

CAUSES OF ACADEMIC BACKWARDNESS OF RURAL SCHOOL CHILDREN IN SELECTED STATES OF INDIA: AN EVALUATION

ABSTRACT

Most of the states in India are facing the problems of academic backwardness especially in rural villages. Academic stress in children can be present as physical, behavioural or emotional problems. The causes for a rural child being poor in academics are varied and range from physical causes to psychological causes the later being more common. The present study was carried out in order to find out the reasons of academic backwardness among rural school children between the age group of 11-17 years and to provide results-based remedial solutions and interventions. For this purpose, samples were selected from different villages of nine states in India which include: Assam (Jorhat), Andhra Pradesh (Hyderabad), Haryana (Hissar), Himachal Pradesh (Palampur), Uttar Pradesh (Pantnagar), Rajasthan (Udaipur), Maharashtra (Parbani), Punjab (Ludhiana), and Uttarakhand (Dharwad). The academic achievement of school children was used and covers three major aspects on health, academics and family. Data analysis was done using frequency, percentage distribution and Chi-square test. Results revealed that in the eight states, the academic factor was the cause of the students' poor achievement while in one state, Parbhani, health is the risk factor most relevant to the students' academic achievement.

KEYWORDS: Academic backwardness , rural, school children

INTRODUCTION

It is a universal truth that all children are basically the same but are different up to a limit from each other physically, mentally, educationally and socially. It is therefore not unusual to find in the classroom, many students who do not benefit much from the usual classroom teaching mostly designed for the normal or average students. It is a known fact that each student of the class brings a unique set of characteristics to the classroom: different background knowledge, intelligence and a unique learning style, a variety of interests and varied parental support and expectations. To anticipate that each student would learn in the same way, at the same speed and using the same material is an unrealistic expectation. Every student possesses different intelligence, interests, learning styles and educational problems that may influence his/her academic achievement. Sharma et al. (2011) defined academic achievement as the outcome of the training imparted to students by the teacher in a school situation. Halawah (2006) opined that academic achievement is accomplished by actual execution of class work in the school setting. It is typically assessed by using teachers' ratings and performance assessments; it is multidimensional; it is intricately related to human growth and cognitive, emotional, social, and

physical development; it reflects the whole child; it is not related to a single instance, but occurs across time and levels, through a student's life to his/her working life. It is an important fact that these variables definitely affect educational backwardness in some students.

Students generally face various educational problems. Because of these problems, the students may not concentrate upon their studies and become educationally backward. Hence, many problems related to teachers and teaching, social, environmental, organizational or administration and cultural causes, may be responsible for low academic achievement. Under these circumstances, the students are surrounded by many problems which may be related to poor self-concept, lack of family involvement and encouragement, damaging peer pressure, cultural deprivation, emotional problems and physical illness.

The cause of low academic achievement may be anywhere; right from the home to the grading system or even the examiner. Unrecognized and unmediated scholastic backwardness has a lifelong impact on the child affecting school completion or higher education, interpersonal relations etc. and it may ultimately result in school dropout. Early identification, early intervention and adequate remediation are important and can make a big difference to the child's future.

Children are the future human resource of our country. Academic performance is given prime importance in Indian society, as it is an important way to elevate one's life. Academic backwardness is one of the commonest educational problems encountered in rural children. It is a big concern among parents and teachers in present day competitive society. It not only results in the child having low self-esteem, but also causes significant stress to the parents. It is usually a reflection of a larger underlying problem in children. Also, a majority of the population of India still lives in villages and so, the issue of rural education in India is of utmost importance. There is a dire need to analyze poor school performance systematically so that proper interventions can be given in this direction. If not worked upon, it will eventually lead to dropout of children. It is reported that around 20% of school children have scholastic backwardness (Karande & Kulkarni, 2005). In the words of Cyril Burt "An academically backward child is one who in the middle of the school career [but] is unable to do the work of the class [and is] below that which is normal for his age." Academic backwardness can be defined as school achievement below the expected level for a given age, cognitive ability or schooling.

