

## Academic Achievement, Behavioral and Emotional Problem among Marginalised Children

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### ABSTRACT

**Background:** Socio-economic status of a family is a key factor in parenting and nurturing as well as schooling and education of children. Due to socio-economic disadvantage, they suffer from inferiority and marginalisation from the mainstream of this society. These marginalised populations become incompetence and have difficulty in coping with the educational system, resulted in lower academic achievement and further higher level of behavioral problems and emotional problems. **Aim:** To compare academic achievement, behavioural and emotional problem in marginalised children living at the hostel and living with parents. **Sample:** The sample size consisted of sixty children, aged between 8-13 years, studying in class 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup>, out of which thirty were living in the hostel and another thirty were living with parents. **Methods:** The children were examined for behavioural and emotional problems by using DPCL, and progress report used for academic achievement. **Results:** The statistical findings showed that the children living with parents had the lesser severity of emotional problems than children living at the hostel, but both had no significantly differ in terms of behavioural problems and academic achievements. The children with less behavioural and emotional problems found better in academic achievement than the children having more behavioural and emotional problems.

**Keywords:** Academic achievement, Behavior problem, Emotional problem, marginalised Children

Children from socially advantaged backgrounds tend to achieve higher educational outcomes than children from more disadvantaged backgrounds (Albrecht & Albrecht, 2011). Children from advantaged social backgrounds tend to achieve higher levels of social economic status as an adult than children from more disadvantaged backgrounds (Alwin and Thornton 1984; Duncan et al. 1998). Schools are expected to prevent violence substance use and other disruptive

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behaviours that are clearly linked to academic achievement (Fleming et al., 2005; Malecki & Elliott, 2002; Wentzel, 1993). Many studies related to socioeconomic status reveals that because of lower household incomes, children from socially disadvantaged families obviously have fewer resources than children from socially advantaged families, and this lack of resources provides obstacles that tend to reduce educational attainment (Becker and Tomes 1986: Biblarz and Raftery 1999: Goldrick-Rab 2006).

Chambers (1991) has identified five dimensions of deprivation: poverty proper (lack of income and assets): physical weakness (under-nutrition, sickness, disability, lack of strength): isolation (ignorance, illiteracy, lack of peripheral location): vulnerability (to contingencies, to becoming poorer): and powerlessness. Based on the study of the priorities of the poor people, he has articulated a hierarchy of priorities consisting of survival, security, and self-respect.

Nationwide surveys by the National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT) and Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) of the problems of Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST) students have shown that their socio-economic and cultural backgrounds in school and home are not supportive, while their aspirations have increased. They also, suffer from feelings of inferiority and incompetence and have difficulty in coping with the demands of the educational system as well as have a long way to go (Chitnis, 1981). Education has an urgent need to learn more about the role of behavioral, social skills, and character in improving academic achievement (Meece, Anderman & Anderman, 2006). In this study, the term 'marginalised children' used for the student belongs to SC and ST category.

### ***Academic achievement***

Academic achievement represents performance outcomes that indicate the extent to which a person has accomplished specific goals that were the focus of activities in instructional environments, specifically in school, college and university (Steinmayr, Meißner, Weidinger, and Wirthwein, 2014). Academic achievement is the after effect of education. Examination and Continuous assessments are the best way to measure the academic achievement of students. Academic achievement defined as the level of schooling one has successfully completed, and an ability to attain success in own self-studies.

Rothstein (1998) used the three terms: academic performance, achievement, and outcomes interchangeably in their studies. However, Mark and Arnley (1999) were careful in the use of the terms. They distinguished among academic performance achievement and outcomes in their words. In fact, academic achievement and labor market outcome were clearly differentiated. They observed that achieving well in school had a significant influence on employment and learning outcome for young people many years after leaving school What this suggests is that academic achievement improves or brings about the outcome.

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Simpson and Weiner (1989) contended that achievement test intends to measure systematic education and training in school occupation towards a conventionally accepted pattern of skills or knowledge. A school's academic achievement considered as a multifaceted construct that comprises different domains of learning. The field of academic achievement is very wide-ranging and covers a broad variety of educational outcomes; the definition of academic achievement depends on the indicators used to measure it. Bong and Skaalvik (2003) described academic self-concept as an individual's knowledge and perceptions about him- or herself in achievement situations.

