

# **Role of Parental Attention on the Academic Achievement of Rural and Urban Secondary School Students of Expatriate Parents**

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## **Abstract**

The purpose of the study was to find out the role of parental attention on academic achievement of students of expatriate parents. The study particularly deals with the role of parental attention on academic achievement of rural and urban students separately. The sample for the study was collected from various schools of Malabar region in the state of Kerala. Sample consists of 600 secondary school students whose fathers are working abroad of which 300 are rural students and 300 are urban students. A self made tool was used to measure the parental attention and the score of annual examination was taken as the indicator of academic achievement. Mean standard deviation and t-test was used for analyzing data. Students were classified into three groups based on the parental attention they get; namely high attention group, average attention group and low attention group. A comparison of percentage of achievement was done further. The study revealed that there is a significant relation between the academic achievement and parental attention among the secondary school students of expatriate parents in urban area where as it revealed that there is no significant relation between the academic achievement and parental attention among the secondary school students of expatriate parents in rural area.

**Keywords:** Academic achievement, secondary school students, expatriate parents, parental attention.

It is clearly understood that in most of the studies conducted so far, the findings show that the academic achievement of the students is positively correlated with parental attention. The achievement of the students is influenced by what type of care they get from their parents and how far they are willing to pay attention on their wards. It is very important that there are also studies which found out that there is no correlation between students' achievement and parental attention. Hence, the investigators hope

that it will be fruitful to study whether the parental attention of students of expatriate parents affects the students' achievement. As the father has distinct role in bringing up the child as a well developed and socially adjusted character, his absence during any of the stages of development of the child will affect the child. Since, it is the father who represents to the child the values and precepts of the society, he not only should contribute an awareness of what the society regards as gender-appropriate behavior but, also should foster and facilitate the adoption of the society's moral values. It is often reported that father absence is associated with delinquency or irregularities in moral development.

Fathers who are away from the home during the first year of a child's life have been reported to have little understanding of the developmental needs of the child and are thus overly strict in their training. Mothers generally have a better understanding of the child's needs than fathers and they tend to be less authoritarian. Children brought up in monomatric homes- homes where the mother takes exclusive care of the child – are usually better understood and enjoy more consistent child-training than those brought up in polymatric homes where the care of the child is shared with another female (Hurlock, 1976). Slater (1962) examined the relationship between college men's personality characteristics and their perceptions of their parents. Students who scored high on questionnaire measures of ego strength and social competence were likely to perceive their fathers as affectionate and emotionally supportive. In contrast, students who responded in a manner suggesting low ego strength, impulsiveness and social introversion were liable to their fathers as being inhibiting in their demands and discipline. Parental involvement was positively associated with the son's responsibility toward others.

Though parental influences on cognitive development are poorly understood, there is a good deal of evidence that the father may exercise a strong influence over his son's intellectual development. Underachieving boys have inadequate relationships with their fathers, whom they regard as rejecting or hostile, but high achievers want to be with their fathers more than low achievers do and perceive themselves as more like their fathers (Shaw & White, 1965). The presence of an alternative masculine model, for example, an older brother, may inhibit the effects of the father's absence to some degree, though Biller (1971) argues that the father is a superior role model.

Although many studies can be criticized for not considering the ecological variables such as age at separation, the reason for separation, the family composition and structure, socioeconomic status and effects, and the mother's reaction to the separation, sufficient studies have been done to permit a conclusion that father absence can be detrimental to the social adjustment of children, especially of boys. Narang (1987) compared the effects of home factor affecting the academic achievement of boys and girls in urban rural areas. The study employed descriptive research design and survey method and found that home factor and status of family did not affect the academic performance in the city, town and village areas.

Research has shown that children from single parent households do not perform as well as in school as children from two parent households. There are several different explanations for this achievement gap. Single parents often struggle with time management issues due to balancing many different areas of life on their own. Some research has also shown that single parents are less involved with their children

and therefore give less encouragement and have lower expectations of their children than two parent households. (Majoribanks,1996). A very different study carried out by Cooksey and Fondell (1996) revealed that shared activities between fathers and their children enhanced academic achievement. A study conducted by Agarwal (1998) revealed that the group of mother present adolescents in all the educational categories showed to have more magnitude of encouragement than the mother absent groups.

