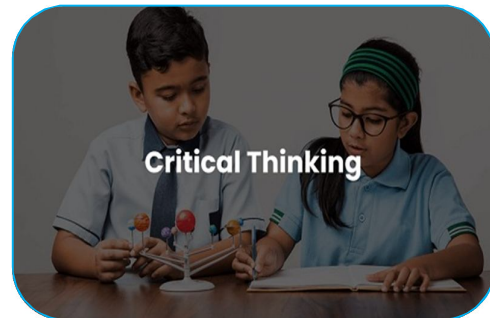




A STUDY ON COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF URBAN AND RURAL SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' CRITICAL THINKING, PROBLEM SOLVING ABILITY AND PARENTAL PRESSURE**Smt. Panchasheela****Research Scholar, Department of Studies in Education,
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Karnataka State Akkamahadevi Women University, Vijayapura.****ABSTRACT**

The important aim of education is to bring the child from darkness to light. Individual development occurs physically and psychologically through education. School education is the foundation upon which the edifice of whole educational system rests. In teaching and learning, critical thinking plays an important role in maximizing students' academic achievement. The study suggests that the development of critical thinking and problem-solving ability should be a central objective of secondary education in both urban and rural settings. At the same time, parental expectations need to be supportive rather than excessive. Any differences between urban and rural students should be understood in the context of their educational and socioeconomic environments. By providing equitable resources, learner-centred teaching, effective counselling, parental awareness, and opportunities for higher-order thinking, schools can help students from both settings become independent, confident, and effective problem-solvers.

**KEYWORDS:** *Critical thinking, Parental pressure, Problem solving ability.***1) INTRODUCTION:**

The important aim of education is to bring the child from darkness to light. Individual development occurs physically and psychologically through education. School education is the foundation upon which the edifice of whole educational system rests. In teaching and learning, critical thinking plays an important role in maximizing students' academic achievement.

1.1 CONCEPT OF CRITICAL THINKING

Critical thinking is the intellectually disciplined process of actively and skilfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action.

Critical thinking is a manner of thinking that employs curiosity, creativity, scepticism, analysis, and logic, where:

- ✚ Curiosity means wanting to learn,

- ✚ Creativity means viewing information from multiple perspectives,
- ✚ Scepticism means maintaining a “trust but verify” mind-set
- ✚ Analysis means systematically examining and evaluating evidence, and
- ✚ Logic means reaching well –founded conclusions.

1.2 concept of Problem solving:

Problem solving is the process of achieving a goal by overcoming obstacles, a frequent part of most activities. Problems in need of solutions range from simple personal tasks to complex issues in business and technical fields.

In order to effectively range and run a successful organisation, leadership must guide their employees and develop problem-solving techniques. Finding a suitable solution for issues can be accomplished by the following the basic four-step problem solving process and methodology outlined below.

1. Define the problem
2. Generate alternative solutions
3. Evaluate and select an alternative
4. Implement and follow up on the solution

1.3 Parental Pressure:

Parental pressure is the emotional stress parents tend to put on their children and is often related to academic success, cultural and social standards, and other factors. The leading cause of concern for the welfare of their children and their employment.

Academic parental pressure will only make kids worry. When they get a high grade on a test, they will worry about the next one or that someone has gotten an even higher grade. If the grade is not the top one, kids will be left with the feeling that they are just not good enough.

2) REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE:

Critical thinking

A longitudinal study conducted by joint researchers from the University of Texas, Austin, Huazhong University of Science; Technology, and **Zhejiang University (2015)** found that children with high critical thinking skills went on to perform better in academic environments. Their finding suggests that critical thinking can, in fact, act as a better predictor than even cognitive ability.

Thalib, corebima and Ghogur (2017) conducted a study on students with a high and low level of academic success and showed a negative relationship between critical thinking and academic achievements.

Problem solving

Chang et al (2001) investigated the pedagogical practices within primary mathematics classrooms in four Singapore schools. In all, a traditional teaching approach predominated among the primary teachers-expository teaching, followed by the students practicing routine exercises to consolidate the concepts, knowledge and skills. Anecdotal evidence further suggested that such an approach to teaching was prevalent in most primary schools. Somehow the emphasis on problem solving did not quite filter through, as it were, to classroom teaching practice.

Gupta (2014) found that the students' academic performance and their construction of the concepts there was no difference in the performance of students in the different ability levels after the treatment. The findings showed that students' ability have significant influence on problem – solving task.

Parental pressure:

Murayama et al (2007) found that high parental aspiration led to increased academic achievement, but only when it did not overly exceed realistic expectation. When aspiration exceeded expectation, the children's achievement decreased proportionately.

