pressing issues in the present educational system that is achievement of students far below their ability. The advantages of investigating the different aspects that might affect this condition are many. First, it is looked forward to reveal many informative findings, and there by increase the quality of knowledge regarding this condition. Second, vivid recommendations could be made to schools, families and government policy makers on different issues of this condition so that the indexed students would be helped out of their problems. Third, the net working of the psychologists, social workers, teachers and parents could be knitted strongly, so as to provide those students a back of primary, secondary and tertiary social support system. Fourth, the findings would help those who are involved with outreach programs to create an awareness about the different aspects of this condition. Fifth, the study might endure as a starting for further investigations on this field. Conclusively, the investigator hopes that the study would be of great use to the concerned students, teachers, family members and all others who are interested in the field of education and the welfare of the exceptional children. Thus the pernicious mix of myth and reality underlying the campaign against academic low achievement is explored.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURES

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURES

Society expects much from its schools, both in terms of general education and vocational training. The school plays a pivotal role in human resource development. The task of the teachers in schools is a challenging one. Teaching is one of the toughest jobs there because teacher has to do many things. He must be a good leader, an effective speaker, a quick diagnostician, a tactful diplomatic and a firm but fair disciplinarian. Effective teaching is intelligent application of psychological principles to solve the practical problems encountered in teaching learning process. Teaching slow learners is an arduous task. Their ability to deal with abstract and symbolic materials, that is, language, number and concepts is very limited and their reasoning in practical situation is inferior to that of average students. These pupil differ slightly from normal students in learning ability. They are also unable to deal with relatively complex games and school assignments. They need much external stimulation and encouragement to do simple type of work. These students who are known to be slow to 'catch on' are called slow learners or backward learners.

Scholastic Backwardness

Backward learners constitute an appreciable fraction of our population. The term 'backward' or slow learner is reserved for those children who are unable to cope with the work normally expected of their age group.

Kirk (1972) took 'the rate of learning' as the basis for identifying slow learners. According to him, the slow learners, gifted and the average children can be classified according to their 'rate of learning'. He also strictly refused to equate slow learners with mentally retarded because the former is capable of achieving a moderate degree of

academic success even though at a slower rate than the average child .As an adult, a slow learner usually becomes self-supporting, independent and socially adjusted; but in the early stage adapts himself to regular class programme which fit in with his slower learning ability.

Hence there is a great need for special educational measures for the backward learners to ensure maximum progress they are capable of. We have to give them special attention on humanitarian grounds so that they can overcome the unhappiness and personal inadequacy that are the concomitants of severe educational and social failures. Other utilitarian reasons also justify the need for special attention to slow learners in the school. First, the country needs the fullest development of the human resources, not only in those capable of development of higher skills but also in those capable of routine tasks which are equally essential for the maintenance of the social organisation. Secondly, the cost of mental ill health and delinquency which can result from educational failure may be greater in the long run than the cost of developing adequate means of special educational treatment in childhood.

Characteristics of Backward Learners

Backward learners have limited cognitive capacity. They fail to cope with learning situations and to reason abstractly. Rational thinking becomes practically impossible. They have the capacity to succeed in rote learning.

These children show interest in learning where relationships are clearly demonstrated.

With regard to retentive memories they require more practice and revision in comparison with normal children. One of the pertinent characteristic of backward learners is poor memory. It occurs due to lack of concentration.

Classroom situations include distraction and lack of concentration of slow learners. This typical behaviour is also associated with poor motivation. Again different studies also report that when the learning materials are presented through concrete situations, the backward learners' concentration and attention do not differ significantly from that of a normal child.

Inability to express ideas through language is another significant characteristic of a slow learner. A slow learner also lacks imagination and foresight. He faces difficulty to foresee consequences in the future.

Causes of Educational Backwardness

The causes of the educational backwardness are school absence, ill health, unfavourable school and home conditions and emotional barriers to learning, poverty etc. Some important ones are discussed below.

➤ Poverty

In a developing country like India, poverty is considered to be the primary cause of slow learning. Poverty affects children in two ways (1) by impairing children's health and (2) by reducing their learning capacity. Again it brings rare opportunities to acquire general knowledge through enriched experience. In other words a child from a sophisticated family has a variety of avenues to explore and get plenty of materials to meet his requirements.

He gets educational toys and books which are conducive to acquire general knowledge to improve his educational background. On the contrary, a child from an impoverished family does not get enough opportunities to live a full life.

➤ **Intelligence of family members**

Another potent factor of learning is the level of intelligence of parents as well as family members. It is true that educated and intelligent parents can provide educational experiences and materials to their children according to their own intellectual level. But if the parents are not intelligent, they cannot take positive steps towards the upliftment of their children. The economic conditions of the family also play a major role to permit the parents to spend a little amount of money on their children regularly.

➤ **Emotional factors**

Emotional factors contribute a lot towards the slow learning of children. Psychologist confirmed this through their research analysis. When a child comes to the school, he brings his emotional world with him. It is a well known fact that tensions and conflicts exercise a negative effect on learning of the child. So the tensions at the home, the relationships between the siblings and parents themselves can have an adverse effect on the child.

➤ **Personal factors**

Besides all these above factors, there are some personal factors which are more or less responsible for slow learning. Personal factors include long illness or long absence from school and lack of confidence in self. It was found that children who lack self-confidence are usually slow learners.

Studies Related to Scholastic Backwardness

Nair, Paul and Mohan (2003) conducted a study to find out the factors affecting scholastic performance of adolescents belonging to various groups and the determinants for poor scholastic performance. 1892 adolescents of 13 to 19 years age group belonging

to different category of schools were interviewed and assessed by a team consisting of paediatricians, psychologists and PG students using teenage screening questionnaire and study habit relating scale. Daily study pattern, family environment, educational status of parents, personal distraction and attitude towards studies were observed as factors affecting scholastic performance.

On multivariate analysis the predictor variables for poor scholastic performance were lower studying in daily lessons, poor concentration in studies lower education status of father and unhappy family. It was concluded that it is feasible to identify determinants of scholastic performance and plan intervention strategies at school level.

A study conducted by **Kapur, Shenoy and Kapur (1996)** on scholastic backwardness among 5-8 years old school going children. 1535 children were screened by their class teachers of which 1023 were found to have scholastic backwardness. No gender differences were noticed. The rates of specified difficulties such as reading, writing and arithmetic were found to be 4.69%, 5.15% and 15.96% respectively. About 26% of scholastically backward children were also found to have psychological disturbances . In addition they most often came from families which could not afford basic amenities, had fathers with alcoholic dependence, inconsistent disciplining and poor parental disorders. They also had more frequent school changes tuition and fewer hobbies compared to the scholastically superior children.

The objective of the study conducted by **Krishnakumar, Geetha and Palat (2006)** was to evaluate the effectiveness of an individualized educational programme for children with scholastic backwardness.

Among the children attending a child guidance clinic for scholastic backwardness, 12 of

them who were diagnosed as slow learners based on current level of academic functioning and IQ and 6 children having mild mental retardation were given individualised education for a period of two months. Independent assessors evaluated the academic functioning at the beginning of the training and at the end. The results showed that the children had significant improvement in their academic functioning and self esteem after the training.

