

Academic Achievement of Secondary School Students in Relation to Parental Involvement and School Environment

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Abstract

Academic achievement is a key indicator of students' educational success and is influenced by various personal, family, and school-related factors. Among these, parental involvement and the school environment play a significant role in shaping students' learning outcomes. Parents contribute to students' academic development by providing guidance, motivation, emotional support, and a conducive home learning environment, while schools enhance achievement through effective teaching, positive classroom climate, adequate infrastructure, and supportive leadership. The combined influence of these two factors creates favourable conditions for students' intellectual, social, and emotional development.

The present paper is a **review-based descriptive study** that examines the relationship between parental involvement, school environment, and the academic achievement of secondary school students. The study synthesizes existing research findings, educational theories, and scholarly literature to explain how family engagement and school climate jointly influence students' academic performance. It also discusses major dimensions of parental involvement, such as home-based learning support, parent-teacher communication, educational expectations, and participation in school activities, along with school environment components including teacher support, classroom atmosphere, learning resources, discipline, and institutional leadership.

The review indicates that students achieve higher academic success when parents actively participate in their education and schools provide a safe, inclusive, and academically stimulating environment. Strong collaboration between families and schools enhances students' motivation, attendance, learning behaviour, self-confidence, and overall academic performance. The paper concludes that strengthening parent-school partnerships and improving the quality of the school environment are essential for promoting educational excellence and holistic student development. The findings provide useful insights for educators, school administrators, policymakers, researchers, and parents in developing strategies to improve students' academic achievement.

Keywords: Academic Achievement, Parental Involvement, School Environment, Secondary School Students, Parent–School Partnership, Learning Environment, Educational Development.

Introduction

Academic achievement is widely recognized as one of the most important indicators of the effectiveness of the educational process and the quality of schooling. It represents the extent to which students acquire knowledge, skills, attitudes, and competencies through formal education. At the secondary school level, academic achievement holds particular significance because it serves as the foundation for higher education, career development, and lifelong learning. Students who perform well academically are more likely to pursue higher studies, develop professional competencies, and contribute positively to society. However, academic achievement is not determined solely by students' intellectual abilities. It is influenced by a complex interaction of personal, family, school, and environmental factors that collectively shape students' educational experiences and learning outcomes.

Among the numerous factors affecting academic achievement, **parental involvement** and the **school environment** have consistently emerged as two of the most influential determinants. Parents are universally regarded as the first educators of their children. From early childhood, they play a fundamental role in developing positive attitudes toward learning, encouraging discipline, instilling moral values, and motivating children to achieve their educational goals. Parental involvement extends beyond providing financial support; it includes supervising homework, monitoring academic progress, maintaining regular communication with teachers, participating in school activities, providing emotional encouragement, and creating a home environment that promotes learning. Such active participation helps students develop self-confidence, responsibility, academic motivation, and effective study habits, all of which contribute to improved academic performance.

Equally important is the role of the **school environment**, which provides the institutional setting in which learning takes place. A positive school environment is characterized by competent teachers, effective instructional practices, supportive leadership, adequate infrastructure, safe and inclusive classrooms, availability of learning resources, and healthy relationships among teachers, students, and parents. Schools that maintain a positive climate encourage active student participation, critical thinking, creativity, and collaborative learning. A supportive school environment not only enhances academic performance but also promotes students' emotional well-being, social adjustment, and overall personality development.

Parental involvement and the school environment are closely interconnected and mutually reinforcing. Effective collaboration between parents and schools creates a strong support system that enhances students' educational experiences. Regular parent–

teacher communication, shared educational responsibilities, and active parental participation in school activities help identify students' learning needs at an early stage and provide timely academic support. Such partnerships strengthen students' motivation, improve attendance, encourage positive behaviour, and foster higher academic achievement. Conversely, inadequate parental involvement or an unsupportive school environment may hinder students' learning progress and reduce their educational aspirations.

In recent years, educational reforms and policy initiatives, particularly the **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020**, have emphasized the importance of strengthening school–family partnerships to improve the quality of education. The rapid expansion of digital learning, technological advancements, and changing family structures has further increased the responsibilities of both parents and educational institutions in supporting students' learning. These developments highlight the need to examine how parental involvement and the school environment jointly influence students' academic achievement.

