

**CHILDHOOD ADVERSITIES, PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING
AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT: A STUDY ON BAGANIYA
ADOLESCENTS IN DOOARS REGION**

*A synopsis of PhD thesis submitted to Jadavpur University for the award
of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Arts (Education)*

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2025

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Chapter 1: Context of the study

Introduction

Childhood adversity or adverse childhood experiences are “highly stressful, and potentially traumatic, events or situations that occur during childhood and/or adolescence. They can be a single event, or prolonged threats to, and breaches of, the young person’s safety, security, trust or bodily integrity” (Young Minds, 2018 in Manchester University, 2025). These extremely stressful and even traumatizing situations or events, happening in the first 18 years of a person’s life (Boullier and Blair, 2018: 132), can be physical, sexual or emotional abuse of the child concerned. Childhood adversity can also happen because of parental neglect of the child, the child living in a dysfunctional household, loss of a beloved family member of the child and the subsequent unresolved grief, and the child’s exposure to violence taking place in the community in which he is growing up (Copley, 2024). The child can also face adverse experiences because of poverty and economic hardships of his family.

People exposed to adverse experiences during the childhood can catch multiple short- and long-term health and lifestyle problems. Children facing adversities witness a disruption of their proper brain development and possess a compromised nervous and immune systems (OECD, 2020). Moreover, such children are also likelier to suffer from developmental delays right during the childhood (OECD, 2020). Furthermore, children who have faced adversities can grow up to be aggressive and violent persons who may find it difficult to establish healthy and stable relationship with other people (Nelson *et al.*, 2020: 3). Adverse childhood experiences can also cause diabetes, heart diseases and a host of other chronic diseases (Shonkoff and Garner, 2012: e238). Moreover, childhood adversity may equally cause addiction to drugs and alcohol. Overall, adverse experiences during the childhood may become one of the reasons for early mortality of a person (Dube *et al.*, 2003: 269).

Childhood adversity also affects the psychological wellbeing of the person who has experienced it. People who have faced adversities during their childhood are more likely to suffer from various kinds of psychiatric disorders like anxiety, depression, psychosis, and post-traumatic stress disorder (Hilberdink, 2023). In fact, research says that those who have suffered childhood adversities are three times more at risk of mental health

disorders and problems (Hogg *et al.*, 2023: 403) and are 15 times more prone to develop Borderline Personality Disorder (Newport Institute, 2023; Bozzatello, 2021).

Adverse childhood experiences are equally related to lower levels of educational and academic achievements (Yeo *et al.*, 2024). Adversities and trauma experienced during the childhood damages the ability of an individual to pay attention and adequately grasp the point along with damaging her memory and retention capabilities (AnxiousMinds). Such children are unable to think or reason properly and fail at solving the problem at hand (NCTSN). These children fail to keep up their curiosity while also experiencing “deficits in language development and abstract reasoning skills” (NCTSN). Therefore, childhood adversity and maltreatment not only negatively impact the psychological wellbeing but it is also one of most consistent causes of cognitive dysfunction related to intelligence and execution (Yingying *et al.* 2019).

Childhood adversity, Psychological wellbeing and Academic achievement

Adverse Childhood Experiences may not be a new concept. One old study (Kempe *et al.*, 1962) has termed it as the “Battered-Child Syndrome.” However, Kempe and his colleagues were concerned only with physical assault on a young child and it causing permanent bodily injury to her or even her death. Whereas the “Battered Adult Syndrome,” as William Foege (1998) has called the experiences and consequences of childhood adversities, came into prominence after a seminal research by Vincent Felitti *et al.* (1998). Actually, when Kaiser-Permanente – a healthcare provider based in the United States – noticed that a significant number of people attending its obesity clinic had a history of sexual abuse during the childhood then Kaiser-Permanente commissioned a study by Felitti *et al.* to understand the negative long-term consequences of adverse experiences faced by the children and the teenagers below the age of 18. (Boullier and Blair, 2018, p. 132). Though Felitti and his teammates do not provide a readily usable definition of Adverse Childhood Experiences, it can be understood as a “scale to measure negative early life experiences” (Petrucci *et al.*, 2019, p., 1) whereby “the higher the ACE score, the greater the risk of experiencing risky health behaviors, chronic health conditions, low quality of life potential, and early death” (Petrucci *et al.*, 2019, p., 1). In short, Adverse Childhood Experiences can be understood as “potentially traumatic events that can have negative lasting effects on health and well-being” (Boullier and Blair, 2018, p. 132).