B.Patel,Bhoomika Patel (2021) Assessment of the parental pressure and peer factors affecting the academic performance of nursing students studying in selected nursing college of Vadodara concluded that majority of the students are having average intensity in their academics and some students are having high intensity in the academics.

3) NEED AND IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY:

The investigator has sought to examine the relationship between the Critical thinking, Problem solving ability and Parental pressure Urban and rural Secondary school students. The investigator on the basis of his finding also aimed at providing few tips and suggestions in order to excel the academic performance of the students.

4) OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

1. To analyse Secondary school students' Critical thinking, Problem solving ability and Parental pressure

5) METHODOLOGY:**Variables:*****Independent Variables to be considered in the study:***

- i. Critical thinking
- ii. Problem solving ability
- iii. Parental pressure

Dependent Variable to be considered in the study:

- i. Rural and Urban Secondary school students

6) RESEARCH HYPOTHESES:

Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is no significant difference between students of rural and urban secondary schools with respect to scores of

- Critical thinking
- Problem solving ability
- Parental pressure

7) DESIGN OF THE STUDY:

The present study is the descriptive study where a survey will be undertaken to compare the Urban and Rural Secondary school students' Critical thinking, Problem solving ability and Parental pressure of Kalaburagi District.

8) STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES USED:

The following statistical technique will be used for analyzing the data and will be computed by using standard formulas, Differential statistics.

Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is no significant difference between students of rural and urban secondary schools with respect to scores of

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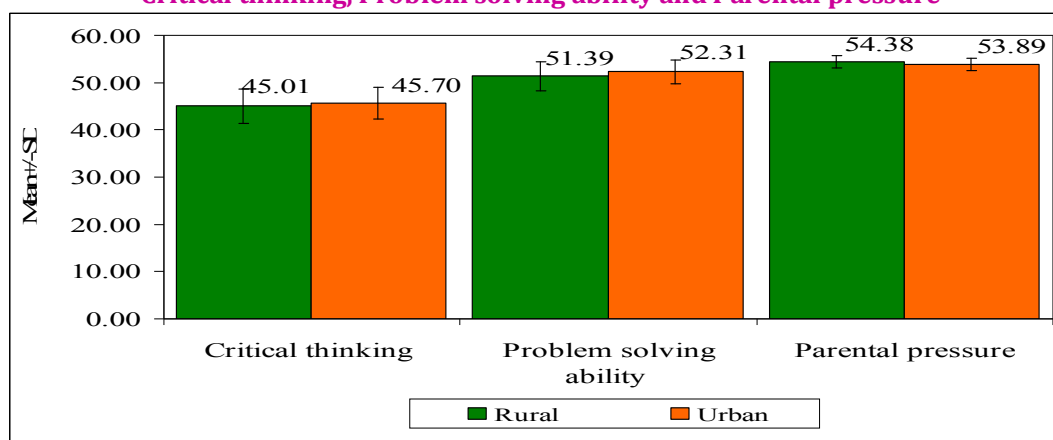
To evaluate the null hypothesis, an independent samples t-test was conducted on the two groups, and the findings are presented in the table below.

Table: Comparative analysis of students of rural and urban secondary schools with respect to scores of Critical thinking, Problem solving ability and Parental pressure

Variable	Location	n	Mean	SD	df	t-value	P-value
Critical thinking	Rural	302	45.01	3.64	602	-2.3904	0.0171,S
	Urban	302	45.70	3.37			
Problem solving ability	Rural	302	51.39	3.09	602	-3.9959	0.0001,S
	Urban	302	52.31	2.55			
Parental pressure	Rural	302	54.38	1.31	602	4.6757	0.0001,S
	Urban	302	53.89	1.27			

From the results of the above table, it clearly shows that

- The Rural (45.01 ± 3.64 , $n=302$) and Urban (45.70 ± 3.37 , $n=302$) students of secondary schools differ statistically significant with respect to their Critical thinking scores ($df=602$, $t=-2.3904$, $p=0.0171$) at 5% level of significance. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. It means that the rural students of secondary schools have significant and lesser Critical thinking scores as compared to urban students of secondary schools.
- The Rural (51.39 ± 3.09 , $n=302$) and Urban (52.31 ± 2.55 , $n=302$) students of secondary schools differ statistically significant with respect to their Problem solving ability scores ($df=602$, $t=-3.9959$, $p=0.0001$) at 5% level of significance. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. It means that the rural students of secondary schools have significant and lesser Problem solving ability scores as compared to urban students of secondary schools.
- The Rural (54.38 ± 1.31 , $n=302$) and Urban (53.89 ± 1.27 , $n=302$) students of secondary schools differ statistically significant with respect to their Parental pressure scores ($df=602$, $t=4.6757$, $p=0.0001$) at 5% level of significance. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. It means that the rural students of secondary schools have significant and higher Parental pressure scores as compared to urban students of secondary schools. The mean and SD of Critical thinking, Problem solving ability and Parental pressure scores between rural and urban students are also presented in the following figure.

