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ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AMONG CLASS IX STUDENTS: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF DETERMINANTS AND INFLUENCING FACTORS

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ABSTRACT

Academic achievement at the secondary school level is a critical indicator of students' educational progress and future success. Class IX, in particular, represents a transitional stage where foundational competencies are strengthened for higher secondary education. The present review synthesizes existing literature on the determinants of academic achievement among secondary school students, with special emphasis on Class IX learners. The review examines studies conducted in both Indian and international contexts, focusing on key variables such as family background, socio-economic status, psychological factors, gender differences, school environment, study habits, and assessment practices. Findings indicate that academic achievement is a multidimensional construct influenced by the interaction of personal, familial, and institutional factors. While consistent evidence supports the role of family environment and psychological attributes, findings related to gender differences remain inconclusive. The review also identifies gaps in integrated research involving meta-cognition, personality traits, and language proficiency. The study concludes by emphasizing the need for holistic and multi-variable approaches to better understand and enhance academic achievement among secondary school students.

Keywords: Academic Achievement, Secondary Education, Class IX, Socio-economic Status, Motivation, School Environment

INTRODUCTION

Academic achievement has long been a central concern in educational research, as it reflects students' mastery of knowledge and skills acquired through formal schooling. At the secondary level, particularly in Class IX, academic performance becomes increasingly important as it lays the groundwork for board examinations and future academic pathways. Understanding the factors that influence achievement at this stage is therefore essential for educators, policymakers, and researchers.

Existing literature suggests that academic achievement is not determined by a single variable but is influenced by a complex interplay of factors, including family background, psychological characteristics, school environment, and socio-cultural conditions. This review aims to synthesize relevant studies to provide a comprehensive understanding of these determinants.

METHODOLOGY OF REVIEW

The present study adopts a qualitative review approach. A total of 81 research studies were examined, including both Indian and international publications. The selection criteria included relevance to academic achievement at the secondary level and alignment with key variables such as socio-economic status, psychological traits, and educational environment. The reviewed studies were categorized into thematic areas to ensure systematic analysis.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. Family Background and Socio-Economic Status

Family background has consistently emerged as a significant determinant of academic achievement. Studies conducted in India highlight that parental involvement, financial stability, and educational support positively influence students' performance (Majhi & Ghosh, 2026). Similarly, Sini et al. (2025) reported a significant positive relationship



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between family acceptance and academic achievement, especially among boys, girls, rural students, and private school students, while no significant relationship was found among urban and government school students.

Socio-economic status (SES) also plays a crucial role. Munir et al. (2023) found that students from higher SES backgrounds achieved better academic outcomes due to access to resources and supportive learning environments. International research supports these findings. Gu et al. (2024) demonstrated that family environment, mediated by parental involvement, significantly influences academic achievement. Likewise, Odinkpa et al. (2025) found that parental education and income levels are strong predictors of student performance.

2. Psychological Factors and Academic Achievement

Psychological variables such as self-concept, motivation, and self-efficacy are critical in shaping academic outcomes. Devika (2025) found a positive relationship between academic achievement and self-concept, achievement motivation, and attitude. Das and Swain (2024) similarly reported that achievement motivation significantly predicts academic performance.

Self-efficacy has also been identified as a strong predictor. Talluri (2019) found that students with higher self-efficacy demonstrate better academic performance. Bala and Kausar (2016) further supported the role of self-concept in enhancing achievement.

International studies reinforce these findings. Costa et al. (2024) identified motivation, personality traits, and cognitive abilities as key determinants of achievement. Carroza-Pacheco et al. (2025) highlighted resilience, particularly self-esteem and internal resources, as significant predictors of academic success.

3. Gender Differences in Academic Achievement

Research on gender differences in academic achievement shows mixed results. Some studies found no significant difference between boys and girls. For example, Balugade (2025) reported that achievement motivation is similar for both genders, which suggests that boys and girls have equal academic potential.

However, other studies have found differences based on subjects and situations. Singh and Pandey (2025) observed differences in overall performance, while Singh and Kumari (2023) found that boys performed better in Mathematics. This shows that gender differences may depend on the subject and learning environment.

Studies from other countries also showed mixed results. Fan et al. (2016) found no difference in English achievement between boys and girls. In contrast, Catherine (2020) reported that boys performed better in some cases. On the other hand, Novák et al. (2024) found that girls performed better and showed higher motivation.

Overall, these findings suggest that gender differences are not the same everywhere. They depend on many factors such as culture, teaching methods, and subject area. Therefore, gender should not be seen as the only factor affecting achievement.

