A Study of Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) on Girls Education with Special Reference to Achievement, Test Anxiety and School Adjustment

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Abstract

The present study attempted to find out the effectiveness of the RMSA programme in government schools on Class X students in relation to their achievement, test anxiety and school adjustment. The sample comprised 400 students studying in different division of Jodhpur, i.e., Pali, Jalore, Barmer, Jaisalmer and Jodhpur districts. Test Anxiety questionnaire was constructed by A. Kumar, the School Adjustment inventory was prepared by N.M. Bhagia and self-constructed science achievement test were used to collect data. It was found that the achievement of rural girls was higher as compare to urban girls but the test anxiety was lower in urban girls in contrast to rural girls, whereas the school adjustment was excellent in urban girls as compared to rural girls due to the facilities provided by the RMSA Programme. Low, negative and significant relationship was found between achievement and test anxiety of rural and urban girls. Low, positive and significant relationship was found between rural and urban girls in relation to their achievement and school adjustment. Moderate, negative and significant relationship was found between test anxiety and school adjustment. This was a benchmark study that provides concrete information from the perception of students that a quality improvement programme must be offered through the RMSA as it is a very effective programme for quantitative and qualitative improvement of the students.

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INTRODUCTION

The Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA), a flagship programme of the Government of India is a centrally sponsored scheme launched in March, 2009 for achieving universal secondary education. It is a community owned initiative to universalise secondary education with an objective to provide quality secondary education to all children up to 16 years and 18 years, respectively, and higher/senior secondary education to all children up to the age group of 14–18 years.

The vision for secondary education is to make good quality education available, accessible and affordable to all children in the age group of 14–18 years. It aims to provide a secondary school within a reasonable distance of any habitation, which should be 5 kilometres for secondary schools and 7–10 kilometres for higher secondary schools. It also aims to include providing access to secondary education with special references to economically weaker sections of the society, the educationally backward, the girls, the disabled children residing in rural areas, other marginalised categories like SC, ST, OBC and Educationally Backward Minorities.

The purpose of this scheme is to improve the gender ratio by providing an environment of security and education to girls with better nutrition and to eliminate all discriminations against the girl child. It is significant that girl education is promoted in rural areas, so that every girl becomes independent and assertive.

Girls' education is also very essential for strengthening the society and lowering crime rates. Most of the parents in rural areas are now seem to be convinced in sending their girl child to school, but it is important that girls finish all necessary levels of education, learn extra skills and competencies for showcasing the same level of competitiveness in the labour market.

Bhutia (2013) studied RMSA in northeast India and concluded that secondary education provides an indispensable link to the whole education system. Sangeeta and Kumar (2013) reviewed the support of RMSA to achieve the education for all. Deb et al. (2015) studied the impact of RMSA and found that RMSA is a transforming recent programme for the universalisation of secondary education. Sachdeva (2016) studied the impact of RMSA in enrollment and parents' satisfaction in rural schools of Sunderbani. Chamyal (2017) conducted a comparative study of the knowledge of RMSA and found significant difference in the knowledge of RMSA among secondary and senior secondary school teachers of rural and urban areas.

The review of literature revealed that there is no study conducted on the RMSA programme to find out improvement of girls' education with special reference to their achievement, test anxiety and school adjustment.

The academic activities conducted under the RMSA programme are focussed on science, mathematics and

English education, in-service training of teacher, science laboratories, ICT-enabled education, curriculum reforms, teaching-learning reforms, etc., for bringing out best results. Therefore, the following research objectives have been framed for investigation.

OBJECTIVES

The following objectives have been framed for the present study.

1. To study and compare the achievement, test anxiety and school adjustment of rural and urban girls studying in schools under the RMSA.

2. To study the relationship between achievement and test anxiety of rural girls studying in schools under the RMSA.

3. To study the relationship between achievement and school adjustment of rural girls studying in schools under the RMSA.

4. To study the relationship between school adjustment and test anxiety of rural girls studying in schools under the RMSA.

