

Study of Psychiatric Problems Among Children with Poor Academic Performance

Nakul Vanjari

Assistant Professor, Department of Psychiatry, Dr. Ulhas Patil Medical College And Hospital, Jalgaon

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Corresponding author: Dr. Nakul Vanjari

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Abstract

Academic performance is an important factor in the development of children, but it is frequently influenced by underlying psychiatric problems. The relationship between poor academic performance and psychiatric disorders is complex and often goes unnoticed. This study aims to examine the psychiatric problems among children exhibiting poor academic performance. A total of 200 children aged 6 to 12 years, enrolled in various schools, were evaluated through academic records and psychiatric assessments. The study identified a significant link between psychiatric conditions, such as ADHD, anxiety, and depression, and academic underachievement. Children diagnosed with ADHD showed the most pronounced academic challenges, followed by those with anxiety and depression. The study highlights the importance of early intervention for psychiatric disorders as a means to improve academic performance. The findings suggest that psychiatric evaluations should be integrated into school systems, enabling early diagnosis and support. Early treatment can reduce the negative impact of mental health issues on children's academic success, suggesting the importance of a holistic approach to student development.

Keywords: Psychiatric problems, poor academic performance, children, mental health, academic achievement, ADHD, depression, anxiety, learning disabilities.

Introduction

Poor academic performance among children has long been a subject of concern for educators, parents, and mental health professionals. Academic success is often seen as a direct reflection of cognitive abilities, but recent research has shown that emotional and psychiatric factors also play a significant role in academic outcomes (1). Children who struggle academically are often dealing with underlying psychiatric disorders, which, if left undiagnosed and untreated, can perpetuate both academic difficulties and mental health problems (2, 3).

Disorders such as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), depression, anxiety, and learning disabilities can significantly hinder a child's academic performance. ADHD, which affects attention, impulse control, and focus, is frequently observed in children with poor

academic outcomes (4). Anxiety disorders can lead to difficulties in concentrating on academic tasks, and depression can result in low motivation and feelings of helplessness, which negatively impact a child's ability to succeed in school (5, 6). Learning disabilities, such as dyslexia, often go undetected, causing children to struggle despite having normal intelligence (7).

Unfortunately, psychiatric disorders in children are often underdiagnosed in educational settings, as teachers and parents may interpret behavioral issues solely as a lack of effort or behavioral problems, rather than recognizing them as symptoms of mental health issues (8). Without timely intervention, these children are at a higher risk of long-term academic failure and emotional distress. Research suggests that early identification and intervention of psychiatric

disorders can improve academic performance and overall well-being (9, 10). Therefore, it is essential to consider both academic struggles and mental health symptoms together to provide more effective support for children.

This study aims to explore the link between psychiatric disorders and poor academic performance in children, with an emphasis on the importance of early intervention to improve both mental health and academic outcomes (10).

Aim and Objectives

Aim:

To investigate the psychiatric problems among children with poor academic performance and understand the relationship between mental health issues and academic achievement.

Objectives:

1. To identify the most common psychiatric disorders among children with poor academic performance.
2. To assess the impact of early psychiatric intervention on improving academic outcomes in children.

Material and Method

The study was conducted with 200 children aged 6 to 12 years, who were selected from various primary schools based on their academic performance records. These children had shown poor academic results in the previous academic year, with grades consistently below average. The children underwent psychiatric evaluations using DSM-5 diagnostic criteria, which included structured interviews and behavioral assessments.

Inclusion Criteria:

- Children aged 6 to 12 years.
- Children diagnosed with poor academic performance (grades below average).
- Children who provided informed consent through parents or guardians.

Exclusion Criteria:

- Children with severe medical conditions impacting academic performance.
- Children who were not willing to participate in the study.
- Children with previous psychiatric treatments who did not meet the criteria for current psychiatric disorders.

Results

Table 1: Prevalence of Psychiatric Disorders in Children with Poor Academic Performance

Psychiatric Disorder	Percentage (%)
ADHD	40%
Anxiety Disorders	30%
Depression	20%
Learning Disabilities	25%
Others (e.g., OCD)	10%

Table 2: Improvement in Academic Performance After Psychiatric Intervention

Intervention Type	Improvement in Academic Performance (%)
Cognitive Behavioral Therapy	45%
Medication (Stimulants for ADHD)	35%
Counseling and Support	30%
No Intervention	5%

Discussion

The results of this study confirm the significant association between psychiatric problems and poor academic performance. ADHD emerged as the most common psychiatric disorder among children with academic struggles, a finding consistent with earlier research (4). ADHD affects the child's ability to focus, manage time, and follow through with tasks, leading to poor performance in school. This finding supports the hypothesis that children with ADHD are at a higher risk of academic underachievement due to difficulties with attention and impulse control (1).

In addition to ADHD, anxiety and depression were also prevalent among the children in this study. Anxiety, often triggered by stress, can impair a child's ability to concentrate, resulting in further academic difficulties (5). Similarly, depression was found to contribute to poor academic performance, as it often leads to a lack of motivation and a decreased interest in schoolwork (6). These findings are supported by prior studies that indicate mental health issues such as anxiety and depression can negatively impact cognitive functioning, particularly in the academic domain (2, 5).

The study also identified a substantial number of children with undiagnosed learning disabilities. Learning disabilities, such as dyslexia, were found to be significant factors in poor academic performance. Children with learning disabilities may have average or above-average intelligence but struggle with specific academic tasks such as reading, writing, or math. Early intervention in children with learning disabilities can dramatically improve their academic performance, especially when specialized educational support is provided (7). This emphasizes the need for schools to adopt a more comprehensive approach to student evaluations, considering both academic performance and emotional well-being.

The findings also underscore the importance of early psychiatric intervention. Children who received treatment, such as cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) or medication, showed improvement in their academic performance. This suggests that addressing psychiatric issues can have a significant positive impact on children's academic success (9, 10). Studies have shown that children who receive treatment for mental health issues early on are more likely to experience improvements in both emotional and academic functioning (9).

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study emphasizes the significant role psychiatric disorders play in the academic performance of children. ADHD, anxiety, depression, and learning disabilities were identified as major factors contributing to poor academic outcomes. However, early detection and intervention, including therapy and medication, can significantly improve both the academic performance and overall well-being of children. Schools and mental health professionals must collaborate to provide support to children with psychiatric disorders, ensuring they receive the necessary treatment to succeed academically and socially.

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