

Determinants of Educational Problems of Rural Pre-Adolescents (9-12 Years)

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INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the basic social forces in the formation and reconstruction of society, state or nation. Besides home the most significant agency of education is school which not only includes academics but other life tasks training as well. Good (1959) defines the educational environment as the sum of physical, social, emotional and mental factors that contribute to the total teaching-learning situations. However, the existing village schools meant to cater to these needs in rural areas are not functioning properly. They are far from efficient and thus giving rise to various kinds of maladjustments in the form of educational problems.

Educational problems are the indices of maladjustment and have adverse effect on progress and achievement of students and often than not lead to their dropping out. Some of the determinants of educational problems can be listed as financial constraints (Rice, 1984; Subrahmanyam, 1985), home environment (Pangotra, 1986; Goyal and Dhaliwal, 1995; Khare 1996), parent-child relationship (Maccoby and Martin, 1983; Parker and Asher, 1987) and school environment (Kaur, 1988; Khurana, 1988). Keeping these in mind, the study was conducted with the following objectives.

1. To identify the various educational problems faced by rural pre-adolescents (9-12 years).
2. To study the relationship of various factors such as socio-economic, parent-child relationship, home environment, school environment with the identified educational problems of rural pre-adolescents (9-12 years).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present study was conducted in two purposively selected villages of Ludhiana district. The sample comprised of 200 randomly

selected rural pre-adolescents (9-12 years, equally distributed over the four age groups and the two sexes), their parents and teachers. The educational problems of the respondents were identified by using Shah and Lakhera's Educational Problems Questionnaire (1989). Socio-Economic status scale (Kulshreshta, 1981) was used to ascertain the socio-economic status of rural families. Chauhan and Khokhar's Multi-Dimensional Parenting Scale (1985) was used to determine the parenting styles of rural parents. The home environment of the respondents was assessed by using Mohite's Home Environment Inventory (1989). To determine the socio-emotional climate of the school, Sinha and Bhargawa's Socio-Emotional School Climate Inventory (1994) was used. Besides these, participatory observation method was used to gather relevant information.

Arithmetic mean, percentages, standard error, coefficient of variation and correlation methods were used to analyse the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

It could be observed from table 1 that majority of the respondents came from low socio-economic status families and poor educational background. Majority of the fathers of the respondents (57.5%) were engaged in labour and as far as their mothers were concerned 60 percent were engaged in labour.

Mean Scores of Selected Variables: It is evident from table 2 that respondents faced a 'high' number of educational problems. It was found that most of the respondents belonged to families of 'low' socio-economic status. This was in line with the nature of home environment which was generally found to be of 'poor' level.

The mean score for the two domains of parent-child relationship and school environment were found to fall in the 'non-deviant' and 'average' category respectively (Table 2).

Table 1: Background Information of the Respondents

S.No.	Variables	n=200	(%)
1.	Type of Family		
	Joint	87	(41.50)
	Nuclear	117	(58.50)
2.	Size of Family		
	Small (3-6)	121	(60.50)
	Medium (7-10)	68	(34.00)
	Large (>10)	11	(5.50)
3.	Parents' Education		
	a) Father		
	Illiterate	70	(35.00)
	Primary	74	(37.00)
	Upto Matric	49	(24.50)
	Above Matric	7	(3.50)
	b) Mother		
	Illiterate	65	(32.50)
	Primary	77	(38.50)
	Upto Matric	56	(28.10)
	Above Matric	2	(1.00)
4.	Siblings' Education (n=399)		
	Illiterate	40	(10.02)
	Primary	200	(50.13)
	Upto Matric	73	(18.29)
	Above Matric	14	(3.51)
	Drop-outs	72	(18.05)
5.	Parents' Occupation		
	a) Father		
	Labour	115	(57.50)
	Farming	30	(15.00)
	Service	50	(25.00)
	Business	5	(2.50)
	b) Mother		
	Labour	78	(39.00)
	Housewife	120	(60.00)
	Business	2	(1.00)
6.	Family Income		
	Below 1500	116	(58.00)
	1500-2500	61	(30.50)
	2500-3500	17	(8.50)
	Above 3500	6	(3.00)
7.	Land-holdings		
	Landless	147	(73.50)
	Less than 1 acre	41	(20.50)
	1-10 acre	10	(5.00)
	11-20 acre	2	(1.00)
8.	Caste		
	Upper caste	69	(34.50)
	Lower caste	131	(65.50)

Frequency Distribution/Percentages of Educational Problems: Majority of the respondents faced 'high' level of educational problems (84 percent). Some of the respondents faced 'medium' level of educational problems (16 percent) where as there were no children facing a 'low' level of educational problems.

(Table 3).

Educational problems related to organisation and administration faced by the respondents were maximum; followed by educational problems related to teacher and teaching; still less were educational problems related to social and educational atmosphere. In comparison, least educational problems faced by rural pre-adolescents were the ones related to cultural and historical taboos.

Relationship of Educational Problems With Selected Variables

Table 4 shows that home environment, socio-economic status and school environment are negatively and significantly related with educational problems of the rural preadolescent children.

Educational problems were not found to be correlated with the two domains of parent-child relationship, i.e. negative and positive as the coefficient of correlation is 0.044 and 0.000, respectively. However, socio-economic status, home environment and school environment have been found to be directly responsible and act as potential contributors towards the incidence of educational problems. It may be inferred that better socio-economic status of the family contributes to minimising the level of educational problems. Similarly children who came from family with a better home environment are less likely to face educational problems. Further an enriched school environment seems to motivate children resulting in the decrease in the level of educational problem that they encounter. These results are supported by those as reported by Subrahmanyam (1985) and Grover and Grover (1988).