5. To study the relationship between achievement and test anxiety of urban girls studying in schools under the RMSA.

6. To study the relationship between achievement and school adjustment of urban girls studying in schools under the RMSA.

7. To study the relationship between school adjustment and test anxiety of urban girls studying in schools under the RMSA.

METHODOLOGY

The normative survey method was used in this study. The sample for the present study consisted of five districts of Jodhpur division including Jodhpur, Barmer, Jaisalmer, Pali and Jalore district. The sample consisted of 400 girl students of rural and urban areas of these districts. The following tools were used for the collection of data under the present study.

TOOLS

In the present investigation the following tools were used.

1. Test Anxiety Scale for children: Constructed and standardised by A. Kumar (1971).

2. The School Adjustment Inventory: Constructed and standardised by N.M. Bhagia (1968).

3. Achievement Test: Self-made objective type test.

The researcher discussed the selected content with the senior teachers of science and also with the teacher educators and experts having long teaching experiences (care was taken that the physics portion was examined by the physics teacher while chemistry and biology was examined by the concerned subject teachers to ensure the reliability and validity). The test paper consisted 50 questions of 50 marks and was checked by an expert panel.

The test is prepared on the basis of blueprint, considering the knowledge,

understanding, application and skill type items. In the present test, all the selected items were objective type and each test item or question carried equal marks. The test paper was of a 60 minute duration. The instruction of administration was also prepared which are written on the test paper. The scoring key and the marking scheme for the test were prepared for evaluation of the test papers.

Statistical Analysis

The data obtained through the tools have been subjected to appropriate statistical analysis in line with the objectives of the study. Mean, Standard Deviation, t-Test, Product Moment Correlation were used for analysis.

Results and Discussion

Science Achievement

The achievement of rural and urban girls of Jalore, Jodhpur, Pali, Barmer and Jaisalmer district in science subject is given in Table 1.

Interpretation

The mean values showed that the rural girls (35.17) have more impact of RMSA on their science achievement than urban girls (31.05). There is a significant difference between the two groups. So, it can be assumed that the RMSA programme methodology and strategy have a powerful impact in the rural areas. This study is in the line with the findings of the previous study (Gupta et al., 1993) who observed that in rural and urban areas, different factors contribute to the prediction of academic achievement. Thus, the RMSA programme increased the science achievement of secondary students, especially in rural areas.

Test Anxiety

Acompalisson of the anxiety level of the rural and urban girls of Jalore, Jodhpur, Pali, Barmer and Jaisalmer district is given in Table 2.

Table 1

Comparison between Rural and Urban Girls for the Variable Science Achievement Studying in Schools under RMSA

S. No.	Area	N	Mean	S.D.	SEm	t value	Level of significance
1.	Rural	200	35.17	9.1	0.64	4.478	Significant at 0.05 level
2.	Urban	200	31.05	9.4	0.66		

Table 2
Comparison between Rural and Urban Girls for the Variable Test Anxiety Studying in schools under RMSA

S.No.	Area	N	Mean	S.D.	SEm	t value	Level of significance
1.	Rural	200	13.415	6.78	0.47	2.134	Significant at 0.05 level
2.	Urban	200	11.84	7.95	0.56		

Interpretation

The numerical values showed that the rural girls have more test anxiety than urban girls; 't' value is significant at 0.05 level of confidence. So, it can be interpreted that the RMSA programme is helpful in decreasing the test anxiety among secondary students, especially in urban areas. These are in line with the findings of the previous study (Alam, 2013) observed that urban students have least test anxiety and excellent academic performance in comparison to their rural counterparts.

School Adjustment

The school adjustment of rural and urban girls of Jalore, Jodhpur, Pali, Barmer and Jaisalmer is described in Table 3.

Interpretation

The significant 't' values for various levels of adjustment in the school by urban and rural girls demonstrate the impact of the RMSA programme and suggest that the programme is capable to increase the school adjustment of secondary students, specially in urban areas. This study is in line with the findings of previous study (Punia and Sangwan, 2011) who reported that the urban adolescents have comparatively better adjustment against its rural counterparts.

