



Academic performance of adolescents: An indicator of prosperous life

■ M.K. Rathore* and Sheela Sangwan¹

Postgraduate Department of Human Development, SNTD Women's University, Juhu Campus, Santa Cruz (West), MUMBAI (M.S.) INDIA

(Email : manjurathore23@gmail.com)

¹Department of Human Development and Family Studies, I.C. College of Home Science, C.C.S. Haryana Agricultural University, HISAR (HARYANA) INDIA

(Email : sangwan.sheela@yahoo.com)

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*Author for correspondence

ABSTRACT

Academic achievement is said to one of the major achievement in life. It is education that determines and contributes to the level of prosperity, welfare and security of the people. It also contributes to happiness, satisfaction, comfort and well being of the individual. The present study aims to assess the level of academic achievement and comparison of academic performance of 13-15 year old children on the basis of socio-personal variables. Representative sample of 209 higher secondary school students were selected. The study revealed significant differences in academic achievement of adolescent's on the basis of academic class and paternal occupation. There was no significant difference in academic achievement of boys and girls as well as in rural and urban area's adolescents.

INTRODUCTION

Academic competency is among the most demanding cognitive and motivational challenge that growing adolescent's face in their life. It is the knowledge acquired and skill developed in school subjects, generally indicated by marks obtained in test or an annual examination. An adolescent is itself recognized as the second major 'window' of opportunity and risk in development. It is a period of biological, cognitive and social change and characterized by significant

neurological, cognitive and socio-psychological development. Adolescents' progress through early, middle, and late adolescence. Self-esteem, mood, body image, cognitive development, family relationships, interactions at school and with peers, and participation in health-risk behaviors are critical developmental considerations.

The importance of academic competence lies in the fact that academic records in the school/college life pre-dominate social reactions and adolescents' future occupational picture. Committees and commission have

recommended a number of schemes to attract the children towards schools and number of strategies and methods has been suggested to bring qualitative improvement in education so that the students could achieve the satisfied educational goals. The growing sense of personal control, self-esteem and parental encouragement in adolescents as a result of academic achievement serve as major personal forces in their ultimate level of accomplishment. Studies have suggested that academic competence may be an important influence on an adolescent's self-concept. It is widely accepted that students' academic success is influenced primarily by their cognitive abilities. That is, students with great intellectual potential will often succeed at a higher level than will students with lower ability. Although it is clear that many variables interact to produce this phenomenon, we will consider the role that self-efficacy perceptions and parental support play in determining how well individuals perform academically. Merely possessing knowledge and skills does not mean that one will use them effectively under difficult conditions (Bandura, 1993). Students often encounter obstacles during learning. These can include noisy study environments, disruptive thoughts, negative emotional reactions, and poor organization skills. With the preview of above information, present investigation was carried out to assess the academic achievement and difference contributed towards academic achievement by socio-personal status of 13-15 year adolescents.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The research was conducted in Hisar district of Haryana state where two Government Senior Secondary Schools from rural area and two from urban area were selected. From each of the four selected schools of rural and urban area of Hisar, all boys and girls of 13-15 year (class 8th, 9th and 10th grade) were included in final sample. Respondents were interviewed in groups in their classroom setting to collect required information. Academic achievement score of children were obtained from the latest grade sheet of the examinations. Self prepared questionnaire was used to delineate socio-personal variables. Frequency and percentages, mean, standard deviation, 'Z' test and ANOVA were used to analyze the data.

OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS

The results obtained from the present investigation

are presented below:

Academic achievement as per residential area and gender :

Table 1 projects gender wise academic achievement of adolescent as per area of residence.

Results disclosed that out of total sample nearly half of the male (54.37%) and female (56.60%) had an average level of academic achievement.

A variation in poor academic achievement were seen, as females in small percentage from both areas, *i.e.* rural and urban (12.30%, 10.20%, respectively), were poor in academics as compared to males (7.70%, 25.50%, respectively). The data related to good academic achievement category showed that, in both the area higher number of females had good academic achievement against their counter parts, since 36.80 per cent of females from rural area and 26.50 per cent from urban area had good academic achievement.

The results had similarity with the findings of Devi and Mayuri (2003) that carried out a study of family and school factors that affect the academic achievement of residential school children studying ninth and tenth classes on a sample of 120 students of Hyderabad city. The results indicated significant gender difference in academic achievement and girls were found to be superior to boys in academic achievement. Gupta *et al.* (2012) conducted a study and data analysis showed that there was significant difference in academic achievement among adolescents with high and low level of achievement motivation in relation to gender, locality and type of schools. It was found that male and female adolescents with high achievement motivation showed better academic achievement than their counterparts. Further, results also showed that high achievement motivation adolescents of rural area and urban area as well as private and govt. schools were found to be better on academic achievement than their corresponding parts. Joshi (2000) also conducted a study on academic achievement as related to gender and culture. The sample selected for the study was 400 students of eighth class belonging to urban and rural area of Punjab. School records and personality inventory was used for data collection. Results revealed a significant difference between boys and girls of rural areas on academic achievement.