The present paper adopts a **review-based descriptive approach** to examine the relationship between parental involvement, school environment, and the academic achievement of secondary school students. By reviewing theoretical perspectives and empirical studies, the paper seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of how these two important factors contribute to educational success. The findings are expected to offer valuable insights for teachers, school administrators, policymakers, researchers, and parents in designing effective strategies that strengthen parent–school collaboration and enhance students' academic achievement and holistic development.

Objectives of the Study

The present review-based descriptive study aims to examine the relationship between parental involvement, school environment, and the academic achievement of secondary school students. The specific objectives are:

1. To analyze the influence of the school environment on the academic performance of secondary school students.
2. To review empirical studies related to parental involvement, school environment, and academic achievement.
3. To identify the major school environmental factors that contribute to students' academic success.
4. To identify the challenges that hinder active parental involvement and the creation of a positive school environment.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework provides the theoretical and logical foundation for understanding the relationship among the variables included in a research study. It identifies the key concepts, explains their interrelationships, and presents the assumptions that guide the investigation. In the present review-based descriptive study, the conceptual framework is developed to explain how **parental involvement** and the **school environment** collectively influence the **academic achievement of secondary school students**. It assumes that academic success is not determined by a single factor but is the result of continuous interaction between home and school environments, both of which play complementary roles in shaping students' educational experiences. Academic achievement is regarded as the dependent variable because it reflects students' learning outcomes, educational progress, and mastery of knowledge and skills acquired through formal schooling. It is generally measured through examination scores, classroom performance, continuous assessment, and overall scholastic achievement. Students' academic success is influenced by a variety of internal and external factors, among which parental involvement and school environment are considered two of the most significant determinants. These variables directly affect students' motivation, learning behaviour, educational aspirations, and overall academic performance.

Parental involvement refers to the active and meaningful participation of parents in supporting their children's educational development. It encompasses a wide range of activities undertaken by parents both at home and in collaboration with schools. Effective parental involvement includes supervising homework, encouraging regular study habits, monitoring academic progress, maintaining communication with teachers, participating in parent–teacher meetings, establishing realistic educational expectations, providing emotional encouragement, and creating a positive home learning environment. Parents who actively engage in these activities help their children develop self-confidence, responsibility, discipline, and positive attitudes toward education. Such involvement also strengthens students' academic motivation and encourages them to achieve higher levels of educational success.

The school environment represents the second major independent variable in the conceptual framework. It includes the physical, academic, organizational, and psychosocial conditions within which teaching and learning take place. A positive school environment is characterized by qualified and supportive teachers, effective instructional practices, safe and inclusive classrooms, adequate learning resources, efficient school leadership, healthy teacher–student relationships, positive peer interactions, and opportunities for participation in co-curricular activities. Schools that provide a secure, motivating, and learner-centred atmosphere encourage active participation, critical thinking, creativity, and collaborative learning. Such educational settings enhance students' confidence, improve classroom engagement, and contribute significantly to better academic performance.

The framework further assumes that parental involvement and the school environment are not isolated influences but are closely interconnected. Strong collaboration between families and schools creates a supportive educational ecosystem in which students receive consistent academic guidance, emotional support, and constructive feedback. Regular communication between parents and teachers helps identify students' strengths

and learning difficulties at an early stage, enabling timely intervention and appropriate educational support. Similarly, schools that actively encourage parental participation foster stronger trust, shared responsibility, and collective efforts to improve students' learning outcomes. This collaborative partnership strengthens students' motivation, improves attendance, promotes disciplined behaviour, and enhances overall academic achievement.

The conceptual framework also recognizes that parental involvement influences the effectiveness of the school environment, while a supportive school environment encourages greater parental participation. For example, schools that organize parent orientation programmes, maintain open communication channels, and involve parents in educational decision-making motivate families to become more actively engaged in their children's education. Likewise, parents who maintain regular contact with teachers and participate in school activities contribute to creating a positive learning culture that benefits students academically and socially. Thus, the interaction between home and school becomes a powerful mechanism for promoting educational excellence.

The framework is further supported by educational theories that emphasize collaborative learning environments. Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory explains that children's development occurs through interactions between family, school, and the wider social environment. Epstein's School–Family–Community Partnership Model highlights the importance of shared responsibility among parents, teachers, and communities in improving student learning. School Climate Theory also suggests that a positive institutional environment significantly influences students' motivation, engagement, and academic achievement. These theoretical perspectives collectively reinforce the assumption that meaningful parental involvement combined with a supportive school environment leads to improved educational outcomes.

