

## The Relationship between Academic Achievements and Mental Health among Higher Secondary School Students in Pathankot

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### ABSTRACT

This research paper examines the relationship between academic achievements and mental health among higher secondary school girls and boys in Pathankot, Punjab. The study aims to explore whether academic performance impacts mental well-being differently for male and female students. Using quantitative data from a sample of 1,008 students (504 girls and 504 boys), the study employs correlation analysis to investigate these relationships. The findings indicate a moderate positive correlation between academic achievement and mental health among girls, while a weaker but significant positive correlation exists among boys. These results suggest the need for gender-sensitive educational and psychological interventions to support both academic performance and mental health.

**Keywords:** Academic achievements, Mental Health, Education, Adolescents

### INTRODUCTION

Education is a critical determinant of personal and societal development. The academic achievement of adolescents is influenced by various factors, including mental health. Previous research has established a link between mental health and academic performance, indicating that students with better mental health tend to perform better academically. This literature review explores existing studies on this relationship, highlighting the need for further research in specific contexts, such as Pathankot.

Academic achievement is a critical measure of success in the contemporary educational landscape. It is often seen as a predictor of future opportunities, both in higher education and in the job market. For adolescents, academic success is not merely a reflection of intellectual capabilities but also an indicator of various underlying factors, including psychological well-being. The correlation between academic achievement and mental health has garnered significant attention in recent years, particularly as the pressures of modern education systems intensify. Adolescents today face numerous challenges that impact both their mental health and their academic performance, making it crucial to explore the intricate relationship between these two variables.

Mental health, as defined by the World Health Organization (WHO), is a state of well-being in which individuals realize their own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, work productively, and contribute to their community. For adolescents, maintaining good mental health is essential as it affects their emotional regulation, decision-making processes, and overall quality of life. Mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, and stress are prevalent among adolescents, often exacerbated by academic pressures. Studies have shown that mental health significantly impacts academic achievement, with students experiencing mental health challenges often performing poorly in school.

Research consistently shows a bidirectional relationship between academic achievement and mental health. High levels of academic stress can exacerbate mental health issues, such as anxiety and depression, which in turn can negatively impact academic performance. Conversely, positive mental health can enhance a student's ability to perform well academically, indicating a complex and interdependent relationship.

In the context of Pathankot, Punjab, a semi-urban area with a unique blend of rural and urban influences, understanding this relationship is particularly important. The educational environment in Pathankot, like in many

other parts of India, is competitive, with students facing immense pressure to excel academically. This study aims to explore how academic achievement correlates with mental health among higher secondary school students in this region, with a specific focus on gender differences.

#### **Literature Review:**

The relationship between academic achievement and mental health has been extensively studied across various contexts. Researchers have consistently found that poor mental health is associated with lower academic performance. For instance, a study by Bostani (2014) found a positive correlation between mental health issues such as anxiety and depression and lower academic outcomes among adolescents. Similarly, Singh (2015) demonstrated that college students with better mental health tend to perform better academically compared to those with mental health challenges.

In Punjab, the influence of mental health on academic achievement has been explored by several scholars. Kaur and Arora (2012) highlighted the need for healthy environments in schools to improve academic performance, emphasizing that students from rural areas require additional support. Their study, along with others conducted in similar settings, underscores the critical role that mental health plays in determining academic success.

Mental health and academic performance are closely intertwined. Studies show that mental health issues, such as depression, anxiety, and stress, can hinder academic success by affecting cognitive functioning, motivation, and overall well-being (Sirin, 2005; McCoach et al., 2013). Adolescence is a critical period marked by significant physical, emotional, and social changes, making adolescents particularly vulnerable to mental health challenges (Chauhan, 2013). Socioeconomic factors, such as family income and parental education, can also influence both mental health and academic achievement (Ladd et al., 2010).

Furthermore, studies like those by Thilagavathy (2014) have shown that academic achievement and mental health are positively correlated, with better mental health leading to higher academic performance.

Despite the growing body of literature on this topic, there is still a significant gap in understanding the specific dynamics at play in semi-urban regions like Pathankot. The interplay between socio-economic factors, cultural expectations, and educational practices in such settings can significantly influence both mental health and academic outcomes. This study aims to fill this gap by providing a detailed analysis of how mental health correlates with academic achievement among adolescents in Pathankot.

#### **Research Objectives:**

1. To study the relationship between academic achievements and mental health of higher secondary school girls within Pathankot.

Null Hypothesis (H0): There is no significant relationship between academic achievements and mental health of higher secondary school girls within Pathankot.

Alternative Hypothesis (H1): There is a significant relationship between academic achievements and mental health of higher secondary school girls within Pathankot.

2. To study the relationship between academic achievements and mental health of higher secondary school boys within Pathankot.

Null Hypothesis (H0): There is no significant relationship between academic achievements and mental health of higher secondary school boys within Pathankot.

Alternative Hypothesis (H1): There is a significant relationship between academic achievements and mental health of higher secondary school boys within Pathankot.

#### **Research Methodology:**

This study employs a quantitative research design with a cross-sectional approach, using both primary and secondary data sources. The sample consists of 1,008 higher secondary school students (504 girls and 504 boys) from Pathankot, selected through stratified random sampling. Data on academic achievements were collected from school records, while mental health was assessed using the Mental Health Battery (2013) developed by Dr. Arun Kumar Singh and Dr. Alpana Sen Gupta.

The study employs Pearson correlation coefficients to analyze the relationship between academic achievement and mental health. Additionally, ANOVA tests were conducted to explore gender differences in these relationships. The cross-sectional design provides a snapshot of the current state of these variables, making it feasible to identify correlations at a specific point in time.