Home environment was observed to be the most significant correlate of educational problems, correlation coefficient being -0.545. It was further subjected to in-depth analysis (Table 5) to find out which of its components contributed most to the educational problems.

The language stimulation was found to be 'inappropriate' in majority of the families since 56.07% of the total statements (1400) checked out with 200 respondents (mothers) reflected 'inappropriate' response for the language stimulation (Table 5). Such a situation is likely to pose

Table 2: Means, standard error and coefficients of variation with respect to educational problems (EP), Socio-economic status (SES), +ve parent-child relationship (PCR+), -ve parent-child relationship (PCR-), home environment (HE) and school environment (SE) for the total sample (n=200) irrespective of age and sex

S.No.	Variations	Levels*	Mean Scores ($\bar{X}$)	$\pm$ Standard error of the sample ($\pm S.E.$)	Coefficient of variation (C.V.)
1.	Educational problems	High	91.11	7.47	8.20
2.	Socio-economic status	Low	44.45	14.06	31.63
3.	Parent-child relationship (+)	Non-deviant	52.63	9.34	17.75
4.	Parent-child relationship (-)	Non-deviant	52.26	11.58	22.16
5.	Home environment	Poor	9.71	2.51	22.10
6.	School environment	Average	46.87	6.84	14.59

Levels :

Educational problems : High (85-126); Medium (43-84); Low (0-42)

Socio-economic status : Low (Below 60); Middle (60-110); High (above 110)

Parent-child relationship (+) : Deviant parenting (below 40); Non-deviant (40 and above)

Parent-child relationship (-) : Deviant parenting (60 and below); Non-deviant parenting (below 60)

Home environment : Poor (0-10); Moderate (11-19); High (20-24)

School environment : Poor (0-23); Average (24-46); High (47-70)

Table 3: Frequency Distribution/Percentages of Children Facing Educational Problems

S.No.	Type of Educational Problems	Level (Score range)	n	%
1.	Related to teacher and teaching	High (41-61)	143	(71.50)
		Medium (21-40)	57	(28.50)
2.	Related to social and educational atmosphere	High (29.41)	115	(57.50)
		Medium (15.28)	85	(42.50)
3.	Related to organisation and administration	High (13-18)	172	(86.00)
		Medium (7-21)	28	(14.00)
4.	Related to cultural and historical taboos	High (6-7)	93	(46.50)
		Medium (3-5)	104	(52.00)
		Low (0-2)	3	(1.50)
Total		High (85-126)	168	(84.00)
		Medium (43-84)	32	(16.00)

Table 4: Estimates of coefficients of correlations among the variables for the total samples (n=200)

S.No.	Variables	SES	PCR+	PCR-	HE	SE
1.	EP	-0.178	0.000	0.044	-0.545*	-0.154*
2.	SES		-0.039	0.078	0.118	0.034
3.	PCR+			-0.479*	-0.084	0.184*
4.	PCR-				-0.117	-0.107
5.	HE					0.035

Critical value of r at 0.05 level is 0.139

* Significant at 0.05 level

1. Educational problems (EP)

2. Socio-economic status (SES)

3. Parent-child relationship (PCR)

4. Home environment (HE)

problems in the understanding ability of the children at school, thus leading to various adjustment problems later on. Similar results have been noted for physical environment and encouragement of social maturity.

The results revealed that in as few as 19.08

per cent cases, families were found to be providing adequate variety of stimulation to the child while as many as 80.92 per cent cases were observed to be negative on providing adequate variety of stimulation in the form of parents' involvement with the child's academic tasks and taking their children for an outing. This might be one of the reasons for the children of these problems having a high score on educational problems. In all aspects of home environment maternal attitude and disciplining was the only aspect where 'appropriate' responses outnumbered the 'inappropriate' ones.

A home environment inadequate in all or any of the required aspects is likely to make a potentially promising child a crippled personality in regards to his abilities and behaviour adjustment (Virmani 1991).

Table 5: Frequency Distribution/percentages of appropriate and inappropriate responses/observations with respect to the statements of various components of home environment (n=200)

S.No.	Subscales of home inventory	Number of statements in the subscales	Number of appropriate responses/ observations	(%)	Number of inappropriate responses/ observations	(%)
1.	Language stimulation	7	615	(43.93)	785	(56.07)
2.	Physical environment	4	350	(43.75)	450	(56.25)
3.	Encouragement for social maturity	2	162	(40.50)	238	(59.50)
4.	Variety of stimulation	6	229	(19.08)	971	(80.92)
5.	Maternal attitude and disciplining	5	595	(59.50)	405	(40.50)

KEY WORDS Educational Problems. Pre-adolescent Children. Socio-economic Status. School Environment. Parent-child Relationship. Home Environment.

ABSTRACT The present study was undertaken to identify the educational problems as faced by rural pre-adolescents and to study the relationship of selected variables viz. socio-economic status, home environment, school environment and parent-child relationship with the identified educational problems. The sample comprised 200 pre-adolescents (9-12 years in age), their parents and teachers, randomly selected from two villages of Ludhiana district, equally distributed over four age groups (n = 50) and the two sexes. Educational problem questionnaire (Shah and Lakhera, 1989) was used to identify the educational problems of respondents. Socio-economic status scale (Kulshreshta, 1981) was used to ascertain socio-economic status of rural families. Multidimensional parenting scale (1985) and Mohite's home environment inventory (1989) were used to determine the parenting styles and home environment, respectively. Sinha and Bhargawa's socio-emotional school climate inventory (1994) was used to determine the socio-emotional climate of school. Results revealed that a majority of the respondents faced 'high' level of educational problems, followed by respondents who faced 'medium' level of educational problems and none were found to fall in the low 'category'. The incidence of educational problems was found to be affected by home environment, socio-economic status, school environment and not by parent-child-relationship.

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