Table 3
Comparison between Rural and Urban Girls for the Variable School Adjustment Studying in Schools under RMSA

S. No.	Area	N	Mean	S.D.	SEm	t value	Level of significance
1.	Rural	200	118.4	22.48	1.58	5.774	Significant at 0.05 level
2.	Urban	200	132	24.65	1.74		

Table 4
The Relationship between Science Achievement and Test Anxiety Studying in Schools under RMSA

Correlated variables	Coefficient of correlation	Type	Level of Confidence	Probable Error	Remarks
Science achievement and test anxiety	-0.1505	Negative	Significant	0.0466	Low

Interpretation

The results revealed that for every unit increase in test anxiety, there is a proportional unit decrease in the science achievement. The negative, low and significant relationship shows that RMSA programme deals with easy teaching and activity-based learning. The RMSA teaching and learning programme influences the understanding of science achievement and decreases the level of anxiety. Certain amount of anxiety is required as an impetus towards positive action. Earlier researches showed moderate negative level of test anxiety (Syokwaa et al., 2014) but the present study revealed low negative test anxiety among secondary students. It means that the RMSA programme is helpful in decreasing test anxiety and increasing science achievement of rural girls of secondary standard.

Interpretation

The well-adjusted students usually value their learning, positively involved in classroom activities and receive high grades (Kuiru et al., 2009). The positive and significant relationship between science achievement and school adjustment of girls under present study indicates that the students are well adjusted in the class and achieving higher scores in science. The physical as well as educational facilities created by RMSA programme in the schools of rural and urban areas enhance the school adjustment of student and simultaneously their science achievements. Our findings are in corroboration with the findings of Kuiru et al., (2009) who observed that adjustment in the classroom influences the learning and attitude of the student.

Table 5
The Relationship between Science Achievement and School Adjustment of Rural Girls Studying in Schools under RMSA

Correlated variables	Coefficient of correlation	Type	Level of Confidence	Remarks	Probable Error
Science achievement and school adjustment	0.2395	Positive	Significant	Low	0.047

Table 6
The Relationship between Test Anxiety and School Adjustment of Rural Girls Studying in Schools under RMSA

Correlated variables	Coefficient of correlation	Type	Level of Confidence	Remarks	Probable Error
Test anxiety and school adjustment	− 0.3323	Negative	Significant	Moderate	0.042

Interpretation

Results revealed that for every unit increase in test anxiety, there is a proportional unit decrease in the science achievement. The RMSA programme is child-centered programme in which students are helped to establish their school adjustment, besides this, the liabilities of students are considered, co–curricular activities and excursions are planned to improve the school adjustment of students under the RMSA programme. As the school adjustment of the students increases, the test anxiety will decrease. These findings are in line with the previous study (Hussain et al., 2008) who observed an inverse but significant relationship between academic stress and adjustment.

Interpretation

All the students experience test anxiety, whose level may change from time to time according to the prevailing circumstances. The high expectations of parents, teachers, school and society make a child more anxious. Hence, an increase in the test anxiety may lead to a decrease in achievement (Sarason, et al., 1960; Pandit 1969; Sridevi, 2013). This study revealed that the RMSA programme is extremely helpful in decreasing test anxiety and increasing the science achievement by providing skillful learning, activity-based strategies, etc.

