

The Effects of Peer Relationships and Self-Esteem on Academic Performance Among Middle School Students

Amrita Santosh^{1*}, Dr. Mamta Mahapatra²

ABSTRACT

This study looks at the role of peer relations in conjunction with self-esteem on the academic performance of middle schoolers. Data from a sample of 100 students was collected and analyzed using regression and correlation methods. Standardized questionnaires were utilized to gather the data. Obtained results indicated that there was no statistically significant effect of either peer relationships or self-esteem on academic performance, nor were there meaningful correlations among the considered variables. This is in opposition to the belief that favorable peer interactions and elevated self-esteem are bound to improve academic performance. This study highlights the importance of family background, emotional regulation, and teacher support in explaining academic success alongside other less explored factors. Self-reported data, limited scope of other explored influences, the cross-sectional nature of the study, and the omission of additional explored influences are identified as limitations. A broader set of parameters in conjunction with longitudinal study design is recommended for future research.

Keywords: *Peer Relationships, Self-Esteem, Academic Performance, Middle School Students, Regression Analysis, Correlation Analysis, Educational Psychology, Adolescent Development, Social Support, Student Well-Being, Self-Concept, Academic Engagement, School Adjustment*

The middle school period is an important stage in a student's life both at an academic level and a personal level. Students undergo profound emotional, social and cognitive changes as they move from primary school to middle school. Subsequently, during this period, relationships with peers and self-esteem influences students' academic scaffolding, motivation, and success.

Background of the Study

From age 11 to 14, students start undergoing an identity formation phase while dealing with increased academic expectations within the context of shifting social interactions. As students grow older, they start placing more emphasis on peer relationships at the expense of family relationships. Adolescents actively pursue social acceptance from their peers, and social activities has the potential to affect learning positively or negatively. Positive peer to

¹M.A. Clinical Psychology, Amity Institute of Psychology and Allied Sciences, Amity University Noida

²Supervisor, Amity Institute of Psychology and Allied Sciences, Amity University Noida

*Corresponding Author

Received: May 27, 2025; Revision Received: June 26, 2025; Accepted: June 30, 2025

The Effects of Peer Relationships and Self-Esteem on Academic Performance Among Middle School Students

peer interactions is associated with increased academic motivation, attendance, and achievement. On the other hand, bullying type interactions and exclusion are associated with lower engagement levels towards academics coupled with poor performance.

Self-esteem, defined as the perception of someone's worth, has also surfaced to be a critical determinant towards academic performance. Individuals with high self-esteem are able to withstand challenges, being confident and willing to undertake academic tasks. On the other hand, students with low self-esteem tend to view failure negatively, which leads to less participation and questioning of one's own abilities, with the end result being decreased grades.

Regardless of the increased understanding of the psychosocial facets, many educational systems remain focused on the curriculum and instruction as the primary framework, and students' emotional and social growth as secondary aspects. This research seeks to examine the complex relationships that multiple components such as peer interactions, self-worth, and academic achievement have among themselves for middle schoolers and how it directly impacts their educational attainment.

Student's Interaction with their Peers and Classroom Involvement

Relationships with peers are a key determinant when it comes to the level of engagement and motivation a student is likely to show toward their studies. During this period of development, adolescents become increasingly sensitive to peer influence, causing their resultant behaviors within school to be greatly influenced by social factors. Active class participation and internal motivation are both enhanced when students are positively socially engaged and feel a sense of belonging. As noted by Wentzel (1998), acceptance among peers is a vital pre-condition for many students to engage and perform at the required levels.

Students' study behavior and academic orientation is also controlled by peer norms. Belonging to some academically driven peer groups shapes student's behavior positively, with students begin to proactively model positive behavior. On the other hand, falling into the wrong crowd, be it disruptive peers or those who neglect school, dramatically decreases motivation and performance. Negative outcomes such as bullying and being ostracized by other children can lead to heightened anxiety, low self-confidence, and diminished participation in lessons (Juvonen & Wentzel, 1996).

Students are more optimistic and are more likely to commit to completing their tasks when they are in positive peer environments. (Kindermann, 2007). Long term achievement in academic goals tend to come when a student is socially and emotionally supported.

