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Study Habits and Achievement Motivation as Predictors of Academic Achievement among Higher Secondary Students

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Abstract

Purpose: To determine the effect of Study Habits and Achievement Motivation on the Academic achievement of higher secondary students. It was designed to study the effect of study habits, achievement motivation, and academic achievement, and to find out the predictive relation of study habits and achievement motivation with the academic achievement of the students.

Methodology: A quantitative method was used in this descriptive survey. The schools in this study were randomly selected by 300 students from higher secondary schools under the control of the State Board. The data were collected using standard instruments, "such as the Study Habits Inventory and Achievement Motivation Scale. Students' annual examination marks from school records were used as indicators of academic achievement. Descriptive statistics, Pearson's product-moment correlation, and multiple regression analyses were used to analyze the data.

Major Findings: The findings showed significant positive correlations between study habits and academic achievement, achievement motivation and academic achievement, and study habits and achievement motivation. Based on the results of regression analysis, it was concluded that the model of research activities and achievement motivation contributed towards the explanation of academic achievement by 55%. The best predictor was study habits ($\beta=0.45$), followed by achievement motivation ($\beta=0.38$). The study also revealed that among the important factors contributing to the good academic achievement of the study population, higher secondary level students, study habits and achievement motivation are important. All of these factors can be supplemented to improve students' learning outcomes along with academic accomplishments.

Recommendations: It is recommended that schools provide study skill training programmes and activities of which motivation will be one to help students' orientation to their learning behaviour. Teachers' academic counselling and emotional assistance for good study skills and motivation should be provided concurrently with the parents and the counsellor.

Future studies should include larger and different samples, as well as other variables such as self-efficacy, parental support, emotional intelligence, and learning environments, to further explore this research. More research based on longitudinal and experimental designs is needed to further elaborate on the determinants of academic achievement.

Keywords: Study Habits, Achievement Motivation, Academic Achievement, Higher Secondary Students, Learning Behaviors, Educational Motivation, Academic Success

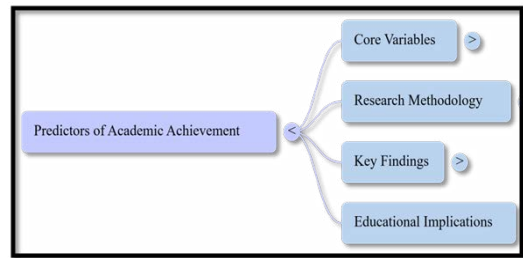
Introduction

Students' academic performance is a common measure of their educational success and a reliable indicator of their future learning and workplace success. At the higher secondary level, students face progressive academic demands, exam preparation for competitive tests, and career choices. Within this context, educators, psychologists, and researchers have been interested in the factors affecting academic performance. One of the many factors that affect students' academic success is their study habits and achievement motivation.

Recent international research has consistently demonstrated that students' academic achievement is influenced not only by cognitive ability but also by learning behaviors, motivational orientations, and self-regulated learning strategies (Zhao et al., 2024). Meta-analytic evidence indicates that students who effectively regulate their learning, monitor their academic progress, and adopt organized study strategies consistently achieve superior educational outcomes across diverse contexts (Theobald, 2021; Broadbent et al., 2021). Similarly, Gong and Jiang (2025) reported that academic self-efficacy positively influences students' learning persistence and achievement, while Luo and Zhou (2024) concluded that effective self-regulated learning strategies significantly improve academic performance. These international findings further reinforce the importance of examining study habits and achievement motivation as significant determinants of academic achievement among higher secondary school students.

Study habits are the consistent practices and approaches that students have to support effective learning. They are planning study schedules, systematic organization of study materials, time management, concentration, note-taking, and systematic review. Good study skills can be a major factor in understanding, retention, and better academic success, while ineffective study skills can be a significant factor in poor comprehension, retention, and academic stress. Well-structured and disciplined students will be better prepared for higher secondary education.

Achievement motivation, on the other hand, is the internal drive of an individual to achieve goals, become excellent, and succeed in difficult situations. Achievement motivation theory (McClelland, 1987) states that people with a high need for achievement tend to have high expectations, persevere through challenges, and work hard to do well. Achievement motivation in education motivates students to work hard on tasks, persevere, and strive to master them (Schunk et al., 2014). Motivated learners are more engaged in their studies and achieve better academic performance.



