

**SCHOLASTIC UNDERACHIEVEMENT IN ADOLESCENTS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY IN GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS AND JR. COLLEGES**J. N. George<sup>1</sup>, A. Amaresh<sup>2</sup>, S. Rampriyanka<sup>3</sup>**HOW TO CITE THIS ARTICLE:**

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**ABSTRACT: BACKGROUND:** There is a lot of concern expressed regarding the present day Adolescent youth, as the problems/ health challenges faced by them are different from those of the past decades. It is in this context we have designed the study. **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:** To study the psychological, Adjustments and Intelligence factors in scholastically underachieving of adolescents and to compare these factors among the Govt. and Private Schools and Jr. Colleges of Hyderabad. **MATERIALS AND METHODS:** This study was designed as a community based cross sectional observational study in 197 adolescents at Govt. and Private schools and Jr. Colleges of Hyderabad and approved by Institutional Ethics Committee. 47 students from Govt. school, Vijayanagar Colony, 32 from Sri Vaishnavi Techno Schools, Kukatpally, 62 from B.J.R.Govt. Jr. College, Golkonda and 56 from Sri Arabindo Jr. College, Mehidipatnam were taken in to the study. The study period is from September-2011 to June-2012. Adolescents between 10-19 years getting grades (<50%) aggregated were included and adolescents with neurological diseases, mental retardation and sensory impairment were excluded from study. Psychological, Adjustment and Intelligence Factors were included in a semi structured Proforma which is designed especially for the study and data was collected using Binet Kamat Test, etc. **RESULTS:** Our current study has mean Intelligence scores (by T-Test) of females in schools (87.47) is higher than males (79.87) and has scholastic significance ( $P < 0.001$ ) and mean intelligence scores of females in Jr. Colleges (88.38) is higher than males (80.93) and statistically significant ( $P < 0.001$ ) by independent sample T-Test and is similar to previous studies. Psychological parameters in current study in school mean scores are found to be higher in males than females. In colleges Social, Thought, Rule Breaking and Aggressive Behaviors are common in males than females. Regarding Adjustment problems all parameters were more commonly observed in males than females by (T-test). Problem at teacher factor is found in all groups irrespective of Sex and Organization. **CONCLUSION:** Every Child is Unique. Behavioral, emotional and psychological problems should be managed through behavior therapy and psychotherapy. Family counseling and parental guidance are essential.

**KEYWORDS:** Adolescents, underachievement, Comparative study, Schools and Colleges.

**INTRODUCTION:** Adolescence is one of the developmental stage during human growth and a transition from childhood to adulthood.<sup>1,2</sup> WHO has defined a child up to age of 19 years and adolescent between 10 and 19 years.<sup>3</sup> Indian academy of Pediatrics (IAP) has adopted a policy that all children up to 18 years are in critical state of growth and hence need the supportive care of pediatricians and IAP has accepted the theme for the year 2000 "adolescence and child at - risk". An adolescent from the National perspective forms about 20 to 30% of our population.

From psychological point of view at this stage an individual develop self-concept and identity and from social point of view transition from dependence on adult direction and protection towards

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self- direction and determination.

“Adolescents would be future parents” and adequate support and training will make them responsible and stable adults.<sup>4,5</sup> Socrates who paid with his life for his unyielding dedication to teach the young, raised some startling modern concern about the behaviors. It has been well established that in this period an individual undergoes various physiological, psychological, intellectual and social changes.<sup>6</sup>

It is this time when parents and teachers expect maximum scholastic achievement hence increased pressure on adolescents <sup>7</sup>. Schools are in a strong position to influence upon the students. The scholastic backward students may be slow learner, emotionally handicapped, learning disabled or mildly retarded and thus perform <2SDs below the expected for age and more methodical approach is essential in teaching such children.<sup>8,9</sup>

**MATERIAL AND METHODS:** Study was designed as community based cross sectional observational study done at Govt. and private schools and Jr. Colleges in Hyderabad. Ethics committee approval was taken from the Institutional Ethics Committee, Osmania Medical College. 47 students from Govt. School, 32 students from Private School, 62 student from Govt. Jr. College and 56 students from Private Jr. College are taken in to the study. Study was conducted between September 2011 and June 2012. Adolescents between 10 to 19 yrs. getting low grades (<50% aggregate) were included in study and ages <10 & >19 with distance education and child with Neurological diseases are excluded from studying.