Rao and Rajaguru (1995) studied, “Effectiveness of Video assisted instruction on the achievement of slow learners”. The major objectives of the study were: 1. To investigate the effectiveness of video assisted instructions on the achievement of slow learners in learning science concepts. 2. To make a comparative study of the achievement of slow learners in terms of the following variables : Sex differences, socio-economical difference, management of school, parents’ educational status and family size of slow learners. 3. To study, the relationship between achievements of slow learners and their intellectual capacity.

After analysis, the study gave the following conclusions.

1. The slow learners of control and experimental groups were alike in immediate retention. But female slow learners of video assisted instruction group performed better in immediate retention than conventional learning group.
2. The socio-economic status had impact on immediate return of slow learners in learning science concepts through video assisted instruction.
3. The slow learners of govt. schools and private schools were alike in intelligence test.
4. The socio-economic status and parent’s educational status had least impact on intelligence of control and experimental group slow learners.

Reddy and Ramar (1997) conducted the study, “Effectiveness of Multimedia Based Modular Approach in Teaching English to Slow Learners to develop multimedia based modules for Std. VIII English subject and to measure the effectiveness of multimedia based modular approach with special reference to slow learners. The following are the conclusions.

1. There was no significant difference between the pre test and post test mean scores of the control groups.
2. There was significant difference between the post-test means scores of control group slow learners taught through traditional lecture method and the experimental group slow learners through multimedia based modular approach.

Reddy and Ramar (1996) undertook an experimental study to assess the Relative effectiveness of Video Instruction in Teaching Science and Social Science to slow learners. The main findings of the study were: 1. There was significant difference between pretest and post test mean scores of experimental group slow learners when the subjects were taught through video instruction. Further their achievement was higher in the post test than in the pretest. Moreover the rate of progress made by the experimental group slow learners signified the relative effectiveness of video instruction in teaching two different subjects i.e. science and social science. 2. There was significant difference between the post test scores of the control group slow learners taught through traditional lecture method and the experimental group slow learners taught through video instruction. Further the achievement of experimental group slow learners was higher than the achievement of control group slow learners. Moreover, an analysis of rate of progress made by the control group slow learners and the experiential group slow

learners brought to light the effectiveness of video instruction.

Reddy and Ramar (1995) conducted a study on the Effectiveness of Computer Assisted Instruction in Teaching Science to slow learners. The main objective of this experimental study was to develop CAI software for science subject of St. VIII and assess its effectiveness with special reference to slow learners.

The study arrived at the following results. There was significant difference between the post test mean scores of control group slow learners taught through traditional lecture method and the experimental group slow learners taught through CAI. Further the achievement of experimental group slow learners was higher than the achievement of control group slow learners. Moreover the rate of progress made by the experimental group slow learners was higher than that of the control group slow learners.

Reddy and Ramar (1997) conducted an experimental study to measure the effectiveness of modular approach with special reference to slow learners and also to assess how far modular approach enables the slow learners to cope with normal students. The study revealed the following conclusions. 1. There was significant difference between the pretest and the post test mean scores of experimental group slow learners when social science subject was taught through modular approach. Further their achievement was higher in the post test than in the pre test.

2. There was significant difference between the post-test mean scores of control group slow learners taught through traditional lecture method and the experimental group slow learners taught through modular approach. For the achievement of experimental group slow learners was higher than the achievement of control groups slow learners.

3. There was significant difference between the post-test mean scores of control group

slow learners and the normal group students. Further the achievement of normal group students was higher than the achievement of experimental group students.

Reddy and Ramar (1997) conducted a study, “Effectiveness of Multimedia Instructional Strategy in Teaching Science to Slow Learners”. The experimental study was undertaken with two objectives in view: 1. To develop multimedia package for VIII standard science subject 2. To measure the effectiveness of multimedia instructional strategy with special reference to slow learners. Two matched group of slow learners were constituted for the purpose of this experiment and a normal group comprising average and above average students was also formed in order to assess how far multimedia instructional strategy enabled the slow learners to cope with normal students.

The control group and the normal group were taught through traditional lecture method while the experimental group was taught through multimedia instructional strategy. The obtained result showed that the multimedia instructional strategy was more effective than the traditional lecture method in teaching science and it enabled the slow learners to cope with normal students to a considerable extent.

Shankar and Mangayarkarasi (2012) conducted a study, “Remedial Strategies for Reducing Learning difficulties of Tenth Standard Slow Learners in Analytical Geometry” revealed the maximum efficiency of remedial strategies in teaching analytical geometry to reduce learning difficulties Moreover the slow learners in analytical geometry showed improvement in learning.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

Research methodology is a way to systematically investigate the research problem. It gives various steps in conducting the research in a systematic and a logical way. It is essential to define the problem, state objectives and hypothesis clearly. The research design provides the details regarding what, where, when, how much and by what means enquiry is initiated. Every piece of research must be planned and designed carefully so that the researcher precedes a head without getting confused at the subsequent steps of research. The researcher must have an objective understanding of what is to be done, what data is needed, what data collecting tools are to be employed and how the data is to be statistically analyzed and interpreted. There are a number of approaches to the design of studies and research projects all of which may be equally valid. Research is a systematic attempt to obtain answers to meaningful questions about phenomenon or events through the application of scientific procedures. It an objective, impartial, empirical and logical analysis and recording of controlled observation that may led to the development of generalizations, principles or theories, resulting to some extent in prediction and control of events that may be consequences or causes of specific phenomenon. Research is a systematic and refined technique of thinking, employing specialized tools, instruments and procedures in order to obtain a more adequate solution of a problem than would be possible under ordinary mean. Thus, research always starts from question. There are three objectives of research factual, practical and theoretical, which gives rise to three types of research: historical, experimental and descriptive.

Research design has been defined by different social scientists in a number of ways. All these definitions emphasize systematic methodology in collecting accurate information

for interpretation. Selltize et al. (1962) expressed their views as, “Research designs are closely linked to investigator’s objectives. They specify that research designs are either descriptive or experimental in nature.” Research design tells us how to plan various phases and procedures related to the formulation of research effort (Ackoff Russell, 1961). Miller (1989) has defined research design, “as the planned sequence of the entire process involved in conducting a research study.”

Kerlinger (1983) has remarked, “Research design sets up the frame work for adequate tests of the relations among variables. Design tells us, in the sense, what observation to make, how to make them and how to analyze the quantitative representation of the observations. A design tells us what type of statistical analysis to use. Finally, an adequate design outlines possible conclusions to be drawn from the statistical analysis.”

Similarly, Van Dalen (1973) states, “Research is often confused, floundering process rather than logical, orderly one. An investigator does tackle one step at a time, complete that process, and then move on to next step, he may tackle the steps out of order, shuffle back and forth between steps or work on two steps more or less simultaneously.”

Kothari (1990) observes, “Research design stands for advance planning of the method to be adapted for collecting the relevant data and the techniques to be used in their research and availability of staff, time and money.” In this way selecting a particular design is based on the purpose of the piece of the research to be conducted. The design deals with selection of subjects, selection of data gathering devices, the procedure of making observations and the type of statistical analysis to be employed in interpreting data relationship”.

