

Breaking the Cycle: Addressing Lack of Academic Perseverance and Alienation from learning among Tamil medium secondary school students in Idukki and Palakkad District

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Abstract - Academic achievement depends heavily on academic perseverance, or the capacity to put up effort and keep an interest in work in the face of difficulties. Many students suffer from lack of academic perseverance which causes them to get disengaged and alienated from the educational process. Students who find it difficult to continue are more likely to experience alienation, and alienated people are less likely to cultivate the perseverance required to overcome obstacles in the classroom. This cycle is particularly evident among students in marginalized communities, where additional socio-economic and cultural factors exacerbate these issues. This paper aims to explore the relation between lack of perseverance and alienation from learning, with a particular focus on Tamil students in the Idukki and Palakkad districts. Tamil medium students in Kerala often face significant language barriers. While Tamil is the medium of instruction in their schools, Malayalam is the dominant language in the state, used in government, business, and daily interactions. This creates a communication gap, making it difficult for Tamil medium students to integrate seamlessly into the broader Kerala society. In this context, the investigator conducted a survey among 55 Tamil medium students in Idukki and Palakkad districts to know the effect of Lack of Academic perseverance on Alienation from learning. The results revealed that most of the students showed moderate level of Lack of perseverance and alienation from learning. Also found that there is strong positive correlation between Lack of perseverance and Alienation from learning.

Keywords – *Lack of academic perseverance, Alienation from learning*

INTRODUCTION

Academic Perseverance is the capacity of a student to persevere through challenges, setbacks, and diversions to finish tasks as thoroughly and on time as possible (Farrington et.al, 2012). To succeed academically, one must possess perseverance. But a lot of students have trouble sticking with it, which might limit their ability to grow as people and produce subpar academic results. The lack of perseverance, which is the inability to maintain interest and effort in tasks in the face of adversity is a major problem in educational settings. Research has consistently shown that students are less likely to stick with a learning task when: a) Culturally exclusive or personally irrelevant material; b) Behavioral norms alienate and marginalize them; c) They don't believe they will succeed; d) They haven't been taught the skills necessary to achieve; e) They aren't given enough voice or choice in how they learn and what they do; f) They don't

have reasons to value the outcomes or the process; g) They feel excluded; h) They don't have reasons to value the learning environment or the process; i.) They don't feel smart (KnowledgeWorks, 2021).

Academic performance and learning engagement are mostly dependent on perseverance. But a large portion of students struggle to stay persistent, which makes them disengaged and distant from the educational process. Poor academic performance can create a feeling of alienation from school and lead to drop out decisions (Robbins, Casillas, & Oh, 2008). Research has demonstrated that adolescents develop negative attitudes toward school during their educational journey, especially in secondary school, which can lead to school alienation (Brown, Higgins, & Paulsen, 2003; Hascher & Hagenauer, 2010). The vicious loop that results from alienation from learning and a lack of perseverance can seriously impede a student's academic progress. Students who find it difficult to continue are more likely to experience alienation, and alienated people are less likely to cultivate the perseverance required to overcome obstacles in the classroom. This cycle is particularly evident among students in marginalized communities, where additional socio-economic and cultural factors exacerbate these issues. This paper aims to explore the relation between lack of perseverance and alienation from learning, with a particular focus on Tamil students in the Idukki and Palakkad districts. The Tamil-speaking population in Kerala primarily consists of migrants from Tamil Nadu who settled in the state over the years, contributing significantly to the cultural and linguistic diversity of districts like Palakkad, Idukki, and Thiruvananthapuram. The Tamil speakers of these three districts have differently in their language loyalty and in their attitude towards the regional language. Tamil medium schools aimed to preserve the Tamil language and culture while providing education in the mother tongue. Over the years, the number of Tamil medium schools increased, particularly in regions with a high concentration of Tamil speakers. Amongst the functional group of Kerala, the Tamilians come first in population. Tamil medium students in Kerala often face significant language barriers. While Tamil is the medium of instruction in their schools, Malayalam is the dominant language in the state, used in government, business, and daily interactions. This creates a communication gap, making it difficult for Tamil medium students to integrate seamlessly into the broader Kerala society (Sumathi, R., & Vajitha, A.A. 2019).