Academic resilience and competence greatly increase due to the influence of a student's self-esteem.

Students tend to enjoy and within self esteem along with self concepts being at a high level greatly enhances positively while performing tasks at hand. Students translates translating in enhanced performing. (Marsh, 1990.) Self-concept along with the academic encourages improves and allows students to push themselves face more difficult tasks while trying to overcome challenges.

The Effects of Peer Relationships and Self-Esteem on Academic Performance Among Middle School Students

Students that have areas where self-esteem and self-concept are complimentary will nearly always succeed in what they set out to do. The opposite, a disaster waiting to happen would be to set people who have no self-worth. Self-concept is overly critical along with self-esteem with the end of failing without setting encouraging goals set out to achieve.

These two phrases manage to fully oversimplify portraying a negative image to low self-esteem. Remove self-concept and self-esteem brings together along set out to attain goes as "post contagious procrastination" where people who set out end up not doing what with phrase the return would not being able to focus in academic situation. This combine frees them over indulging in boundaries make them loose while forcing their mind to focus on flimsy ideas distract attention in achieving their focus.

Students' academic performance and self-esteem tend to reinforce each other. Bandura (1997) explains that success in school enhances students' self-worth, which benefits their motivation and performance. Thus, self-esteem, especially during the vulnerable middle school years, needs to be fostered in order to achieve successful academic outcomes.

The Relationship of Self-Esteem and Peer Interactions

Self-esteem and peer relationships are particularly important during adolescence since they are highly interdependent. Adolescents look out to their peers for approval, which alters their self-image and alters their academic performance. Self-esteem is further strengthened by positive peer interactions, as it helps in providing emotional reassurance and enhances a person's sense of belonging (Harter, 1999). As a result, these students approach school and other social challenges with a higher level of confidence and greater ability to cope with difficulty.

Bullying and peer rejection are negative peer interactions that can damage one's self-esteem and lead to withdrawal, anxiety, and sometimes, depression. As a consequence, students tend to disengage and exhibit a decline in their academic performance, which leads to behavioral issues (Rubin et al., 2006).

Students also tend to self-regulate and modify their peer interactions based on their self-esteem. Students who regard themselves of high self-worth have been shown to have better social skills and more meaningful interactions (Orth et al, 2012). In contrast, low self-esteem students tend to be insecure, suspicious of being rejected, and overly dependent on other people's validation.

This can result in feedback loops that are either positive or negative. As self-esteem increases, social interactions become more supportive and self-esteem enhances social competence which, in turn, positively reinforces social interactions. Therefore, positive relationships and emotional health or academic productivity tend to increase together.

Educational Considerations and School Strategies

Knowing the influence of peers and self-esteem can be very useful in implementing educational policies. Middle-grade teachers are perhaps the most influential people with respect to the social environment of the students as well as their emotions.

Students' social and emotional development is critical, but so is the positive climate of the classroom. Teachers need to respect each student and their individuality, which will allow

The Effects of Peer Relationships and Self-Esteem on Academic Performance Among Middle School Students

them to actively participate in classroom rules. With focused instruction, students are trained to work in groups which promotes teamwork and peer affirmation.

Additionally, social and emotional learning (SEL) programs are effective in addressing the issues mentioned above. Empathy, self-awareness, and communication skills are fundamental elements brought to learners through SEL. Programs have shown, as supported by Durlak et al. (2011), that social-emotional learning enhances students' behavior, mental health, and even academic performance because students are provided with the means to interact positively with peers and manage emotions.

Counseling services offered at the school need to address issues like self-esteem and constructive conflict resolution. Students' perceptions of themselves and their engagement with school improves through self-esteem enhancement counseling (Branden, 1994). In addition, social and academic engagement is promoted among peers through active mentorship programs (Topping, 2005).

Parental involvement is equally critical. Support from home reinforces school-based efforts to build students' self-worth and promote positive behavior (Epstein, 2001). Reliable praise given by parents and educators significantly increases the worth and confidence students feel about themselves, and helps build a positive self-image.

