

Socio-emotional problem of academically backward adolescents

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ARTICLE INFO :

Received : 26.05.2017
Revised : 27.09.2017
Accepted : 13.10.2017

KEY WORDS :

Adolescent, Academically backward, Socio-emotional problem

HOW TO CITE THIS ARTICLE :

Handique, Mala, Baruah, Krishna and Gualla, Gitanjali (2017). Socio-emotional problem of academically backward adolescents. *Adv. Res. J. Soc. Sci.*, 8 (2) : 184-187, DOI: 10.15740/HAS/ARJSS/8.2/184-187.

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ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted with the objective to assess the socio-emotional problems of academically backward adolescents. The sample consists of 125 academically backward adolescents (age ranges from 11-17 years) from two schools of Jorhat district. Socio-emotional problem scale-developed by AICRP-CD scientists was used in this research study. Results revealed that majority of the adolescents had mild socio-emotional problems and less number of adolescents had moderate socio-emotional problem. It was also found that none of the adolescents had severe socio-emotional problems.

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a period of life with specific health and developmental needs and rights. It is also a time to develop knowledge and skills, learn to manage emotions and relationships, and acquire attributes and abilities that will be important for enjoying the adolescent years and assuming adult roles. Adolescence is usually associated with the teenage years, but its physical, psychological or cultural expressions may begin earlier and end later.

The problems of adolescents are quite serious as compared to those of children. A recent study by the World Health Organization indicates that mental health problems account for nearly half of all disabilities among

individuals between the ages of 10 and 24 (Gore *et al.*, 2011). Many rural adolescents in India fail to develop important social and emotional competencies. They are confused and anxious regarding the biological, psychological and social challenges they have confronted. The difficulties include emotional problems (Dryfoos, 1990), upto 15 per cent of individuals under the age of 18 years of age experience emotional problems like sudden mood changes, irritability, irresponsible behaviours, depression, anxiety, suicidal ideation, loneliness, anger, stress etc. serious enough to justify special treatment (Lerner, 1995).

Some other problems include familial problems like starting arguments, breaking rules or withdrawing from

family; delinquency like missing school, stealing and acts of vandalism (Okorodudu and Okorodudu, 2003). Substance abuse was seen as a major problem, approximately one of every four young adolescents (12 to 17 years old) report having used illicit drugs (Denton and Kampfe, 1994). In some cases, they face some problems in school and show decreased interest, negative attitude, and drop in performance and discipline problems (Rice and Myer, 1994).

Schools must work toward actively preventing socio-emotional problems through supporting students' healthy social and emotional development. A recent report from the Institute of Medicine (2009) highlights the importance of promoting healthy self-esteem, social-emotional competence and social inclusion as important aspects of preventing and treating emotional, behavioural and mental disorders. The promotion of social-emotional competencies is associated with greater well-being in students and improvements in overall school performance, whereas a failure to achieve competence in these domains is associated with impairment in academic, social and family functioning (Greenberg *et al.*, 2003 and Guerra and Bradshaw, 2008).

It is well known fact that a person who experiences more socio-emotional problem may face difficulty in adjustment, interaction and learning etc. At this stage they begin to rely less on parents and non-parental adults may have more influence on development than in previous stages of development (Rhodes and Roffman, 2003). So, one of the aim of parenting should be to produce individuals who can meet the pain, sorrow and frustration that are inescapable in life without being overwhelmed by them and who can appreciate all the joys that life can offer. The present research was planned with the objective to assess the socio-emotional problems of academically backward adolescents.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Sample:

A sample of 125 academically backward adolescents were selected from two schools of Jorhat district with the help of purposive random sampling. Sample selected were age range between 11-17 years.

Tool for data collection :

In order to collect the background information, Socio-economic status scale by O.P. Aggrawal was used.

Socio-emotional problem scale developed by AICRP-CD scientists was used to assess the socio-emotional problems of adolescents. It consisted of 70 statements with three alternative responses *i.e.*, always, sometimes and never. High scores indicate more socio-emotional and *vice-versa*.

Data collection:

Data were collected separately from each school. The questionnaires were distributed to the adolescents with proper instruction. The investigator was present during the data collection and attended to the subjects, whenever they had any difficulty.

Analysis of data:

After data collection descriptive statistics like frequency and percentage were calculated to assess the socio-emotional problems of academically backward adolescents.

OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS

Data were examined to assess the socio-emotional problems of adolescents and the response received has been presented in the form of Table 1.

The analysis of data shows that majority of respondents (56%) had mild socio-emotional problems whereas 44 per cent respondents had moderate socio-emotional problems. It was also found that none of the respondents had severe socio-emotional problems.

Results shows that majority of respondents had mild socio-emotional problems, which indicate a good socio-emotional management among students. It may be due to their parents and teachers involvement in their life. Parents involvement is generally thought of as an avenue for promoting academic performance. However, parents involvement may also enhance children's behaviour at home and in the classroom as parents and teachers work together to enhance social functioning and address problem behaviours. A growing literature has demonstrated benefits of parent involvement for social functioning (Izzo *et al.*, 1999; McWayne *et al.*, 2004; Reynolds, 1989; Rimm-Kaufman *et al.*, 2003; Supplee *et al.*, 2004). For example, a recent study of Head Start students revealed that parent involvement was associated with lower conduct problems (Fantuzzo *et al.*, 2004). Such findings are also evident in adolescence (Hill *et al.*, 2004).

Findings of the study also revealed that none of the respondent had severe socio-emotional problems, which may be due to the parenting style. It may be due to the fact that the parents of the respondents may be authoritative, who are high in acceptance and involvement-warm, responsive, attentive, patient and sensitive to their child's needs. These parents make demands and engage in autonomy granting that fits with children's ability to take responsibility for their own behaviour. As a result, these parents let children know that they are competent individuals who can do things successfully for themselves, thereby fostering high self-esteem and cognitive and social maturity. Warm, involved parents who are secure in the standards they hold for their children provide models of caring concern as well as confidence, self-controlled behaviour. Perhaps for this reason, children of such parents are advanced in emotional self-regulation and emotional and social understanding-factors linked to social competence with peers (Lindsey and Mize, 2000; Parke 1994).

Izzo *et al.* (1999) also found significant positive associations between average parent involvement in early elementary school and socio-emotional development and achievement in later elementary school. Such studies reflect the common practice of considering parent involvement as a static predictor of concurrent achievement or educational outcomes in later school years.

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Mild	70	56
Moderate	55	44
Severe	-	-
Total	125	100

Conclusion :

It can be concluded from the present study that though majority of adolescents had mild socio-emotional problems but it cannot be ignored. Adolescents who had mild and moderate socio-emotional problems, they can be provided intervention and counseling programmes. Socio-emotional problems should be handled in proper ways and at proper time so its harmful effects can be minimized and his/her physical and psychological health can be maintained, as a good socio emotional state is required for leading quality life. Adolescence is

considered vulnerable period in terms of having multifaceted problems. The period is also labelled as 'Problem Age'. Socio emotional problems are common during this period and for minimizing these problems they require proper education, guidance and other kind of interventions.

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