

Factors Influencing the Student's Academic Performance in Senior Secondary Schools in Madhya Pradesh India

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Abstract

Education is considered imperative for not only the progress of the individuals, but also for the development of community and nation. In order to bring about improvements in all aspects, and utilize modern and innovative techniques and methods, individuals need to generate awareness and enhance their educational skills. The main purpose of this research paper is to understand the factors that influence the academic performance of the students in secondary schools in India. In secondary schools, there are numerous factors within school and outside school that influence the academic performance of the students. The main areas that have been taken into account include, factors influencing the academic performance of the students, academic performance and large number of students in class, parental and associated factors relating to academic achievement, contribution of school factors towards the academic performance of students, influence of poverty on academic achievement of students and other causes of low academic achievement.

Keywords: Academic Performance, Education, Learning, Schools, Students, Teachers

INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the imperative aspects that not only inculcates the essential skills, abilities and knowledge among the individuals, but also leads to overall growth and progress of the individuals, community and nation as a whole. An educated person is not only able to accomplish his desired goals and objectives, but is also able to render an efficient contribution towards the well-being of the community. The inculcation of academic knowledge, skills, abilities and proficiency among the individuals is enhanced through learning and academic performance. In secondary schools, there are numerous factors that contribute an important part in enhancing the academic performance of students. The academic performance determines the future goals and objectives of students. What subject they will specialize in colleges and universities, which educational institutions they will get enrolled into, what career opportunities they would take up and so forth.

The determinants of academic performance of the students include, class participation, class assignments, home-work assignments, tests, examinations, and participation in competitions or other events. The pressure of the parents and other individuals upon teachers and school administrators to improve the academic performance has enabled schools to come up with advanced strategies. These include, promoting extra classes for students, introducing effective teaching-learning methods and instructional strategies, using technology, rewarding students for good performance serves as a motivating factor and when they achieve low grades, than they usually tend to work more to make improvements (Nyagosia, 2011). When teachers implement the strategies for rewarding good performance, then they would be motivated to study and improve their academic performance. Secondary school students usually belonging to upper class and wealthy families are aware and aspire to have a good career.

Factors Influencing the Academic Performance of the Students

The factors that influence the academic performance of the students have been stated as follows:

Attitude of the Students – In secondary schools, the students are between 12 to 18 years of age. They possess the abilities to differentiate between what is appropriate and what is inappropriate. Goal-oriented students usually possess positive feelings regarding their school experiences, they possess the traits of discipline, diligence, and resourcefulness, are avid readers and tend to devote less time towards recreation and leisure activities. It is vital for the students to possess positive thinking in terms of their

schools, teachers and academic subjects. With positive attitude, they will be able to dedicate themselves wholeheartedly towards learning and generate the desired academic outcomes (Maina, 2010).

School Resources – Within schools, it is vital to make provision of resources that can be utilized to enhance the academic performance of students. The textbooks, notes, learning materials, hand-outs, technology, library facilities and laboratory facilities, especially in science subjects should include the essential materials. When students will be provided the necessary tools and equipment, they will be able to acquire a better understanding regarding academic concepts and how to perform the experiments. In some cases, especially the students belonging to deprived, marginalized and socio-economically backward sections of the society, cannot afford the books and materials required for learning, hence, they are dependent upon the library facilities and fellow students to obtain the books and other materials (Maina, 2010).

Leadership Aspects – The principal, teachers and the administrative staff members of the school are vested with the authority to implement the managerial functions of planning, organizing, controlling, and directing the activities. The principal primarily has the right to make decisions. The decisions can be made either at one's own discretion or they may consult others and seek ideas and suggestions from teachers and other staff members of the school. The major role of leadership aspects in influencing the academic outcomes of the students is based upon the administration and management of the school. When there are proper rules, policies and management is put into practice in an appropriate manner, then there would be improvement in academic performance of the students (Maina, 2010).

Skills and Abilities of the Teachers – Teachers have an imperative role in influencing the academic performance of the students. They are bestowed with the authority to direct all the classroom activities and administer learning. It is vital for the teachers to possess the traits of professionalism and conscientiousness. They need to possess an approachable nature, listen and provide solutions to the problems experienced by the students. They should possess adequate knowledge and information regarding the subjects that they are teaching, usage of technology, modern and innovative methods in the teaching and learning processes, managing discipline and directing all of the classroom as well as school activities and functions in a well-organized manner. The teachers in some cases are strict, but strictness should be maintained within limits. The main objective of the teachers should only be to enhance the academic performance of the students and lead to their effective development (Maina, 2010).

