Academic Enablers crucial to Academic Success of the students ..An empirical study

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ABSTRACT
Academic success owes every child a promising future which is determined by academic skills and non-academic skills. Academic skills are the basic and cognitive skills (reading, writing, mathematics, critical thinking etc.) and non academic skills are the academic enablers. Academic Enablers consists of a broad non-academic skill set which help the students to actively involve in and benefit from classroom thus leading to academic achievement of the students. Some of the enablers include social skills, study skills, motivation and engagement. These enabling factors play an equally important role in the academic success of the students.
In this study, the researcher with the help of case studies tries to highlights the various non-academic skills possessed by the students. Descriptive analyses with the help of figures are used to analyse the data. It is apparent that students devoid of these academic enablers find it difficult to relate with the class room instruction and other academic activities.

Introduction:

A student's academic competence makes him more confident to reach academic success. It refers to the skills, attitudes, behaviours towards studies which can be broadly classified as academic skills and academic enablers. Academic skills (language based skills, critical thinking, reading, writing...) are being taught whereas academic enablers (motivation to learn, engagement...) are nurtured gradually. The academic enabling factors are expressed as behaviours that interact along with the classroom instruction (Di Perna & Elliot, 2000).

Teachers are in the forefront in helping the students to master the subjects. If at all a student struggles in studies, it may be due to lack of academic or non-academic skills or may be both. Intervening around the proficiency in improving the academic skills is not sufficient. Assessing the non-academic skill or the academic enablers will surely help the students to achieve academically. This study summarises the experiences of students in the form of case studies of how academic enablers has played a crucial role in their academic success.

Literature Review:

There are various literatures which justifies academic enablers are crucial to academic success for students. A study by Di Perna and Elliot (1999) concludes that student's skills or behaviours are concerned with five predictor variables -1) prior achievement, 2) interpersonal skills, 3) study skills, 4) motivation and 5) engagement and students who have positively developed these skills are prepared for academic success.

Student academic success requires more than content knowledge or mastery of a collection of cognitive strategies. Academic accomplishment depends also on a set of ancillary skills and attributes called 'academic enablers' (Di Perna, 2006). Examples of academic enablers include:

- Study skills
- Organization
- Cooperative learning skills
- Independent seatwork
- Motivation

Research Methodology:
Objectives of the study:
- To know about the socio-economic status of the disadvantaged children.
- To understand how academic enablers contribute to their academic success.

Method of the study:
This study is descriptive which involves case study method to collect and assimilate the data. The sample of the study consists of 3 girls from a scheduled caste community defined as disadvantaged group by the Right to Education Act 2010 and the sampling type was purposive.

The tool for this study is a set of observational checklist which served as a base for discussion. It consists of various questions under the headings study skills, organisation skills, cooperative learning skills, independent seatwork and motivation. The researcher spent 45 minutes with each respondent trying to understand the various academic enablers leading them to success.

Case study 1:
The girl named Sivaranjani, aged 18 resides in Venagangudi village in Manachanallur Block. Born in family of 4, her father is a daily wage worker, elder brother working in tyre company and her elder sister is doing her M.com. Her mom died when she was young and was raised up by her sister. The monthly income of the family is Rs.18, 000/-. The family resides in a pucca house owned by them built with the help of the government stipend. Sivaranjani is studying 12th std in a government school at Manachanallur and she loves to study. Has opted for vocational group which includes account, commerce, economics, auditing additional to tamil and english. Her aim is to become an auditor and focuses more in the auditing subject. Her hour of study includes 2 hours at home and 4 hours in school. Almost all of the day's portions are being revised in school as this is the custom followed in her school. She also uses the public transport to go to school which is 2 kms far away from her home.

Case study 2:
Aged 16 years, Nisha is from a middle class family with her dad is a retired Border Security Force personnel. Living with her elder sister's family, Nisha's extrinsic motivation is her sister and brother-in-law. An average student Nisha wishes to take up nursing as her profession. She is ignorant of the family income as she is related with her sister's family. Her mode of transport to school is bicycle. The school which she studies is a government higher secondary school situated 2kms from her village. Accompanied by her friend to

Case study 3:
Nithya is from a educated family, aged 16 years studying 11th std along with Nisha. A single parent child, Nithya is being supported by her elder brother who is a diploma graduate. Her mom is an agricultural labourer and also owns some farm land. Her sister is studying M.com and helps her in studies. Dreams of becoming an engineer, Nithya spends about 4 hours in school and 2 hours at home to study. The monthly income of the family is Rs.20,000/-. She goes by bicycle along with her friend on time, discusses the affairs of the day and also clarifies the academic doubts to her friends. She completes her home work without

fail and is interested in group work.