Exploratory Research: This kind of research has the primary objective of development

of insights into the problem. It studies the main area where the problem lies and also tries to evaluate some appropriate courses of action. The research methodology for the present study has been adopted to reflect these realities and help in reaching the logical conclusion in an objective and scientific manner. The present study is an ideal case for exploratory research.

Nature of Data

Primary Data: It was collected through direct conversation and through questionnaires.

Secondary Data: It is already available and published data. It could be internal and external source of data.

Internal source, that originates from the specific field or area where research is carried out, e.g. already published brochures, official reports, etc.

External source, that originates outside the field of study like books, periodicals, journals, newspapers and the internet.

Methods of Collecting Data

Primary Research:

- Interaction with teachers and students in school.
- Interaction with respondents- guardians & parents through interviews.

Analysis Method:

- Quantitative Analysis of response from Parents, Guardians, Counsellors, Teachers and Students.

Interpretation regarding quantitative analysis may be based on:

- (a) Method of interaction categories
- (b) Method of areas of interaction

(c) Methods of interaction variables

- Qualitative analysis of role of parents, guardians and teachers and social environment at school & home, was done.

1) The phenomenological study by method of interaction with parents and teacher, counsellor and children was as follows:

- (a) Recognition of pre-conceived ideas about scholastic backwardness in children.
- (b) Developing questionnaire to explore the understanding of respondents about this phenomenon.
- (c) Data would be collected from respondents/ affected parties.
- (d) The data was analysed and corroborated with the experience of respondents, then conclusion were arrived at and suggestions for mitigating the scholastic backwardness in children.

- Case study of students was also done while conducting the survey.

Secondary Research:

- Referring Books, Journals, Articles, Magazines and Newspapers.
- Referring the reports from research institution like NCERT.
- Referring the reports of Ministry of HRD, India.

Sampling Procedure

Random Sampling

Source of Sample: Schools in NCR region (Urban & Rural).

Size of Sample: Approximately 200 responses would be studied from various classifications of schools viz Private schools, Government schools, Government aided.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATIONS

“When data has been obtained, it is necessary to organize them for the interpretation. Qualitative data may have to be summarized and treated statistically to make significant clean.”

Olive R.A.G.

According to Good, Barr and Scates, “Analysis is a process which enters into research in one form or another, from the very beginning. It may be fair to say that research, in general, consists of two large steps i.e. gathering of data and the analysis of research data.”

The data may be adequate, valid and reliable to any extent, but it does not serve any worth while purpose unless it is carefully adopted, systematically classified and tabulated scientifically analyzed, intelligently interpreted and rationally concluded. Hence, in this chapter, the data gathered so far has been analyzed through proper statistical techniques and results have been interpreted.

In the previous chapters, description of the problem, review of related literature, description of tools and procedure for data collection have been presented. It is already stated that the purpose of this study is to study the reasons of scholastic backwardness in children.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

Socio-Demographic Characteristics

A total number of 200 students (100 girls, 100 boys), were studied. Total percentage of girls were 50% and boys were 50%. More number of girls were found in corporation schools 63% than private schools 47%. In corporation schools, girls (70%) fared better than boys (30%) as high achievers. Boys (51%) were marginally better than girls (49%) as high achievers in private schools (Table 1).

Table 1: Gender Wise Analysis

Grade	Corporation		Private	
	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys
Low % $p < 0.01$	63	37	33	67
Moderate % $p < 0.05$	61	39	51	49
High % $p < 0.001$	70	30	48	52

Enrolled 100 students were from corporation schools and 100 from private schools. 50 students were in the 8th standard, 25 in the 9th standard and 25 in their 10th standard. The overall mean age of adolescents enrolled for the study was 14.35 ± 1 year. The students were grouped as per their grades (Table 2).

Table 2: Scholastic Achievement (Grade) Analysis: High Achievers were More in Private Schools

Grade	Corporation	Private	Total	
Low achievers	24 (24%)	3 (3%)	27 (13.5%)	$p < 0.001$
Moderate achievers	55 (55%)	38 (38%)	93 (46.5%)	NS
High achievers	21 (21%)	59 (59%)	80 (40%)	$p < 0.001$

High achievers were more in private schools. Significant number of low achievers belonged to corporation schools. Higher educational level of parents resulted in higher achievement in adolescents.

Education of the parents

Table 3: Education of the Parents: Adolescents who were High Achievers had increased percentage of Parents with Higher Education

Grade	Father		Mother	
	< 10 th std	>10 th std	< 10 th std	>10 th std
Low achievers	24%	3%	21%	2%
Moderate achievers	52%	42%	52%	39%
High achievers	24%	55%	27%	59%
(Between Low and High)	p < 0.001		p < 0.001	

Health Problems

Health problems recorded in these adolescents were asthma, joint pains, migraine, acne, dandruff, refractory errors, heart diseases, menstrual and dental problems Fig. 1.