Classroom Environment – The academic concepts are made known to the students by the teachers within classroom. Teachers have the main job duty of completing the subject syllabus. Therefore, it is vital that classroom environment should be disciplined, and well ordered (Kudari, 2016). Within the classroom, it is vital for the teachers and the students to implement the traits of morality and ethics. It is vital to promote mutual understanding, amiability and co-operation among the teachers and students as well as among the fellow students. The efficiency in the management of the classroom, introduces a well-organized and efficient management of the lesson plans, instructional strategies, teaching-learning processes and so forth. When there is discipline and effective communication among the individuals, then it would help the students learn better and improve their academic performance.

Role of Parents – Home is referred to as the place from where the foundation of learning and education takes place. In order to produce good academic outcomes, it is vital for the parents, children and other family members to encourage a learning atmosphere within homes. For instance, when students experience problems in certain subjects, then parents are responsible for providing help. This help may be in the form of private tuitions or they themselves may teach their children. They make provision of technology and other learning materials at home to enhance the academic performance of their children. Parents play an important role in leading to operative growth and development of their children (Kudari, 2016). In schools, whatever problems that children go through regarding academics and other areas, they normally communicate to their parents. Parents are sources of security, encouragement and help their children in providing solutions to their problems.

Social Circle – Children get enrolled in schools not only to learn academic concepts, but they also

learn, how to interact and socialize with others. Students usually form friendly terms and relationships with the fellow students. Forming a social circle and friendships have a positive effect upon the academic outcomes of the students. As when one has to work on a project or prepare for a test, then group study is in most cases beneficial. It also causes social satisfaction and happiness in one's student life (Kudari, 2016). Forming a social circle proves to be beneficial to the individuals in number of ways, such as, solving academic problems, getting involved in leisure activities, sharing one's joys and sorrows, and so forth.

Psychological and Health Related Factors – Learning is not an easy task for the students. It is essential for them to possess diligence, resourcefulness and conscientiousness to enhance their learning. In order to generate positive academic outcomes, it is essential for the students to maintain their psychological and physical health. When a student is healthy, then he will be able to contribute an active role towards learning. On the other hand, factors such as, stress, anxiety, fear, trauma, depression or physical health problems prove to be impediments within the course of their academic achievement. It is vital for the students to take pleasure and look towards their school and classroom activities from a positive viewpoint. Consuming a healthy and nutritious diet, getting engaged in extra-curricular activities, staying calm and taking pleasure in studying are some of the aspects that help in maintaining good psychological and physical health (Srinivas, & Venkatkrishnan, 2016).

Motivating and Encouraging Students – In academic learning, some of the concepts are difficult to learn and understand. When problems and difficulties are experienced by the students, then they need to obtain assistance from others. When students are unable to achieve the desired grades, then instead of getting angry on them, the teachers and parents need to make provision of help and assistance. They should motivate the students and encourage them to do well in future. They need to understand their weaknesses and help them. When students find certain areas difficult to learn, then teachers should repeat the concepts, provide them class and homework assignments, so that they are able to acquire complete understanding of the concepts (Srinivas, & Venkatkrishnan, 2016).

Visual and Hearing Impairments – Visual and hearing impairments are stated as the disease related factors. There are students, who experience these problems. But when they are achievement-oriented, they do not let these problems become barriers within the course of achievement of their academic goals. When these problems are severe and the students do not have the necessary resources to facilitate learning, then it is likely that their academic performance may get affected in a negative manner. Visual impairment usually imposes problems in handwriting and observing the black-boards. Hearing impairment imposes problems in listening to the instructions and explanations given by the teachers within classrooms and it is associated with poor language development. It impedes the communication abilities of the students and hence their academic performance gets influenced in a negative manner (Srinivas, & Venkatkrishnan, 2016).

Counselling and Guidance Services – In secondary schools, there are numerous problems and difficulties that students experience. Some may even get involved into violent and criminal acts, drug abuse, HIV, other sexually transmitted infections, teenage pregnancies, induced abortions and unemployment. These factors have a direct impact upon not only their academic performance, but also their lives. These may hamper their psychological approach and they may even experience problems of depression, trauma or stress to a major extent. Counselling and guidance services need to be established in schools to help the students to provide solutions to their problems, focus upon their studies, and become responsible members of the community (Maganga, 2016). It is vital for the individuals, who work as counsellors to specialize in a particular area and possess adequate knowledge, expertise and skills. Counselling is related to various areas, such as career, academics, depression, stress, health, family issues and so forth.

