

Research Paper

## Academic Achievement of Students with Different Levels of Mental Health

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### ABSTRACT

The major objective of this study was to 'examine the impact of mental health levels on academic achievement of students at the secondary level'. Total 800 secondary level students (based on area: 400 rural and 400 urban; and based on gender: 400 boys and 400 girls) were voluntarily participated in the study. The participants were selected from difference secondary level colleges using systematic sampling technique. To assess the mental health (MH) of the participants, a standardized test mental health battery (M.H.B) was administered. Thereafter, to the collect data concerning academic achievement, marks obtained in the annual examination were gathered. The study followed factorial design and for the analysis of the obtained data, the statistical technique Three-Way ANOVA ( $2 \times 2 \times 4$ ) was used. The study concluded that the academic achievement of secondary level students is significantly ( $p < 0.01$ ) affected by their mental health and gender; whereas the area (rural and urban) does not significantly ( $p > 0.05$ ) affect it.

**Keywords:** *Mental Health, Academic Achievement, Secondary Level, Education, Adolescence*

Academic achievement and mental health (MH) both play a significant role in the development of students (Maurya & Maurya, 2025; Maurya & Singh, 2024a; Maurya & Singh, 2024b; Singh & Maurya, 2020). Academic achievement is a highly important term in process of education (Ifedioramma & Anyamene, 2025); it refers to the educational goals achieved by students, teachers, and educational institutions within a specific time period (Mahmood & Iqbal, 2015). Academic achievement includes various components such as knowledge, comprehension, application, ability, development, competence, learning, skill, instructional objectives, acquisition, examination, exam results, marks, quantity, and mark sheets (Maurya & Singh, 2025). It also includes the integrated

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outcome of the holistic development (cognitive, social, mental, and emotional) of the student. Mental health play significant role in all these components because it is a major positive factor for learning ability, emotional intelligence (Kaur, 2018; Faghirpour et al., 2011), knowledge (Lugogwana, 2017), education (Lugogwana, 2017; Mankani & Yenagi, 2012), social maturity (Shrivastava & Kumar, 2016), self-study (Singh & Sharma, 2017), and academic motivation (Singh & Yadav, 2002). Mental health is an important dimension of overall health (Liu et al., 2024; Sun et al., 2024; Marahatta et al., 2021; Chen et al., 2020), as it is considered a universal human right for individuals and their communities (World Health Organization [WHO], 2023), and as a state of mental well-being, it enables persons to cope with stress, realize their abilities, learn well, work efficiently, and contribute to their community (WHO, 2022). Along with this, inadequate mental health care can increase the risk of suicide (Maurya et al., 2025; Maurya & Singh, 2025; Begum, 2024; Farabaugh et al., 2012).

At the secondary education level, students in the age group of 14–18 years are enrolled (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 2020). At this stage, students are in a transitional period of life where they go through the sensitivities and complexities of adolescence, physical changes, development of creative thinking, social pressures, democratic-social responsibilities, and academic expectations. In such a situation, it is essential for their mental health to be strong, as poor mental health can hinder their academic progress/achievement (Tiwari & Singh, 2017; Bang et al., 2016). In this perspective, the present research work conducted an effective study on the academic achievement and mental health of secondary-level student; for this, an in-depth review of related research works was first carried out.

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The findings of studies by Maurya and Maurya (2025) and Tiwari and Singh (2017) specify that mental health has a significantly positive impact on academic achievement. Similarly, the studies by Maurya and Singh (2024c) and Bang et al. (2016) reveal that students' academic achievement is significantly influenced by their mental health. Mandole (2024), Thapliyal (2022), and Singh (2015), through their research, found that students' academic achievement has a significantly positive relationship with mental health. A comparative study showed by Maurya and Singh (2025) on secondary-level students (from C.B.S.E. and U.P. Boards) found that students (C.B.S.E. & U.P. Board) academic achievement is significantly influenced by their mental health and gender, whereas their area (culture/residence) has no significant effect. Also, several studies have found that students with lower mental health tending to have lower academic achievement (Chu et al., 2023; Kapil, 2023). The findings from studies on adolescent students support the idea that to enhance students' academic achievement, their mental health should be promoted (Monzonís-Carda et al., 2025). Likewise, the results of studies conducted by Yadav and Yadav (2022), and Pandey and Gupta (2015) demonstrate that student's specific area (rural and urban) has no significant impact on their academic achievement; whereas Mandole (2024) found that there is a significant difference in academic achievement between rural and urban students. Regarding gender, the findings of researcher show that gender has no significant effect on students' academic achievement (Mandole, 2024; Thapliyal, 2022); while Vats (2019) found significant difference in the academic achievement of male and female students.