Schools are responsible for aiding in the development of esteem and fostering healthy relationships; with this, schools can position themselves to effectively nurture academic achievement and overall student wellness. Addressing emotional and social needs alongside academic teaching is crucial to achieving comprehensive development in learners.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The Influence of Romantic Relationships, Teen Self-Concept, and The Academic Achievement of Adolescents

Middle school serves as a particularly sensitive period in the development of the psychosocial and academic life of a student. The shift from the routine and systematic environment of the primary school to the more complex and social middle school brings with it a number of concerns including relationships with peers and self-esteem which directly impact academic performance. The purpose of this study is to determine the correlation between psychological well-being defined as psychological suzhi, self-esteem, and peer relationships with an emphasis on self-esteem as a moderator for mediation effects.

Psychological suzhi, basically the psychological inner quality and strength of an individual, has been shown to have direct effects on mental health and even affects interpersonal relations. Emotions, cognition, and peers interact and influence each other's level, thus, better emotional regulation and cognitive function results in enhanced academic performance and supportive relationship with others. There is a close to strong tethering linking psychological well-being and interpersonal relationship particularly in adolescents, thus studying peers sheds light on school adjustment.

Peer relationships are critical during adolescence. Wentzel (1998) and Kindermann (2007) documented that positive peer relationships enhance participation in the classroom, foster

The Effects of Peer Relationships and Self-Esteem on Academic Performance Among Middle School Students

motivation, and support greater academic outcomes. On the downside, negative peer relationships such as bullying or social exclusion have been documented to cause anxiety and reduced interest in academic endeavors which negatively affects their performance (Juvonen & Wentzel, 1996). Empirical studies, including Kang (2024), pinpoint social relationships as having a direct and indirect impact on academic performance via learning motivation and engagement, particularly through social connections.

Self-esteem is equally important. Self-esteem guidelines explain that self-evaluative stance an individual possesses dictates how students respond to challenges and failures. High academically self-resilient, goal-oriented students tends to cope better with set-backs (Marsh, 1990; Rosenberg, 1965). With low self-esteem, the opposite is generally expected as self-doubt, avoidance of school, and negative performance becomes the primary PARADIGM (Pajares & Schunk, 2001; Harter, 1993). Particularly regarding school academic behaviors, self-esteem mediates the relationship with peers, as illustrated by Coie et al. (1982) and Baumeister et al. (2003). Positive peer relationships usually lead to enhanced self-esteem which in turn positively affects academic behaviour.

The first suzhi self-deriving study was conducted in Chengdu with a sample of 938 middle school students where they were administered the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, a peer relations questionnaire, and a simplified psychological suzhi scale. It was discovered that psychological suzhi had direct effects on peer relationships and self-esteem, and indirect effects via self-esteem. Stronger peer connections were reported by girls and older students. The findings highlight that increasing psychological suzhi can lead to greater self-esteem, improved peer relations, and better academic functioning (Xiao, 2016).

Comparable results were generated in other regions. From a longitudinal study conducted in Germany (Maaz, 2017) with nearly eight thousand students participating, it was found that academic performance was positively correlated with peer acceptance as well as self-esteem. In this study, self-esteem predicted academic performance, but not the other way around. There were also differences across school tracks and between genders suggesting divergent needs for targeted strategies.

Self-esteem's mediating influence was also found in research conducted in South Korea where Lee (2007) showed that peers and parents significantly affected students' school adjustment. For boys, peer affection was important whereas girls depended on parents more. This adds to the understanding of psychosocial factors directing students' daily school life in a more contextual and gender-specific frame. Social connectedness has an impact on academic performance. Multifaceted social belonging strongly correlates with self-esteem and students' academic outcomes among middle schoolers (Rosenberg, 1965; Goodenow & Grady, 1993). It mediates the self-perception to social-emotional wellbeing learning relationship, which emphasizes the contribution of wellbeing on learning.

Social factors impact managing stress and anxiety which then influences academic performance indirectly. Supported by Cohen (1985) and Watson (2002), strong social support networks have been shown to decrease anxiety, emotional resilience, and stress, along with other physiological markers. Sadly, stigma, isolation, and financial factors pose barriers to receiving much-needed support for a student's academic and emotional wellbeing.