Despite governmental efforts, and huge investment and many innovative programmes, academic problems which ultimately lead to dropout of children from school remains alarming high in many states of India. In this context, it is not only the provision of schooling facilities and quality of education, but also other household and social factors that play a major role in influencing the academic achievements in rural areas. It is very important to understand the family and parental characteristics and various other factors to examine the reasons for this trend. Therefore, it is necessary that not only the teachers but also the parents of

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the backward students must root out the reasons for the academic constraints and create an environment where such students take interest in educational activities and make their academic achievement a high priority.

Objective:

The objective of the study was to identify the reasons for academic backwardness among school-going rural children in selected states of India.

Hypothesis: Familial factors are the major reason for academic backwardness among school-going rural children followed by academic and health reasons.

METHODOLOGY

1. **Sample Selection:** A total of 1350 school children from the nine states of India who scored C, D and E grades were randomly selected. Each centre is represented by 150 school children belonging to the 7th -10th standards or grades and between the age group of 11-17 years of age (Table 1).

Table 1. The grading system used in area schools

	Grade	Percentage %
1.	A	Above 85
2.	B	71-85
3.	C	51-70
4.	D	31-50
5.	E	6-30

2. Tool and its description:

Socio-economic status scale:

1. A standardized socio-economic status scale by Aggrawal et al. (2005) was used to assess the family background information of students which includes educational and occupational status of parents, number of siblings, material possessions, kind of locality, presence of farm animals, land holdings, number of earning members in the family, etc.

2. A checklist on “Reasons of Academic Backwardness” was prepared by All India Coordinated Research Project (AICRP) HDFS Scientists to assess the causes for academic backwardness among school children. It was comprised of 40 statements with yes or no options which were mainly divided into three categories: Academics, Health and Familial.

3. Procedure of data collection

The tools were administered on the subjects in the presence of the investigator after getting consent from school authorities. To respond, the subjects were required to tick mark any one alternative from the choices given, which they found most appropriate in their cases (Table 2). Although clear instructions were given for each tool, the investigator always remained available for further clarifications. The respondents were requested to give accurate information and the assurance for the confidentiality of the information was given.

RESULTS

Academic reasons: With regard to academic reasons, Table 2 revealed significant difference among all centers with respect to various aspects of academic reasons. More than half of the children in Hyderabad (59%), Palampur (53.33%), Pantnagar (57%) and Parbhani (70.66%) showed difficulty in understanding the subjects. Respondents from Jorhat (60.8%), Hyderabad (68%), Hissar (67.3%), Pantnagar (64%), Udaipur (71.3%), Parbhani (67.33%) and Dharwad (65.3%) felt some subjects are hard to understand. More children reported inability to answer the questions in the exams from six centers: viz Jorhat, Hyderabad, Hissar, Pantnagar, Parbhani and Dharwad. A majority (73.3%) of respondent from Udaipur, 84 per cent from Parbhani, 71 per cent from Hyderabad reported studies are a burden, boring teaching methods in the classroom and poor written and spoken language respectively affect their progress. The child is called backward not only because he/she is a slow learner but also he/she is not using an effective learning style. Owing to it, h/she may forget lessons at examinations then show low academic achievement and become known as a backward student. According to Dunn and Dunn (1986), multi-style learners tend to achieve more and score better than learners with one or two learning styles. As such, it is inferred that learning styles do make an impact on the students’ overall academic achievement. Respondents from Hyderabad (63%) and Parbhani (74.66%) reported that studies seem to be beyond their capacities. Respondents from Hyderabad (66%), Udaipur (63.33%) and Parbhani (76.66%) stated that they are unable to continue the tasks related to study such as daily homework, or revision of what is being taught in class. The highest number of respondents from Udaipur (73.33%) stated that they have a tendency to postpone studies during examination time. It can be said that there are many direct or indirect factors that affect the overall academic performance of children. Nair et al. (2003) in a similar study found that daily study patterns, family environment, education status of parents, personal distractions and attitude towards studies were observed as factors affecting academic performance. The Annual Status of Education Report

(ASER, 2016), showed that even though the number of rural students attending schools is rising, more than half of the students in fifth grade are unable to read a second grade textbook and are not able to solve simple mathematical problems.