Children's perceptions of their scholastic competence have also been found to be a robust predictor of their academic achievement (Muijs, 1997; Scales, Sesma, & Bolstrom, 2003; Trautwein, Lüdtk, Köller, & Baumert, 2006). Although self-esteem is less related to academic achievement (Trautwein et al., 2006), it reflects children's mood and general motivation (Harter, 1999) Character Education (Berkowitz & Bier, 2004) and other social-emotional learning (SEL) interventions (Zins, Bloodworth, Weissberg, Walberg 2007) have increasingly been noted for enhancing academic achievement. Berkowitz and Bier (2004) and Zins *et. al.* (2007) also noted the importance of formative evaluation in carrying out successful character and SEL interventions. A brief character assessment that had predictive value with respect to academic outcomes would be useful as a formative evaluation tool. This seems especially important in contexts in which additional resources are allocated for low-income and underachieving students for academic and social-emotional enrichment.

### ***Behavioural problems***

Behaviour is mainly concerned about an adjustment in the environment. In children, during growing age, people try to put good manners about society acceptable activities, such as respect and obedience of elder, kindness towards younger, helping and cooperation, helps in sustaining culture, look after the parents during old age, etc. At this age children are highly active to imitate the action as imitating connotation of dialogue. They cannot defer the action either in good or bad but perform sometimes ignorance or to learn the after effects (Kapur, 1995).

Trotmana, Tuckera, and Martyn (2015) conducted a qualitative investigation with ethnographic approach identified as having the greatest bearing on negative pupil behaviour was the issue of transition. While many pupils imagine the transition to key stage 4 (ages 15–16) as a positive departure from their previous behavioural histories to a world of qualification opportunities, personal commitment, future employment and adulthood, this is not matched by the perceptions of many of the teaching staff. In particular, the move from primary school to secondary school was seen by many respondents as a traumatic period of transition and an underlying cause for negative behaviour. Respondents report that, when left unchecked, difficulties associated with primary– secondary school transition were often amplified throughout the first three years of secondary schooling. The classroom behaviour problems, as well as scholastics difficulties,

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appear to be related to socio-economic status, to the expectations of parents and teacher regarding the child's school performance and behaviour and to the inherent learning disabilities in the child (Kapur, 1995).

In general, outcomes is used for various purpose e.g. for academic achievement, learning, behavioural, attitude. In general, the outcome means measures the statement which provides for both academic performance/achievement and/or attitude learning outcome also provides for measurement of specific actions designed to achieve some future behaviour. Learning outcome also provides for measurement of specific actions designed to achieve some future behaviour. The behavioural problem of students in primary and secondary schools increasingly attract the attention of not only of teachers, pedagogues, and psychologists in school but also the general public. At school and other educational and cultural institutions problematic way of behaving of students is usually defined as problematic behaviour ("problem children"), or as child neglect and sanctioned according to regulations on disciplinary measures, while in the society severe forms of problematic behaviour are regulated by the criminal law and milder forms of law of misdemeanors (Krnetić & Šević 2015). The behaviour most often occurs may be intensely teasing context such as in child's grabbing others toy, scratching, spoiling, theft. All these are maladaptive behaviour and its affect further coming life. The behaviour may also be viewed as socially maladaptive in that it is atypical and thus may bring about undesirable social consequences (e.g. being teased or ostracized) (Kapur 1995).

### ***Emotional Problem***

Emotions have been described as is a "positive or negative experience that is associated with a particular pattern of physiological activity (Schacter, Gilbert & Wegner 2011). The physiology of emotion is closely linked to the arousal of the nervous system with various states and strengths of arousal relating, apparently, to particular emotions. Extroverted people are more likely to be social and express their emotions, while introverted people are more likely to be more socially withdrawn and conceal their emotions. Emotion is often the driving force behind motivation, positive or negative (Gaulin & McBurney 2004).

Several Indian school surveys in the past decade have recorded prevalence rates of emotional problems that range between 20 to 50 percent (Kapur 1985, Venugopal & Pabhakar 1988). Relationships among classmates are also regarded to be an important learning environment factor, and research into peer relationships. In general suggests that these are related to the social and emotional development of children and adolescents (Parker & Asher, 1987). Leeper (1970) suggested that emotions act as motives because they are mildly aroused most of the time, controlling our behaviour without our awareness. In this motivational theory of emotion, he argues that emotions give behaviour (and mental activity) its goal-directedness, allowing us to choose between alternatives, for example, or to solve problems, or to endure sanctions in order to gain a reward.