The quality of education in Tamil medium schools can be inconsistent. Many schools suffer from a lack of resources, such as modern teaching aids, well-stocked libraries, and extracurricular facilities. Additionally, there is often a shortage of qualified teachers who are proficient in both Tamil and the subjects they teach. This affects the overall academic performance of students (Muneer. V & Saleem, M. 2020). By examining the lack of perseverance and alienation from learning, the paper seeks to provide a deeper understanding of how these phenomena manifest and interact in Tamil medium schools. The manuscript includes Objectives, review of related literature, methodology, results and analysis, conclusion and discussion, future scope of the study and references.

OBJECTIVES

1. To find out the level of Lack of Academic Perseverance among Tamil medium secondary school students in the total sample.
2. To find out the level of Alienation from Learning among Tamil medium secondary school students in the total sample.
3. To find out whether there exists any significant relation between Lack of Perseverance and alienation from learning among secondary school students for the total sample.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In a study by Silvervarg, A., Haake, M., & Gulz, A. (2018), the phenomena of perseverance were examined with 108 10- to 12-year-olds who utilized a digital educational game focusing history. The purpose of the instructional game was to present all students with tasks that they were unable to do, at which time they were presented with a series of options that represented persistence and non-perseverance. Behavioral log data, post-questionnaires, and an in-game questionnaire administered by a game character that inquired about the students' rationale for their selection were the techniques employed. They discovered no distinctions in the self-reported reasons for persevering when faced with challenges or obstacles, nor in the experiences of effort, difficulty, and learning between students with high and low perseverance. Nonetheless, in terms of output, students with strong perseverance completed a notably greater number of activities at increasingly challenging levels. When they compared individuals with high perseverance who typically took a break right after failing an exam, before going back to work on the same task, they discovered no discernible differences, suggesting that taking a break does not negatively impact learning or perseverance.

According to grit research, perseverance is a strong predictor of academic success. However, there is still a lack of research on the mechanisms by which persistence could result in academic success, especially in cross-cultural studies. Xu, K., et al. (2019) looked into these mechanisms by analyzing potential mediating effects of students' use of self-regulated learning strategies (memorization, control, and elaboration) on the relationship between students' perseverance and academic achievement in Anglo-Saxon English-speaking Western countries and East Asian students. 24,352 population-representative 15-year-old students from Hong Kong, the Republic of Korea, Australia, New Zealand, Scotland, and the US made up the sample, which was drawn from the OECD PISA research. The findings indicated that in East Asian cultures as opposed to Western societies, persistence was positively correlated with achievement. In Western countries, the influence of perseverance on accomplishment was more adversely mediated by instrumental motivation and the employment of memorizing and elaboration strategies, while control strategy was a stronger positive mediator of achievement.

Two investigations were carried out by Hascher, T., & Hagenauer, G. (2010) with the goal of determining the duration of school alienation and the school-related variables that could affect it in the early stages of adolescence. 434 pupils in grades 5–8 took part in Study 1 (cross-sectional design). They used a longitudinal strategy to track 356 students in grades 6–7 in Study 2. In determining academic alienation during early adolescence, the results validate the prevalence of alienation for boys and low achievers, the gradual progression of alienation during adolescence, and the predictive value of instructional quality, positive teacher–student integration, and positive student–student integration.

METHODOLOGY

- Survey method was used for data collection
- The sample consists of 55 Tamil medium secondary school students in Palakkad and Idukki districts.
- Variables of the study consists of Lack of perseverance and Alienation from learning are major variables. Gender is considered as the categorical variable.
- Tools used
 - Scale on Alienation from learning (Nimisha & Bindhu, 2022): It is a Five-point scale with 14 items consists of 6 Positive items and 8 negative items.
 - Scale on Perseverance (Nimisha & Bindhu, 2022): It is a five-point scale with 13 items, including 5 positive items and 8 negative items.