Development of Study Skills – In order to enhance one's academic performance, it is vital for the individuals to develop study skills within themselves. The students themselves need to generate awareness regarding study skills, so that they are able to produce desired academic outcomes. Some of the study skills include, memorizing from the textbooks or other materials, making

notes, practicing writing essays and articles, especially in languages, practicing calculations in mathematics and so forth. One of the important areas is, when one is studying, it is vital to completely concentrate towards one's studies. Inability to completely concentrate is one of the factors that leads to undesired academic outcomes. Memorising is regarded as one of the rare techniques, hence, the teachers encourage students to acquire understanding of the concepts instead of memorizing.

Time Management – Students in secondary schools have a busy schedule, hence it is vital for them to generate awareness in terms of effective time management. Research has indicated that the normal schedule of the secondary school students comprise of school hours, then they need to spend some time in completion of home-work assignments. They also get involved in some kinds of extra-curricular activities and sports. Playing and getting engaged in creative activities, not only help them concentrate better, but they are able to stimulate their mind-sets. For the secondary school students, it is important to get engaged in extra curricular activities and for this purpose, they need to implement proper time management skills. It is essential for the students to create a balance between all the tasks and activities. The activities that are more important should be given more time and lesser amount of time can be spent on the activities that are less important.

Home Environment – The home environment should be amiable and pleasant in order to generate appropriate academic outcomes. Within home, among the family members, it is vital to initiate measures to form effective terms and relationships. They should communicate with each other in an appropriate manner and minimize the occurrence of conflicts and disputes. Research has indicated that conflicts may take place among siblings in terms of use of technology or books or stationary, hence, it is vital for the parents to ensure that all children are provided with the necessary materials to enhance their learning. The availability of materials and amiable environmental conditions with the home are essential for the students to focus upon studies and generate the desired academic outcomes.

Teaching-Learning Methods – The teaching-learning methods and strategies should be appropriate and encouraging to the students. The teachers in school are the ones that contribute an imperative part in promoting learning among the students. It is essential for them to ensure that the teaching methods used should prove to be beneficial to the students.

For instance, if the students are able to learn better through dictation of notes, then teachers should provide notes. If the students are able to learn better through verbal explanation, then they should promote verbal explanation and so forth. Within home, if students are taking private tuitions of certain academic subjects such as, mathematics or science, or their parents teach them, then too, it is vital for the parents and tutors to make sure that effectual teaching learning methods are implemented, which may encourage learning among the students and help them understand better.

Approachability and Professionalism – The teachers in school are required to be approachable and professional in their conduct. They are the ones, whom students approach, in case they have any problems and difficulties. When the teachers are friendly and generous, then the students feel comfortable in not only approaching them, but also in clarifying their doubts. The professionalism and approachable attitude on the part of the teachers is of utmost significance in influencing the academic performance of the students in a positive manner. On the other hand, at home, parents or tutors are the ones, who supervise their studies, hence, it is vital for them to be professional in their conduct. Teaching should be implemented in a calm and pleasant manner. Any kind of harsh attitude should be avoided, as it may demotivate the students.

Conclusion

As it has been understood that education is imperative for leading to overall progress of the individuals, communities and nation. In order to attain educational qualifications and to enhance one's skills and abilities, it is vital to do well academically and obtain good grades. There are number of factors within school as well as outside school that affects the academic performance of the students. Within school, the factors mainly include, professionalism, skills and abilities on the part of the teachers, provision of library facilities, laboratory, appropriate teaching-learning processes and instructional strategies, effective

communication between the individuals, formation of good terms and conditions, usage of technology and evaluation methods. The class and homework assignments and tests are regarded as aspects that determine the understanding of the students as well as utilization of teaching methods by the teachers.

The other factors that influence the academic performance of the students are home environment, financial position of their families, conditions of poverty, provision of tuitions and assistance at home, counselling and guidance, occurrence of conflicts and disputes, employment opportunities, household chores, needs and requirements of other family members and violent and criminal acts. The home environmental conditions and financial position of the families have been favourable as well as unfavourable towards the academic outcomes of the students. Finally, it can be stated that in order to achieve good academic outcomes, it is vital for the students to be dedicated and sincere towards their studies, the home environmental conditions should be peaceful and amiable, and teachers should be approachable in attitude and implement teaching-learning processes and instructional strategies in a beneficial manner.

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