Academic Enablers	Ms. Sivaranjani	Ms. Nisha	Ms. Nithya
Study Skills	• Doesn't takes class notes but follows the lessons while teaching. • Reviews the lessons at the end of each day. • Uses pencil to mark important points while studying. • Utilise the study hours (2hours/day) in schools to prepare for tests and exams. • Doesn't follow any strategy or tool to gain high scores. • Clarifies academic doubts to friends and not to teachers.	• Listens with full attention during class hours. • Doesn't takes class notes as the students are instructed to listen only. • Revises each lesson at the end of the day at home. • Uses pencil to mark the important points as instructed by the teacher. • Memorises the lessons with understanding and also discusses with her friends. • Clarifies doubts to teachers and also to high scoring students after class.	• Doesn't deviate herself during lesson hour in school. • Class notes are not taken but she makes sure to note down the points in pencil after class. • Has a study group and works out each day's lesson every evening. • Believes that understanding with revision fetches good scores in exams. • Clarifies academic doubts to her friends.
Organisation skills	• Arrives to class before time. • Brings to class the necessary belongings. • At times skips her home works when has a doubt in it but maintains class notes and assignments up to date. • Feels difficult to transit from one learning activity to another when involved in an interested subject.	• Reaches school before time involves herself in an academic discussion with her friends. • Brings to class the learning and writing tools, shares it with friends too. • Does all the given home works with interest and also give a try to the mathematical problems which are difficult to solve. • Doesn't mind in switching from one subject to another.	• Has the practice to be at school before time and discusses the academic activities for the day. • Has the stock of writing materials all times. • Consistent in doing home works in the scheduled hour of study. • Efficient in planning her lessons and to transit from one subject to another with ease.
operative Learning skills	• Feels shy to participate in class room discussion. • Not interested in group activities because she feels its difficult to get co-ordination among her classmates. • Doesn't likes to be a leader fearing of the responsibilities which a leader has to shoulder.	• Involves in class room discussion whenever she gets the right point for discussion. • Interested in group activities when her friends are in that group. • Not interested in being the leader of the class as she feels that she will miss the time with her friends.	• Believes that classroom discussions are for students with oratical skills and doesn't involve in it. • Doesn't parcipates in any group activities but rather supports the group with its decisions. • Feels she is timid and doesn't holds the trait of a leader.
Independent seat work	• Has necessary work materials for assignments and is also supported by her sister too in her study. • Refrains herself from getting distracted in class hours. • Gets the help of the teacher in an appropriate manner after class. • Does work as far its interesting if not just keeps it incomplete.	• Assignments done with appropriate work materials owned by her. • Avoids talking, Mumbling or other distracting behaviours in class. • Clears important doubts to teachers at the end of the class. • Sincere in completing class works on time.	• All the assignments and notes are being completed with the necessary materials at hand. • Not involved in any mischievous behaviour as she feels that this would irritate her teacher. • Takes utmost care in completing the class works on time.
Motivation	• Believes that reasonable effort brings academic success. • Motivated to study well intrinsically as she thinks having a single parent she must study well. • Her sister motivates her extrinsically on her academic achievements by getting gifts and praising her.	• Acknowledges that continuous effort with understanding and revision results in academic success. • Her intrinsic motivation are her love towards education and her goal to become as a nurse. • Extrinsic motivation factors are teacher's appreciation, applause from her classmates and whenever new topic is taught.	• Uninterrupted listening with understanding and day today revision will help to get good marks. • Striving to achieve the goal to become an engineer was her intrinsic motivation factor. • Teacher's appreciation and her parent's motivation are the extrinsic motivational factors.

Table-1: The student's response to each of the academic enablers

Key Findings of the study:
• The study skills are more or less same for the students. They are instructed to pay attention to the class focusing what is said by the teacher.
• For some subjects the students follow the subject guides and for other the teacher's dictate the notes to learn.
• Highlights the important points while studying.

• Some students have the habit of group learning with their friends at home. They memorize the subject and dictate it among them.
• Most of them clarify doubts initially to their friends and then to teachers personally rather in front of the class.
• Most of them arrives to class before time and have a academic discussion along with personal discussion too.
• The students doesn't wish to be as a leader as its about shouldering more responsibilities added to tolerance and

availability at all times whenever the teacher summons.
- The learning and writing materials are taken by the students to class each day.
- Most of them refrains themselves from getting distracted or distracting the class.
- Reasonable, continuous and interrupted work will yield academic success was their academic strategy.
- Their intrinsic motivation is their career goals and they are motivated extrinsically by their teacher's appreciation, family member's motivation to study well and friend's applause.

Conclusion:
This research paper added to the existing literature of how come the academic enablers help the students to travel in their academic path successfully. The researcher with the help of set of observational checklists enquired about the academic enablers to students selected purposively for the study. The discussion has highlighted how the academic enablers indicators are helping the students to get along with their studies.

Co-operative learning skills are where the students need to improve. They fear in taking up leadership and not interested in group activities. Teachers could intervene and encourage the students to be as a leader and improve their co-operative learning skills. Considerable efforts could be pooled in giving importance to academic enabler as it plays an important role to academic success along with academic skills.

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