Deary *et al.* (2006) examined the association between psychometric intelligence and educational achievement and found gender difference in academic

achievement. The findings indicated that the girls performed better than the boys.

Area wise assessment of academic performance was done by Waters *et al.* (2006) who also determined whether the academic performance of 575 medical students learning in rural settings differs from those learning in urban settings. Academic achievement included the results of the consecutive three years and five specialists eight week rotations conducted in either the rural clinical division for rural students or for urban students, all following the same curriculum and taking the same examinations. From the results no statistically significant differences were found between academic performance of rural and urban students.

Comparison of academic achievement of adolescents as per personal variables :

The observations of Table 2 show the academic achievement of adolescents as per personal variables. Comparison was done using Z test and Duncan multiple difference comparison. Significant differences were observed for academic achievement of adolescents from different academic classes ($F_{(2,206)} = 5.80^*$, $p < 0.05$). The

mean scores, predicted that the adolescents of class 10th ($M=62.21$) had significantly higher academic achievement compared to adolescents of class 8th and 9th ($M=55.46$, 57.19 , respectively).

Adolescents with higher standards had comparatively good academic achievement than adolescents in lower standards *i.e.* with increasing academic standards, maturity as well as intellectual abilities also gets improved and which helps adolescent in performing better in academics.

Non-significant differences were found for academic achievement of adolescents from various age groups and sex categories. However, the mean scores of 15⁺ year's adolescents were comparatively higher than 13⁺ year's and 14⁺ year's adolescents showing that better academic achievement in older ones. Likewise mean scores of both the sex categories showed that females were better performers in academics. Tripathi and Swarnkar (2008) too reported that achievement motivation of boys and girls does not differ significantly. Begum and Phukan (2001) also explored the difference in boys' and girls' academic achievement and found that there was no difference between boys and girls with respect to high

Sr. No.	Residential area	Rural (n=109)		Urban (n=100)		Total (n=209)	
		Male (n=52)	Female (n=57)	Male (n=51)	Female (n=49)	Male (n=103)	Female (n=106)
1.	Poor	4(7.70)	7(12.30)	13(25.50)	5(10.20)	17(16.50)	12(11.32)
2.	Average	30(57.70)	29(50.90)	26(51.00)	31(63.30)	56(54.37)	60(56.60)
3.	Good	18(34.60)	21(36.80)	12(23.50)	13(26.50)	30(29.13)	34(32.08)

Note: Figures in parentheses indicate percentage

Sr. No.	Academic achievement	Personal variables			
1.		Age			
		13 ⁺ years	14 ⁺ years	15 ⁺ years	F-value
		Mean ± SD	Mean ± SD	Mean ± SD	
		56.80±9.77	57.41±11.73	59.25±14.21	0.77
2.	Academic achievement	Sex			Z -value
		Male	Female		
		Mean ± SD	Mean ± SD		
		56.69±12.50	58.94±11.58		1.35
3.		Academic class			
		8 th	9 th	10 th	F-value
		Mean ± SD	Mean ± SD	Mean ± SD	
		55.46 ^a ±9.97	57.19 ^a ±10.93	62.21 ^b ±14.93	5.80*

* indicates significance of value at P=0.05

Note: Means in the same row that do not share superscripts differ at $p < 0.05$ using Duncan multiple difference comparison

and low academic achievement. Sunitha (2005) studied academic learning environment of students from aided and unaided co-educational high schools and results also revealed no significant difference in academic achievement of boys and girls. Pandey and Ahmad (2008); Nuthana (2007); Halawah (2006); Parsasirat *et al.* (2013) and Singh and Thukral (2010) also observed that there was no significant difference in academic achievement of boys and girls. Opposite to it, Deswal and Rani (2012) found that male adolescents were possessing higher level of achievement motivation than female adolescents.

Comparison of academic achievement of adolescents as per parental variables :

Results related to adolescent’s academic achievement on the basis of parental variables are portrayed in Table 3. Significant differences contributed for academic achievement of adolescents as per paternal occupation ($F_{(2,200)} = 2.90^*$, $p < 0.05$). Mean scores for

academic achievement as per paternal occupation were significantly different, indicating adolescents whose fathers were engaged in farming (M=60.07) were significantly better in academic achievement than adolescents whose fathers were engaged in labour work and there were no difference existed in adolescents whose fathers were engaged in business/service from adolescents whose fathers were engaged in farming and labour work. In agreement to this finding Gill and Sidhu (1988) also found that occupation of parents influence the school performance of their children. Likewise, students belonging to fathers of service group were found to have significantly better achievement motivation as compared to their counterparts (Penda and Jena, 2000).