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### *Rationale*

The in-depth review of prior research studies reveals that contemporary research based on mental health & academic achievement is extremely important, relevant, and timely from the perspective of educational research, and is essential for providing direction and momentum to the holistic development of students; it is also established that mental health is a decisive and significant factor in students' academic progress (academic achievement). Accordingly, this research attempts to explore whether the academic achievement of secondary-level students is directly influenced by their mental health? And whether area and gender significantly affect the academic achievement of students at this educational level? Through the findings achieved from this study, attempt was made to statistically analyze actual status of secondary-level students (in terms of mental health and academic achievement), so that practical, coherent, and effective suggestions can be presented in the direction of mental and educational development. Thus, this study, while providing a comprehensive interpretation of mental health and academic achievement, can serve as a strong intellectual foundation for the formulation of future educational policies. In this context, a properly structured and scientific research method was followed in the light of well-planned objectives and hypotheses.

### *Objectives*

Based on a comprehensive review of the available research findings from related studies, the following research objectives have been determined for the present study:

1. To study the impact of mental health on academic achievement of secondary level students.
2. To study the impact of area on academic achievement of secondary students.
3. To study the impact of gender difference on academic achievement of secondary students.
4. To examine the interaction effects of mental health, area and gender on academic achievement of secondary level students.

### *Hypotheses*

In order to provide a clear and focused perspective as well as research direction to the structure and purposeful exploration of the present study, the following coherent hypotheses have been thoughtfully formulated:

1. Academic achievement of secondary students would be significantly affected by their level of mental health.
2. Academic achievement of secondary level students would be significantly affected by their area of residence.
3. There would be significant gender difference in academic achievement of secondary level students.
4. Interaction effects of mental health level, area and gender would be found significant on academic achievement of secondary students.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### *Participants*

In this study, the target population was determined as the 12th-grade students (boys and girls) studying in secondary education in Jaunpur district. Based on the survey method, the sample was selected through the systematic sampling technique to ensure impartiality and representativeness in the selection of participants. During the sampling process, a total of 800 students from selected schools located in the Municipal Council Jaunpur area of Jaunpur district and the Karanjakala and Sirkoni blocks of Sadar (Jaunpur) tehsil were included in

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the research sample, with an equal representation of 400 male & 400 female students based on gender, and 400-400 students based on area (rural-urban).

### *Research tool & collection of data*

The data required for the research was collected as follows:

1. For collecting information related to mental health, the standardized questionnaire 'Mental Health Battery' (M.H.B.) consisting of 130 items, developed by Singh and Gupta (2000), was used.
2. The data related to the participants academic achievement was collected based on their marks obtained in the annual examination. These were the same participants who had earlier actively participated in the M.H.B. and expressed their responses.

### *Variables of the study*

In the study, 3 variables were treated as independent variables (IVs), namely: (1) Area (Rural-Urban), (2) Gender (Male-Female), and (3) Mental Health (MH) and its levels/Status (Very Poor, Poor, Average, Good); while Academic Achievement was treated as the dependent variable (DV).

### *Research design*

To reach the purposes of this research, 'three-way factorial design' (2X2X4) was employed to conduct a functional study on 'the effect of area, gender, and mental health with its levels on academic achievement'. The study examined the major effects and interaction effects of three independent variables: area with two levels (rural & urban), two group of gender (male and female), and mental health with four levels (very poor, poor, average, and good) on academic achievement (dependent variable).

### *Data analysis*

For the statistical analysis of the dependent variable (academic achievement) and the independent variables (area, gender, and mental health), first, the calculation of means (M) and standard deviations (SD) of the groups was conducted to identify the apparent differences. Subsequently, to test the independent and interactive effects of three independent variables (area, gender and mental health) on a dependent variable (academic achievement) a Three-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was employed.