Architecting Academic Success: Motivation and Study Habit Dynamics

Although the importance of study habits and achievement motivation has been recognized, many higher secondary students face problems such as bad study habits, improper time management, inability to concentrate, and lack of motivation towards study. These problems can have negative consequences for their schoolwork and education. Therefore, it is necessary to explore the relationship between study habits, achievement motivation, and academic achievement to help us understand what factors can help students achieve good academic performance. The findings from these investigations can help educators, parents, and policymakers develop interventions and support systems that can improve students' learning behaviors, motivational orientations, and academic results (Zimmerman, 2002).

Although previous research has consistently reported positive relationships between study habits, achievement motivation, and academic performance, several limitations are evident in the existing literature. Many studies have examined these variables independently rather than investigating their combined predictive influence on academic achievement. In addition, a considerable proportion of earlier research has focused on college students or general secondary school populations, leaving higher secondary school students comparatively underrepresented. This stage of education is particularly significant because students experience intense academic pressure, competitive examination preparation, and make important career-related decisions. Therefore, a comprehensive investigation of study habits and achievement motivation as simultaneous predictors of academic achievement is necessary. The present study addresses this gap

by examining the relative contribution of these two important educational variables among higher secondary students and providing evidence that may assist educators in developing targeted academic support strategies.

Need for the Study

Higher secondary education plays a pivotal role in the educational lives of students as it acts as a bridge between secondary and higher education and has a significant impact on their academic trajectories and careers. Students must deal with higher demands in their studies, a full curriculum, revision for competitive exams, and decisions on further study and employment options during this time. Thus, the success or failure in securing good grades in higher secondary schools often influences students' admission to top-notch educational institutions and career prospects. What could be considered a failure at this level could prevent further education, limit employment opportunities, and negatively impact students' self-confidence and future goals. In this context, it is necessary to know the factors that lead to success in school. Study habits and achievement motivation are among the many variables related to educational achievement that are regarded as modifiable, and thus, subject to modification and strengthening through proper guidance and intervention. Good study skills, including developing a study timetable, taking notes systematically, using study time effectively, concentration, and revision, help pupils to learn effectively and do well at school.

Likewise, in terms of persistence, commitment, and striving for excellence, achievement motivation is a very important factor that influences students' actions. High achievement motivation is associated with establishing stretch goals, persevering with difficulty, and trying for success. Demotivated students may lack engagement, perseverance, and interest in academic activities. Hence, developing achievement motivation is crucial for enhancing students' learning and achievement. Study habits and achievement motivation as factors affecting academic achievement are a matter of empirical investigation that can provide evidence-based insights into the extent to which students' study habits and achievement motivation can influence

their academic achievement. Based on the results of this study, teachers, parents, school leaders, and school counselors can identify the domain that requires support and plan intervention programs that support learning behaviors and positive motivational orientations among higher secondary students. The findings can also help shape education policies and guidance that promote learning excellence, reduce under achievement, and enhance students' learning. Finally, the links between the three are important, and understanding these links can help create learning environments that enable students to realize their full potential for learning and make good progress in their future studies and careers.

Review of Literature

The importance of achievement motivation and study habits in relation to academic success in secondary education has been shown repeatedly in the literature. The findings from an experimental study involving secondary school students in Nigeria showed that the intervention that targeted both achievement motivation and study habits was found to have a significant effect on students' performance in English language and this intervention group performed better than other groups in whom the interventions targeted either achievement motivation or study habits (Jegede et al., 1997). Similarly, in Ethiopia positive and significant correlations among students' achievement motivation, attitudes towards schooling and academic achievement were found, suggesting the role of motivational factors in addition to cognitive factors in predicting achievement (Dagnew, 2017).

Theories of motivation have been developed concerning the nature of motivation. Research based on achievement goal theory also suggests that when teachers focus on mastery and understanding, learning outcomes are more positive and some students are more motivated to learn, while other teachers focus on ability, classroom climate is more competitive, learning outcomes are not so positive, and the motivation of some students may be reduced (Meece et al., 2006). In contrast, secondary students' self-reported motivations orientations (e.g., "doing my best") are directly related to gains in the achievement measures used in the standards-

based assessment, as they were found to be strongly correlated with these measures (Meyer et al., 2009). The relationship between teacher's expectations and students' achievements is mediated by the construct of achievement motivation, indicating that achievement motivation serves as an important psychological mechanism that transforms external influences in education into achievement outcomes (Hu & Qian, 2025).