Table 2. Academic reasons that affect the academic performance of the students in the rural villages of the 9 states of India

S.no	Items	AAU, Jorhat (N=125)	ANGRAUH ydarabad	CCSHAU, Hisar	CSKHPKV Palampur	GBPAUT, Pantnagar	MPUAT Udaipur	MAU, Parbhani	PAU, Ludhiana	UAS, Dharwad	Ci Square
1.	I don't understand what teachers teach in the class.	20 (16.0)	88 (59.0)	59 (39.3)	80 (53.33)	86 (57.0)	35 (23.3)	106 (70.66)	25 (16.66)	51 (34.0)	191
2.	I don't like a few subjects; that's why I am lagging behind.	65 (52.0)	108 (72.0)	72 (48.0)	41 (27.33)	70 (47.0)	70 (46.6)	100 (66.66)	50 (33.33)	75 (50.0)	102
3.	I feel that some subjects are hard.	76 (60.8)	102 (68.0)	101 (67.3)	65 (43.33)	96 (64.0)	107 (71.3)	101 (67.33)	58 (38.66)	98 (65.3)	67.5
4.	Studies seem to be beyond to my capacities.	12 (9.6)	95 (63.0)	29 (19.3)	82 (54.67)	65 (43.0)	50 (33.3)	112 (74.66)	6 (4.0)	46 (30.7)	291
5.	I postpone studies for examination time.	29 (23.2)	21 (14.0)	74 (49.3)	63 (42.0)	40 (27.0)	110 (73.3)	30 (20.00)	10 (6.66)	57 (38.0)	228
6.	I feel that studies are a burden.	28 (22.4)	92 (61.0)	19 (12.7)	35 (23.33)	27 (18.0)	65 (43.3)	102 (68.00)	9 (6.0)	38 (25.3)	260
7.	I am unable to continue the tasks related to study.	24 (19.2)	99 (66.0)	65 (43.3)	69 (46.0)	62 (41.0)	95 (63.3)	115 (76.66)	30 (20.0)	44 (29.3)	195

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8.	I am unable to give answers to all questions in the exams.	82 (65.6)	103 (69.0)	107 (71.3)	42 (28.0)	82 (55.0)	34 (22.6)	102 (68.00)	41 (27.33)	83 (55.3)	187
9.	I write slowly.	57 (45.6)	107 (71.0)	92 (61.3)	53 (35.33)	82 (55.0)	26 (17.3)	95 (63.33)	38 (25.33)	91 (60.7)	167
10.	I am afraid of studies.	10 (8.0)	89 (59.0)	12 (8.0)	38 (25.33)	33 (22.0)	21 (14.0)	102 (68.00)	8 (5.33)	36 (24.0)	314
11.	I find teaching methods in the classroom are boring.	10 (8.0)	57 (38.0)	33 (22.0)	18 (12.0)	34 (22.0)	24 (16.0)	126 (84.00)	12 (8.0)	31 (20.7)	347
12.	School hours seem long to me.	29 (23.2)	72 (48.0)	26 (17.3)	53 (35.33)	39 (26.0)	36 (24.0)	75 (50.00)	24 (16.0)	32 (21.3)	92.1
13.	My written and oral language is not good.	40 (32.0)	106 (71.0)	71 (47.3)	41 (27.33)	81 (55.0)	46 (30.6)	115 (76.66)	26 (17.33)	60 (40.0)	194
14.	I feel difficulty to understand my teacher's language.	14 (11.2)	48 (32.0)	12 (8.0)	58 (38.67)	42 (28.0)	15 (10.0)	74 (49.33)	9 (6.0)	49 (32.7)	157
15.	My teacher's behavior seems to be biased.	44 (35.2)	23 (15.0)	33 (22.0)	19 (12.67)	31 (21.0)	18 (12.0)	48 (32.00)	20 (13.33)	31 (20.7)	49
16.	Behavior of my classmates is not good with me.	14 (11.2)	27 (18.0)	18 (12.0)	75 (50.0)	66 (44.0)	10 (6.6)	81 (54.00)	26 (17.33)	31 (20.7)	202