Fathers' involvement in the schooling of the children has a great influence on their achievement. Nord and Winqvist (1999) conducted a study to find out fathers' involvement in their children's education. Findings indicated that children are more likely to do well academically, to participate in extra- curricular activities and to enjoy school if their fathers have high involvement in their schools. Children in single-parent homes are particularly at a disadvantage because they most often experience a reduction in the number of adult role models who are available to them. The reduction of adult role models, in turn, may result in the child missing out on resources that could have been invested by the absent parent (Heard, 2007). Phares, Fields and Kamboukos (2008) initiated a study on fathers' and mothers' involvement with their adolescents. The objective of this study was to explore mothers' and fathers' time and found mothers are spending more time with their adolescents than did fathers. Both mothers and fathers agreed that mothers had more responsibility for adolescents discipline, daily care and recreational activity.

Habibah Elias and Tan Huey Yee (2009) conducted a study on Relationship between Perceived Paternal and Maternal Parenting Styles and Student Academic Achievement in Selected Secondary Schools. Their findings revealed that perceived paternal permissive, authoritarian, and authoritative parenting styles were not significantly correlated with students' academic achievement. The findings also revealed that perceived maternal permissive, authoritarian, and authoritative parenting styles were not significantly correlated with students' academic achievement. The findings of Habibah Elias and Tan Huey Yee (2009) contradict with the previous study which found that there was a significant relationship between paternal and maternal parenting style and students' academic achievement (Chen, Dong, & Zhou, 1997). The findings also contradict with the results obtained by Seyed Mohammad Assadi, Nayereh Zokaei, Hossein Kaviani, Mohammad Reza Mohammadi, Padideh Ghaeli, Mahmood Reza Gohari *et al.* (2007) which found that perceived maternal permissive, authoritarian, and authoritative parenting was significantly correlated with students' academic achievement. The findings in this study is inconsistent with the findings by Silva, Dorso, Azharm, and Renk (2007) which reported that perceived paternal and maternal authoritative and maternal authoritarian parenting style were correlated with students' grade point average.

However, the findings of Habibah Elias and Tan Huey Yee (2009) are consistent with the findings obtained by Joshi, Ferris, Otto, and Regan (2003) in which perceptions of both paternal and maternal parenting style were not correlated with academic achievement. According to Joshi, Ferris, Otto, and Regan (2003) the finding that paternal and maternal parenting styles were unrelated with students' academic achievement could be explained by the different influence of parenting style as the children grow older. Children's academic achievement in the early years of schools may be influenced by parenting style but not at the later years of schools (McBride-Chang & Chang, 1998).

The absence of either parent can have detrimental effects on the academic achievement of immigrant students. For instance, maternal and paternal absence has been associated with reduced academic success, with prolonged periods of paternal absence being more detrimental to child outcomes (Suarez-Orozco *et al.* 2010).

### **Objectives of the study**

The study had the following objectives.

1. To compare the level of Achievement of secondary school rural students of expatriate parents who get different levels of Parental Attention.
2. To compare the level of Achievement of secondary school urban students of expatriate parents who get different levels of Parental Attention.

### **Hypotheses**

1. Academic achievement of secondary school rural students of expatriate parents who get different levels of Parental Attention is not influenced by the parental attention they receive.
2. There is no significant correlation between the academic achievement of secondary school urban students of expatriate parents and the level of parental attention they receive.

### **Methodology**

Survey method was used for the purpose of research. A sample of 600 students was collected using stratified random technique. Sample covered government, aided and unaided schools; all from both male and female students. A self made Inventory was used to collect the needed data for the study on Parental Attention. Annual examination marks of Std VIII were taken as the measure of Achievement. Estimation of percentage, the mean, SD and t- test were employed to analyze the data.

### **Analysis**

#### ***Classification on the basis of Parental Attention***

The total sample was classified into three groups on the basis of the score obtained in the inventory. They are:

- (i) Students who get High Parental Attention.
- (ii) Students who get Average Parental Attention.
- (iii) Students who get Low Parental Attention.

For this classification, first the mean of the total scores was found and then the standard deviation also. Mean +1 s and above were treated as High Parental Attention and mean -1 s and below were treated as Low Parental Attention. The rest were treated as Average Parental Attention. The mean score was

172.225. The standard deviation was 13.137 Hence, the score 185 and above were considered to be with High Parental Attention, the score between 184 and 160 were to be with Average Parental Attention and the score 159 and below were to be considered with Low Parental Attention.