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Symptoms of children aged 10-11 years were also linked to increased attributions of anger to facial expressions with low-intensity happiness (Richards, Frence, Nash, Hadwin & Donnelly, 2007). Various researchers have argued that the preschools years constitute a landmark period for the development of emotion understanding and that the acquisition of emotional knowledge in this stage of development has significant implications for children's long-term social competence (Denham et al., 2003; Schultz et al. 2001). Consistent with research in middle childhood and adolescence, several studies have found links between behaviour problems and emotional processing in preschoolers. Difficulties in emotion recognition in children with externalizing and internalizing symptoms might be understood more clearly by exploring emotional processing difficulties evident during this early stage of development (Chronaki, Garner, Hadwin, Thompson, Chin, & Sonuga-Barke, 2013).

Some studies have demonstrated that through intervention it is possible to improve early childhood teachers' emotional skills, which would help them cope more effectively with the emotional problems that they encounter in and out of the classroom (Heller et al. 2012; Raver et al. 2008). The findings of several studies indicate that students who feel emotionally supported by their teachers are more likely to experience enjoyment of learning and motivation for academic success, to display on-task behaviour and to have fewer emotional problems (Bru *et al.* 1998, Fraser & Fisher, 1982; Merrett & Wheldall, 1987; Moos, 1979; Murberg, 2004; Thuen & Bru, 2004).

### *Hypotheses*

The followings were hypothesized to check the statistical significance.

1. There is no significant difference between the academic achievement of students live with parents and students live in the hostel ( $1H_0$ ).
2. There is no significant difference between the behavioural problem of students live with parents and students live in the hostel ( $2H_0$ ).
3. There is no significant difference between the emotional problem of students live with parents and students in the hostel ( $3H_0$ ).

## **METHODS**

### *Participants*

All participants belonged to marginalised section of Indian society. All participants (N=60) were the residence of Delhi region. These randomly selected participants children age ranged from 8 to 13 years and were studying in class 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup>. The total participant was sixty (N=60), out of which thirty children ( $n_1 = 30$ ) living at the hostel (Group 1) and another thirty children ( $n_2 = 30$ ) living with parents (Group 2).

### ***Measures***

#### **1. Measures of behavioural and emotional problems**

The Development Psychopathology Checklist (DPCL) developed by Kapoor (1995) was used for identification of the behavioural and emotional problem. The DPCL is the first ever checklist to include items of background variables in the developmental context to psychopathology. It is a simple, brief, yet comprehensive tool that can be used across disorders, age, and gender. It is unique and simple temperament subsection based on ancient Indian thought, has a provision of biological, psychological and social dimensions in addition to studying competency (Kapur, Barnabas, Reddy, Rozario & Uma, 2011). The DPCL has 124 items and six subsections. The subsections are – (i) Developmental History (Items 1-10), (ii) Developmental Problems (Items 11-28), (iii) Psychopathology (Items 29-78), (iv) Psychosocial Factors (Items 79-101), (v) Temperament Profile (Items 102-118), (vi) Social supports and assets of the child (Items 119-124) (*op.cit.*, pp. 6-8). Item no.11-28 (related to developmental problems) and item no.79-86 (related to psychosocial factors) of the DPCL were used for identification and data collection related to behavioural problems in the children. And, item no. 87-101 (related to interaction in the family) of the DPCL were used for identification and data collection related to emotional problems of the children.

#### **2. Measures of academic achievement**

Academic achievement was measured by standardised achievement test developed for school subjects. What this means is that academic achievement is measured in relation to what is attained at the end of a course, since it is the accomplishment of medium or long term objective of education. Every school does a proper and continuous evaluation (formative and summative) of their every student as a part of the academic responsibility. On the basis of this evaluation, school administration provides a progress report to students as per their academic performance and promotion of students to the next higher class. The progress report contains a statement of the marks of subjects of study as per the academic performance of the student. So, the final marks statement of the child's progress report given by the school was used as the measure of academic achievement.

### ***Procedure***

The consent of parents, guardian and/or wardens of the children was obtained. The instructions given in manual were strictly followed. The responses as given by the parents, guardian, and warden to DPCL were filled personally and properly. The aim of the data analysis was to compare the academic achievement, behavioural problem and emotional problem of children living at the hostel (Group 1) with children living with parent (Group 2). Three null hypotheses were framed to test its statistical significance by applying 't' - test.

