



TEACHING LEARNING PROBLEMS OF COMMERCE AND REMEDIAL TEACHING ON IMPROVING THE COMPETENCIES OF LOW ACHIEVERS

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ABSTRACT

This research study aimed at identifying the impact of remedial teaching on improving the competencies of low achieving students in Thiruvallur district of Tamilnadu. For this purpose, ninety seven students from rural and urban area were selected from four different schools in Thiruvallur Education zone. The selection of the higher secondary grade is decided to censure the effectiveness of the program in higher secondary education. Objectives of this program are to investigate the reasons for the low achievement of students in this zone, to assess the effectiveness of the remedial teaching and to recommend possible actions to be carried out for improvement. The data were collected by interviewing relevant authorities and from the secondary records. Finding shows that the socio economic condition of the family and physical and psycho social status of the student causes low achievement. The implemented remedial program proved to be effective with recovering ninety four percentage of students in Commerce and ninety three percentage of students in Accountancy continuous capacity development of teachers on concept and skills of remedial teaching and strengthening the referral mechanism to find solution for the social economic and psycho social reasons to ensure the sustainability of the recovery are strongly recommended.

Key words: *Competencies, Low achievers, Remedial teaching, psycho-social factors, socio-economic conditions, Thiruvallur.*

INTRODUCTION

The highest aim of education is the development of the individual. Here education enables the individual to survive and leave out his complete and successful life. It looks to the

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individual differences. Another major aim of education is the development of the society. Here education maintains the continuity of life by handing down customs, beliefs and traditions from generation to generation. It seeks to reconstruct new experiences and unfold new dimensions of knowledge. The other chief aim of education is the development of the nation. Here education makes the rising generation understand its rights and duties as individual citizens of a democratic country. It aims to cultivate leadership qualities in the new generation. It strives to develop in students a sense of emotional, ethic and cultural unity. It wants cultivation of service to humanity and nation in students. In our country the higher secondary education covers grade one to five and to assess the students based on their achievement of essential learning competencies.

Generally, the achievement of essential learning Competencies by children who are in similar grades and undergoing a similar teaching process differs. Some are lower in achievements compare to others due to various reasons. If these students are not provided with proper support to overcome the challenge, they will be gradually dropped out from the school before completing the compulsory education in the formal education system. This will lead to limited knowledge and skilled labor force of the country and hinder the economic growth of the country and will bring negative long term impact in the country's development initiatives. Remedial teaching is one of the acceptable solutions for low achievement. Identification of these low achievers, application of Remedial teaching with systematic assessment of progress and analysis are needed to understand the effectiveness of the remedial teaching.

Remedial Teaching

The remedial teaching can also be defined as 'the name implies, is designed to cater to the needs of children unable to keep pace with the teaching-learning process in a normal classroom.' Remedial teaching will act as a safety valve for the students who are behind the expected level of achievement. It involves diagnosis of specific difficulties, provide suitable remedial measures and provide support to prevent reoccurring of them again in future.

This theory believes that emphasis on early observation and identifying the strength and weaknesses of students in terms of skills in reading and writing, and one-to-one support in the higher secondary grades by teachers towards their students, incorporate a variety of methods such as modeling, explicit teaching, and prompting and praising student struggling with reading and writing will help students to become self-regulatory in terms of their reading and writing abilities. (Burris, op.cit.)

Methodology

Thiruvallur district Education zone identified 497 low achievers in Key Stage two and implements the Remedial Teaching program during 2019. The selection of the higher secondary grade is decided to ensure the effectiveness of the program in higher secondary

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education which will support the students to gain necessary learning competencies of higher secondary and enter into higher education without dropping out before or end of this school education cycle. It was decided by the Thiruvallur district Education zone to provide remedial teaching to Key Stage two students since the improvement in their performance of these students will continue to key stage five in which they will sit for the scholarship examination, which will provide individual benefits to the students as well as improve the performance of the Education zone in the examination. Out of 497 four hundred ninety seven students' ninety seven students from schools namely St. Annes Matriculation higher secondary school Thirunintravur, Sundaram Government higher secondary school, Thirumazhisai, and Guru Vidhyalaya Matriculation higher secondary school, Thirunintravur from Thiruvallur District were selected for the study based on the judgmental area sampling method.