A semi structured proforma is designed especially for this study to asses' psychological, Adjustment and intelligence factors for the 197 students. Data was collected by using The Binet Kamat Test, Pre-adolescent adjustment scale by Parikh, CBCL Child behavior Check List and analyzed by student T-Test.

**RESULTS:** Since this is a comparative study, there should be a minimum of 30 subjects in each group. The contribution of Govt. School is 59% and Pvt. School is 41% and among the colleges Govt. Jr. College 53% and Pvt. Jr. College is 48%. Sex wise from schools, Females are 43% and Males are 57% and Jr. Colleges Females 62% and Males 38% .<sup>10</sup> Among the junior colleges the variation is because of more male absentees. Study revealed the mean intelligence scores (by T-Test) of females in school is 83.47 and males is 79.87. Scores of psychological scale are found to be higher in males than females and aggressive behavior are more commonly observed in males than females. School adjustment problems were observed commonly in males than females.

In colleges, adjustment in home (P= 0.020) and teachers (P=0.009) by independent sample T-Test parameters were observed more in females and that of peer and school parameters are observed more in males.<sup>11,12</sup> Problem at teacher factor is found in all the groups of study irrespective of sex and organization.

**DISCUSSION:** School's play a critical and formative role in intellectual, cognitive, emotional, social and moral development of a child. Scholastic backwardness usually engenders feelings of anxiety and inadequacy in children. This in turn can have negative impact on emotional and social functioning of child. Hence, learning problem is an issue of concern not only for students but also for parent and all the professionals involved in the child welfare.<sup>13</sup> The underlying cause should be identified and

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appropriate remedy given soon, so that the academic performance of such children can be made better.

Scholastic backwardness is due to causes in child or environment or both. Causes in the child are low intelligence, learning disabilities, reading and writing disorders, physical illness etc. Causes in environment (external Factors) are poor discipline at home, Sibling rivalry, discordant environment at school, over ambitious attitude of parents.<sup>14,15</sup> Studies by Dixit, et al., showed that intellectual levels and the academic achievements of girls was superior to that of boys in both IX<sup>th</sup> and X<sup>th</sup> classes, but in general the intelligence test score of boys were higher than that of girls Loa (1980), Ferguson (1994). In our current study the mean intelligence scores by T-Test of females in schools (83.47) is higher than males (79.87) and is statistically significant ( $p < 0.001$ ), and the mean intelligence scores of females in Jr. Colleges (88.38) is higher than males (80.93) and is statistically significant ( $P < 0.001$ ).<sup>16</sup>

Regarding psychological parameters, a substantial research showed that there is a relation between behaviors and academic achievements, anxiety and negativism have been identified as key personality traits with academic problems.<sup>17</sup> A subjective sense of belonging and inter personal supports is associated with higher achievement motivation and educational plans.<sup>18,19</sup> In the current study, in the schools the mean scores of psychopathology (anxiety, depression, somatic complaints) scales are higher in males than females, and school adjustment problems are commonly observed in males than females (T-Test).<sup>20</sup> This is similar to study by Parikh, et al. In colleges, adjustment in home and teacher parameters are observed more in females and that peer and school parameters are observed more in males.

**CONCLUSION:** Every Child is Unique .Every effort should be made to find the cause in each child for his scholastic backwardness which should be managed through intensive individualized approach in a supportive environment. Behavioral, emotional and psychological problems should be managed through behavior therapy and psychotherapy. Family counseling and parental guidance are essential. Teacher-student relationship should be strengthened. A psychologist should be there in every educational institution to help students to maintain a sound mental health.