Table 7
The Relationship between the Variable Science Achievement and Test Anxiety of Urban Girls Studying in Schools under RMSA

Correlated variables	Coefficient of correlation	Type	Level of Confidence	Remarks	Probable Error
Science achievement and test anxiety	- 0.2362	Negative	Significant	Low	0.045

Table 8
The Relationship between Science Achievement and School Adjustment of Urban Girls Studying in Schools under RMSA

Correlated variables	Coefficient of correlation	Type	Level of Confidence	Remarks	Probable Error
Science achievement and school adjustment	0.2114	Positive	Significant	Low	0.045

Interpretation

This study revealed that there is a low positive and significant relationship found between science achievement and school adjustment of urban girls. The RMSA programme enhances the achievement of students by providing them various innovative pedagogy and methods or techniques which help in the adjustment of students. Surekha (2008) reported significant, positive correlation between academic achievement and adjustment. Yellaiah (2012) found that there was a low positive relationship between adjustment and academic achievement. The findings under the present study are in agreement with the findings of other workers and suggests that the RMSA is an objective-based programme, fulfilling the needs of students.

test anxiety and planned educational programme for effective management of test anxiety. The results proved that the RMSA programme is getting success in decreasing test anxiety and increasing school adjustment.

CONCLUSION

The present study is an attempt to study the impact of the RMSA in the education of girls, with special reference to their achievement, test anxiety and school adjustment. It has also tried to compare and correlate the variables that is i.e., science achievement, test anxiety and school adjustment. The present study revealed that the RMSA programme has more impact on rural girls on science achievement as compared to urban girls. It means that the RMSA programme has more

Table 9
The Relationship between Test Anxiety and School Adjustment of Urban Girls Studying in Schools under RMSA

Correlated variables	Coefficient of correlation	Type	Level of Confidence	Remarks	Probable Error
Test anxiety and school adjustment	– 0.3842	Negative	Significant	Moderate	0.041

Interpretation

Anxiety is the way of telling us that something in the environment requires attention, which should be addressed properly. Urban girls reported a greater number of worries, more separation anxiety and higher level of generalised anxiety (Vig and Chawla, 2013). But the RMSA programme deals to sensitise these adolescent girls on the issues of

effect on rural girls as compared to urban. The rural girls have more test anxiety, than urban girls due to lack of facilities in that area. The school adjustment of urban girls were more than rural girls. It shows that the RMSA programme is working efficiently to remove adjustment problems. In rural and urban areas, the relationship between science achievement and test anxiety was

negative, low and significant, which proves that the RMSA programme decreases test anxiety and gives a positive effect on science achievement. The correlation between science achievement and school adjustment of rural and urban girls was positive, low and significant, revealing that the RMSA programme helps in learning and healthy adjustment of students. The correlation between test anxiety and school adjustment of rural and urban girls was moderate, negative and significant, showing that the RMSA programme is a student-centered programme.

SUGGESTIONS

On the basis of the findings of this study, some suggestions can be made.

1. The RMSA programme is enhancing the science achievement of secondary school students, so it should be monitored properly.

2. The teachers need to be familiar with the uses of ICT and open educational resources for teaching school subjects. Some training programmes could be organised on e-pathsala.

3. Some personality development programme for teachers may be organised with the help of NCERT, CBSE, and also the best teacher award should be given to the teacher who takes initiatives.

4. Pre-service education programmes need to be revised and updated as per the NCF 2005, the RTE Act 2009, and NCTE regulation 2014.

5. The students need to be encouraged for study by organising discussion on different topics, skills, reading habits, note taking and communication. Established alumni may be invited to the school for delivering lectures or giving motivational speeches.

6. The training programme should be convenient for all teachers so that they can be self-motivated for the programme. Teacher should be trained according to their interest, capabilities and academic achievements.

7. Every school must appoint a school counsellor who can help students and teachers, especially girls for their adjustment during period of adolescence. The counsellor can also aid students in choosing subjects and carriers after school education.

8. Impact of quality of RMSA should be analysed over a period of time but not as a single point. The performance of students should be recorded, monitored and compared from one project to other so that relative advantage may be assessed.

9. A toll free 24-hour helpline for the RMSA programme can be set up to provide effective, quality, on-the-spot solutions by experts. This will not only help the people person in remote areas but also solve the problem by subject experts, resource person, etc.

10. Attractive incentives should be provided to expert and teachers to work in remote tribal areas so that a result-oriented scheme could be launched.

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