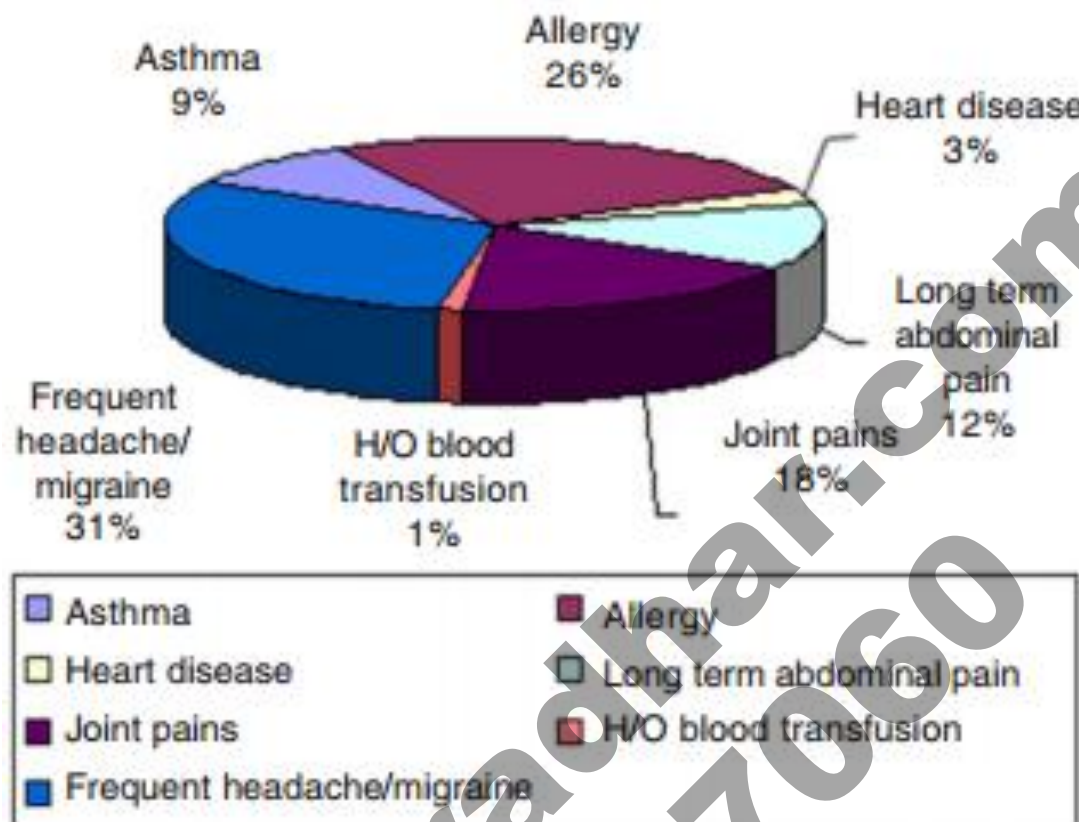


Fig 1. Adolescents with medical problems

Social influences

Adolescents having disturbing factors at home in the form of quarrels between parents and siblings, broken homes, substance abuse in parents and having responsibilities at home were 13% of which 17% were from corporation school and 9% were from private schools. 18% of the low achievers and 9% of high achievers had the above disturbing factors. 18% had adjustment problems with parents (13%), friends (37%), siblings (13%) and friends or neighbors (37%). Private school students (20%) had statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) more adjustment problems than corporation school adolescents (15%), especially when compared in the low achiever group (44% in private to 17% in corporation). However multivariate analysis did not show any significant association. Time spent on television watching did not affect grades in the present study. 51% of adolescents watched television for 1 hour followed by 32% of them watching for 2 hours. Total hours of television watching was around 11 hr/week in adolescents studying in private schools to <10 hr/week in those studying in corporation schools.

Study Habits

Factors as regular attendance, having help for study at home, attending tuitions, completing homework daily, solving question bank, studying regularly or studying just before examinations were studied. Adolescents with regular attendance numbered 96%, and were more from the private schools 98% and was significant. ($p < 0.01$).

A total of 60% of the adolescents had help for study at home, 27% of adolescents have help from both parents and siblings followed by 22% from mother. Adolescents attending tuition was 43%, of which 33% were from corporation and 52% were from private schools. In the present study, statistically significant association was found

between high achievers and low achievers ($p < 0.01$) attending tuition, in both schools.

49% of adolescents did not study daily, of which 36% were from corporation schools.

31% of adolescents gave postponing habit as the reason for not studying regularly on day-to-day basis followed by not getting enough time by 22%.

Adolescents doing homework regularly was 83%, of which 81% were from corporation and 86% were from private schools. Univariate analysis showed no difference in low achievers. There was significant difference ($p < 0.01$) among the high.

Achievers doing homework regularly in both categories of schools (83% corporation and 94% private). Adolescents did not clear doubts with teachers (56%), 83% of adolescents were afraid of asking teachers their doubts. 89% of adolescents perceive their teachers as encouraging and 6% of them perceive their teacher as partial. 41% of adolescents had solved question bank. There was significant difference ($p < 0.01$) in the adolescents who solved question bank among the high achievers (39%), 54% being from corporation schools and 33% being from private schools. 37% of adolescents studied just before the examinations 59% of low achievers studied just before exams, whereas 26% of high achievers did the same (Table 4).

**Table 4: Factors Influencing Low Achievers (L) and High Achievers (H). Social,
Scholastic Factors Affected Adolescent's Grades in School**

Factors	Low Achievers (%)	Moderate Achievers (%)	High Achievers (%)	P value
SOCIAL				
Disturbance at home	18	15	9	
TV Watching	87	87	89	
Adjustment problems	20	20	15	P<0.01 L
Regular Attendance	89	96	98	P<0.01 H
SCHOLASTIC				
Helped at home	67	67	55	P<0.01 H
Tuitions	39	47	39	P<0.01 H
Not studying daily	45	54	46	P<0.01 L
Doing HW daily	73	80	91	P<0.01 H
Not asking doubts	41	50	69	P<0.01 H
Solving QB	37	43	39	P<0.01 H
Studying just before exams	59	40	26	P<0.01 L, H

Multivariate analysis was done through logistic regression analysis, (Table 5). It showed that scholastic performance decreases by 4.219 times if a student has refractory error, by 3.623 times, if no one helps a student in his studies at home, by 5.235 times if a student does not do home work regularly, by 3.394 times if a student does not solve question bank papers, by 3.802 times if a student reads only before examinations. Decreased performance is a result of an interplay of factors in all 3 domains, health, social and school.

**Table 5: Showing the Odd's Ratio and Confidence Interval of Different Variables
(Risk factors)**

Risk Factors	Odds Ratio	Confidence Interval (95%)		p-value
		Lower	Upper	
Refractory error	4.219	1.416	12.500	<0.01
Help at home	3.623	1.433	9.174	<0.01
Home work	5.235	1.081	25.363	<0.05
Q Bank	3.394	1.341	8.592	<0.01
Reads only before exam	3.802	1.533	9.429	<0.01

CHAPTER-V

CONCLUSIONS & SUGGESTIONS

MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

On the basis of analysis and interpretation of results, the below recorded major findings are drawn.

(I) FINDINGS RELATED TO SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

A total number of 200 students (100 girls, 100 boys), were studied. Total percentage of girls were 50% and boys were 50%. More number of girls were found in corporation schools 63% than private schools 47%. In corporation schools, girls (70%) fared better than boys (30%) as high achievers. Boys (51%) were marginally better than girls (49%) as high achievers in private schools.

Enrolled 100 students were from corporation schools and 100 from private schools. 50 students were in the 8th standard, 25 in the 9th standard and 25 in their 10th standard. The overall mean age of adolescents enrolled for the study was 14.35 ± 1 year. The students were grouped as per their grades

High achievers were more in private schools. Significant number of low achievers belonged to corporation schools. Higher educational level of parents resulted in higher achievement in adolescents.

(II) FINDINGS RELATED TO EDUCATION OF THE PARENTS

High achievers were more in private schools. Significant number of low achievers belonged to corporation schools. Higher educational level of parents resulted in higher achievement in adolescents.

(III) FINDINGS RELATED TO SOCIAL INFLUENCES

Adolescents having disturbing factors at home in the form of quarrels between parents and siblings, broken homes, substance abuse in parents and having responsibilities at

home were 13% of which 17% were from corporation school and 9% were from private schools. 18% of the low achievers and 9% of high achievers had the above disturbing factors. 18% had adjustment problems with parents (13%), friends (37%), siblings (13%) and friends or neighbors (37%). Private school students (20%) had statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) more adjustment problems than corporation school adolescents (15%), especially when compared in the low achiever group (44% in private to 17% in corporation). However multivariate analysis did not show any significant association. Time spent on television watching did not affect grades in the present study. 51% of adolescents watched television for 1 hour followed by 32% of them watching for 2 hours. Total hours of television watching was around 11 hr/week in adolescents studying in private schools to <10 hr/week in those studying in corporation schools.

(IV) FINDINGS RELATED TO STUDY HABITS

Factors as regular attendance, having help for study at home, attending tuitions, completing homework daily, solving question bank, studying regularly or studying just before examinations were studied. Adolescents with regular attendance numbered 96%, and were more from the private schools 98% and was significant. ($p < 0.01$).