The assessment marks available in schools will be collected as secondary data and percentage analysis has been done. Focus group discussion with district zonal Education Team, Headmasters, selected teachers and students were used to collect higher secondary data regarding the reasons for low achievements.

Results and Discussion

Reasons for Low Achievement

Based on the collected data of the reasons for the low achievement, multiple reasons cause the low achievement of each student. The following table shows the reasons and number of students affected by each reason.

Table 1: Reasons for low Achievement

Reasons	Rural School		Urban school		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Less interest of parents in child's education	19	46	17	30	36	37
Severe Poverty	29	71	23	41	52	54
Irregular attendance	6	15	9	16	15	15
Nobody at home to support in studies	8	20	15	27	23	24
Sickness	8	20	15	27	23	24
Slow learner	1	2	14	25	15	15
Displaced and staying in welfare centre	3	7	9	16	12	12
Parents separated or family disputes	0	0	7	13	7	7
Staying with Relatives for study purpose	0	0	7	13	7	7
Alcoholic habited Father	1	2	3	5	4	4



Active child with less concentration	2	5	1	2	3	3
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Source: Survey Data

The first predominant reason is less interest of parents in child's education which affects fifty four percentages of students. The keenness of parents to meet teachers on request of teacher or by self interest, engage in the discussion with teachers openly , agreement for some follow up at home and commitment to practice the requested follow up were some of the criteria used for the analysis by the teacher. The low literacy level of parents and more attention for daily earning due to the low economic status are the contributing factors for this attitude.

The second pre dominant factor is severe poverty which affects thirty seven percentages of the students. Almost entire families of selected low achievers are belongs to low economic class with irregular income source. This identified thirty six families has no income source and depending on food ration and other subsidies of Government. This reason is identified based on the analysis of the teachers regarding family background and parent's employment. The poverty creates non conducive learning environment at home due to several issues that the poverty creates. The irregular attendance and lack of support at home to provide guidance for learning become the third dominant reasons which affect twenty four percentages of the students. The irregular attendance cause missing of lessons and affect the continuity of learning process. The lack of support in learning lessons left the child alone with all the doubts and clarification from the lessons learnt in the school.

The sickness often the children experienced are related to malnutrition and less immunity for diseases. The sickness leads to irregular attendance and missing lessons. Fifteen students affected by this reason. There are twelve students affected by displacement and stayed in welfare camp. They missed number of school days during the displacement and not acquired the learning competency of the previous grade caused them low achievement of the present grade. The family disputes and separated parents affected seven students. Another reason identified is slow learning. These children are not suffering from any other complicated or multiple reasons but naturally they were slow in learning process. Fifteen students identified with this reason. In some cases, parents who have displaced and returned to their own villages at present, left their children with friends and relatives to continue the study in Thiruvallur district schools. Seven of the students were affected by the fact that they were away from their family. Excessive alcoholic intake of father affects four students out of ninety seven. This habit causes several issues in the family and made the home non conducive for the child to study. There are three students identified by the teachers as very active students with less concentration on lessons. Their attention distracted very quickly from learning lessons and caused difficulty in learning process.

Comparison of Reasons in Rural and Urban Schools

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The effect of less interest of parents and severe poverty is more for students studying in rural schools than for whom in urban schools. Irregular attendance and no support in home in studies are slightly high for students of rural schools than urban schools. Percentage of slow learners and displaced students is high in urban schools than in rural schools. Family disputes, separated families and students staying with relatives and guardians for study purpose is entirely in town schools.