The Effects of Peer Relationships and Self-Esteem on Academic Performance Among Middle School Students

Focusing on peers, other studies show the impact of social connectedness on behavioral aspects of student academic engagement. Students who receive high acceptance from their peers tend to demonstrate more positive academic behaviors. This was noted by Coie et al. (1990) who observed timely class participation and completion of associated tasks, including homework. On the other hand, socially rejected students tend to disengage themselves, displaying low-academic performance due to self-fulfilling prophecies of low self-esteem.

Demaray (2006) and Zimmerman (2000) argued that positive relationships among peers not only alleviate stress but also reinforce academic resilience. To address these needs, strategies such as peer support groups and training for building resilience were suggested. Likewise, supportive environments in which students are provided with guidance fuel self-concept, which Marsh and Craven (2006) highlighted as a powerful determinant of performance.

Caldwell (1997) is among the few to study these peer-related factors over an extended period. He observed that membership in specific peer groups and mutual friendships were predictive of cumulative GPA over time. Through constructive peer relationships, positive behaviors were found to mediate the relationship between peers and academic performance.

Kang (2024) suggests that China's array of sociocultural dimensions is useful for understanding this multidimensionality. The use of structural equation modeling demonstrated that the relationship between peers and academic performance was mediated by motivation and engagement in learning. The strongest path was: peer relationship → motivation → accomplishment.

Both peer perception and self-image can be superseded by students' experiences of being victimized. Offen (2015) reported that social self-efficacy and self-esteem helped to alleviate the academic burden imposed by peers' victimization. More so, with high self-esteem, students were more academically resilient despite bullying and peer pressure.

In his 2018 work, Donnel alongside historical theorists Sullivan and Piaget have already pondered on the interrelation of self-esteem and peers interaction. It foster a social engagement and the self-worth reinforce it, and so the cycle continues, profoundly influencing the academic path of adolescents.

METHODOLOGY

Aim of the Study

The study aims to investigate the effects of peer relationships and self-esteem on academic performance among middle school students.

Variables of the Study

- **Independent Variable:** *Peer Relationships* – Refers to the extent and nature of students' interactions with their peers, encompassing aspects such as trust, communication, social engagement, and conflict resolution.
- **Dependent Variables:**
 - Self-Esteem – Represents an individual's perception of self-worth and value relative to others.
 - Academic Performance – Assessed based on students' test scores, classroom performance, and progress towards educational goals.

The Effects of Peer Relationships and Self-Esteem on Academic Performance Among Middle School Students

Objectives

1. To examine the relationship between peer relationships, self-esteem, and academic performance in middle school students.
2. To analyze the impact of peer relationships on academic performance.
3. To analyze the impact of self-esteem on academic performance.

Hypotheses

- **H1:** Peer relationships significantly impact academic performance.
- **H2:** Self-esteem significantly impacts academic performance.
- **H3:** There is a significant relationship among peer relationships, self-esteem, and academic performance.

Participants

The study was conducted among middle school students aged 11 to 15. A random sampling method was used to ensure equal representation. This approach minimized selection bias and enhanced the generalizability of the findings.

Data Collection Instruments

Three standardized tools were used to gather data:

1. **Index of Peer Relations (IPR)** – Measures the quality of peer interactions across dimensions like emotional support, social acceptance, and conflict.
 - *Reliability:* High internal consistency with an Alpha coefficient of ≥ 0.90 .
2. **Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES)** – A 10-item scale widely used to assess overall self-worth. Items are scored on a four-point Likert scale with reverse scoring for negatively worded items.
 - *Reliability:* Cronbach's alpha ranged from 0.84 to 0.86. Factor loadings ranged from 0.361 to 0.814, indicating robust validity.
3. **Academic Performance Scale (APS)** – An 8-item tool measuring intrinsic academic motivation and self-confidence. Students rated agreement using a five-point Likert scale.
 - *Reliability:* Demonstrated strong test-retest reliability ($r = 0.85$), confirming consistency and stability over time.

Data Collection Procedure

Participants completed the three standardized questionnaires anonymously under the supervision of the research team. Instructions were given beforehand to ensure clarity and honesty in responses. Both self-report and peer-report methods were employed for evaluating peer relationships, minimizing bias and enhancing the reliability of the findings.