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Multivariate analysis was done through logistic regression analysis, (Table 5). It showed that scholastic performance decreases by 4.219 times if a student has refractory error, by 3.623 times, if no one helps a student in his studies at home, by 5.235 times if a student does not do home work regularly, by 3.394 times if a student does not solve question bank papers, by 3.802 times if a student reads only before examinations. Decreased performance is a result of an interplay of factors in all 3 domains, health, social and school.

DISCUSSION

Scholastic backwardness is a universal problem. A significant percentage of students fail to make progress with traditional classroom instructions. Today, academic achievement plays an important role in the student's life and in this context, it becomes imperative for pediatricians, psychologists, and educationists, to take steps to help the significant percentage of students who have scholastic problems.

Researchers have estimated that 10% to 37% of students have academic problems. In the present study, 13% of adolescents were low achievers. Causes of scholastic under achievement are many and complex. Seldom is a single cause unequivocally identified. Combination of health, social factors and school environment is responsible.

In the present study in health factors, refractory error alone showed significant association with scholastic performance. Studies have reported that children from families with higher parental education do better in their scholastic performance as seen in the present study too. Studies found that home environment, parent's education, quality of maternal care and relationship between parents play a significant role in the child's academic achievement. In the present study, factors like not having help for study at home, presence of disturbing factors at home and adjustment problems were leading factors. Adjustment problems of the adolescent may be the normal physiological phenomenon of adolescent period and may occasionally be an indicator of underlying mental health problems of the adolescent. No overt abnormal behavioral disorders were seen in this study. The results of the present study concurred with other studies done earlier where adjustment problems were found more with low achievers. Television viewing 10 hours/week, considered as a vice did not influence scholastic performance in

this study and in earlier studies. Factors such as not performing regular home work, not clearing doubts with his teachers, not solving question bank papers, or studying only prior to examinations, contributed to scholastic backwardness.

These factors were seen significantly among the adolescents attending the corporation schools as compared to the private schools.

Classroom climate correlates with academic achievement. Studies have shown that regular homework, positive student teacher relationship boosted scholastic performance of students. Specific use of praise and criticism by teachers for students is also likely to improve student's performance. Perception of the teacher by student as encouraging, indifferent, and partial also affects their performance.

We teach our children a lot of subjects but never teach them how to study. Learning skills are an important factor in developing proper study habits. Much of the individual success in life depends upon the care and confidence with which one acquires knowledge and upon one's ability to perform tasks.

School initiated communication takes place when adolescents misbehave or face academic problems. It is critical to expand the communication to include positive news.

This study identifies 3 important areas: health, social and school environment that influences student performance. Decreased school performance is a result of an interplay of factors in all three domains. The findings have important implications for promoting parental involvement and teaching practices to benefit student achievement. Given that in our hierarchically oriented Indian culture, parents and teachers tend to play a more important role than peers in student academic behavior, it is important that parents, teachers, students and adolescent physicians work together to support student's

academic endeavors.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, it is feasible to identify the determinants of scholastic performance and plan intervention strategies at each school. The results of this study highlight the importance of implementing newer strategies, focusing on strict study patterns and creating the conducive school and home environment for study, so as to better scholastic performance.

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EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Children of today are the citizens of tomorrow, they are going to be the pillars of the country. Hence it is essential to ensure that each pillar is as strong as the other. Moreover, we cannot bring about optimum human resources development without uplifting the backward learners who constitute about 18% of the student population. There is every possibility that each classroom has backward learners. It is more true at primary and high school levels. They come to school regularly, but they are likely to become dropouts if their needs are not adequately met. From psychological point of view, it would be more beneficial to identify the backward learners as early as possible. The earlier they are identified, the sooner they can be subjected to remedial instruction. For this first, the deficiencies are to be identified and to be confirmed by experts administering some diagnostic tests. Then the expertise of specialists can be utilized to deal with specific backwardness. The following points can be taken in to consideration while dealing with backward children.

1. The content of the lessons must be carefully graded keeping in mind the capacity, experience and educational levels of the backward learners.
2. The teachers should give due importance to practice, drill and review which will facilitate the comprehension and retention of backward children.
3. The backward learners are able to grasp concrete ideas rather than abstract ideas. So as far as possible multimedia approach should be followed for the instructional process of backward learners.
4. The backward learners are easily susceptible to fatigue, boredom and disinterest in learning. So instruction should be made interesting by using different audio-visual aids

and adopting different instructional strategies.

5. In dealing with backward children, a friendly approach is highly conducive. Encouraging words, positive reinforcements, praise at appropriate time will have a reaching influence on the learning capacity of backward learners.

6. Backward learners may be paired up with peer tutors who will provide study guides, lecture notes, copies of overheads etc.

7. In the case of backward learners, give as much time and instruction as necessary to bring them all a reasonable level of learning.

8. They may need advance organizers in order to understand important points that are going to be covered during instructional time.

9. Teachers should repeat information especially with those learners who experience maturational lags.

10. Backward learners need to be provided with an enriched environment through numerous experiences and opportunities for learning.

11. Information should be presented in bit-sizes to backward learners. Too much of information at one time will confuse the backward learners.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

1. The same study can be repeated at high school level and higher secondary level.
2. The effectiveness of multimedia package in backward learners can be tested.
3. A study can be conducted to compare the creativity and process skills of scholastically backward children at different levels.
4. A study on the effectiveness of small group activity oriented approach to enhance the skills of scholastically backward students is suggested.
5. A study can be conducted with a larger sample drawn from all districts of the state, so that the findings could be more generalisable.
6. Effectiveness of peer tutoring in attaining the process skills of scholastically backward students is suggested.
7. The role of individualised instruction in developing skills of scholastically backward students can also be conducted.
8. Effectiveness of Individual Laboratory method in developing skills in the scholastically backward students can also be conducted.
9. A comparative study of attitude of the scholastically backward students and the normal students is also suggested.
10. Effectiveness of utilising select community resources in enhancing the skills and creativity of scholastically backward students can also be studied.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY

SUMMARY

SUPERVISOR

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.....
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INVESTIGATOR

MS. SUNITA DEVI

M.A. Education

Enrolment No. 100055090

INTRODUCTION

Education is widely acknowledged as a vital cultural action that enables individual to transform himself into a complete and integral human being. Education surely is an agency of social change, which transforms the society into a better place to live. The right kind of education is undoubtedly a stimulus to think, question and inquire into the truth of life and thereby refine and purify the human consciousness. It is the function of education to impart the right kind of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values to children so that they become harmonious in themselves and resourceful citizens playing their role effectively in the development of the nation.

In the modern competitive world in which academic achievements are considered important, scholastic backwardness causes tremendous stress for the students. In our pedagogical practices followed in the school, the teachers find it difficult to cater to the needs of the individual differences in the class room situations. The individual differences forming a group of heterogeneous group is a reality. Various factors such as physical, psychological and even socio-economic status of the learner may contribute to the individual differences. This individual differences is a challenge to every teacher however resourceful she may be. It is comparatively easy to interact with the average or above average students.