Effectiveness of Remedial Teaching

The effectiveness of the remedial teaching class is analysed based on the improvement on the learning achievement and which is measured by assessment marks. The analysis shows in the following table

Table 2: ANALYSIS OF ASSESSMENT MARKS

Marks Ranges	Assessment marks- Commerce (%)			Assessment marks-Accountancy (%)		
	Initial	Intermediate	Final	Initial	Intermediate	Final
01 to 25	16	3	1	18	4	3
26 to 50	49	18	4	33	18	4
51 to 75	23	27	16	39	37	24
76 to 100	11	53	78	10	41	69
	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Survey Data

The percentage of students scored marks in between zero to twenty five and twenty six to fifty shows decreasing trend from initial to final assessment for both commerce and Accountancy .The percentage of students scored marks in between fifty one to seventy five also show a decreasing trend for commerce and Accountancy except a slight increase in intermediate assessment in commerce. In commerce while in the initial assessment, sixty five percentages of students scored marks less than fifty and in the final assessment five percentage of students scored students got less than fifty marks. In Accountancy, fifty one percentages of students scored less than fifty marks for initial assessment and seven percentages of students scored less than fifty, marks in final assessment. In final assessment of commerce and Accountancy, ninety four percentages and ninety three percentages of students scored than fifty marks respectively.

Comparison of Assessment Marks in Commerce

Table 3: Analysis of Assessment Marks in Commerce

Marks	Initial Assessment %		Intermediate Assessment %		Final Assessment %	
	Rural	Town	Rural	Town	Rural	Town

Range	school	School	School	school	school	school
0-25	20	14	2	4	0	2
26-50	63	39	7	25	0	7
51-75	17	27	29	25	27	9
76-100	0	20	61	46	73	82

Source: Survey Data

Table 4: Analysis of Assessment Marks in Accountancy

Marks Range	Initial Assessment %		Intermediate Assessment %		Final Assessment %	
	Rural school	Town School	Rural School	Town school	Rural school	Town school
0-25	22	14	0	7	2	4
26-50	39	29	17	18	2	5
51-75	32	45	29	43	15	32
76-100	7	13	54	32	80	59

Source: Survey Data

All the students of rural schools scored marks below seventy five for initial assessment and all of them got above fifty marks for the final assessment. It shows the less complexity of the background where the effect of remedial teaching is strong enough to recover all the students above fifty marks. In terms of town schools initial assessment shows students scored marks ranging all four categories. While twenty percentage students scored more than seventy five marks in initial assessment, there are nine percentages of students scored less than fifty in final assessment. This situation shows the issues of inconsistency of performance and other external factors which create a complexity of students' background and influencing the effect of remedial teaching. The situation of assessment marks for Accountancy show spread of students in all four categories of marks range in rural and urban schools with twenty percentage of students scoring more than seventy five for initial assessment and thirteen percentage of students remain less than fifty marks for final assessment. The issues of inconsistency of performance and external factors influencing effect of remedial teaching is explained in the assessment marks of Accountancy. The difference of students in achieving essential learning competencies in Commerce and Accountancy are also explained by the above comparative analysis.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Thiruvallur district Education Zone identified the low achievers as one of its issues and wants to test the effectiveness of remedial teaching in its context. This study was designed to identify the reasons for low achievement and the effectiveness of the remedial teaching program. The findings show that the socio economic condition of the family and physical and



psycho social status of the student cause low achievement. The implemented remedial program proved to be effective by recovering ninety four percentages of students in commerce and ninety three percentages of students in Accountancy.

Based on the findings from the data collection and analysis, the following are recommended

- Continuation and expansion of the remedial teaching class in Thiruvallur Education zone
- Continuous capacity building of teachers on concept and skills of remedial teaching class
- Strengthening the Referral mechanism to find solution for the social economic and psycho social reasons to ensure the sustainability of the recovery.
- Streamlining the remedial teaching class all over the country.

The reasons identified for the low achievement such as family disputes, alcoholic intake of fathers, displaced students with psycho social impact and mentally retarded children are beyond the preview of education system. These issues need to be handled by technical experts of those disciplines. Those students need to be referred to the relevant government and private agencies for further follow up, so that the effect of the remedial teaching could be improved and sustained

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