Statistical Analysis

Descriptive statistics were used to compute frequencies, means, and standard deviations for all variables. To test the hypotheses, **regression analysis** was conducted to assess the predictive effects of peer relationships and self-esteem on academic performance. Additionally, **Pearson correlation** was used to examine the strength and direction of the relationships among the variables.

Data Analysis

The analysis explored patterns in the relationships among self-esteem, peer relationships, and academic achievement. Regression analysis provided insights into how each

The Effects of Peer Relationships and Self-Esteem on Academic Performance Among Middle School Students

independent variable influenced academic performance, while Pearson correlation helped identify statistically significant associations among the variables. Findings were interpreted to understand both direct and indirect effects, particularly the role of self-esteem in mediating peer relationships and academic outcomes.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of all variables Peer relationships Self Esteem Academic performance

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	N
Peer Relationships	92.76	10.72	100
Self-Esteem	23.71	2.41	100
Academic Performance	25.45	3.71	100

- **Sample Size:** N = 100 middle school students
- **Peer Relationships:**
 - Mean = 92.76
 - Standard Deviation = 10.72
 - Interpretation: High level of peer interaction with moderate variability
- **Self-Esteem:**
 - Mean = 23.71
 - Standard Deviation = 2.41
 - Interpretation: Generally positive self-esteem with low variability
- **Academic Performance:**
 - Mean = 25.45
 - Standard Deviation = 3.71
 - Interpretation: Good academic performance with moderate variation

Table 2 Regression Analysis: Impact of Peer Relationships on Academic Performance Among Middle School Students

Regression Statistics	Value
Multiple R	0.0947
R Square	0.0090
Adjusted R Square	-0.0011
Standard Error	3.7150
Observations	100

Table 3 ANOVA Summary for Regression of Peer Relationships on Academic Performance

Source	df	SS	MS	F	Sig. F
Regression	1	12.25	12.25	0.89	.348
Residual	98	1352.50	13.80		
Total	99	1364.75			

Hypothesis 1 (H1): There is a significant impact of peer relationships on academic performance among middle school students.

Regression Analysis Summary (Table 2):

- **R Squared = 0.0089**
 - Indicates peer relationships explain less than 1% of the variance in academic performance.

The Effects of Peer Relationships and Self-Esteem on Academic Performance Among Middle School Students

- **Significance F = 0.348**
 - Greater than $\alpha = 0.05 \rightarrow$ **not statistically significant.**
- **Interpretation:**
 - The regression model does **not** significantly predict academic performance based on peer relationships.
 - Peer relationships have a **negligible** impact on academic success in this sample.

Table 4 Regression Analysis: Impact of Peer Relationships on Academic Performance Among Middle School Students

Regression Statistics	Value
Multiple R	0.0845
R Square	0.0071
Adjusted R Square	-0.0030
Standard Error	3.7184
Observations	100

Note. This table reports the output of a simple linear regression with peer relationships as the predictor of academic performance.

Table 5 ANOVA Summary for Regression of Peer Relationships on Academic Performance

Source	df	SS	MS	F	Sig. F
Regression	1	9.74	9.74	0.70	.403
Residual	98	1355.01	13.83		
Total	99	1364.75			

Note. SS = Sum of Squares; MS = Mean Square; F = F-statistic; Sig. F = Significance of F-test.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): There is a significant impact of self-esteem on academic performance among middle school students.

Regression Analysis Summary (Table 4):

- **R Squared = 0.0071**
 - Self-esteem explains less than 1% of the variance in academic performance.
- **Significance F = 0.403**
 - Well above the $\alpha = 0.05$ threshold \rightarrow **not statistically significant.**
- **Interpretation:**
 - The regression model fails to establish a meaningful link between self-esteem and academic performance.
 - Self-esteem has a **negligible predictive value** for academic success in this sample.

Table 6: Pearson Correlation Analysis of relationship between peer relationships self-esteem and academic performance among middle school students.

	Peer Relationships	Self-Esteem	Academic Performance
Peer Relationships	1.00	-0.00	-0.09
Self-Esteem	-0.00	1.00	-0.08
Academic Performance	-0.09	-0.08	1.00

Note. Values represent Pearson correlation coefficients. Correlations are rounded to two decimal places. None of the correlations are statistically significant at $p < .05$.