It is not unusual to find in our classroom many students who do not profit much from the usual classroom teaching mostly designed for the normal or averages. Among such children there may lie a group of children who have relatively a quite lower rate of learning than most of their classmates. They always lag behind in terms of catching the usual pace of the class and consequently suffer in terms of their educational progress and academic achievement. They are often seen to suffer from educational failure by playing truancy, repeating the class or leaving the school education in between as a drop out (Mangal, 2007).

Characterised with their lower rate of learning and educational impoverishment, such children are labelled as backward children or slow learners. Historically, the term slow learners is relatively a new term being used for the type of learners traditionally known as backward children. It was evolved and carried by the American educational psychologists for being used to a group of less able students with IQ between 70 and 85. In our country also we are making use of the term slow learners as an umbrella term covering fairly a large group of students whose rate of learning slowed down by one or more factors of which limited ability may be one. In this way backwardness in terms of rate of learning and academic performance of child in comparison to that of the classmates may be said as the main criterion for labelling a child as slow learner.

There are so many causes underlying scholastic backwardness. But if we observe these factors we find that all the factors can be divided into two categories. They are internal factors such as low intelligence, learning disability, attention deficit disorder and lack of motivation and external or environmental factors such as family adjustment issues, poor

discipline, discordant environment in school, sibling rivalry and over expectation of parent etc.

Educationally backward or slow learners do not seem to differ much from the normal or average children in terms of their physical appearance, social and emotional behavior etc. It is difficult to test the general causes of backwardness as it is an individual problem and every individual problem is unique. But it is certain that the root of backwardness of a child must lie within him or outside him within the environment. Moreover it is also found that usually many factors or causes operate together in a particular case of backwardness.

Scholastic backwardness usually provides feelings of anxiety and inadequacy in children. This in turn can have negative impact on the emotional and social functioning of the child. Scholastic backwardness is mainly caused by learning disabilities. Apart from learning disability there are so many factors which provokes learning disability and ultimately leads to Scholastic backwardness. Unrecognized and unmediated Scholastic backwardness has a life long impact on the child affecting school completion or higher education, interpersonal relations etc. Early identification, early intervention and adequate remediation is important and can make a big difference to the child's future.

RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

In the yester years, education was primarily for learning. But today the main purpose of education is for earning (Bhatti,I 993). In this world of industrialization and globalization, education has become highly commercial and academic excellence has gained through tough competitions. The educational status of an individual is highly depicted through the academic achievement. Academic achievement of students has

been a great concern to educationist since time immemorial. Now a days, this trend has been intensively felt by the academicians, parents and students. Strikingly, academic achievement has become a detrimental index in determining a child's future. This speaks a lot about the significance of taking up the present investigation. Going higher up in the social status by means of academic achievement is universally accepted and the most important determinant of a person's adult status is his career.

From crayons to career, the academic grading speaks a lot about one's academic achievement. Academic achievement is generally an expression, when the individual learns to utilize his energies with the given innate potentials and a particular pattern of socializing pressure. Considering the fact that both innate potentials and environmental factors play equally important roles in academic achievement, it is imperative to look into the interplay of both these factors. Innate potentials, in terms of academic achievement is exhibited mainly through the intellectual functions, and of course there is a positive correlation between intellectual functions and academic achievement. However, there are certain confounding factors which mask the effect of this innate potential and in turn, hamper the child's academic achievement in the course of his studentship. Specifically this group of students are those who have more inner cries. The parents and teachers are also not devoid of this, because in the absence of all external handicaps and with the presence of adequate and required intellectual abilities, they fail to achieve. In the present study this felt need has been met by assessing the intellectual functions and tapping various environmental factors which could be responsible for this turmoil. It has been seen that personality of the child is a very radiant and an influential factor that aids a child in academic excellence. Hence, its effect has been assessed in this

study by assessing it comprehensively and sensitively using a highly reliable and valid questionnaire which is developed on the basis of a strong theoretical construction. However, the very fact that family is the basic socializing unit, that fine tunes the formation and existence of a child, forces the investigator to become sensitive to include it as a major variable. The objective has been met with the administration of a standardized tool that taps the processes that are going on in a child's family. And a number of other family related variables have been incorporated in the socio-demographic data sheet to make the picture all the more clear to the world of research.

Though these are the two major propelling forces that act on a child toward academic excellence, there are other equally stronger intrinsic forces that leave its significant marks on academic achievement. Study skills or study habits and academic achievement motivation are those intrinsic factors that in turn act as a self rewarding system in one's forward movement with scores.

The investigator had felt a need that the study would be comprehensive only when such innermost factors are taken into consideration.

Another significant area that has been powerfully intertwined with all the above said factors and yields the ultimate crop is the school factor. This broad area has a number of break-ups and the teacher student relationship is the core aspect of it. Hence, it forms a part of the present investigation. Other physical parameters that are related to school are assessed through the items that are specifically designed in the socio demographic data sheet.

Conclusively saying, academic achievement is an index as well as an affair that has its roots from nervous system to neighbourhood and only a thorough and comprehensive

assessment would be able to point out the detrimental factors that are responsible for the dilemma of academic low achievement. Hence, all possible care has been taken to be sensitive to investigate all the needed information, so as to give a consolation to the inner cry of many, who are associated with this silent childhood disability. It is ironical to note that though abundant amount of literature tries to describe the existence of the condition and the processes that are involved with this condition, yet silent so far to determine the epidemiological distribution of this condition in any context. In fact, this scarcity exists through out the world scenario. In India, one of the major problems presented in schools by teachers and in the clinics by parents is, that of academic low achievement of children. About 39% of the normal and 44% of the disturbed, 12 to 16 years old are reported to have scholastic backwardness (Rozario, 1988).

However, the epidemiology would only be increasing while considering the causal factors. This again indicates the pressing need of today's society, to take up this issue as a research topic.

Different researchers regarding scholastic backwardness in general have taken up various studies. However, a comprehensive, yet concise research work, focusing those closely related psychosocial variables in low academic achievement could not be located even in the world research scenario. Hence, much work needs to be done with reference to each variable and its interaction with each other, as suggested by the theories as well as the empirical findings of the earlier researchers. Thus, this study aims at a new perspective, with an earnest attempt to satisfy the need of presenting an epidemiology of the condition, and the factors related to it. Hope the findings of the study would equip the professionals with the information about the required strategies in alleviating the

condition of low achievement. Conclusively, this is a study, which is in its nascent stage but could be of use to various others who are related to the condition of low academic achievement.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The statement of the problem is “A STUDY TO IDENTIFY REASONS OF SCHOLASTIC BACKWARDNESS IN CHILDREN.”

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Following objectives are formulated for the proposed study:

Main Objective

- To identify factors causing Scholastic Backwardness in Children and suggest measures to help them in mitigating scholastic backwardness;

Minor Objectives

- To collect objective data and systematic record regarding factors effecting Scholastic Backwardness in Children.
- To study the effect of Educational background of parents on scholastic backwardness in children;
- To study the effect of place of residence (Rural / Urban) on scholastic backwardness in children;
- To study the effect of Gender on scholastic backwardness in children;
- To study the effect of category of schools (viz.- Privately managed / Government Schools)
- To formulate remedial measures in the context of teaching methods;

HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

- There is no significant difference in scholastic backwardness in children between wards of educated parents and uneducated parents.
- There is no significant difference in scholastic backwardness in children residing in rural or urban area.
- There is no significant difference in scholastic backwardness between male and female children.
- There is no significant difference in scholastic backwardness between children studying in privately managed school and government school.

DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- Time is the major research constraint.
- Research area is restricted to district of Gurgaon (Haryana) region.
- Constraint of population size.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study is expected to throw light on the various aspects on one of the most pressing issues in the present educational system that is achievement of students far below their ability. The advantages of investigating the different aspects that might affect this condition are many. First, it is looked forward to reveal many informative findings, and there by increase the quality of knowledge regarding this condition. Second, vivid recommendations could be made to schools, families and government policy makers on different issues of this condition so that the indexed students would be helped out of their problems. Third, the net working of the psychologists, social workers, teachers and parents could be knitted strongly, so as to provide those students a back of primary,

secondary and tertiary social support system. Fourth, the findings would help those who are involved with outreach programs to create an awareness about the different aspects of this condition. Fifth, the study might endure as a starting for further investigations on this field. Conclusively, the investigator hopes that the study would be of great use to the concerned students, teachers, family members and all others who are interested in the field of education and the welfare of the exceptional children. Thus the pernicious mix of myth and reality underlying the campaign against academic low achievement is explored.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology for the present study has been adopted to reflect these realities and help in reaching the logical conclusion in an objective and scientific manner. The present study is an ideal case for exploratory research.

Nature of Data

Primary Data: It was collected through direct conversation and through questionnaires.

Secondary Data: It is already available and published data. It could be internal and external source of data.

Internal source, that originates from the specific field or area where research is carried out, e.g. already published brochures, official reports, etc.

External source, that originates outside the field of study like books, periodicals, journals, newspapers and the internet.

Methods of Collecting Data

Primary Research:

- Interaction with teachers and students in school.

- Interaction with respondents- guardians & parents through interviews.

Analysis Method:

- Quantitative Analysis of response from Parents, Guardians, Counsellors, Teachers and Students.

Interpretation regarding quantitative analysis may be based on:

- (a) Method of interaction categories
 - (b) Method of areas of interaction
 - (c) Methods of interaction variables
- Qualitative analysis of role of parents, guardians and teachers and social environment at school & home, was done.
- 1) The phenomenological study by method of interaction with parents and teacher, counsellor and children was as follows:
 - (a) Recognition of pre-conceived ideas about scholastic backwardness in children.
 - (b) Developing questionnaire to explore the understanding of respondents about this phenomenon.
 - (c) Data would be collected from respondents/ affected parties.
 - (d) The data was analysed and corroborated with the experience of respondents, then conclusion were arrived at and suggestions for mitigating the scholastic backwardness in children.
- Case study of students was also done while conducting the survey.

Secondary Research:

- Referring Books, Journals, Articles, Magazines and Newspapers.
- Referring the reports from research institution like NCERT.

- Referring the reports of Ministry of HRD, India.

Sampling Procedure

Random Sampling

Source of Sample: Schools in NCR region (Urban & Rural).

Size of Sample: Approximately 200 responses would be studied from various classifications of schools viz Private schools, Government schools, Government aided.

MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

On the basis of analysis and interpretation of results, the below recorded major findings are drawn.

(I) FINDINGS RELATED TO SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

A total number of 200 students (100 girls, 100 boys), were studied. Total percentage of girls were 50% and boys were 50%. More number of girls were found in corporation schools 63% than private schools 47%. In corporation schools, girls (70%) fared better than boys (30%) as high achievers. Boys (51%) were marginally better than girls (49%) as high achievers in private schools.

Enrolled 100 students were from corporation schools and 100 from private schools. 50 students were in the 8th standard, 25 in the 9th standard and 25 in their 10th standard.

The overall mean age of adolescents enrolled for the study was 14.35 ± 1 year. The students were grouped as per their grades

(II) FINDINGS RELATED TO EDUCATION OF THE PARENTS

High achievers were more in private schools. Significant number of low achievers belonged to corporation schools. Higher educational level of parents resulted in higher achievement in adolescents.

(III) FINDINGS RELATED TO SOCIAL INFLUENCES

Adolescents having disturbing factors at home in the form of quarrels between parents and siblings, broken homes, substance abuse in parents and having responsibilities at home were 13% of which 17% were from corporation school and 9% were from private schools. 18% of the low achievers and 9% of high achievers had the above disturbing factors. 18% had adjustment problems with parents (13%), friends (37%), siblings (13%) and friends or neighbors (37%). Private school students (20%) had statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) more adjustment problems than corporation school adolescents (15%), especially when compared in the low achiever group (44% in private to 17% in corporation). However multivariate analysis did not show any significant association. Time spent on television watching did not affect grades in the present study. 51% of adolescents watched television for 1 hour followed by 32% of them watching for 2 hours. Total hours of television watching was around 11 hr/week in adolescents studying in private schools to <10 hr/week in those studying in corporation schools.

(IV) FINDINGS RELATED TO STUDY HABITS

Factors as regular attendance, having help for study at home, attending tuitions, completing homework daily, solving question bank, studying regularly or studying just before examinations were studied. Adolescents with regular attendance numbered 96%, and were more from the private schools 98% and was significant. ($p < 0.01$).

A total of 60% of the adolescents had help for study at home, 27% of adolescents have help from both parents and siblings followed by 22% from mother. Adolescents attending tuition was 43%, of which 33% were from corporation and 52% were from private schools. In the present study, statistically significant association was found

between high achievers and low achievers ($p < 0.01$) attending tuition, in both schools.

49% of adolescents did not study daily, of which 36% were from corporation schools.

31% of adolescents gave postponing habit as the reason for not studying regularly on day-to-day basis followed by not getting enough time by 22%.

Adolescents doing homework regularly was 83%, of which 81% were from corporation and 86% were from private schools. Univariate analysis showed no difference in low achievers. There was significant difference ($p < 0.01$) among the high.

Achievers doing homework regularly in both categories of schools (83% corporation and 94% private). Adolescents did not clear doubts with teachers (56%), 83% of adolescents were afraid of asking teachers their doubts. 89% of adolescents perceive their teachers as encouraging and 6% of them perceive their teacher as partial. 41% of adolescents had solved question bank. There was significant difference ($p < 0.01$) in the adolescents who solved question bank among the high achievers (39%), 54% being from corporation schools and 33% being from private schools. 37% of adolescents studied just before the examinations 59% of low achievers studied just before exams, whereas 26% of high achievers did the same.

Multivariate analysis was done through logistic regression analysis, (Table 5). It showed that scholastic performance decreases by 4.219 times if a student has refractory error, by 3.623 times, if no one helps a student in his studies at home, by 5.235 times if a student does not do home work regularly, by 3.394 times if a student does not solve question bank papers, by 3.802 times if a student reads only before examinations. Decreased performance is a result of an interplay of factors in all 3 domains, health, social and school.