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentage: Significant at 0.01% level of significance

125 Table 3. Familial problems that affect the academic performance of the students in the rural villages in the 9 states of India

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S.no	Items	AAU, Jorhat (N=125)	ANGRAU, Hyderabad	CCSHAU, Hisar	CSKHPKV, Palampur	GBPAUT, Pantnagar	MPUAT, Udaipur	MAU, Parbhani	PAU, Ludhiana	UAS, Dharwad	Chi Square
1	My home environment is not conducive for studies.	36 (28.8)	83 (55.0)	41 (27.3)	39 (26.0)	65 (43.0)	9 (6.0)	12 (8.00)	31 (20.66)	28 (18.7)	15 4
2	My siblings disturb me in my studies.	31 (24.8)	57 (38.0)	53 (35.3)	32 (21.33)	22 (15.0)	34 (22.6)	104 (69.33)	23 (15.33)	19 (12.7)	18 6
3	My family members engage me more in activities other than studies.	7 (5.6)	52 (35.0)	49 (32.7)	30 (20.0)	36 (24.0)	45 (30.0)	129 (86.00)	30 (20.00)	30 (20.0)	28 1
4	I have to do other work due to financial constraints.	13 (10.4)	33 (22.0)	1 (0.7)	29 (19.33)	53 (35.0)	08 (5.3)	94 (62.66)	27 (18.00)	29 (19.3)	23 9
5	Actually my parents don't want me to continue my studies.	4 (3.2)	33 (22.0)	2 (1.3)	30 (20.0)	42 (28.0)	00	75 (50.00)	6 (4.0)	23 (15.3)	23 2
6	My family occupation interrupts me in my studies.	19 (15.2)	32 (21.0)	1 (0.7)	37 (24.67)	27 (18.0)	22 (14.6)	90 (60.00)	20 (13.33)	25 (16.7)	17 7
7	Due to some family reasons I can't spare time for studies.	23 (18.4)	32 (21.0)	13 (8.7)	52 (34.67)	73 (47.0)	41 (27.3)	115 (76.66)	36 (24.0)	40 (26.7)	22 1
8	There is no contribution of my family members in my studies.	18 (14.4)	72 (48.0)	46 (30.7)	79 (52.67)	65 (43.0)	58 (38.6)	135 (90.00)	21 (14.0)	36 (24.0)	26 9
9	Due to lack of education, the expected cooperation from family members is lacking.	38 (30.4)	77 (51.0)	93 (62.0)	57 (38.0)	79 (53.0)	52 (34.6)	125 (83.33)	27 (18.0)	50 (33.3)	18 5
10	My studies are affected due to family disputes.	23 (18.4)	21 (14.0)	10 (6.7)	30 (20.0)	49 (33.0)	05 (3.3)	85 (56.66)	22 (14.66)	34 (22.7)	18 3
11	I can't study because of ill health of family members.	31 (24.8)	11 (7.0)	-	42 (28.0)	55 (37.0)	20 (13.3)	50 (33.33)	20 (13.33)	23 (15.3)	11 7

Comment [EF2]: Reformat so the 10, 11, 12 and 13 are full showing in the left hand column.