Psychological Well-Being (PWB) is an old evolving concept. The ideas on individuation by Carl Jung (1933), mature personality by Gordon Allport (1937), positive criteria for mental health by Marie Jahoda (1958), psychosocial stage model by Erik Erikson (1959), fully-functioning person by Carl Rogers (1961), self-realization by Abraham Maslow (1968), personality change in later life by Bernice Neugarten (1973) among others have contributed to the contemporary understanding of PWB. Carol Ryff (1995), of whom we shall see more later, has beautifully synthesized the above-mentioned and other works to come up with a comprehensive understanding of PWB. Therefore, PWB is neither the absence of negative mental conditions like anxiety and depression (Ryff, 1995, p. 99) nor it is presence of positive mental conditions like pleasure and happiness. Let it be emphasized over here that PWB is not hedonistic consumption of multiple kinds of goods and services for incessant enjoyment and gratification. Similarly, human life is not a bed of roses thus negative experiences and feelings are part and parcel of everyone's life (Huppert, 2009, p. 137). PWB lies in finding meaning in an absurd world and providing essence to our existence Ryff, 2014, pp. 11-12). PWB is about knowing ourselves and our potential and living our lives to the fullest extent and to achieve our true potential (Ryff, 2014, p. 11). Conforming with this latter eudemonic understanding of PWB, the World Health Organization (2001) has come up with a functioning definition of PWB i.e. "a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community."

Academic achievement is the end of the result of a student of all academic activities. In India, test and exams are used by the Indian educational system to evaluate students' academic achievement. It determines the students rank, grades, and success or failure, all of which are beneficial to their future education (Mathew. 2017). These academic success is very important of any student on his future perspectives that means massive chances of employment, good mental health, higher self-esteem, healthy family and also social relationship. Academic achievement helps in children to identify their skills, abilities and competence which is crucial for establishing professional aspirations (Illahi & Khandai. 2015) Academic achievement is deliberate a comprehensive learning environment in the end of the course. These academic achievement take a significant role for assessing of students future life. Various factors and situations effect on students achievement or performances in their particular field. Many times highly commendable

students may not succeed as can be expected on their abilities. Academic achievement might be characterised as perfection in all academic fields, in class as well as extracurricular activities (Sarmah & Borah, 2019). In modern days technologies improve students' qualities, facilities and academic outputs.

Rationale of the Study

Childhood adversities encompass a broad variety of adverse experiences that produce severe or prolonged stress in early developmental ages. These include physical, emotional and economic abuse, neglect by parents, witnessing violence, having a single parent, experiencing early maternal loss and other types of family disruption. These are not race, ethnic, gender or socio-economic restricted and are increasingly viewed as a public health issue worldwide. Submerged feelings and the prospect of shame in revealing traumatic incidents during childhood tend to create a long-lasting state of psychological malaise. This emotional load prevents individuals from forming healthy ways of dealing with challenges and negatively impacts their mental health and general wellbeing years into adulthood.

Childhood adversities have significant social and economic repercussions since they affect cognitive, emotional and behavioural development, leading ultimately to educational achievement, productivity, and social functioning. These hardships jeopardise a child's potential for success within the educational environment and damage their psychological resilience. The children of tea garden labourers within the Dooars area of West Bengal, who are locally known as Baganiyas, frequently experience various types of adversity. Housed in a poverty-stricken environment with parental drug use, poor supervision and risky living conditions, these children must deal with these issues on a daily basis, with factors that deskill their psychological health and academic development. Most are subjected to emotionally traumatic experiences at home or in their communities, and are frequently forced to assume responsibilities that are inappropriate to their age, causing emotional tension and premature burnout.

In spite of an increasing volume of cross-national literature documenting the effects of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) on mental health and academic achievement, empirical studies in India are lacking, especially among disadvantaged and indigenous populations such as those living in Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar districts' tea

estates. Such populations are traditionally undercounted and continue to experience institutional disregard. The area has more than 180 registered tea gardens, and the population relying on this industry is large, with their socio-economic risks usually crossing generations. This research then seeks to fill a significant gap by exploring the correlation between childhood adversities, psychological wellbeing and academic performance among Baganiya adolescents in the Dooars region of West Bengal.