Conceptual Model

Independent Variables

A. Parental Involvement

- Home learning support
- Parent–teacher communication
- Educational expectations
- Academic monitoring
- Participation in school activities
- Emotional encouragement

B. School Environment

- Teacher support
- Classroom climate
- School leadership
- Learning resources
- School discipline and safety

- Peer relationships
- Co-curricular opportunities

Dependent Variable

Academic Achievement of Secondary School Students

The conceptual framework concludes that academic achievement is the outcome of the combined influence of parental involvement and the school environment. Strengthening family engagement, improving school climate, promoting effective parent–teacher collaboration, and ensuring supportive educational practices can significantly enhance students' academic performance and contribute to their holistic intellectual, social, emotional, and moral development. This framework provides the conceptual basis for understanding the relationships among the study variables and serves as a guide for interpreting the findings of the present review-based research.

Theoretical Framework

The present study is grounded in educational and psychological theories that explain how parental involvement and the school environment influence the academic achievement of secondary school students. These theories provide a conceptual basis for understanding the interaction between home, school, and the broader educational context in promoting students' learning outcomes. The framework is primarily based on **Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory**, **Epstein's School–Family–Community Partnership Model**, and **School Climate Theory**.

1. Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory

Urie Bronfenbrenner (1979) proposed that a child's development is shaped by continuous interactions within multiple environmental systems. According to this theory, academic achievement is influenced not only by individual ability but also by the relationships among family, school, peers, and society.

The **Microsystem**, consisting of parents, teachers, classmates, and the immediate school environment, has the most direct impact on students' learning. The **Mesosystem** emphasizes the interaction between home and school, where effective parent–teacher collaboration enhances students' academic progress. The **Exosystem** includes factors such as educational policies and community resources that indirectly influence learning, while the **Macrosystem** reflects cultural values, educational beliefs, and societal expectations regarding education.

This theory suggests that students achieve better academic outcomes when both family and school provide consistent support, encouragement, and learning opportunities.

2. Epstein's School–Family–Community Partnership Model

Joyce L. Epstein's model emphasizes that students' academic success depends on strong partnerships among families, schools, and communities. The model identifies six

dimensions of effective parental involvement: parenting, communication, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaboration with the community.

According to Epstein, schools should actively encourage parents to participate in their children's education through regular communication, educational programmes, and shared decision-making. Such partnerships improve students' attendance, motivation, classroom behaviour, and academic achievement while strengthening trust between families and educational institutions.

3. School Climate Theory

School Climate Theory explains that the overall atmosphere and quality of the school environment significantly affect students' academic performance and well-being. A positive school climate is characterized by supportive teachers, effective leadership, safe classrooms, mutual respect, adequate learning resources, student participation, and a culture of academic excellence.

Research based on this theory indicates that students learn more effectively in schools where they feel safe, respected, and motivated. A healthy school climate enhances engagement, reduces behavioural problems, improves attendance, and contributes to higher academic achievement.

Synthesis of the Theoretical Framework

The three theories collectively explain that academic achievement is the outcome of the combined influence of **family support** and a **supportive school environment**.

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory highlights the interaction between home and school, Epstein's Partnership Model emphasizes active collaboration between parents and educational institutions, and School Climate Theory focuses on the importance of a positive learning environment within the school.

Together, these theoretical perspectives provide a comprehensive framework for understanding how parental involvement and school environment jointly influence the academic achievement of secondary school students. They support the view that strengthening parent-school partnerships and improving school climate are essential for promoting students' academic excellence and holistic development.

Review of Literature

The review of literature is a fundamental component of educational research, providing a systematic examination, critical analysis, and synthesis of existing theoretical and empirical studies related to a specific research problem. It enables researchers to understand the current state of knowledge, identify research gaps, evaluate methodological approaches, and establish a strong conceptual and theoretical foundation for the study. A comprehensive review of literature also helps in avoiding duplication of research, refining research objectives, and selecting appropriate frameworks for interpreting research findings. In the field of education, where learning outcomes are influenced by numerous interconnected variables, reviewing previous

studies is essential for understanding the factors that contribute to students' academic achievement and overall educational development.