1	Proper facilities for studies are not available in my home.	32 (25.6)	28 (19.0)	80 (53.3)	48 (32.0)	76 (51.0)	26 (17.3)	110 (73.33)	25 (16.66)	29 (19.3)	21 9
1	There is no inspiration and guidance in my home for studies.	23 (18.4)	82 (55.0)	75 (50.0)	73 (48.67)	54 (37.0)	49 (32.6)	135 (90.00)	25 (16.66)	30 (20.0)	26 5

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentage. Significant at 0.01% level of significance

Familial reasons: Table 3 throws light on the familial reasons for academically backward children. All centers differ significantly in various aspects of familial reasons. About 83.33 percent, 62 percent, 53 percent and 51 per cent of respondents from Parbhani, Hissar, Pantnagar and Hyderabad respectively reported lack of education and lack of cooperation from family member as the cause of academic backwardness. Lack of a proper facilities for studies in homes was reported by Hisar (53.3%), Pantnagar (51%) and Parbhani (73.33%) centers. Hyderabad, Hisar and Parbani (55.50 and 90% respectively) children reported no inspiration and guidance in their homes for studies as another reason of academic backwardness. Very small percentages of children reported that they are not getting a conducive environment for studies at home, distractions by siblings, involvement in household tasks, financial crisis and financial disputes, poor family support and ill health of family members as causes for academic backwardness. Almost fifty percent of the respondents from Udaipur stated that school hours seem to be long which might hamper their studies. A majority of respondents reported that they don't have any difficulty in understanding the teacher's language and stated that behavior of teacher's is not biased in their perception. A few respondents from Jorhat, Hyderabad, Parbhani and Dharwad reported that they don't like a few subjects and that's why they are lagging behind in those subjects. Lower education status of the father and unhappy families were found to predict poor scholastic performance in adolescents in a study from Kerala (Nair MK, Paul MK, Padmamohan J., 2003). Topor (2010) also found in similar studies that academic achievement is significantly influenced by the socio-economic and cultural milieu of the family and parental involvement in school activities. It was reported that disturbing factors at home including quarrels between parents and siblings, broken homes, substance abuse in parents and being burdened by domestic responsibilities were more prevalent in low achievers compared to high achievers (Florence MD, Asbridge M, Veugelers PJ., 2008). Obeta (2014) found that home environment and socio-economic status of students' families influence the academic performance of children. Home environment includes parenting style, parental expectations, parental involvement in the child's school work and the way in which the child spends time after school, which all affect the child's academic achievement to a large extent.

Comment [EF3]: Check this...it doesn't look like proper citation style.

Comment [EF4]: Check for proper citation style.