Chapter 2: Problem of study

This chapter describes an overview of the literature review, research problem, delimitation, major research questions, objectives and hypotheses that have guided the researcher in pursuing the research.

In order to perform a comprehensive study of previous research in this particular topic, the researcher initially identified both theoretical and empirical papers pertaining to childhood adversities, psychological wellbeing and academic achievement. Subsequently, the focus was limited down to studies specially undertaken in the realm of education and higher education. The researcher looked in the primary research databases such as Scopus, PubMed, Directory of Open Access Journals(DOAJ), JSTOR and Google Scholar. The researcher selected and reviewed 35 relevant studies on childhood adversities, psychological wellbeing and academic achievement to identify the knowledge gap for the current study.

Statement of the Problem

The Dooars area of West Bengal, covering the Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar districts, harbours a sizeable number of tea garden workers, more commonly referred to as Baganiyas. They are comprised mainly of Scheduled Tribe (ST) and Scheduled Caste (SC) populations with chronic poverty, low education, poor access to healthcare, and unstable family backgrounds. The children are often exposed to several adversities from an early age, such as parental alcohol or drug abuse, domestic violence, and educational neglect this resulting to poor mental health and academic failure.

To fill the knowledge gap, the researcher has identified the research problem – ***“Childhood adversities, Psychological Wellbeing and Academic Achievement: A study on Baganiya adolescents in Dooars Region.”***

Delimitations of the Study

The present study was delimited to the following:

- i. The sample consisted of only 1016 students from 21 schools located in the Dooars region of West Bengal.
- ii. Only Bengali-medium schools were included in the study.

- iii. The study considered students from Classes IX, X, and XII only.
- iv. The study primarily focused on the wards of tea garden workers, who predominantly belong to Scheduled Tribes communities.
- v. Socioeconomic indicators considered in the study were limited to: Class, Gender, Social Category, Number of Family Members, Father's Occupation, Mother's Occupation, Father's Educational Qualification, and Mother's Educational Qualification.
- vi. The study utilised standardised tools, including the Adverse Childhood Experiences Questionnaire (Felitti et al., 1998) and Ryff's Scales of Psychological Well-being (18-item version) (Ryff, 1995).
- vii. Academic Achievement was measured by analysing and aggregating students' performance of last academic year.
- viii. Deprivation measured by IMPI by NITI AAYOG, 2021, based on GMPI (Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative), 2010.

Research questions

In light of the identified knowledge gap, the researcher has formulated the following research questions.

- i) How far have the Baganiya Children experienced Childhood Adversities?
- ii) Do the children in the Tea garden region have a satisfactory level of Psychological Wellbeing?
- iii) What is the academic performance of the Baganiya children during the last year?
- iv) Does Multidimensional Poverty prevail in the Tea Garden region of West Bengal? To what extent?
- v) Does poverty play any role in the adverse childhood experiences and Psychological Wellbeing of the Baganiya Children?

Objectives of the Study

Based on research questions following objectives were identified -

- i. To understand the extent of childhood adversities among Baganiya students in the Dooars Region.
- ii. To assess Baganiya students' psychological wellbeing in the Dooars Region.
- iii. To find out the effect of Baganiya students' childhood adversities on psychological wellbeing.
- iv. To investigate whether Baganiya students' childhood adversities and psychological wellbeing, separately as well as in combination, affect their academic achievement.
- v. To assess the academic achievement of Baganiya students through the school's annual examination scores.

Hypotheses

Based on research objective of the study, following null hypotheses were formulated -

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in childhood adversities between male and female Baganiya students.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference in childhood adversities based on the grade level of Baganiya students.

H₀₃: There is no significant correlation between childhood adversities and the age of Baganiya students.

H₀₄: There is no significant difference in childhood adversities based on the social category of Baganiya students.

H₀₅: There is no significant difference in childhood adversities based on the father's occupation among Baganiya students.

H₀₆: There is no significant difference in childhood adversities based on the mother's occupation among Baganiya students.

H₀₇: There is no significant difference in childhood adversities based on the father's education among Baganiya students.

H₀8: There is no significant difference in childhood adversities based on the mother's education among Baganiya students.