Table 1 shows the number of rural students and urban students who get different types of parental attention and their percentage of achievement.

**Table 1: Percentage of Achievement of the samples based on locale of students (N=600)**

Level of Parental Attention	Samples	N	% of Achievement
High Attention	Rural	56	71
	Urban	48	73
Total		104	72
Average Attention	Rural	221	63
	Urban	166	62
Total		387	63
Low Attention	Rural	23	58
	Urban	86	55
Total		109	56
N=600			

**Comparison of the level of achievement of rural students in high attention, average attention and low attention groups**

At first the investigator compared the levels of achievement of the rural students who get high parental attention, average parental attention and low parental attention. Details of the analysis are given below.

***Comparison of the Level of Achievement between Rural students with High Parental Attention and Rural students with Average Parental Attention***

Comparison of the Level of Achievement between Rural students with High Parental Attention and Rural students with Average Parental Attention was done and the data and results are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Comparison of the Level of Achievement between Rural students with High Parental Attention and Rural students with Average Parental Attention**

Variable	Sample				Critical Ratio	Level of Significance
	Rural students with High Attention		Rural students with Average Attention			
	N1	P1	N2	P2		
Achievement	56	71	221	63	1.1211	NS

Note: NS= Not Significant.

From Table 2, it is clear that the critical ratio for Achievement between Rural students who get High Parental Attention and Rural students who get Average Parental Attention is 1.1211. It indicates that there is no significant difference in Achievement between Rural students who receive High Parental Attention and those who receive Average Parental Attention because the critical ratio is 1.1211 which is less than the table value for significance at 0.05 level.

Comparison of the Level of Achievement between Rural students with High Parental Attention and Rural students with Low Parental Attention

***Comparison of the Level of Achievement between Rural students with High Parental Attention and Rural students with Low Parental Attention was done and the data and results are presented in Table 3.***

**Table 3: Comparison of the Level of Achievement between Rural students with High Parental Attention and Rural students with Low Parental Attention**

Variable	Sample				Critical Ratio	Level of Significance
	Rural students with High Attention		Rural students with Low Attention			
	N1	P1	N2	P2		
Achievement	56	71	23	58	1.1163	NS

*Note:* NS= Not Significant.

From Table 3, it is clear that the critical ratio for Achievement between Rural students who get High Parental Attention and Rural students who get Low Parental Attention is 1.1163. It indicates that there is no significant difference in Achievement between Rural students who receive High Parental Attention and those who receive Low Parental Attention because the critical ratio is 1.1163 which is less than the table value for significance at 0.05 level.

***Comparison of the Level of Achievement between Rural students with Average Parental Attention and Rural students with Low Parental Attention***

Comparison of the Level of Achievement between Rural students with Average Parental Attention and Rural students with Low Parental Attention was done and the data and results are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4: Comparison of the Level of Achievement between Rural students with Average Parental Attention and Rural students with Low Parental Attention**

Variable	Sample				Critical Ratio	Level of Significance
	Rural students with Average Attention		Rural students with Low Attention			
	N1	P1	N2	P2		
Achievement	221	63	23	58	0.4726	NS

*Note:* NS= Not Significant.

From Table 4, it is clear that the critical ratio for Achievement between Rural students who get Average Parental Attention and Rural students who get Low Parental Attention is 0.4726. It indicates that there is no significant difference in Achievement between Rural students who receive Average Parental Attention and those who receive Low Parental Attention because the critical ratio is 0.4726 which is less than the table value for significance at 0.05 level.

From the above three comparisons, the investigator could reveal that there is no influence of parental attention on achievement of secondary school rural students of expatriate parents.

**Comparison of the level of achievement of urban students in high attention, average attention and low attention groups**

After comparing the levels of achievement of the rural students, the investigator compared the levels of achievement of urban students who get high parental attention, average parental attention and low parental attention. Details of the analysis are given below.

***Comparison of the Level of Achievement between Urban students with High Parental Attention and Urban students with Average Parental Attention***

Comparison of the Level of Achievement between Urban students with High Parental Attention and Urban students with Average Parental Attention was done and the data and results are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5: Level of Achievement between Urban students with High Parental Attention and Urban students with Average Parental Attention**

Variable	Sample				Critical Ratio	Level of Significance
	Urban students with High Attention		Urban students with Average Attention			
Achievement	N1	P1	N2	P2	1.3983	NS
	48	73	166	62		

*Note: NS= Not Significant.*

From Table 5, it is clear that the critical ratio for Achievement between Urban students who get High Parental Attention and urban students who get Average Parental Attention is 1.3983. It indicates that there is no significant difference in Achievement between Urban students who receive High Parental Attention and those who receive Average Parental Attention because; the critical ratio is 1.3983 which is less than the table value for significance at 0.05 level.

