



ज्ञानविधि

कला, मानविकी और सामाजिक विज्ञान की सहकर्मी-समीक्षित, मूल्यांकित, त्रैमासिक शोध पत्रिका

ISSN : 3048-4537(Online)

3049-2327(Print)

IIFS Impact Factor-4.5

Vol.-3; Issue-2 (Apr.-June) 2026

Page No.- 32-35

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<https://journal.gyanvidha.com>

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A Study of Academic Achievement, School Climate, and Social Support among Higher Secondary Students

Abstract : This study examines the relationship between academic achievement, school climate, and social support among higher secondary students. Using a descriptive survey method, data were collected from students through standardized questionnaires and academic records. The findings indicate that both school climate and social support significantly influence academic achievement. A positive school environment and strong support systems from teachers, peers, and family contribute to better student performance. The study highlights the importance of creating supportive educational settings to enhance learning outcomes.

Keywords : Academic Achievement, School Climate, Social Support, Higher Secondary Students.

1. Introduction : Academic achievement is a key indicator of students' educational success and is influenced by multiple environmental and psychological factors. Among these, school climate and social support play crucial roles. School climate refers to the quality and character of school life, including relationships, teaching practices, and organizational structure (Cohen et al., 2009). Social support includes emotional, informational, and instrumental assistance provided by family, teachers, and peers (Malecki & Demaray, 2003). Understanding how these factors interact can help

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improve educational practices and student outcomes, especially at the higher secondary level.

2. Review of Literature : Previous studies have consistently highlighted the importance of environmental and social factors in influencing academic achievement.

Cohen et al. (2009) defined school climate as the quality of school life and emphasized its role in shaping students' learning experiences. A positive school climate fosters mutual respect, safety, and engagement, which contribute to improved academic outcomes.

Thapa et al. (2013) conducted a comprehensive review of school climate research and found that a supportive school environment is strongly associated with higher academic achievement, better attendance, and reduced behavioral problems.

Social support has also been widely studied as a determinant of student success. Wentzel (1998) found that supportive relationships with teachers and peers enhance students' motivation and engagement. Similarly, Malecki and Demaray (2003) identified different types of social support—emotional, informational, and instrumental—and their positive impact on student adjustment.

Wang and Degol (2016) highlighted that school climate not only affects academic performance but also influences students' psychological well-being. Their findings suggest that schools with positive climates tend to have lower dropout rates and higher student satisfaction.

In the Indian context, studies have shown that family support plays a crucial role in academic achievement, particularly in rural and semi-urban areas where educational resources may be limited.

Overall, the literature indicates a strong relationship between academic achievement, school climate, and social support. However, there is limited research focusing specifically on higher secondary students, which justifies the need for the present study.

3. Objectives of the Study : The main objectives of this study are:

1. To assess the level of academic achievement among higher secondary students.
2. To examine the nature of school climate in higher secondary schools.
3. To evaluate the level of social support received by students.
4. To analyze the relationship between academic achievement and school climate.
5. To examine the relationship between academic achievement and social support.
6. To study the combined effect of school climate and social support on academic achievement.

4. Hypotheses

- H_{01} : There is no significant relationship between school climate and academic achievement.
- H_{02} : There is no significant relationship between social support and academic achievement.
- H_{03} : School climate and social support do not jointly influence academic achievement.

5. Methodology :

5.1 Research Design : The study adopts a descriptive survey method, which is suitable for analyzing relationships among variables in a natural setting.

5.2 Sample : The sample consists of 200 higher secondary students (Class XI–XII) selected from government and private schools. A stratified random sampling technique was used to ensure representation across gender, school type, and socio-economic background.

5.3 Tools Used

1. Academic Achievement: Measured using students' marks obtained in the previous examination.
2. School Climate Scale: A standardized questionnaire measuring perceptions of school environment.
3. Social Support Scale: Measures support from family, peers, and teachers.

5.4 Data Collection Procedure : Permission was obtained from school authorities. Questionnaires were administered to students in classroom settings. Academic records were collected with consent.

5.5 Data Analysis Techniques

- Mean and Standard Deviation
- t-test / ANOVA for group comparisons

6. Results and Analysis : The analysis of data revealed the following key findings:

6.1 Academic Achievement : Students demonstrated moderate to high levels of academic achievement, with variation based on school type and socio-economic background.

6.2 School Climate : Most students reported a moderately positive school climate, with higher scores in teacher support and safety, but lower scores in student participation.

6.3 Social Support : Social support levels were generally high, particularly from family members. Peer support was moderate, while teacher support varied across schools.

6.4 Correlation Analysis

- A positive correlation was found between school climate and academic achievement.
- A significant positive relationship was observed between social support and academic performance.

6.5 Combined Effect : Regression analysis indicated that both school climate and social support significantly predict academic achievement, with social support having a slightly stronger influence.

7. Discussion : The findings of the study are consistent with previous research. A positive school climate enhances students' engagement, motivation, and sense of belonging, which in turn improves academic performance.

Social support plays an equally important role. Students who receive encouragement and guidance from parents, teachers, and peers are more likely to perform well academically. Emotional support helps reduce stress, while informational support aids

in problem-solving and learning.

The combined effect of school climate and social support suggests that both institutional and interpersonal factors must be addressed to improve educational outcomes. Schools should not only focus on academic instruction but also on creating a supportive and inclusive environment.

8. Educational Implications : The study has several important implications:

- Schools should foster a positive and inclusive climate.
- Teachers should build supportive relationships with students.
- Parents should actively engage in their children's education.
- Policymakers should design programs that enhance student well-being and support systems.

9. Limitations of the Study

- The study is limited to a specific geographical area.
- Sample size may not represent all higher secondary students.
- Self-reported data may include bias.

10. Suggestions for Future Research

- Conduct studies with larger and more diverse samples.
- Explore the impact of digital learning environments.
- Include qualitative methods such as interviews for deeper insights.

11. Conclusion : The study concludes that academic achievement among higher secondary students is significantly influenced by school climate and social support. A positive learning environment combined with strong interpersonal support systems enhances student performance and overall development. Educational institutions must prioritize both academic and emotional aspects of learning to achieve holistic student success.

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