H₀9: There is no significant correlation between childhood adversities and fathers' education among Baganiya students.

H₀10: There is no significant correlation between childhood adversities and mothers' education among Baganiya students.

H₀11: There is no significant difference in psychological wellbeing between male and female Baganiya students.

H₀12: There is no significant difference in psychological wellbeing based on the grade level of Baganiya students.

H₀13: There is no significant correlation between psychological wellbeing and age among Baganiya students.

H₀14: There is no significant difference in psychological wellbeing based on the social category of Baganiya students.

H₀15: There is no significant difference in psychological wellbeing based on the father's occupation among Baganiya students.

H₀16: There is no significant difference in psychological wellbeing based on the mother's occupation among Baganiya students.

H₀17: There is no significant difference in psychological wellbeing based on the father's education among Baganiya students.

H₀18: There is no significant difference in psychological wellbeing based on the mother's education among Baganiya students.

H₀19: There is no significant correlation between psychological wellbeing and the father's education among Baganiya students.

H₀20: There is no significant correlation between psychological wellbeing and the mother's education among Baganiya students.

H₀21: There is no significant difference in deprivation between male and female Baganiya students.

H₀22: There is no significant difference in deprivation based on the grade level of Baganiya students.

H₀23: There is no significant correlation between deprivation and the age of Baganiya students.

H₀24: There is no significant difference in deprivation based on the social category of Baganiya students.

H₀25: There is no significant difference in deprivation based on the father's occupation among Baganiya students.

H₀26: There is no significant difference in deprivation based on the mother's occupation among Baganiya students.

H₀27: There is no significant difference in deprivation based on the father's education among Baganiya students.

H₀28: There is no significant difference in deprivation based on the mother's education among Baganiya students.

H₀29: There is no significant correlation between education and living standard among Baganiya students.

H₀30: There is no significant correlation between childhood adversities and psychological wellbeing among Baganiya students.

H₀31: There is no significant correlation between deprivation and childhood adversities among Baganiya students.

H₀32: There is no significant correlation between psychological wellbeing and deprivation among Baganiya students.

H₀33: There is no significant association between childhood adversity and psychological wellbeing among Baganiya students.

H₀34: There is no significant association between MPI status and childhood adversity among Baganiya students.

H₀35: There is no significant association between MPI status and psychological wellbeing among Baganiya students.

H₀36: There is no significant association between academic achievement and childhood adversities among Baganiya students.

H₀37: There is no significant association between academic achievement and psychological wellbeing among Baganiya students.

Chapter 3: Method and Procedure

The method and procedure chapter depicts an overall picture of the research design and its implementation by the researcher.

Study Design

The researcher initiated descriptive survey method in Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar districts of the Dooars region of West Bengal. Snowball sampling technique was used in this study. The researcher approach of the study was fundamentally quantitative along with qualitative explanations. All Baganiya adolescent students whose either of the parents work in tea garden of the Dooars region (Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar district) were considered as population of the study. The study covered 21 schools in the Dooars region (Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar districts) of West Bengal. Firstly, the schools were selected purposively due to their remote location and geographical characteristics. Then classes IX, X and XII of those schools were considered as the sampling frame. The sample size of this current research was 1016. Identification of adolescents whose either of the parents work in tea garden was done using snowball sampling method.

Variables

In the present study, independent variables included i.e., Gender, Age, Student grade, Social category, Father's occupation, Mother's occupation, Father's education qualification, Mother's educational qualification and Deprivation. On the other hand, Childhood adversity, Psychological wellbeing and Academic Achievement were taken as dependent variables.

Table 1 *Sample distribution by Levels of Independent Variables*

Variable	Levels	No. of Students	Percent of total
Gender	Male	412	40.6%
	Female	604	59.4%
Age	Range 13 Years to 19 Years		
Grade	Class IX	366	36.02%
	Class X	326	32.09%
	Class XII	324	31.89%
Social Category	UR	86	8.46%
	SC	310	30.51%
	ST	471	46.36%
	OBC	149	14.67%
Occupation of Father	Tea Garden Worker	521	51.3%
	Other	495	48.7%
Occupation of Mother	Tea Garden Worker	478	47.0%
	Homemaker	459	45.2%
	Other	79	7.8%
Educational qualification of Father	Illiterate	73	7.20%
	Primary	412	40.60%
	Secondary	401	39.50%
	Higher Secondary	86	8.50%
	Graduation	44	4.30%
Educational qualification of Mother	Illiterate	75	7.4%
	Primary	415	40.8%
	Secondary	421	41.4%
	Higher Secondary	79	7.8%
	Graduation	26	2.6%
Deprivation	Not Deprived	825	81.2%
	Deprived	191	18.8%