Comparison of the Level of Achievement between Urban students with High Parental Attention and Urban students with Low Parental Attention.

***Comparison of the Level of Achievement between Urban students with High Parental Attention and urban students with Low Parental Attention was done and the data and results are presented in Table 6.***

**Table 6: Comparison of the Level of Achievement between Urban students with High Parental Attention and Urban students with Low Parental Attention**

Variable	Sample				Critical Ratio	Level of Significance
	Urban students with High Attention		Urban students with Low Attention			
Achievement	N1	P1	N2	P2	2.0483	S
	48	73	86	55		

*Note:* S= Significant.

From Table 6, it is clear that the critical ratio for Achievement between Urban students who get High Parental Attention and Urban students who get Low Parental Attention is 2.0483. It indicates that there is a significant difference in Achievement between Urban students who receive High Parental Attention and those who receive Low Parental Attention because the critical ratio is 2.0483 which is greater than the table value for significance at 0.05 level.

***Comparison of the Level of Achievement between Urban students with Average Parental Attention and Urban students with Low Parental Attention***

Comparison of the Level of Achievement between Urban students with Average Parental Attention and Urban students with Low Parental Attention was done and the data and results are presented in Table 7.

**Table 7: Comparison of the Level of Achievement between Urban students with Average Parental Attention and Urban students with Low Parental Attention**

Variable	Sample				Critical Ratio	Level of Significance
	Urban students with Average Attention		Urban students with Low Attention			
Achievement	N1	P1	N2	P2	1.0754	NS
	166	62	86	55		

*Note:* NS= Not Significant.

From Table 7, it is clear that the critical ratio for Achievement between Urban students who get Average Parental Attention and Urban students who get Low Parental Attention is 1.0754. It indicates that there is no significant difference in Achievement between Urban students who receive Average Parental Attention and those who receive Low Parental Attention because the critical ratio is 1.0754 which is less than the table value for significance at 0.05 level.

From the above comparisons, it is clear that the percentages of Achievement of rural students and urban students in High Parental Attention Group are 71 and 73 respectively. The percentages of Achievement

of rural students and urban students in Average Parental Attention Group are 63 and 62 respectively. The percentages of Achievement of rural students and urban students in Low Parental attention Group is 58 and 55 respectively.

### **Findings of the Study**

1. There is no significant difference between the percentages of Achievement of rural students who get High, Average or Low Parental Attention.
2. There is a significant difference between the percentages of Achievement of urban students who get High Parental Attention and Low Parental Attention.

### **Conclusion and Educational Implications**

From the above findings, the researchers could arrive at the conclusion that the achievement of secondary school students of expatriate parents in rural area is not influenced by the parental attention they receive. This clearly remarks that the parents in rural area are not showing much interest in the education of their children. It may be due to the poor infra structure in rural locality, due to their lack of awareness, and due to their socio-economic status that the parents fail in providing adequate attention towards the education of their children. At the same time, the achievement of urban students is clearly influenced by the parental attention they receive. It indicates that the parents in urban area are much interested and actively engaged in the education of their children. It may be because the urban area tends to grow faster.

As the present study pinpoints towards the lack of awareness of the parents in the rural area, the measures like training them towards effective parenting and the sessions that highlight the value of education should be implemented in the rural area. So, the fathers and mothers can encourage their children to obtain high scores. School authority must maintain strict discipline in the school along with help of parents so that it may pave the way for greater achievement of the students. Home tuition or holiday classes may be arranged for the rural students in order to keep them in touch with the school subjects. Financial aid may be provided to the needy students.

Father absent students of urban schools should be given more care in curricular and co-curricular fields. It may be because the mothers in urban area are more educated than their counterparts in rural area that urban mothers' attention influences the achievement of their children. Mothers of such students can form a special body to discuss and work out the needed matters every now and then. Parents, teachers and students can utilize the latest means of ICT for their communication hence they facilitate remote parenting with cheap expense.

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