On the other hand, non-significant differences were found for academic achievement of adolescents from various categories of maternal age, paternal age, maternal education, paternal education and maternal occupation. These results are inclined with Pandey (2008) who

Sr. No.	Academic achievement		Parental variables		
1.			Maternal age (n=208)		
	27-35 year	36-43 year	44-51 year	F-value	
	Mean ± SD	Mean ± SD	Mean ± SD		
	59.33±12.69	58.71±10.49	56.20±14.79	1.09	
2.			Paternal age (n=203)		
	30-40 year	41-50 year	51-60 year	F-value	
	Mean ± SD	Mean ± SD	Mean ± SD		
	61.70±11.27	57.81±11.96	57.03±18.89	0.41	
3.			Maternal education		
	Illiterate	Primary	Middle and above	F-value	
	Mean ± SD	Mean ± SD	Mean ± SD		
	56.13±12.21	59.25±12.08	59.90±11.47	2.09	
4.	Academic achievement			Paternal education	
	Illiterate	Primary	6 th –matriculation	Above matriculation	F-value
	Mean ± SD	Mean ± SD	Mean ± SD	Mean ± SD	
	56.33±12.97	57.16±10.27	57.40±11.63	58.51±12.43	0.37
5.			Maternal occupation		
	Housewife	Labourer and small entrepreneur		Z -value	
	Mean ± SD	Mean ± SD			
	58.34±11.76	54.98±13.75		1.41	
6.			Paternal occupation		
	Labourer	farmer	Business/service	F-value	
	Mean ± SD	Mean ± SD	Mean ± SD		
	55.50 ^a ±11.85	60.07 ^b ±11.40	58.89 ^{ab} ±11.31	2.90*	

* indicates significance of value at P=0.05

Note: Means in the same row that do not share superscripts differ at $p < 0.05$ using Duncan multiple difference comparison

observed that academic achievement of students was not affected by education level of parents. Opposite to this, Crede *et al.* (2015) reported that only mothers' education functioned as a moderator of the relationship between academic achievement and students' Life Satisfaction. The association between academic achievement and Life Satisfaction was only found in the group of students whose mothers had achieved the same or a higher education (at least high school diploma) as their own children. Fathers' educational attainment, however, was not a significant moderator of the respective relationship.

Comparison of academic achievement of adolescents as per socio-economic variables :

Comparison of academic achievement of adolescents as per socio-economic variables is displayed in Table 4. Non-significant differences were identified for academic achievement on the basis of residential area, family size and family's monthly income of the respondents. However mean scores of rural respondents (M=59.08) were comparatively higher than that of urban respondents (M=56.48) showing better level of academic achievement in rural respondents. Similarly mean scores of adolescents of large sized families (M=59.78) are higher followed by medium sized (M=58.78) and small sized families (M=57.16).

Waters *et al.* (2006) determined no statistically significant differences between academic performance of rural and urban students. Same finding were supported

by Singh and Thukral (2010). When examining academic achievement, it is imperative that socio-economic status (SES) is included due to the fact that SES can have a direct effect on this factor, and according to Demi and Lewis (2010), the effects of SES on the academic outcome and future life course pathways is significant. Children within low-income families are less likely to earn passing grades within their middle school years than children within middle and upper income families (Demi and Lewis, 2010). Additionally, children within low-income situations are less likely to "attend higher quality schools (schools with larger budgets, better quality teachers, and within high-income neighbourhoods), and continue their education into college" (Demi and Lewis, 2010). Overall, Demi and Lewis conclude that a child's socio-economic status is strongly correlated with that individual's academic achievement, with evidence that children within higher SES categories complete more years of education. Furthermore, a family's SES had an indirect impact on a child's academic achievement through the resources provided at home that is necessary for a child to achieve in school (food, clothes, school supplies; Sirin, 2005).

Conclusion :

There is a significant differences were characterized in level of academic performance of adolescents as per academic class and paternal occupation. It does not vary strongly with respect to age, sex, remaining parental aspects, residential area, and size of family and family monthly income.

Table 4 : Academic achievement of adolescents as per socio-economic variables					(n=209)
Sr. No.	Academic Achievement	Family socio-economic variables			
1.		Residential area			
		Rural	Urban		Z -value
		Mean ± SD	Mean ± SD		
		59.08±11.43	56.48±12.64		1.56
2.		family size			
	Academic Achievement	Small	Medium	Large	F-value
		Mean ± SD	Mean ± SD	Mean ± SD	
		57.16±12.73	58.78±11.81	59.78±12.50	0.72
3.		Monthly income			
		Up to Rs. 10,000	Above Rs.10,000		Z -value
		Mean ± SD	Mean ± SD		
		57.48±12.05	59.37±12.16		0.88

*indicates significance of value at P=0.05

Note: Means in the same row that do not share superscripts differ at p<0.05 using Duncan multiple difference comparison

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