Tools for Data Collection

To collect data from each students, the present study used one information schedule about students, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) scale constructed by Vincent Felitti and colleagues in 1998. Ryff Scales of Psychological Well-being (18-item) 1995 and India's Multi-dimensional Poverty Index (Niti Aayog, 2021).

Data tabulation, Cleaning and Analyses

A total of 1,030 students participated in the study and responded to the questionnaires. However, due to incompleteness and extreme responses, the data of 14 students were excluded from the final dataset, resulting in a total of 1,016. The raw data of 1016 students were individually tabulated in a Microsoft Excel sheet. Data were analysed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS, Version 20), because it accommodates a large number of variables at the same time and reduces detailed, laborious calculations by hand, thereby minimising the chance of error.

Chapter 4: Analysis and Interpretation

This chapter encompasses the comprehensive examination and elucidation of the data obtained from the study. To enhance understanding, the study examined both descriptive data and inferential conclusions. To begin with, descriptive statistics, the mean and standard deviation, were calculated. These values were then utilised in parametric inferential statistics, such as T-Test (for equal variance), one-way ANOVA and Chi-Square tests.

In this chapter, the following significant findings were established –

- Out of the 1,016 Baganiya adolescent students, the distribution of childhood adversity levels was as follows: 43.9% (n = 446) reported no adversity, 34.3% (n = 348) experienced low to moderate adversity, 9.8% (n = 100) reported high adversity, and 12.0% (n = 122) experienced very high adversity.
- Male students have more childhood adversities (statistically significant) than female students in the Dooars region.
- Grade 12 students were found to have more childhood adversities (Statistically Significant) than students from other grades.
- A very weak positive correlation ($r = 0.071$) was found between age and childhood adversities. The coefficient correlation between age and childhood adversities scores was found to be Significant at .01 level.
- Students from Scheduled Tribes were found to have more childhood adversities (Statistically Significant) than students from other social categories.
- It was found that students whose parents' occupation was a tea-garden worker had more childhood adversities (Statistically Significant) than students from other parents' occupations.
- It was found that students whose parents are illiterate had more childhood adversities (Statistically Significant) than students whose parents are educated.
- Out of the 1,016 Baganiya adolescent students, 90.1% (n = 915) were found to have a low level of psychological well-being, while only 9.9% (n = 101) reported a high level of psychological wellbeing.

- Male students were found to have better psychological wellbeing (Statistically not Significant) than female students.
- Grade 9 students were found to have better psychological wellbeing (Statistically Significant) than students from other higher grades.
- Students from Scheduled Tribes were found to have better psychological wellbeing (Statistically Significant) than students from other social categories.
- It was found that students whose fathers were tea-garden workers had better psychological wellbeing (Statistically Significant) than students whose fathers had other occupations.
- It was found that students whose mothers' were tea-garden workers had better psychological wellbeing (Statistically Not Significant) than students whose mothers had other occupations.
- It was found that students whose parents are illiterate had better psychological wellbeing (Statistically Significant) than students whose parents are educated.
- Out of the 1,016 Baganiya adolescent students, 18.8% (n = 191) were found deprived and 81.2% (n=825) were found not deprived.
- Male students were found to have more deprivation scores (Statistically Significant) than female students.
- Grade 11 students were found to have higher deprivation scores (Statistically Significant) than students from other grades.
- A weak positive correlation was found between deprivation score and students' age, though the relationship was not statistically significant.
- Students from Scheduled Tribes were found to have a higher deprivation score (Statistically Significant) than students from other social categories.
- It was found that students whose fathers were tea-garden workers had a higher deprivation score (Statistically Significant) than students whose fathers were from other occupations.