The Effects of Peer Relationships and Self-Esteem on Academic Performance Among Middle School Students

Hypothesis 3 (H3): There is a significant relationship between peer relationships, self-esteem, and academic performance among middle school students.

Correlation Analysis Summary (Table 6):

- **Academic Performance & Self-Esteem:**
 - $r = -0.094$ → Weak, negative correlation
- **Academic Performance & Peer Relationships:**
 - $r = -0.084$ → Weak, negative correlation
- **Self-Esteem & Peer Relationships:**
 - $r = -0.002$ → No meaningful correlation

Interpretation:

- All correlation values are **very low and negative**, indicating **no statistically significant relationship** between the variables.
- The data suggests **no meaningful associations** among peer relationships, self-esteem, and academic performance.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this research was to examine how middle school kids' social networks and sense of self-worth influenced their academic achievement. No significant connections between these factors were found within the sample, which goes against predictions and the previous research.

Peer Relationships and Academic Performance

Peer connections and academic achievement were shown to have a weak and non-significant link, according to the regression analysis ($R^2 = 0.0089$, $p > 0.05$). This contradicts previous studies that found that students' motivation and involvement in school were positively impacted by having supportive friendships with their classmates. In particular, Huang et al. (2024) shown that, through learning engagement and motivation, peer interactions substantially impacted academic performance. Wang et al. (2024) also found that learning motivation and engagement mediated the connection between peers' connections and students' academic achievement. Possible explanations for the disparity between the results of prior studies and the present ones include variations in cultural settings, measuring instruments, or sample composition

Self-Esteem and Academic Performance

Additionally, the results showed that there was no statistically significant correlation between self-esteem and academic achievement ($R^2 = 0.0071$, $p > 0.05$). Studies have found a favourable correlation between self-esteem and academic achievement, thus our result contradicts other findings. As an example, research by Lee et al. (2021) found that academic self-efficacy acted as a mediator between self-esteem and academic engagement. Furthermore, studies conducted by Kim and Park (2021) showed that academic zeal and perseverance were indirect mechanisms via which self-esteem affected academic performance. The present study did not find a significant direct association between self-esteem and academic achievement. This shows that there may be intermediary variables at play here that influence self-esteem and academic success.

The Effects of Peer Relationships and Self-Esteem on Academic Performance Among Middle School Students

Interrelationships Among Variables Relationships

with peers, self-esteem, and academic achievement were shown to be weakly correlated in the study. Based on these results, it seems that self-esteem and peer connections do not have a direct bearing on academic performance in this population. This is in opposition to the self-system model of motivational development, which conjectures those social settings, such interactions with peers, impact self-beliefs and, consequently, academic engagement and performance (Connell & Wellborn, 1991). Other variables, such family support or teacher connections, may have a more considerable impact on academic success for this demographic, as there were no significant correlations in this study.

CONCLUSION

The objective of this quantitative research was to evaluate the effect of peer relationships and self-esteem on the academic performance of middle school students. Findings indicate that there is no impact or correlation between these relationships and academic performance, which suggests that peer relationships and self-esteem do not significantly predict academic achievement within this environment.

These results indicate a lack of social, psychological, and academic developmental focus while overlooking key academic contributors like other essential factors, such as family involvement, instructional support by parents, emotional self-regulation, motivation, and guidance which assist learners in achieving their educational goals. It also suggests that utilizing a self-esteem approach to promote self-esteem enhancement based on peer influence alone yields no positive change in academic performance.

The discussion propounded by the study expands the debate on education and the growth of adolescents by indicating that there is a need to consider more complex and comprehensive approaches as a focus in the future. Subsequent studies should utilize a qualitative approach alongside a longitudinal design to reveal the indirect and contextual aspects that are more accurately captured through open-ended questions.

Recommendations

- Refocus the Basic Strategy: A more efficient approach would be to merge academic aid alongside emotional regulation, mental health education, family involvement, and active engagement with family.
- Initiate SEL Programs: Propose supportive frameworks which embed social-emotional learning in the scheme of work to address long-term developmental objectives, despite immediate academic impacts being non-existent.
- Encourage Emotional Support Training for Teachers: Foster teaching that harnesses supportive, psychologically safe environments which encourage students to build their self-confidence, social relationships, and their social-emotional skills.
- Provide Counseling Services: Individual or group counseling can provide students with the necessary emotional support and assist them in their personal growth, which will help engage them in learning at an academic level.
- Encourage Participation from Parents: Foster the partnership between the school and home, to help further nurture both the emotional and education development of the child outside the school setting.