#### **Results and Interpretation:**

**Relationship between Academic Achievements and Mental Health:**

The Pearson correlation coefficient ( $r$ ) measures the strength and direction of the linear relationship between two variables. In this case, we're examining the correlation between academic achievement and the mental health in a sample of 504 girls.

**Table 1: The relationship between academic achievements and mental health of higher secondary school girls.**

Correlation	N	Pearson Co-efficient Correlation (Calculated $r$ value)	Pearson Co-efficient Correlation (Tabulated $r$ value)	Result
Academic Achievement and Mental Health of Girls	504	0.295	0.149	Significant at 0.01 level

**Table 2: The relationship between academic achievements and mental health of higher secondary school boys.**

Correlation	N	Co-efficient Correlation $r$	Table value at .01 level	Result
Academic Achievement and Mental Health of Boys	504	0.188	0.149	Significant at 0.01 level

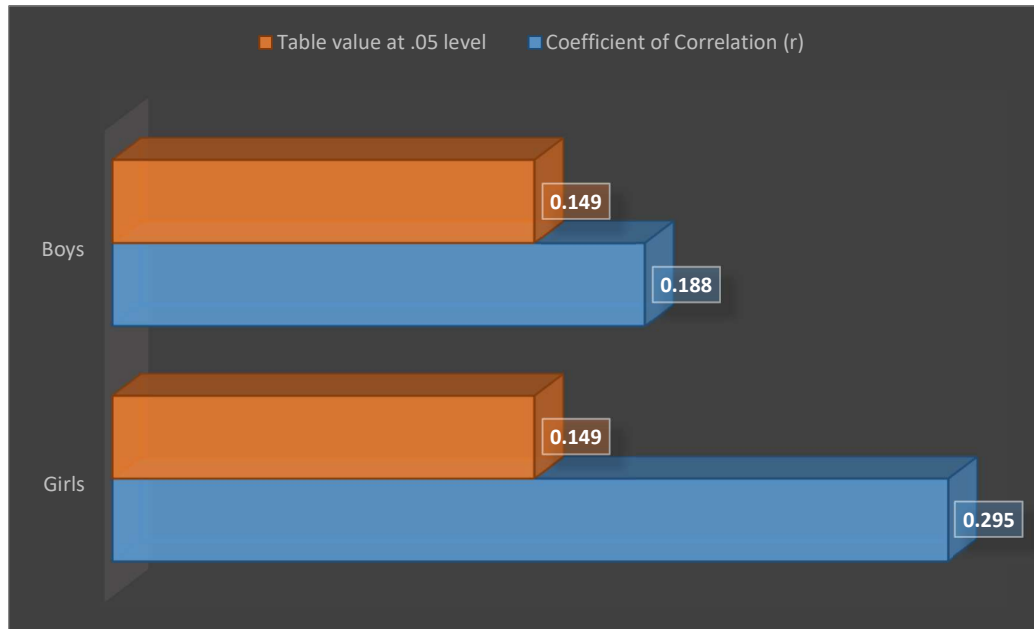
- **Girls:** The study found a moderate positive correlation ( $r = 0.295$ ) between academic achievement and mental health among girls. This suggests that higher academic performance is associated with better mental health. The relationship was statistically significant at the 0.01 level, indicating that as academic achievement increases, mental health tends to improve among girls in the sample.
- **Boys:** Among boys, the correlation was weaker ( $r = 0.188$ ) but still significant. This suggests a positive relationship between academic achievement and mental health, although less pronounced than in girls. The statistically significant correlation at the 0.01 level implies that academic performance has a meaningful impact on mental health for boys as well, but the effect is less substantial compared to girls.

**Discussion and Conclusion:**

The findings of this study indicate that there is a significant positive correlation between academic achievement and mental health for both girls and boys in Pathankot. However, the strength of this relationship varies by gender, with girls showing a stronger correlation. These results suggest that academic success is more closely tied to mental well-being among female students than among male students.

- The result highlights the interconnectedness between academic achievement and mental health among adolescent girls and boys. Schools and educational institutions should recognize the importance of addressing both academic and mental health needs in their students to promote overall well-being and success.
- Furthermore, the significant correlation suggests that interventions aimed at improving academic achievement may also have positive effects on mental health, and vice versa. For example, implementing stress-reduction techniques, providing mental health support services, and fostering a supportive and inclusive school environment may help improve both academic outcomes and mental health among girls.
- These findings underscore the importance of considering mental health alongside academic achievement, particularly for adolescent girls and boys. Schools and educational institutions may benefit from implementing interventions and support systems that address both academic and mental health needs. By promoting positive mental health practices and providing resources for students to cope with stress and other mental health

challenges, educators can potentially enhance academic outcomes and overall well-being among girls and boys.



**Fig 1: Graphical representation of relationship between academic achievements and mental health of higher secondary school girls and boys.**

Given these findings, it is essential for educational institutions in Pathankot to adopt a gender-sensitive approach when designing interventions aimed at improving both academic performance and mental health. Schools should consider implementing mental health programs that address the specific needs of both boys and girls, alongside academic support services. Moreover, educators and policymakers should recognize the critical role that mental health plays in academic success and develop strategies to support students in maintaining good mental health. This study contributes to the understanding of how academic achievement and mental health are interconnected in a semi-urban Indian context, particularly in terms of gender differences. Further research could explore the underlying factors that contribute to these differences and investigate the long-term effects of academic stress on mental health and educational outcomes.

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