## RESULTS

*Table 1. Comparison of Academic Achievement (data obtained through marks statement)*

Category	n/N	Mean	SD	t	df	p	95% confidence level
Group 1	30	65.4666	8.6051	0.54	58	0.59	The calculated t value is 0.54. The table $t_{60}$ value is 2.000.
Group 2	30	66.9	11.5739				
Total	60	66.1833	10.089				

The t score of academic achievement of the children was calculated to find out the significant differences between Group 1 (CLAH) and Group 2 (CLWP). The calculated t value is 0.54, which is less than table value (2.000). Hence, the first null hypothesis ( $1H_0$ ) statistically accepted. The calculated t value indicates non-existence of a significant difference between the academic achievement of CLAH and CLWP.

*Table 2 Comparison of Behavioural Problem (data obtained through DPCL)*

Category	n	Mean	SD	t	df	p	95% Confidence level
Group 1	30	21.066	11.255	0.013	58	0.897	The calculated t value is 0.013. The table $t_{60}$ value is 2.000.
Group 2	30	14.93	6.807				
Total	60	17.999	9.031				

The t score was calculated to check the significance of differences in behavioral problems between Group 1 (CLAH) and Group 2 (CLWP). The calculated t value (0.013) is less than the table ' $t_{60}$ ' value (2.000). Hence, the second null hypothesis ( $2H_0$ ) statistically accepted. The calculated t value indicates non-existence of a significant difference between the behavioural problem of CLAH and CLWP.

*Table 3 Comparison of Emotional Problem (data obtained through DPCL)*

Category	n/N	Mean	SD	t	df	p	95% Confidence Interval
Group 1	30	9.0667	4.1267	8.779	58	0.0001	The calculated t value is 8.779. The table $t_{60}$ value is 2.000.
Group 2	30	5.533	2.250				
Total	60	7.29	3.14				

This part of the result is related to the emotional problems of Group 1 (CLAH) and Group 2 (CLWP). The calculated t value (8.779) is very higher than the respective table 't' value (2.000). Hence the third null hypothesis ( $3H_0$ ) is statistically rejected. The calculated t value indicates the existence of a significant difference between the emotional problem of CLAH and CLWP.

## DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows that the mean and standard deviation (SD) of academic achievement of children living in the hostel is almost equal. Parker & Asher (1987) found that the peer relationship has an important learning environment factor among classmate and these are related to the social and emotional development of children and adolescence. Anderson *et. al.* (2000) noted some other

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existence of fact influence the academic achievement the effects of school size and its impact on children behaviour arising from pupils' feelings of loss, uncertainty, and insecurity (including frequent changes of subject teachers, complex timetabling requiring significant movements around a school and losing contact with significant peers). It could be argued that parents and wardens are almost equally concerned (in providing educational help, educational resources, tuition, etc.) and attentive towards the academic achievement of the child.

Table 2 shows that the mean and standard deviation (SD) of behavioural problems in CLAH is higher than CLWP. But t-test shows that existence of this difference is statistically not significant. It means both groups (CLAH and CLWP) have the same degree of behavioural problems. It could be argued that parents and wardens affect the children's behaviour in the same way. Children are like sponges, they mimic everything a parent does and incorporated what they see. It is important that parents and wardens should set the right examples for the children. Negative examples can be detrimental to a child's development and can lead to bad behaviour. So, parents and wardens should always need to reinforce desired behaviour for the improvement in the children.

Table 3 shows that the mean and standard deviation of the emotional problem of CLAH is higher than CLWP. And the t-value indicates the rejection of the third null hypothesis ( $3H_0$ ). However, Chronaki *et. al.* (2013) found difficulties in emotion recognition in children with externalizing and internalizing symptoms might be understood more clearly by exploring emotional processing difficulties evident during this early stage of development. There may various causes such as poverty, marital disharmony, parent's education, use of alcohol in the family, etc. It could be argued that the manifestation of emotional disturbance is due several factors like- heredity, brain disorder, diet, stress, family functioning, etc. and many of these factors are not similar for both CLAH and CLWP.