The long-term effects of motivational variables have also been studied longitudinally, with negative academic experiences such as grade retention being associated with a decrease in academic self-concept and motivation that may have a negative impact on subsequent academic performance (Rodríguez-Rodríguez, 2022). This proof can back interventions that keep and improve drive to keep on learning.

Project-based learning, gamification, and collaborative learning are active learning methodologies that have been shown to positively impact student motivation and academic achievement, particularly when implemented over extended periods and coupled with constructive feedback (Costa & Reis, 2025). Consideration of teacher behaviours and motivational strategies is important for student achievement in high stakes assessments and teachers need to be made aware of their role in boosting student motivation and achievement and collaborate with students to do this (Flitcroft & Woods, 2018).

Research Gap

The reviewed literature consistently demonstrates that study habits and achievement motivation are important determinants of academic success. Previous studies have independently established the influence of organized learning behaviors, self-regulated learning practices, and motivational factors on educational success. However, limited research has examined the combined predictive contribution of study habits and achievement motivation among higher secondary students in the contemporary educational context. Furthermore, recent educational changes, increasing academic competition, and evolving learning environments necessitate a renewed investigation of these variables. Therefore, this study sought to examine the extent to which study habits

and achievement motivation jointly predict academic achievement among higher secondary students.

Operational Definitions of Key Terms

Study habits are the regular and systematic methods adopted by higher secondary students to improve their study performance. These may relate to aspects of time management, study focus, note taking, reading, exam preparation, and completion of assignments. Study habits will be operationally defined as the scores that students earn on a standardized Study Habits Scale. Higher scores on the scale are indicative of good study habits, and lower scores are indicative of poor study habits.

Student self-motivation to achieve academically. It involves being motivated towards a goal, persevering, being responsible, striving for success, and taking risks to achieve success. Scores on a standardized Achievement Motivation Scale were used to measure achievement motivation. High scores are associated with high achievement motivation, and low scores are associated with low achievement motivation.

Academic achievement refers to the academic results of higher secondary school students in the subjects they studied. It shall be the number of marks or percentage of marks obtained by the student in the most recent school examination to which the student was entered, as recorded by a school official. The higher the mark/percentage, the higher the academic achievement, and the lower the mark, the lower the academic achievement.

Higher secondary students are students studying in a well-recognized higher secondary school, Classes XI and XII. Students who are members of these groups will be the sample population from which students will be drawn.

Objectives of the Study

- To determine the relationship between study habits and academic achievement.
- To determine the relationship between achievement motivation and academic achievement.
- To determine the predictive role of study habits and achievement motivation on academic achievement.

Hypotheses of the Study

- There was no significant relationship between study habits and academic achievement of higher secondary students.
- There was no significant relationship between achievement motivation and the academic achievement of higher secondary students.
- Study habits and achievement motivation did not significantly predict the academic achievement of higher secondary students.

Methodology

This quantitative study used a descriptive survey to analyze the relationship between study habits, achievement motivation, and academic achievement of higher secondary students. A sample of 300 higher secondary students was selected using a simple random sampling technique from schools affiliated with the State Board. Data collection employed a Study Habits Inventory and Achievement Motivation Scale, and academic achievement was assessed through students' exam marks from their school records. The collected data were subjected to statistical analysis, which included the following techniques: mean, standard deviation, Pearson's product moment correlation, and multiple regression analysis to determine the nature of the relationships and the predictive importance of study habits and achievement motivation on academic achievement.

Reliability and Validity of the Instruments

Prior to the main investigation, the instruments were subjected to validity and reliability assessments. Content validity was established through expert evaluation by specialists in educational psychology, measurement and evaluation, and teacher education. Their suggestions were incorporated to improve the clarity and relevance of the questions. A pilot study was conducted among 50 higher secondary students, who were not included in the final sample. The reliability of the instruments was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The Study Habits Inventory yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.87, while the Achievement Motivation Scale produced a reliability coefficient of 0.89. These values indicate high internal consistency and confirm the suitability of the instruments for the present investigation.