152 Table 4. Health problems that affect the academic performance of the students in the rural villages in the 9 states of India
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S.no	Items	AAU, Jorhat (N=125)	ANGRAU, Hyderabad	CCSHAU, Hisar	CSKHPKV, Palampur	GBPAUT, Pantnagar	MPUAT, Udaipur	MAU, Parbhani	PAU, Ludhiana	UAS, Dharwad	Chi Square
1.	My frequent illness hinders my studies.	44 (35.2)	17 (11.0)	26 (17.3)	69 (46.0)	73 (47.0)	4 (2.6)	25 (16.66)	21 (14.0)	33 (22.0)	169
2.	Sufficient food is not available for me.	21 (16.8)	21 (14.0)	-	58 (38.66)	47 (31.0)	-	30 (20.00)	7 (4.66)	15 (10.0)	169
3.	Due to depression I am unable to study properly.	36 (28.8)	33 (22.0)	-	81 (54.00)	67 (44.0)	1 (0.6)	100 (66.66)	13 (8.66)	39 (26.0)	327
4.	My school is far from my home so I get tired.	56 (44.8)	24 (16.0)	32 (21.3)	61 (40.67)	65 (43.0)	60 (40.0)	105 (70.00)	33 (22.0)	48 (32.0)	138
5.	Often I feel tired so I am unable to concentrate on my studies.	38 (30.4)	33 (22.0)	30 (20.0)	51 (34.0)	56 (37.0)	40 (26.6)	125 (83.33)	37 (24.66)	48 (32.0)	195
6.	My frequent absentia in school because of illness affects my studies.	34 (27.2)	19 (13.0)	24 (16.0)	39 (26.0)	49 (33.0)	1 (0.6)	75 (50.00)	15 (10.0)	38 (25.3)	145
7.	I frequently suffer from headache.	29 (23.2)	17 (11.0)	38 (25.3)	97 (64.67)	46 (31.0)	2 (1.3)	79 (52.66)	19 (12.66)	45 (30.0)	239
8.	I frequently suffer from stomachache.	18 (14.4)	23 (15.0)	32 (21.3)	34 (22.67)	46 (31.0)	4 (2.6)	65 (43.33)	17 (11.33)	24 (16.0)	104
9.	I am unable to study properly because of vision problems.	19 (15.2)	13 (9.0)	17 (11.3)	21 (14.0)	41 (28.0)	0	35 (23.33)	11 (7.33)	21 (14.0)	63
10.	I feel physically weak which affects my studies.	20 (16.0)	15 (18.0)	26 (17.3)	24 (16.0)	52 (35.0)	0	90 (60.00)	15 (10.0)	19 (12.7)	238
11.	My studies are affected due to lack of concentration.	53 (42.4)	67 (45.0)	66 (44.0)	42 (28.0)	59 (39.0)	34 (22.6)	115 (76.66)	17 (11.33)	63 (42.0)	167
12.	My studies are affected	19	72	-	74	60	12	95	23	34	271

	because of my worries and restlessness.	(15.2)	(48.0)		(49.33)	(40.0)	(8.0)	(63.33)	(15.33)	(22.7)	
13.	I am unable to hear properly in the classroom.	10 (8.0)	17 (11.0)	13 (8.7)	23 (15.33)	37 (25.0)	0	25 (16.66)	14 (9.33)	45 (30.0)	83

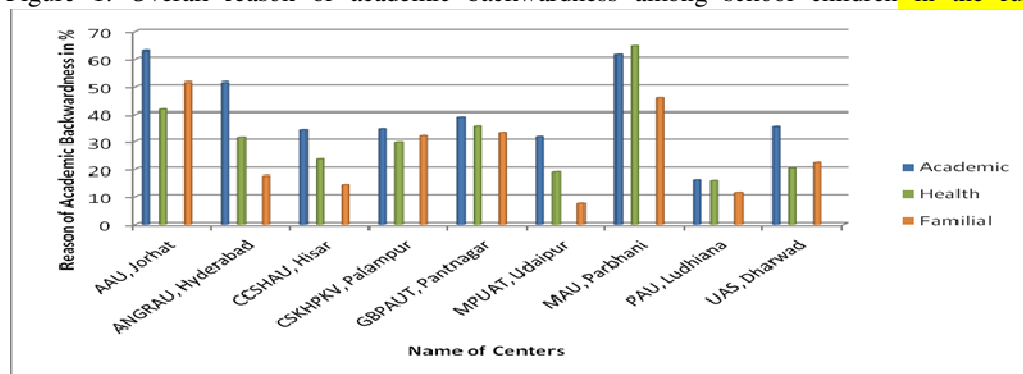
Figures in parenthesis indicate percentage. Significant at 0.01% level of significance