The Effects of Peer Relationships and Self-Esteem on Academic Performance Among Middle School Students

Limitations

- Cross-Sectional Design: Difficulty in evaluating the impact of time, causation, or long-term effects.
- Narrow Range of Scope: Omits important factors which include motivation, socioeconomic status, or teacher assistance.
- Self-Reported Data: Introduction of bias that threatens the validity and integrity of the data presented.
- Homogeneous Sample: Absence of diversity in participants limits application of results to other populations.
- Measurement Constraints: Stated measures do not capture the nature of peer relations and self-esteem concerning interactions and self-image.

REFERENCES

- An-Ceng, L. I. U., Tai-Jun, Z. H. A. N. G., Pan-Lu, P. A. N., Mo-Fen, C. H. E. N., & Yuan Xiao, M. A. (2016). The relationship between middle school students' psychological suzhi and peer relationship: The mediating role of self-esteem. *Journal of Psychological Science*, 39(6), 1290.
- Baumeister, R. F., Campbell, J. D., Krueger, J. I., & Vohs, K. D. (2003). Does high self-esteem cause better performance, interpersonal success, happiness, or healthier lifestyles? *Psychological Science in the Public Interest*, 4(1), 1–44. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1529-1006.01431>
- Blascovich, J., & Tomaka, J. (1991). Measures of self-esteem. In J. P. Robinson, P. R. Shaver, & L. S. Wrightsman (Eds.), *Measures of personality and social psychological attitudes* (Vol. 1, pp. 115–160). Academic Press.
- Byrne, B. M. (1986). Self-concept/academic achievement relations: An investigation of dimensionality, stability, and causality. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science*, 18(2), 173–186.
- Coie, J. D., & Dodge, K. A. (1990). Multiple sources of data on social behavior and social status in the school: A cross-sectional study. *Child Development*, 61(3), 815–829.
- Coie, J. D., Dodge, K. A., & Coppotelli, H. (1982). Dimensions and types of social status: A cross-age perspective. *Developmental Psychology*, 18(4), 557–570.
- Eccles, J. S., & Roeser, R. W. (2011). Schools as developmental contexts during adolescence. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 21(1), 225–241.
- Fredricks, J. A., Blumenfeld, P. C., & Paris, A. H. (2004). School engagement: Potential of the concept, state of the evidence. *Review of Educational Research*, 74(1), 59–109.
- Gallardo, L. O., Barrasa, A., & Guevara-Viejo, F. (2016). Positive peer relationships and academic achievement across early and mid-adolescence. *Social Behavior and Personality: An International Journal*, 44(10), 1637–1648.
- Goodenow, C., & Grady, K. E. (1993). The relationship of school belonging and friends' values to academic motivation among urban adolescent students. *The Journal of Experimental Education*, 62(1), 60–71.
- Grunebaum, H., & Solomon, L. (1987). Peer relationships, self-esteem, and the self. *International Journal of Group Psychotherapy*, 37(4), 475–513.
- Harter, S. (1999). *The construction of the self: A developmental perspective*. Guilford Press.
- Juvonen, J. (2006). Sense of belonging, social bonds, and school functioning. In P. A. Alexander & P. H. Winne (Eds.), *Handbook of educational psychology* (2nd ed., pp. 655–674). Routledge.

The Effects of Peer Relationships and Self-Esteem on Academic Performance Among Middle School Students