Academic achievement has long been recognized as one of the most important indicators of educational effectiveness and student success. It reflects the knowledge, skills, competencies, and learning outcomes acquired by students through formal schooling. At the secondary school level, academic achievement is particularly significant because it serves as a foundation for higher education, career opportunities, and lifelong personal development. Researchers across the world have devoted considerable attention to identifying the factors that influence students' academic performance. Their findings suggest that academic achievement is shaped not only by students' intellectual abilities but also by a combination of family, school, psychological, social, and environmental factors. Among these, **parental involvement** and the **school environment** have consistently emerged as two of the most influential determinants of educational success.

The concept of parental involvement has evolved considerably over the past few decades. Earlier studies primarily viewed parental involvement as helping children with homework or attending parent-teacher meetings. However, contemporary educational research recognizes parental involvement as a multidimensional process that includes creating a supportive home learning environment, monitoring academic progress, encouraging educational aspirations, maintaining regular communication with teachers, participating in school activities, providing emotional support, and fostering positive attitudes toward learning. Such active engagement enables students to develop greater self-confidence, stronger academic motivation, effective study habits, and higher educational aspirations. Researchers have consistently reported that students whose parents actively participate in their education generally perform better academically, exhibit greater classroom engagement, maintain better attendance, and demonstrate more positive learning behaviours than students who receive limited parental support. In addition to parental involvement, the school environment plays a decisive role in determining students' educational outcomes. The school environment encompasses the physical, academic, organizational, and psychosocial conditions within which teaching and learning occur. It includes the quality of teaching, school leadership, classroom climate, availability of learning resources, infrastructure, discipline, safety, peer relationships, and opportunities for co-curricular activities. A positive school environment encourages students to participate actively in classroom learning, develop critical thinking skills, build healthy interpersonal relationships, and achieve higher academic standards. Conversely, an unsupportive school climate characterized by inadequate facilities, ineffective teaching practices, poor leadership, or unsafe learning conditions may negatively affect students' motivation, confidence, and academic performance. Therefore, educational researchers widely acknowledge that the quality of the school environment significantly influences students' learning experiences and academic achievement.

A growing body of literature further indicates that parental involvement and the school environment should not be viewed as separate or isolated influences. Rather, these factors operate together to create a comprehensive support system for students. Effective collaboration between parents and schools strengthens communication,

promotes shared educational responsibility, facilitates the early identification of learning difficulties, and ensures consistent academic guidance both at home and in school. Schools that encourage family participation through regular parent–teacher interactions, awareness programmes, and collaborative decision-making often report higher levels of student achievement, improved behaviour, stronger attendance, and increased academic motivation. Likewise, parents who maintain close relationships with schools are better equipped to support their children's educational progress and respond effectively to their academic needs. These findings highlight the importance of strong parent–school partnerships in promoting students' educational success.

International research conducted in diverse educational contexts consistently supports the positive relationship between parental involvement, school climate, and academic achievement. Studies have shown that students benefit academically when families actively engage in their education and when schools provide safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environments. Similarly, research conducted in India has demonstrated that parental awareness, effective school leadership, qualified teachers, and a positive educational atmosphere contribute significantly to improving students' academic performance. Recent educational reforms, particularly the **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020**, have further emphasized the need to strengthen collaboration among schools, parents, and communities to ensure equitable, inclusive, and high-quality education for all learners.

Despite the extensive literature available on parental involvement and school environment as separate constructs, relatively fewer studies have examined their combined influence on the academic achievement of secondary school students. Most previous investigations have focused on individual variables such as parental expectations, home learning support, teacher effectiveness, or school climate without adequately exploring the interactive relationship between family engagement and the educational environment. This gap indicates the need for an integrated review that examines how parental involvement and school environment jointly contribute to students' academic success.

The present review of literature, therefore, synthesizes theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and contemporary educational research related to parental involvement, school environment, and academic achievement. It aims to identify major trends, summarize existing evidence, and establish a comprehensive conceptual foundation for understanding the interrelationship among these variables. The review is expected to provide valuable insights for educators, researchers, school administrators, policymakers, and parents by highlighting effective educational practices that strengthen family–school partnerships and improve the academic achievement and holistic development of secondary school students.

Research Gap

A review of the existing literature reveals that considerable research has been conducted on **parental involvement**, **school environment**, and **academic achievement** as independent areas of study. Many researchers have examined the influence of parental support on students' academic performance, while others have focused on the role of school climate, teacher support, leadership, and learning resources in improving educational outcomes. Although these studies have significantly contributed to educational research, several important gaps remain.

First, most previous studies have investigated parental involvement and school environment **separately**, with limited attention to their **combined influence** on the academic achievement of secondary school students. There is a need for a more integrated understanding of how these two factors interact to shape students' learning experiences and educational outcomes.