It can be seen from above tables that the mean of academic achievement of both CLAH and CLWP is almost same, but not in the case of emotional and behavioural problems. Therefore, it is clear that children living with parents have a lesser degree of behavioural and emotional problems. But, the calculation of t-value indicates only the difference in emotional problems of CLAH and CLWP is statistically significant. It means the CLWP have significantly less emotional problems than CLAH. However, the findings of Miles and Stipek (2006) regarding the children's perceptions of behavioural conduct may relate to academic achievement. Poor behavioural conduct, indicating discipline problems and conflicts with others, may undermine academic achievement. Zeedyk *et. al.* (2003) pointed out that increased level of importance placed on 'rules of behaviour' experienced in larger rather than smaller schools and the concomitant decrease in tolerance of misbehaviour, as children move from elementary to high school settings. Placed alongside this, a much greater emphasis is given to ability, success, and competition at the expense of individual effort and the improvement of performance. It is argued



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that negative experiences of transition affect not only academic performance but also the well-being and mental health of young people. Malecki and Elliot (2002) found that positive behaviours such as social skills were more related to academic achievement than problem behaviours. It means the positive behaviour (social skill, discipline, kindness, cooperative, manners, extra curriculum activity etc.) supports academic development.

### CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The current research is important in advancing knowledge about the academic achievement, behavioral and emotional problem of children living with parents and children living at the hostel. While the current study included only a small numbers of children and their parents or wardens, it does provide evidence for nurturing of children by parents at home is preferable over nurturing by wardens or caretakers at the hostel, and it helps into reduction and minimizing the emotional problem in children. In the nurture role, parents take care of their children's basic needs (such as food, medical care, shelter, clothing, etc., as well as give love, attention, understanding, acceptance, time, and support) in a better way than wardens or caretakers which reflect as high degree of emotional and behavioral problems in CLAH than CLWP. In summary, the current research concluded the followings:

1. The children living with parents have the same degree of behavioural problems as the children living at the hostel.
2. The children living with parents have the lesser severity of emotional problems than children living at the hostel.
3. There is no significant difference in academic achievement of children living with parent and children living at the hostel.
4. The academic achievement of children with less behavioural and emotional problems is higher than the children having more behavioural and emotional problems.

The development and integration of neurophysiologic, cognitive, and behavioural processes over the first five years of life help children transition from being primarily "other-regulated" (by parents) as infants and toddlers to increasingly "self-regulated" as preschoolers (Calkins & Fox, 2002). Self-regulation, which is one of the major achievements of early childhood, refers to the process through which children increasingly acquire the ability to regulate their own arousal, emotion, and behaviour (Kopp, 1982; Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000).

Patterson (1971) was geared counseling toward teaching a parent to modify their responses to the child in order to affect the child's subsequent behaviour. The stress was on the importance of learning theory in understanding parent-child behaviour. Parents are taught behavioural strategies in order to modify their child's behaviour and re-establish positive relationships within the family (Danforth, 1998; Sonuga-Barke *et. al*, 2001). The efficacy of a parent training intervention on coercive discipline, positive parenting practices, and child non-compliance was studied by Martinez & Forgatch (2001). Intervention effects were evaluated 5 times from baseline to 30 months. They found that the intervention produced ending benefits to coercive

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discipline, positive parenting and boys' non-compliance. Blair (2002) expressed that self-regulates emotion, behaviour, and cognition provides the foundation for the social and academic demands required for the successful transition to formal schooling.

Parents, as well as wardens or caretakers, often need help in understanding their child's behavioural and emotional problems and how to address the needs that arise from these problems. First level help is available from teachers or special educators or school psychologist at school. But for a higher degree of assistance need to consult psychiatrists, psychologists, and other mental health professionals that work in the public or private sector, or mental health support operating in every state as well as locally. It is also suggested that parents, wardens, and caretakers need to be aware of children who are at particular risk of developing emotional and behavioural problems, and the approaches which may be employed to provide help.

The presence of behavioural and emotional problems among children debilitates their academic achievement. So, there is an urgent need to minimise the gap of nurturing. And to reduce the emotional and behavioral problems in children, the job of parents or wardens or caretakers of children is to give direction, impose rules, use discipline, set limits, establish and follow through with consequences, hold the children accountable for their behavior, and teach values. Parents or wardens or caretakers can provide the guidance that helps the children to change, grow, and mature. It is vitally important to the children's development that their parents (or wardens or caretakers) discipline them, teach them, guide them, provide rules and follow through on the rules, and set reasonable expectations for their behaviour and emotion.

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