Figure: Comparison of students of rural and urban secondary schools with respect to scores of Critical thinking, Problem solving ability and Parental pressure

Educational Implications:

1. Schools in both urban and rural areas should provide learning experiences that promote analysis, interpretation, reasoning, evaluation, and independent judgement. Teaching should move beyond rote memorisation and encourage students to ask questions, examine evidence, and express their own viewpoints.
2. Students should be given opportunities to solve real-life and academic problems through project work, experiments, case studies, puzzles, group activities, and problem-based learning. Such activities can help students develop logical reasoning, decision-making, creativity, and confidence.
3. If significant differences are found between urban and rural students, educational authorities should identify the factors responsible for these differences. Rural schools may require additional support in terms of learning resources, digital facilities, libraries, laboratories, trained teachers, and opportunities for enrichment activities.
4. Students should have equitable access to quality education irrespective of their geographical location. Educational programmes and resource allocation should ensure that rural students are not disadvantaged because of limited educational infrastructure or learning opportunities.
5. Teachers in both urban and rural schools should be encouraged to use learner-centred approaches such as cooperative learning, inquiry-based learning, experiential learning, discussion, project-based learning, and activity-based teaching.
6. Parents should be made aware that excessive pressure related to marks, examinations, competition, career selection, or comparison with other students may negatively affect children's educational experiences. Parents should provide encouragement and guidance while respecting the individual abilities and interests of their children.
7. Schools can organise awareness programmes and workshops for parents, particularly on adolescent development, academic expectations, communication with children, career guidance, and healthy ways of supporting academic achievement.
8. Counselling services should be made available to secondary school students to help them deal with academic stress, parental expectations, career-related concerns, and difficulties in learning. Counsellors can also help students develop effective coping and problem-solving strategies.
9. Urban and rural students may have different educational experiences because of differences in family background, socioeconomic conditions, school facilities, technology access, and exposure to diverse learning environments. Teachers should consider these contextual factors rather than attributing differences simply to students' abilities.
10. Teachers should be trained to develop higher-order thinking and problem-solving skills among students. Professional development programmes can focus on effective questioning, critical-thinking strategies, formative assessment, technology-supported learning, and differentiated instruction.
11. Digital resources can provide rural students with access to learning materials, virtual laboratories, educational videos, online libraries, and interactive learning experiences. However, technology initiatives should be accompanied by adequate infrastructure, teacher training, and student support.
12. The curriculum should include activities that connect classroom knowledge with real-life situations. Science investigations, community-based projects, environmental activities, local problem-solving tasks, debates, and social studies projects can help students develop critical thinking and practical problem-solving abilities.
13. School examinations and classroom assessments should not focus exclusively on memorisation. Questions involving application, analysis, evaluation, reasoning, interpretation, and problem-solving should be incorporated into assessments in both urban and rural schools.
14. Students should be encouraged to identify learning goals, search for information, evaluate sources, complete tasks independently, and reflect on their learning. This can enhance both critical thinking and problem-solving ability.

15. In rural areas, schools can collaborate with parents, local communities, educational organisations, and community resource persons to provide students with additional learning experiences. Local knowledge and community-based activities can also be integrated into teaching.
16. Schools should provide systematic career guidance based on students' interests, aptitude, abilities, and aspirations. Parents should be discouraged from imposing career choices based solely on social status, economic expectations, or comparison with other children.
17. Schools should create an atmosphere in which students feel comfortable asking questions, expressing opinions, making mistakes, and exploring alternative solutions. A non-threatening environment can encourage intellectual curiosity and independent thinking.
18. Educational policymakers should use findings from studies of this nature to identify areas requiring intervention. Special attention may be given to improving rural educational infrastructure, teacher availability, digital access, counselling facilities, and enrichment programmes while maintaining quality education in urban schools.

CONCLUSION:

The study suggests that the development of critical thinking and problem-solving ability should be a central objective of secondary education in both urban and rural settings. At the same time, parental expectations need to be supportive rather than excessive. Any differences between urban and rural students should be understood in the context of their educational and socioeconomic environments. By providing equitable resources, learner-centred teaching, effective counselling, parental awareness, and opportunities for higher-order thinking, schools can help students from both settings become independent, confident, and effective problem-solvers.

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