Instrument	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Study Habits Inventory	30	0.87
Achievement Motivation Scale	25	0.89

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1 There is a Positive Relationship between Study Habits and Academic Achievement, which is also Positively linked to Achievement Motivation and Positively related to Study Habits

Variables	Study Habits	Achievement Motivation	Academic Achievement
Study Habits	1.00	0.62**	0.68**
Achievement Motivation	0.62**	1.00	0.65**
Academic Achievement	0.68**	0.65**	1.00

Note: (N=300), **p < 0.01 (Significant at 1% level),

Interpretation

Table 1 shows that the study habits and academic achievement variables are significantly positively correlated ($r=0.68$), which means that students who study better tend to get better academic scores. There was also a positive and significant correlation between achievement motivation and academic achievement ($r=0.65$). In addition, study habits were positively related to achievement motivation ($r=0.62$). The findings of the study imply that both study habits and achievement motivation are significant factors related to the academic success of higher secondary students.

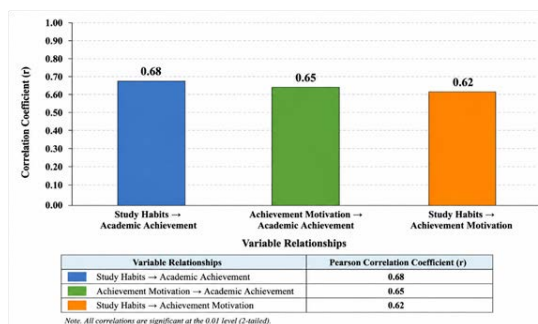


Figure 1 Correlation Coefficients among Study Habits, Achievement Motivation, and Academic Achievement

Table 2 To Predict Academic Achievement from Study Habits and Achievement Motivation using Multiple Regression Analysis

Predictor Variables	B	Std. Error	Beta	t-value	Sig.
Constant	12.45	2.10	—	5.93	0.000
Study Habits	0.48	0.05	0.45	9.60	0.000
Achievement Motivation	0.42	0.06	0.38	7.00	0.000

$R=0.74$, $R^2=0.55$, $F=181.32$, $p < 0.01$

Interpretation

Table 2 shows that the study habits achieved motivation to learn together significantly predicted academic achievement of higher secondary students with an R^2 value of 55%. Study habits proved to be the most powerful predictor ($\beta=0.45$), followed by achievement motivation ($\beta=0.38$). The F-ratio is significant at the 0.01 level, indicating that the overall regression model is effective. This means that better study skills and enhancement of attitude towards achievement can significantly affect students' achievement.

Predictor	Beta	95% Confidence Interval	Effect Size (f^2)
Study Habits	0.45	0.38 – 0.52	0.32
Achievement Motivation	0.38	0.29 – 0.46	0.24

The confidence intervals indicate stable and reliable estimates of regression coefficients. Both predictor variables demonstrated moderate to large effect sizes, confirming their practical significance in explaining academic achievements. These results strengthen the robustness and interpretability of the regression model.

Findings of the Study

The analysis revealed a strong positive relationship between study habits and academic achievement ($r=0.68$, $p < 0.01$). This finding indicates that students who regularly engage in organized study routines, effective time management, systematic revision, and focused learning practices tend to achieve higher academic performance. The results highlight the importance of disciplined learning behaviors in enhancing educational performance.

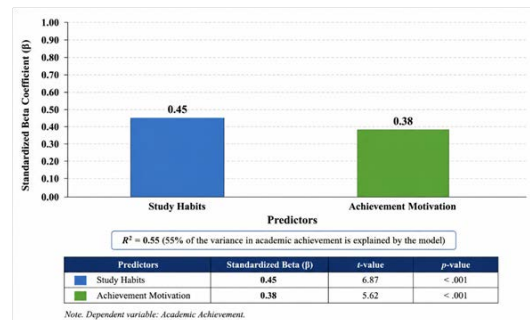


Figure 2 Relative Contribution of Study Habits and Achievement Motivation in Predicting Academic Achievement

Achievement motivation was significantly positively related to academic achievement ($r=0.65$, $p < 0.01$). Students who possess a stronger desire for success, persistence in learning tasks, and commitment toward educational goals achieve better academic outcomes. This finding confirms the crucial role of motivation in supporting academic excellence.