- It was found that students whose mothers' occupations were tea-garden workers had a higher deprivation score (Statistically Not Significant) than students from other mothers' occupations.
- It was found that students whose parents are illiterate had a higher deprivation score (Statistically Significant) than students whose parents are educated.
- A weak positive correlation ($r = .270$) was found between childhood adversities and psychological wellbeing. The coefficient correlation between childhood adversities and psychological wellbeing scores was found to be Significant at .01 level.
- A weak positive correlation ($r = .362$) was found between deprivation and the childhood adversities Score. The coefficient correlation between deprivation and the childhood adversities Score was found to be Significant at .01 level.
- A weak positive correlation ($r = .191$) was found between deprivation and the psychological wellbeing Score. The coefficient correlation between deprivation and the psychological wellbeing Score was found to be Significant at .01 level.
- A weak negative correlation ($r = .388$) was found between childhood adversity scores and the level of the father's education. The coefficient of correlation between childhood adversity scores and the level of the father's education was found to be Significant at .01 level.
- A weak negative correlation ($r = .159$) was found between psychological wellbeing scores and the level of the father's education. The coefficient of correlation between psychological wellbeing scores and the level of the father's education was found to be Significant at .01 level.
- A weak negative correlation ($r = .396$) was found between childhood adversity scores and the level of the mother's education. The coefficient of correlation between childhood adversity scores and the level of the mother's education was found to be Significant at .01 level.
- A weak negative correlation ($r = .179$) was found between psychological wellbeing scores and the level of the mother's education. The coefficient of

correlation between psychological wellbeing scores and the level of the mother's education was found to be Significant at .01 level.

- A weak positive correlation ($r = .192$) was found between students' level of education and their living standards. The coefficient of correlation between students' level of education and their living standards was found to be Significant at .01 level.
- It was found that 43.9% of all students reported experiencing no childhood adversity. Regarding psychological wellbeing, 45.4% of students had low psychological well-being, while 30.7% reported high psychological wellbeing. Low to moderate levels of adversity were observed in 34.3% of students, of whom 33.9% had low and 37.6% had high psychological wellbeing. Among students with high adversity (9.8%), 9.3% reported low and 14.9% reported high psychological well-being. Additionally, 12.0% of students experienced very high adversity, with 11.5% showing low and 16.8% showing high psychological wellbeing. The results showed a statistically significant association, $\chi^2 = 9.859$, $df = 3$, $p = .020$ (Statistically Significant).
- It was found that 81.2% of all students reported that they were not deprived. Among these, 88.6% had no childhood adversity, while 73.0% and 67.2% had experienced high and very high levels of adversity, respectively. On the other hand, 18.8% of students reported being deprived. Within this group, 11.4% had no adversity, whereas 32.8% had experienced very high childhood adversity. The results revealed a statistically significant association, $\chi^2 = 36.969$, $df = 3$, $p = .000$ (Statistically Significant).
- It was found 81.2% of all students reported that they were not deprived. Among them, 81.6% had low psychological wellbeing, while 77.2% had high psychological wellbeing. Conversely, 18.8% of students were classified as deprived. Within this group, 18.4% had low psychological wellbeing, and 22.8% had high psychological wellbeing. The results showed a statistically significant association, $\chi^2 = 1.160$, $df = 1$, $p = .282$ (Statistically not Significant).
- It was found that 36.7% of all students reported that they had low level academic achievement. Among these, 11.3% had no childhood adversity, while 5.3% and

7.3% had experienced high and very high levels of adversity, respectively. On the other hand, 51.4% of students reported having moderate level of academic achievement. Within this group, 24.7% had no adversity, whereas 4.4% had experienced very high childhood adversity. 11.9% were found to have high level of academic achievement, among these 7.9% had no childhood adversity, while 0.2% and 0.3% had experienced high and very high levels of adversity, respectively. The results showed a statistically significant association, $\chi^2 = 81.643$, $df = 6$, $p = 0.000$ (Statistically Significant).

- It was found that 36.7% of all students reported that they were low level academic achievement. Among these, 32.8% had low level of psychological wellbeing, while 3.9% showed high levels of psychological wellbeing, respectively. On the other hand, 51.4% of students reported being moderate level academic achievement. Within this group, 46.0% had low level of psychological, whereas 5.4% high levels of psychological wellbeing. 11.9% were found high level of academic achievement, among them 11.3% low level of psychological, while 0.6% showed high levels of psychological wellbeing, respectively. The results showed a statistically significant association, $\chi^2 = 3.817$, $df = 2$, $p = .148$ (Statistically not Significant).