- Kiefer, S. M., Alley, K. M., & Ellerbrock, C. R. (2015). The role of teacher support in adolescents' academic and social motivation: A variable-centered and person-centered approach. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 107*(2), 391–406.
- Leary, M. R., & Baumeister, R. F. (2000). The nature and function of self-esteem: Sociometer theory. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology, 32*, 1–62.
- Liem, G. A. D., & Martin, A. J. (2011). Peer relationships and adolescents' academic and non-academic outcomes: Same-sex and opposite-sex peer effects and the mediating role of school engagement. *British Journal of Educational Psychology, 81*(2), 183–206.
- Lim, S. K., & Lee, H. S. (2007). The effects of self-esteem, relationships with parents and peer relationships on adolescents' school adjustment. *Journal of Korean Home Economics Education Association, 19*(3), 169–183.
- Malecki, C. K., & Demaray, M. K. (2006). Social support as a buffer in the relationship between socioeconomic status and academic performance. *School Psychology Quarterly, 21*(4), 375–395.
- Marsh, H. W. (1990). *Self-description questionnaire II: Manual*. University of Western Sydney.
- Marsh, H. W., & Craven, R. G. (2006). Reciprocal effects of self-concept and performance from a multidimensional perspective. *Perspectives on Psychological Science, 1*(2), 133–163.
- Martin, A. J., Marsh, H. W., & Debus, R. L. (2003). Self-handicapping and defensive pessimism: A model of self-protection in achievement settings. *Educational Psychologist, 38*(2), 73–85.
- McGraw, K. O., Moore, S., Fuller, D., & Bateson, J. E. G. (2008). Social support, academic stress, and self-esteem among college students. *College Student Journal, 42*(2), 531–539.
- Raskauskas, J., Rubiano, S., Offen, I., & Wayland, A. K. (2015). Do social self-efficacy and self-esteem moderate the relationship between peer victimization and academic performance? *Social Psychology of Education, 18*, 297–314.
- Rigby, K., & Slee, P. T. (1993). Dimensions of interpersonal relation among Australian children and implications for psychological well-being. *The Journal of Social Psychology, 133*(1), 33–42.
- Rosenberg, M. (1965). *Society and the adolescent self-image*. Princeton University Press.
- Ryan, A. M. (2000). Peer groups as a context for the socialization of adolescents' motivation, engagement, and achievement in school. *Educational Psychologist, 35*(2), 101–111.
- Shao, Y., Kang, S., Lu, Q., Zhang, C., & Li, R. (2024). How peer relationships affect academic achievement among junior high school students: The chain mediating roles of learning motivation and learning engagement. *BMC Psychology, 12*(1), 278.
- Schunk, D. H., & Pajares, F. (2002). The development of academic self-efficacy. In A. Wigfield & J. S. Eccles (Eds.), *Development of achievement motivation* (pp. 15–31). Academic Press.
- Schwartz, D., Gorman, A. H., Duong, M. T., & Nakamoto, J. (2008). Peer relationships and academic achievement as interacting predictors of depressive symptoms during middle childhood. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 117*(2), 289.
- Tennant, R., Hiller, L., Fishwick, R., Platt, S., Joseph, S., Weich, S., Parkinson, J., Secker, J., & Stewart-Brown, S. (2007). The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS): Development and UK validation. *Health and Quality of Life Outcomes, 5*, 63.

The Effects of Peer Relationships and Self-Esteem on Academic Performance Among Middle School Students

- Tetzner, J., Becker, M., & Maaz, K. (2017). Development in multiple areas of life in adolescence: Interrelations between academic achievement, perceived peer acceptance, and self-esteem. *International Journal of Behavioral Development, 41*(6), 704–713.
- Wang, M. T., & Eccles, J. S. (2012). Social support matters: Longitudinal effects of social support on three dimensions of school engagement from middle to high school. *Child Development, 83*(3), 877–895.
- Wentzel, K. R. (1998). Social relationships and motivation in middle school: The role of parents, teachers, and peers. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 90*(2), 202–209.
- Wentzel, K. R., & Caldwell, K. (1997). Friendships, peer acceptance, and group membership: Relations to academic achievement in middle school. *Child Development, 68*, 1198–1209.
- Zimmerman, B. J. (2000). Self-efficacy: An essential motive to learn. *Contemporary Educational Psychology, 25*(1), 82–91.

Acknowledgment

The author(s) appreciates all those who participated in the study and helped to facilitate the research process.

Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

How to cite this article: Santosh, A. & Mahapatra, M. (2025). The Effects of Peer Relationships and Self-Esteem on Academic Performance Among Middle School Students. *International Journal of Indian Psychology, 13*(2), 5218-5231. DIP:18.01.460.20251302, DOI:10.25215/1302.460