- Statistical techniques such as Preliminary analysis and Correlation coefficient (r) are used for analyzing the data

RESULTS & ANALYSIS

Analysis of The Level of Lack of Perseverance Among Tamil Medium Secondary School Students in The Total Sample

The level of Lack of Perseverance Among Tamil Medium Secondary School Students in The Total Sample was calculated by the percentage analysis.

Table 1

The mean scores & level of Lack of Perseverance Among Tamil Medium Secondary School Students in The Total Sample	No	Mean	SD	Level	Sample size	Percentage
	55	31.07	5.76	High	11	20 %
				Low	11	20 %
				Moderate	33	60 %

Table 1 revealed that, among 55 Tamil medium students, 20 % students showed high and low level of Lack of perseverance and 60% students showed moderate level of Lack of perseverance. Most of the students showed moderate level of Lack of perseverance.

Analysis of the Level of Alienation from Learning Among Tamil Medium Secondary School Students in the Total Sample

The was calculated by the percentage analysis.

Table 2

Level of Alienation from Learning Among Tamil Medium Secondary School Students in the total sample	Total Sample size	Mean	SD	Level	Sample size	Percentage
	55	36.18	5.75	Low	8	14.54 %
				High	10	18.18 %
				moderate	37	67.27 %

Table 2 revealed that, 14.54% students showed low level of Alienation from learning, 18.18 % students showed high Alienation from learning and 67.27 % students showed moderate level of Alienation from learning.

Estimation of relationship between Lack of Perseverance and Alienation from learning among secondary school students using Karl Pearson product moment co-efficient of correlation (r).

Table 3

Coefficient of Correlation between Lack of Perseverance and Alienation from learning among secondary school students	Variables	N	Correlation	Level of Significance	Sig

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of Perseverance Alienation from Learning 	55	0.864833	0.01	.000
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Significant at 0.01 level. P value <0.001.

The correlation coefficient of Lack of Perseverance and Alienation from learning among Tamil medium students is 0.864. It revealed that there is strong positive correlation between the two variables.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

- Most of the Tamil medium students showed moderate level of Lack of perseverance. According to Griffiths, K. (2017), none of the participants in their study thought that their schools regularly or even specifically taught or practiced perseverance or the character traits that go along with it.
- Most of the Tamil medium students exhibited moderate level of Alienation from learning. Malayalam is the dominant language in the state, used in government, business, and daily interactions. This creates a communication gap, making it difficult for Tamil medium students to integrate seamlessly into the broader Kerala society (Sumathi, R., & Vajitha, A.A. 2019). It will lead to linguistic alienation among Tamil medium students. The phenomenon of language alienation is very likely to have a direct impact on primary and secondary school students' language learning as well as behavioral norms (Sun Yan. (2023). Social interactions heavily depend on language use. Peer interactions might be difficult for students who don't speak the prevalent language well, which can make them feel alone. Their alienation may worsen if they experience bias, bullying, or are just left out of conversations.
- The lack of perseverance and alienation from learning among Tamil medium students showed strong positive correlation. According to Silvervarg, A., Haake, M., & Gulz, A. (2018), without perseverance in learning domain, the likelihood that a learner will make progress in the domain is very low.

FUTURE SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Extending the research to further districts of Kerala in order to determine whether the problems are unique to Idukki and Palakkad or if they affect the entire state. Comparing Tamil-medium students to those in Kannada- and English-medium schools to see if there is a discernible difference in the alienation and perseverance problems caused by the different teaching methods. Determining long-term effects on academic performance and socioemotional development by carrying out longitudinal research to monitor changes in perseverance and alienation over time. Influencing educational policy to address structural problems including curriculum design, resource distribution, and language support that contribute to alienation and a lack of perseverance. Researching the coping techniques and stress levels of Tamil-medium pupils in order to create plans for improved emotional control and resilience.

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