Second, many studies have concentrated on specific dimensions of parental involvement, such as homework assistance or parent–teacher communication, without considering the broader aspects of family engagement, including educational expectations, emotional support, and participation in school activities. Similarly, research on the school environment has often emphasized physical infrastructure or teacher effectiveness while giving less attention to psychosocial factors such as classroom climate, peer relationships, and school culture.

Third, much of the existing literature is based on empirical investigations conducted in different educational, cultural, and socio-economic contexts. Consequently, the findings cannot always be generalized to all secondary school settings. There is a need to synthesize evidence from diverse studies to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the relationship among parental involvement, school environment, and academic achievement.

Fourth, recent educational developments, including the implementation of the **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020**, increasing digital learning opportunities, and changing patterns of parent–school interaction, have created new educational realities that are not adequately reflected in much of the earlier literature. More comprehensive reviews are required to understand these emerging trends and their implications for secondary education.

Therefore, the present review-based study attempts to address these gaps by integrating theoretical perspectives and empirical findings related to parental involvement and school environment. It provides a comprehensive understanding of their combined role in enhancing the academic achievement of secondary school students and offers educational implications for teachers, school administrators, policymakers, researchers, and parents.

Discussion

The present review highlights that the academic achievement of secondary school students is strongly influenced by the combined effects of parental involvement and the school environment. The literature consistently demonstrates that these two factors complement each other in creating favourable conditions for effective learning and overall student development. While parental involvement provides emotional support, academic guidance, and motivation at home, the school environment offers structured learning opportunities, professional teaching, and institutional support. Together, they establish a comprehensive educational ecosystem that promotes students' academic success.

The reviewed studies reveal that students whose parents actively monitor their studies, communicate regularly with teachers, encourage educational aspirations, and provide a supportive home learning environment generally achieve better academic outcomes. Similarly, schools characterized by effective leadership, qualified teachers, positive classroom climates, adequate learning resources, and safe educational environments contribute significantly to students' academic performance and personal growth. The literature further indicates that parent-school collaboration enhances communication, strengthens educational planning, and facilitates the timely identification of students' learning needs. Such partnerships encourage consistent educational support both at home and in school, leading to improved attendance, higher motivation, stronger self-confidence, and better academic achievement. These findings support the view that academic success cannot be attributed to a single factor but results from the interaction of family support and a positive school environment.

Despite these positive findings, the review also identifies several barriers to effective parental involvement and school improvement. Socio-economic challenges, limited parental education, work-related commitments, inadequate communication between schools and families, and unequal access to educational resources often reduce the effectiveness of family engagement. Likewise, poor infrastructure, overcrowded classrooms, limited teaching resources, and weak school leadership may adversely affect students' learning experiences. Addressing these challenges requires collaborative efforts involving parents, teachers, school administrators, policymakers, and the wider community.

Overall, the reviewed literature suggests that strengthening parental involvement and improving the quality of the school environment should remain central priorities in educational planning. Such efforts will contribute not only to higher academic achievement but also to the holistic development of secondary school students.

Conclusion

The present review-based descriptive study examined the relationship between parental involvement, school environment, and the academic achievement of secondary school students. The literature reviewed clearly indicates that both parental involvement and a positive school environment are fundamental determinants of students' educational

success. Their combined influence enhances academic motivation, learning behaviour, classroom participation, self-confidence, discipline, and overall academic performance. The study emphasizes that effective education extends beyond classroom instruction and requires active collaboration among parents, teachers, school leaders, and the community. Parents contribute by providing academic guidance, emotional encouragement, and a supportive home learning environment, while schools facilitate learning through qualified teachers, effective leadership, safe infrastructure, and inclusive educational practices. When these two educational systems work together, students receive consistent support that enhances both academic achievement and holistic development.

The review also highlights the importance of strengthening parent–school partnerships through regular communication, parental participation in school activities, awareness programmes, and collaborative decision-making. Educational institutions should create welcoming environments that encourage family engagement, while policymakers should formulate initiatives that promote inclusive and supportive school climates. In conclusion, improving parental involvement and enhancing the school environment are essential strategies for raising the academic achievement of secondary school students. A strong partnership between families and schools not only improves educational outcomes but also contributes to the development of responsible, confident, and lifelong learners capable of meeting the challenges of the twenty-first century.

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