

Periodic Research

Academic Achievement in Physically Challenged and Normal School Going Children in Districts Anantnag and Srinagar (J&K)

Abstract

This study investigated academic achievement in 180 physically challenged and 180 normal school going children selected from various private and government schools of rural and urban areas of districts, Anantnag and Srinagar in the state of Jammu and Kashmir (India). The rural samples were collected from Anantnag and the urban samples were drawn from district Srinagar. Purposive and random sampling techniques were employed. Physically challenged school going children were categorized into three main classes i.e., visually impaired, hearing impaired and orthopedically crippled. To assess the academic achievement, the percentage of marks obtained by the subjects in their previously held annual examinations was taken as an index. Mean, Standard Deviation (SD) and t-test for significance of difference between means were the statistical measures used to draw the logical inferences from the analysis. While inferring the findings, it has been found that the physically challenged and normal school going differ significantly on academic achievement. The performance of physically challenged children in academics was lower compared to the performance of their normal peers. Urban physically challenged children and urban normal children were having better academic performance than their rural physically challenged and normal peers. Academic achievement was found to be similar among all the three categories of physically challenged children.

Keywords: Children, Physically Challenged, Normal, Academic Achievement.

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Introduction

In India a large chunk of population comprises of the children who are having some form of disability. Although, disability associates with disadvantage, but all individuals with disabilities are not equally disadvantaged. These children are seeking admissions in schools. Today well established schools having an understanding of imparting education to children irrespective of physical variations are coming up with the disability friendly school buildings ideal for children with different needs. Inclusive education is spreading far and wide. Undoubtedly the severe cases find their access in special schools only. Unlike typical children, physically challenged children vary in their academic performance to a great extent owing to the varying degrees of disabilities.

Since the constitution of India ensures equality, freedom, justice and dignity of all the individuals. It declares that all individuals can avail the opportunity for education. So being the citizens of democratic India, persons with disabilities have an equal right to access educational services. As the physically challenged children are influenced by the limitations imposed by their disabling conditions it has a definite impact on their lives as well. To a great extent, these conditions may lead to their poor academic performance. Students with physical illnesses or disabilities are at risk for being underachievers when their impairment results in limitations on physical and cognitive abilities, or results in limited school attendance and decreased opportunity for school success (Bloch, 1986; Perrin and Gerrity, 1984). There is a strong association between a society's level of academic achievement and positive socioeconomic development (Richarda). Academic achievement is the knowledge of attaining ability or degree of competence in school tasks usually measured

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by standardized tests and expressed in a grade or units based on pupil's performance Trow (1956). Academic achievement is "the knowledge attained or skills developed in the school subjects usually designed by test scores or marks assigned by the teacher" Good (1959). Academic achievement is both curricular and co-curricular performance of the students Metha K. K. (1969).

Objective of the Study

The objective of the present investigation was to assess and compare the rural/ urban physically challenged and normalschool going children on Academic Achievement.

Materials and Method

The present study was conducted on physically challenged and normal school going children selected from various private and government schools of rural and urban areas of Anantnag and Srinagar districts. Physically challenged school going children were selected by employing purposive sampling technique and normal children were selected randomly in the same schools.

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The size of the sample was 360(180 physically challenged and 180 normal school going children). 180 physically challenged school going children were categorized into three main classes with equal distribution i.e., (60 visually impaired), (60 hearing impaired) and (60 orthopedically crippled).

Tool Used

To assess the academic achievement, the percentage of marks obtained by the subjects in their previously held annual examinations was taken as an index.

Statistical Technique used

Data were analyzed using SPSS software version 16. Mean, standard deviation (S.D.) and t-test for significance of difference between means were the statistical techniques used.

Results and Discussion

To determine the significance in mean scores of physically challenged and normal school going children t-test was computed. Details have been presented in the tables below.

Table 1

Mean Comparison of Physically Challenged and Normal School Going Children on Academic Achievement (N=180 each)

Groups	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Level of Significance
P C	49.85	16.89	2.28	Significant at 0.05 level
Nrml	53.94	17.03		

PC=Physically Challenged
Nrml=Normal

Table 1 shows the mean, S.D. and t-value comparison of physically challenged and normal school going children with N=180 in each case on academic achievement. The results indicated a significant difference at(0.05 level) in the two groups i.e., physically challenged and normal school going children on academic achievement. The statistical

analysis of the data showed that the performance of physically challenged children in academics was lower compared to the performance of their normal peers. The finding is inconsistent with the results of **Talwar and Kour (2015)** who found that physically challenged students had a deficient performance in academics as compared to their normal participants

Table 2

Mean Comparison of Rural/Urban Physically Challenged School Going Children on Academic Achievement (N=90 each)

Groups	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Level of Significance
Rural	46.13	18.32	3.01	Significant at 0.01 level
Urban	53.57	14.50		

The mean, S.D. and t-value comparison of rural and urban physically challenged school going children with N=90 in each case on academic achievement can be seen in Table 2. It is evident that the rural physically challenged school going children

differed significantly from the urban school going children on academic achievement, with urban physically challenged children having better academic performance than their rural physically challenged peers

Table 3

Mean Comparison of Rural/Urban Normal School Going Children on Academic Achievement (N=90 each).

Groups	Mean	S.D.	t-value	Level of Significance
Rural	49.30	17.97	3.78	Significant at 0.01 level
Urban	58.58	14.71		

The mean, S.D. and t-value comparison of rural normal and urban normal school going children with N=90 in each case on academic achievement can be seen in Table 3. It is evident that the rural physically challenged school going children differed significantly from the urban school going children on academic achievement, with urban physically challenged children having better academic performance than their rural physically challenged peers.

Conclusion

Physical, behavioural and learning differences are found everywhere. These differences result in varying abilities in students with special needs to learn and adjust in the society. However, Students with physical illnesses or disabilities are at risk for being underachievers when their impairment results in limitations on physical and cognitive abilities. The findings of the present study revealed that the physically challenged and normal school

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going children differ significantly on academic achievement. The performance of physically challenged children in academics was lower compared to the performance of their normal peers. The urban physically challenged children were having better academic performance than their rural physically challenged peers. The urban normal children were also found to perform better in academic performance than their rural peers.

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