TENABILITY OF HYPOTHESIS

	HYPOTHESIS	ACCEPTED/REJECTED
1.	There is no significant difference in scholastic backwardness in children between wards of educated parents and uneducated parents.	REJECTED
2.	There is no significant difference in scholastic backwardness in children residing in rural or urban area	REJECTED
3.	There is no significant difference in scholastic backwardness between male and female children.	PARTIALLY ACCEPTED AND REJECTED
4.	There is no significant difference in scholastic backwardness between children studying in privately managed school and government school.	REJECTED

DISCUSSION

Scholastic backwardness is a universal problem. A significant percentage of students fail to make progress with traditional classroom instructions. Today, academic achievement plays an important role in the student's life and in this context, it becomes imperative for

pediatricians, psychologists, and educationists, to take steps to help the significant percentage of students who have scholastic problems.

Researchers have estimated that 10% to 37% of students have academic problems. In the present study, 13% of adolescents were low achievers. Causes of scholastic underachievement are many and complex. Seldom is a single cause unequivocally identified. Combination of health, social factors and school environment is responsible.

In the present study in health factors, refractory error alone showed significant association with scholastic performance. Studies have reported that children from families with higher parental education do better in their scholastic performance as seen in the present study too. Studies found that home environment, parent's education, quality of maternal care and relationship between parents play a significant role in the child's academic achievement. In the present study, factors like not having help for study at home, presence of disturbing factors at home and adjustment problems were leading factors. Adjustment problems of the adolescent may be the normal physiological phenomenon of adolescent period and may occasionally be an indicator of underlying mental health problems of the adolescent. No overt abnormal behavioral disorders were seen in this study. The results of the present study concurred with other studies done earlier where adjustment problems were found more with low achievers. Television viewing 10 hours/week, considered as a vice did not influence scholastic performance in this study and in earlier studies. Factors such as not performing regular home work, not clearing doubts with his teachers, not solving question bank papers, or studying only prior to examinations, contributed to scholastic backwardness.

These factors were seen significantly among the adolescents attending the corporation

schools as compared to the private schools.

Classroom climate correlates with academic achievement. Studies have shown that regular homework, positive student teacher relationship boosted scholastic performance of students. Specific use of praise and criticism by teachers for students is also likely to improve student's performance. Perception of the teacher by student as encouraging, indifferent, and partial also affects their performance.

We teach our children a lot of subjects but never teach them how to study. Learning skills are an important factor in developing proper study habits. Much of the individual success in life depends upon the care and confidence with which one acquires knowledge and upon one's ability to perform tasks.

School initiated communication takes place when adolescents misbehave or face academic problems. It is critical to expand the communication to include positive news.

This study identifies 3 important areas: health, social and school environment that influences student performance. Decreased school performance is a result of an interplay of factors in all three domains. The findings have important implications for promoting parental involvement and teaching practices to benefit student achievement. Given that in our hierarchically oriented Indian culture, parents and teachers tend to play a more important role than peers in student academic behavior, it is important that parents, teachers, students and adolescent physicians work together to support student's academic endeavors.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, it is feasible to identify the determinants of scholastic performance and plan intervention strategies at each school. The results of this study highlight the

importance of implementing newer strategies, focusing on strict study patterns and creating the conducive school and home environment for study, so as to better scholastic performance.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Children of today are the citizens of tomorrow, they are going to be the pillars of the country. Hence it is essential to ensure that each pillar is as strong as the other. Moreover, we cannot bring about optimum human resources development without uplifting the backward learners who constitute about 18% of the student population. There is every possibility that each classroom has backward learners. It is more true at primary and high school levels. They come to school regularly, but they are likely to become dropouts if their needs are not adequately met. From psychological point of view, it would be more beneficial to identify the backward learners as early as possible. The earlier they are identified, the sooner they can be subjected to remedial instruction. For this first, the deficiencies are to be identified and to be confirmed by experts administering some diagnostic tests. Then the expertise of specialists can be utilized to deal with specific backwardness. The following points can be taken in to consideration while dealing with backward children.

1. The content of the lessons must be carefully graded keeping in mind the capacity, experience and educational levels of the backward learners.
2. The teachers should give due importance to practice, drill and review which will facilitate the comprehension and retention of backward children.
3. The backward learners are able to grasp concrete ideas rather than abstract ideas. So as far as possible multimedia approach should be followed for the instructional process

of backward learners.

4. The backward learners are easily susceptible to fatigue, boredom and disinterest in learning. So instruction should be made interesting by using different audio-visual aids and adopting different instructional strategies.

5. In dealing with backward children, a friendly approach is highly conducive. Encouraging words, positive reinforcements, praise at appropriate time will have a reaching influence on the learning capacity of backward learners.

6. Backward learners may be paired up with peer tutors who will provide study guides, lecture notes, copies of overheads etc.

7. In the case of backward learners, give as much time and instruction as necessary to bring them all a reasonable level of learning.

8. They may need advance organizers in order to understand important points that are going to be covered during instructional time.

9. Teachers should repeat information especially with those learners who experience maturational lags.

10. Backward learners need to be provided with an enriched environment through numerous experiences and opportunities for learning.

11. Information should be presented in bit-sizes to backward learners. Too much of information at one time will confuse the backward learners.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

1. The same study can be repeated at high school level and higher secondary level.

2. The effectiveness of multimedia package in backward learners can be tested.

3. A study can be conducted to compare the creativity and process skills of

scholastically backward children at different levels.

4. A study on the effectiveness of small group activity oriented approach to enhance the skills of scholastically backward students is suggested.

5. A study can be conducted with a larger sample drawn from all districts of the state, so that the findings could be more generalisable.

6. Effectiveness of peer tutoring in attaining the process skills of scholastically backward students is suggested.

7. The role of individualised instruction in developing skills of scholastically backward students can also be conducted.

8. Effectiveness of Individual Laboratory method in developing skills in the scholastically backward students can also be conducted.

9. A comparative study of attitude of the scholastically backward students and the normal students is also suggested.

10. Effectiveness of utilising select community resources in enhancing the skills and creativity of scholastically backward students can also be studied.

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QUESTIONNAIRE

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A STUDY TO IDENTIFY REASONS OF SCHOLASTIC BACKWARDNESS IN

CHILDREN

NAME:

GENDER:

AGE:

SCHOOL: CORPORATION/PRIVATE

CLASS: 8TH/9TH/10TH

FATHER'S NAME:

MOTHER'S NAME:

FATHER'S EDUCATION:

MOTHER'S EDUCATION:

DO YOU HAVE ANY HEALTH PROBLEMS?: YES/NO

DO YOU HAVE ONE OR MORE SIBLINGS: YES/NO

TIME SPENT ON TELEVISION: 1HR/2HR/3HR/MORE THAN 3HR

ATTENDING TUITIONS: YES/NO

COMPLETING HOMEWORK DAILY: YES/NO

SOLVING QUESTION BANK: YES/NO

STUDYING REGULARLY OR STUDYING JUST BEFORE EXAMINATIONS:

YES/NO

DO YOU REGULAR GOING SCHOOLS: YES/NO

DO YOU HAVE ANY DISTURBANCE AT HOME: YES/NO