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## OBSERVATIONS & RESULTS

### SAMPLE DISTRIBUTION

Govt.school-47

Private school-32

Govt.Jr.college-62

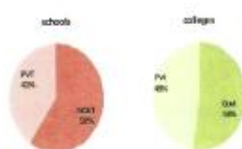
Private.Jr.college-56

Total sample-197

CHART-1

### DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE

GROUP WISE DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE



SEX WISE DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE

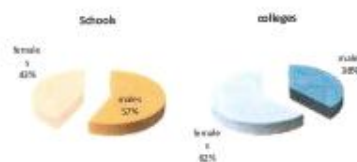


TABLE-1-INTELLIGENCE IN SCHOOLS-SEX WISE

	SEX	N	MEAN	SD	SE	SIGNIFICANCE
Intelligence	Male	45	79.89	6.968	1.039	<0.001
	Female	34	83.47	9.365	1.606	

The above table shows the mean, standard deviation and standard error of intelligence score in males and females of Schools.

The difference in the two groups is statistically significant ( $p < 0.001$ ).

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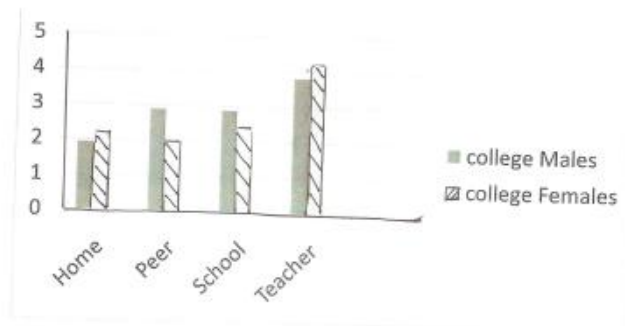
TABLE- -ADJUSTMENT PROBLEMS IN COLLEGES-SEX WISE

PARAMETER	SEX	N	MEAN	SD	SE	SIGNIFICANCE
Home	Male	45	1.93	1.156	.172	0.153
	Female	73	2.22	.975	.114	
Peer	Male	45	2.89	1.369	.204	<0.001
	Female	73	2.01	1.208	.141	
School	Male	45	2.89	1.283	.191	0.036
	Female	73	2.40	1.187	.139	
Teacher	Male	45	3.84	1.580	.236	0.16
	Female	73	4.25	1.451	.170	
General	Male	45	3.33	1.128	.168	0.245
	Female	73	3.05	1.332	.156	

The above table illustrates the SEX wise mean, standard deviation, standard error of the Pre- Adolescent subscale parameters in the COLLEGES of the current study group and the level of significance of the difference among the two groups.

The difference is significant in parameters of Peer, School, Teacher( $p < 0.05$ ).

Chart- -ADJUSTMENT PROBLEMS IN COLLEGES-SEX WISE



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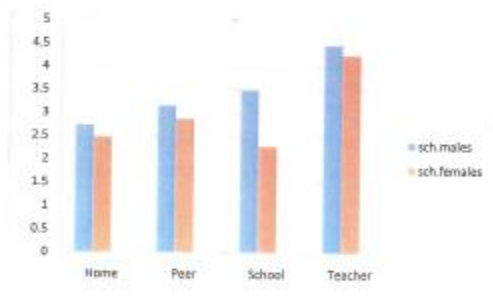
TABLE - ADJUSTMENT PROBLEMS IN SCHOOLS -SEX WISE

PARAMETER	SEX	N	MEAN	SD	SE	SIGNIFICANCE
Home	Male	45	2.73	1.437	.214	0.02
	Female	34	2.47	.992	.170	
Peer	Male	45	3.16	1.522	.227	0.245
	Female	34	2.88	1.513	.259	
School	Male	45	3.49	1.576	.235	0.97
	Female	34	2.29	1.315	.226	
Teacher	Male	45	4.47	1.700	.253	0.009
	Female	34	4.26	1.746	.299	
General	Male	45	3.16	1.127	.168	0.008
	Female	34	3.29	1.219	.209	

The above table illustrates the SEX wise mean, standard deviation, standard error of of the Pre- Adolescent subscale parameters in the SCHOOLS of the current study group and the level of significance of the difference among the two groups.

Significant difference is observed in parameters of Home, Teacher and General( $p < 0.05$ ).

CHART - -SEX WISE ADJUSTMENT PROBLEM IN SCHOOLS



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