Multiple regression analysis revealed that study habits and achievement motivation jointly explained 55 percent of the variance in academic achievement. Among the predictor variables, study habits emerged as the strongest predictor ($\beta=0.45$), followed by achievement motivation ($\beta=0.38$). These findings suggest that behavioural and psychological factors work together to influence student achievement and should be addressed simultaneously within educational interventions

Recommendations of the Study

Educational institutions should set up study skills training courses for higher secondary students to improve study skills, such as time management, regular study schedule, note making, and exam preparation skills. Teachers should help students plan their studies systematically and not be influenced by last-minute learning.

Motivation-enhancement activities, such as goal-setting workshops, counseling sessions, and inspirational talks in schools, should be implemented to boost students' achievement motivation. Confidence and persistence must be encouraged by teachers using positive reinforcement, recognition of effort, and constructive feedback.

Parents should be informed that they are part of the support team and should be informed of their role in both study habits and motivation. They should foster an environment that supports students and offer them study space and emotional encouragement to stay focused on academic objectives.

To use a student-centered approach to teaching and learning, engaging pupils and interactive learning generate interest and motivation. Through regular tracking of student progress, it is possible to determine that some students do not study appropriately and may demonstrate low motivation, and to offer support at an opportune moment.

School counselors should offer academic support and guidance to students who have difficulty concentrating, setting goals, or experience test anxiety, as these issues can impact students' study habits and achievement motivation.

Policymakers and school administrators should incorporate life skills and self-regulated learning strategies into the curriculum to enhance students' independent learning skills.

Future researchers are encouraged to investigate other factors that may affect academic achievement, study habits/motivation, including self-efficacy, parental support, learning environment, and emotional intelligence

Limitations of the Study

- The study is restricted to Higher Secondary students from selected schools.
- Generalizations should not be made to other classes, colleges, or areas.
- Only the two variables studied (study habits and achievement motivation) were studied, with no consideration of other variables that could influence achievement.
- Self-report scales are used to gather data on study habits and motivation, and can potentially generate response bias.
- Exam-based academic achievement is used and may not accurately cover what is achieved or understood.
- The study design was cross-sectional, which means that cause-effect inferences are not justified.

- Due to time constraints, sample size and resources, the depth of the study may be constrained

Suggestions for Further Research

- Future studies should include larger and more diverse samples from different regions.
- Additional variables, such as self-efficacy, intelligence, parental support, emotional intelligence, and learning environment, can be studied.
- Longitudinal studies should be conducted to examine changes over time.
- Experimental research can be used to test programs that improve study habits and achievement motivation.

Conclusion

The results of the present study reveal that study habits and achievement motivation are important predictors of the academic achievement of higher secondary students. Improvements in these factors can contribute to higher academic achievement and educational outcomes. The findings of this study are beneficial for the education sector for both educators and policymakers, as well as the education research sector.

In view of the above, the present empirical study was conducted to explore the role of study habits and achievement motivation on the academic achievement of higher secondary students. The results of the study clearly indicate that study habits and achievement motivation are both highly and positively correlated with academic achievement. Students with effective study skills, such as proper time management, revision, concentration, and organized learning skills, performed better. The same was true for students with high achievement motivation, who showed greater persistence, goal orientation, and motivation towards learning tasks, which were positively related to their achievement scores.

Correlation and regression analyses also showed that, in addition to being related to academic achievement, study habits and achievement motivation are good predictors of students' academic success. When compared with the two variables, study habits were the most significant,

which indicates the significance of a systematic and disciplined study approach at the higher secondary level of schooling. Psychological factors are also strongly influenced by achievement motivation, which has a significant contribution to academic achievement; therefore, psychological factors are very important in improving students' learning outcomes.

The results of this study will have implications in the field of education for teachers, school administrators, parents, and education policymakers. Students can improve their performance with the help of structured study skills programs, guidance, and academic support services if they can develop effective study skills. Moreover, the development of achievement motivation through positive reinforcement, goal-setting exercises, and learning environments that foster positive learning can further enhance students' academic involvement and achievement.

In conclusion, this study emphasizes that higher secondary level academic achievement is a multidimensional phenomenon that can be affected by both behavioral and motivational factors. Educators who take a holistic approach to study habits and achievement motivation can enhance children's academic success and adequately equip them for college and careers. The results of this study add valuable empirical information to the body of educational research and provide a basis for additional research on student learning and achievement.

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