Health reasons: With regard to health reasons, Table 4 showed all centers differ significantly in different aspects related to health reasons causing poor academic performance. Percentage distribution showed tiredness due to long distance from schools was reported by more than one third of respondents from Jorhat (44.8%), Palampur (40.67%), Pantnagar (43%), Udaipur (40%), Parbhani (70%) and Dharwad (32%). More than half (64.67% & 52.66 %) of the respondents from Palampur and Parbhani respectively reported frequent headaches. Sixty per cent of children from Parbhani center reported that physical weakness was a cause which interfered in their studies. In many centers (e.g., Jorhat, Hyderabad, Hissar, Parbhani and Dharwad) more than one third of the children reported lack of concentration. Saraswati et al. (2009) also recognized that social influences, study habits and health factors affect scholastic performance of adolescents. Factors responsible for the backwardness of students are from their family environment, school environment and their own health. So it is evident that social and family factors have a significant influence on the academic functioning of children (Haneesh K.Krishna kumar.p. Sukumaran.S, Riyaz. A., 2013). School absenteeism was reported to be greater in students whose fathers were laborers or self-employed and whose mothers had lower educational levels (Saraswati, Rao, & Hegde, 2009). This may contribute to lower academic performance in children. Apart from socioeconomic factors and parental education, other factors in the family environment also influence academic functioning of children. A healthy family environment fosters academic achievement. Mogasale (2012) also found that factors associated with scholastic backwardness include physical illnesses, below average intelligence, learning disorders, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, psychiatric disorders, and family and school factors.

Comment [EF5]: Use proper citation style.

Comment [EF6]: This whole paragraph is out of place. It should not be part of your results but should appear in the Discussion/Conclusion section of the paper.

174 Figure 1. Overall reason of academic backwardness among school children in the rural villages in the 9 states of India



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176
177 Figure 1 depicts an overall summary of reasons for academic backwardness of rural school children in this jurisdiction. In this
178 study population, participants perceived that the major causes of academic backwardness were academic (39.21 %) followed by health
179 (30.56 %) and familial (24.36 %) reasons. A similar trend was observed across all eight centers except Parbhani. In Parbhani health
180 (64.56 %) was t perceived to be the major cause of poor performance, followed by academic (61.83 %) and familial (45.9 %) reasons.
181

182 The reason for regional differences may be age of the respondents, where very few of them considered study to be a major
183 concern in comparison with physical appearance, entertainment, etc. It may be that the Indian rural children are more confident with
184 their vocation of agriculture. Very few of them are exposed with the various job avenues available to them. When we examine the
185 familial reasons, it can be stated that illiteracy, lack of awareness, ignorance and scarcity of resources in the rural families are the key
186 issues for academic problems. Looking into health causes for academic backwardness, inadequate food, nutritional insecurity and poor
187 access to health facilities account for mush of the perceived problems. Despite several governmental efforts, wide gaps continue to
188 persist in Indian rural education.

189 CONCLUSION

190
191 It can be concluded that causes of low academic achievement are due to academic reasons followed by health and familial
192 causes. There is a dire need to create awareness among children towards the importance of education. Also, it is the responsibility of
193 the teachers, parents and society as a whole to provide the help and necessary guidance and inspiration needed for educationally poor
194 children to progress.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

This study throws light on the problems of academically poor students and the relationship with academic achievement. Various program formulations and implementation of remedial programs can be organized for such students; these may help them build a strong personality and future orientation. There is an urgent need of special education and attention for the academically poor students. It will help in saving huge wastage and stagnation and check the growth in numbers of students lagging behind in studies. It is the duty of the government, society and educational institutions of this democratic nation, to ensure that such children should be identified and then proper education and guidance should be provided to them according to their needs. Hence, any child with difficulty in reading or arithmetic skills or deterioration in academic performance should be evaluated and managed scientifically at the earliest moment. Improvement in academic performance will help the child to excel in future life.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study will help policy makers and human development professionals to gain a deeper understanding of the underlying academic problems among rural students. It will also be helpful for all the academicians, educators, teachers, counselors and other professionals dealing with rural Indian school students. This study will serve as useful reference material for future studies in this field. The data of the study would be highly useful for the teachers and parents to improve academic achievement of each school's students.

Consent: Consent from school authorities was taken for data collection.

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Comment [EF8]: Format of references needs to be checked carefully by a capable editor as it does not conform to academic style.

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