4. School-Related Factors

School-related factors play an important role in students' academic achievement. These include the type of school, its location, facilities, and teaching quality. Studies in India show that students from urban and private schools usually perform better than those from rural and government schools (Noatia et al., 2025; Jha & Jha, 2024). This may be because they have better resources and learning environments.



Another important factor is the school climate, which means the overall environment of the school. A positive school climate includes supportive teachers, good relationships, and a safe learning atmosphere. Luaran et al. (2025) found that students perform better in such environments.

Tsou (2024) also found that good schools can reduce the negative effects of poor family background. This means that a supportive school can help students succeed even if they face challenges at home. In short, both the quality of the school and its environment play a key role in improving academic performance.

5. Study Habits and Learning Strategies

Study habits are very important for academic success. Students who follow regular study routines, manage their time well, and revise properly tend to perform better. Siddiqui and Ali (2018) found a strong positive relationship between good study habits and academic achievement. Participation in extracurricular activities also helps students perform better. Crosnoe et al. (2015) found that such activities improve skills like discipline, confidence, and time management, especially for students from weaker backgrounds.

Learning strategies are also important. These include how students understand, remember, and apply what they learn. Mutua and Oyoo (2020) found that students who use better learning methods, such as understanding concepts instead of memorizing, perform better. Therefore, teaching students effective study habits and learning strategies can greatly improve their academic performance.

6. Assessment and Measurement Practices

Assessment is an important part of education because it helps measure students' learning. Traditional studies by Sagar (2010), Sharma (2008), and Rani (2004) highlight the importance of well-designed tests to evaluate students properly. Ebel (1965) and Gayen (1958) emphasized that tests should be reliable and valid, meaning they should measure what they are supposed to measure and give consistent results.

Modern education supports continuous assessment instead of only final exams. Reynolds et al. (2017) suggested that regular evaluation helps students improve over time. However, Gould (1981) warned that too much dependence on standardized tests can be unfair, as they may not reflect all students' abilities. So, a balanced approach to assessment is needed, combining regular evaluation with fair testing methods.



Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of Academic Achievement



The conceptual framework proposes that academic achievement is influenced by four major domains: family, psychological, school, and behavioral factors. Family background provides the foundational environment, while psychological traits directly shape students' engagement with learning. School-related factors act as institutional supports, and study habits translate these influences into actual academic performance. Gender and socio-cultural context function as moderating variables affecting the strength and direction of these relationships.

DISCUSSION

The review shows that academic achievement is influenced by many factors working together. Family background and psychological factors like motivation play a strong role in shaping students' performance. School environment also plays an important role, especially in supporting students from weaker backgrounds. Study habits and learning strategies help students use their abilities effectively. However, findings about gender differences are not consistent. This means more research is needed to understand how different factors affect boys and girls in different situations. Overall, academic achievement should be understood in a combined and holistic way rather than focusing on only one factor.

Table 1: Summary of Key Studies on Academic Achievement

Author(s) & Year	Sample & Method	Key Variables	Major Findings
Majhi & Ghosh (2026)	Secondary students; descriptive study	Family background	Strong parental support improves achievement
Balugade (2025)	160 students; quantitative	Achievement motivation	No gender or locality difference
Devika (2025)	300 students; survey	Self-concept, motivation, attitude	Positive correlation with achievement
Munir et al. (2023)	300 students; regression	Socio-economic status	Higher SES → higher achievement
Sini et al. (2025)	305 students; correlational	Family acceptance	Strong positive relationship
Das & Swain (2024)	700 students; survey	Achievement motivation	Significant positive influence
Talluri (2019)	576 students; survey	Self-efficacy	Strong predictor of achievement
Siddiqui & Ali (2018)	345 students; survey	Study habits	Better habits → higher performance
Gu et al. (2024)	525 parents; SEM	Family environment	Stronger than SES effect
Tsou (2024)	PISA dataset; HLM	School factors	Schools reduce SES impact
Novák et al. (2024)	572 students	Motivation, gender	Girls outperform boys
Crosnoe et al. (2015)	997 students	Activities	Extracurriculars improve performance



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RESEARCH GAP

- Even though many studies have been conducted, some gaps still exist. Most research studies focus on only one or two factors at a time, rather than studying multiple factors together.
- There is also limited research on important areas such as meta-cognition (thinking about learning), personality traits, and English language skills, especially among Class IX students.
- In addition, more studies are needed that focus on specific regions and real classroom situations. This will help in better understanding students' needs and improving their performance.

CONCLUSION

Academic achievement among secondary school students is influenced by many factors such as family background, psychological traits, school environment, and study habits. The review shows that no single factor alone determines success. Instead, all these factors work together to shape students' performance.

Future research should focus on studying these factors together to get a clearer understanding of academic achievement. This will help teachers and policymakers create better strategies to support students, especially at the important stage of Class IX.

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