Chapter 5: Discussion and conclusion

The main aim of the study to examine the relationship between childhood adversities, psychological wellbeing, and academic achievement among Baganiya adolescents in the Dooars region.

Discussion

The present study aimed to explore the relationship between childhood adversities, psychological wellbeing, and academic achievement among Baganiya adolescents in the Dooars Region. A sample size 1016 students from 21 higher secondary school of the Dooars Region. This study using descriptive survey method to obtain a good representation of the population in the said geographical region to find out fascinating facts and variances in accordance with the research questions. The researcher then attempted to analyse and discuss the findings based on his viewpoints. The current study, it was perceived that adverse experiences during childhood can have significant impacts on adolescents' psychological wellbeing and academic attainments in the Baganiya region. The study suggest schools should conduct parent-teacher meetings, educate local communities against domestic violence, awareness against consumption of alcohol and drugs as well as recommends that the local government take initiatives to empower financially deprived families in the Baganiya region of West Bengal through education, training and resource allocation.

Recommendations & Suggestions

This study has found that there is a big and direct causal relationship between childhood adversity and academic performance of the Baganiya students. Moreover, psychological wellbeing may be an intermediate variable between childhood adversity and academic achievement, but our survey has found that it is not such a big factor regarding academic achievement. Therefore, the government should primarily focus on lessening the adversities faced by the Baganiya children to boost their academic result. Hereunder, this study would like to give some concrete policy suggestions regarding the same.

- The syllabi of schools in Dooars region should include a section on childhood adversity and how to escape and overcome it. Moreover, the students should also be equipped with some kind of practical training regarding the same. The

students must be provided with understanding about sexual abuse and physical violence, and how to resist it if ever one faces these adverse experiences.

- The parents and family members of the Baganiya students should also be regularly educated about the childhood adversities during the parent-teacher meetings and other school functions. Moreover, the schools should equally train the parents and family members to avoid contributing to adverse experiences faced by the children. It must be drilled into parents' mind that beating does not turn a child either hardworking or intelligent.
- The schools in the Dooars region should create awareness against dysfunctional households. For example, the schools should educate local communities against domestic violence, and consumption of alcohol and drugs. The importance of a caring and loving family for the wellbeing of the children and adolescents should also be stressed in the local communities.
- If found that any student is undergoing through adversities then the schools should have some support system to help the her avoid and recover from the adverse experiences. Similarly, the student should also be provided with some help to have a sound psychological wellbeing.

Limitations of the study

There were several factors to this study that limits from capturing a true picture of what its conclusions indicated.

- The study is limited to childhood adversities, psychological wellbeing and academic achievement of Baganiya adolescents in the Dooars Region of West Bengal in gender, age, grade, social category, parent's education, parent's occupations and deprivation.
- The study could not cover all level of school education except secondary and higher secondary.
- The study pertained to childhood adversities, psychological wellbeing, academic achievement and deprivation measured through survey method.
- For evaluating the hypotheses, the researcher employed merely a 5% level of significance.

Conclusion

This study shows the interconnected realities of childhood adversities, psychological wellbeing, academic performance, and poverty among Baganiya adolescents in the Dooars region of West Bengal. The findings reveal that while 43.9% of students reported no adversity, more than half faced low to very high levels of adversity, with the most affected being male students from Scheduled Tribes, children of illiterate parents, and those whose parents work in tea gardens. In terms of psychological wellbeing, although 90.1% of adolescents reported low levels, the surprising result was that the most disadvantaged group—male students of 9th grade from illiterate Scheduled Tribes families—showed the best wellbeing, possibly due to resilience developed through hardships and less academic pressure from parents. Academic achievement, despite being tested by hardships and low wellbeing, continued to improve, with more than half of the students achieving moderate levels and a few high levels, indicating education as a path of hope. Poverty was present in 18.8% of the students, once more highest in the most excluded groups, indicating entrenched inequalities. Surprisingly, poverty had a positive association with adversity and wellbeing, suggesting that though poverty heightens adversity, it can also enhance resilience. In general, the study emphasizes interventions aimed at mitigating deprivation while enhancing the strengths of Baganiya children of the Dooars Region.

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