## **RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION**

For the fulfillment of the purposes of the present research, the examination of data between groups (first the calculation of means and standard deviations, followed by three-way ANOVA) yielded the following results:

**Table No. 1: Mean (M) and Standard Deviation (SD) of scores of academic achievement of participants with different levels of mental health**

| <b>Dependent Variable - Academic Achievement Scores</b> |             |                           |                    |
|---|-------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Mental Health Level</b>                              | <b>Mean</b> | <b>Standard Deviation</b> | <b>Participant</b> |
| Very Poor   | 262.59      | 70.710                    | 79                 |
| Poor  | 299.69      | 72.321                    | 189                |
| Average   | 327.96      | 63.291                    | 506                |
| Good  | 348.85      | 59.888                    | 26                 |
| Total   | 315.51      | 69.521                    | 800                |

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The effects shown in Table 1 (for all secondary-level students) indicate that the increasing level of mental health of the participants (Very Poor → Poor → Average → Good), associated with their mean of academic achievement scores (262.59 → 299.69 → 327.96 → 348.85). This trend reveals that an improvement in the participant's mental health corresponds to an improvement in their academic achievement scores. Additionally, it is evident that there is a variation in the mean (M) scores across four levels of mental health of the participants. Next, the M and SD of the participants were designed separately for the rural and urban groups based on their area:

**Table No. 2: M and SD of academic achievement scores of secondary level rural and urban students (based on mental health and its different levels)**

| Dependent Variable – Academic Achievement Scores |                        |                         |        |        |             |
|--|------------------------|-------------------------|--------|--------|-------------|
| Area   | Gender                 | Status of Mental Health | M      | SD     | Participant |
| Rural  | Both (Male and Female) | Very Poor               | 258.20 | 60.480 | 40          |
|  |                        | Poor                    | 298.87 | 62.241 | 94          |
|  |                        | Average                 | 322.05 | 57.376 | 253         |
|  |                        | Good                    | 346.85 | 56.003 | 13          |
|  |                        | Total                   | 311.02 | 62.188 | 400         |
| Urban  | Both (Male and Female) | Very Poor               | 267.10 | 80.421 | 39          |
|  |                        | Poor                    | 300.49 | 81.404 | 95          |
|  |                        | Average                 | 333.88 | 68.302 | 253         |
|  |                        | Good                    | 350.85 | 65.780 | 13          |
|  |                        | Total                   | 319.99 | 75.966 | 400         |

The statistical data presented in Table 2 (for all rural and urban participants) indicate that the mean of academic achievement of participants from the urban area is higher compared to those from the rural area across all levels of mental health. When observing the overall mental health status impact on academic achievement, the mean score of urban participants (319.99) is also higher than that of all rural participants (311.02). Thus, after statistical calculations based on area, the M and SD of participants according to gender has been designed for different groups and the results are accessible in Table No. 3 and its sub-tables 3.1 and 3.2:

**Table No. 3: Mean and SD of academic achievement scores of all male and female students at the secondary level (according to levels of mental health)**

| Dependent Variable (Academic Achievement Scores) |        |                        |        |        |             |
|--|--------|------------------------|--------|--------|-------------|
| Area   | Gender | Level of Mental Health | M      | SD     | Participant |
| All  | Male   | Very Poor              | 262.23 | 65.156 | 39          |
|  |        | Poor                   | 283.91 | 69.802 | 95          |
|  |        | Average                | 320.20 | 67.332 | 252         |
|  |        | Good                   | 328.71 | 55.940 | 14          |
|  |        | Total                  | 306.22 | 70.391 | 400         |
|  | Female | Very Poor              | 262.95 | 76.570 | 40          |
|  |        | Poor                   | 315.64 | 71.671 | 94          |
|  |        | Average                | 335.67 | 58.123 | 254         |
|  |        | Good                   | 372.33 | 57.752 | 12          |
|  |        | Total                  | 324.79 | 67.460 | 400         |

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The above Table (3) provides information regarding the M and SD of academic achievement scores of participants based on gender (male and female) according to their mental health levels. It is evident that at all levels of mental health (very poor, poor, average, and good), the M and SD values for female are better than those of male participants. Similarly, at the overall mental health level, the mean academic achievement score of female participants (324.79) is higher compared to that of male participants (306.22). The results of the statistical calculations conducted across different groups based on gender are as follows:

**Table No. 3.1: Distribution of academic achievement scores (M & SD) of all rural male and female secondary level students according to different levels of mental health**

| Dependent Variable (Scores of Academic Achievement) |        |                      |        |                    |             |
|---|--------|----------------------|--------|--------------------|-------------|
| Area  | Gender | Mental Health Status | Mean   | Standard Deviation | Participant |
| Rural   | Male   | Very Poor            | 254.36 | 61.756             | 22          |
|   |        | Poor                 | 282.43 | 67.129             | 46          |
|   |        | Average              | 307.90 | 61.224             | 124         |
|   |        | Good                 | 334.50 | 43.987             | 8           |
|   |        | Total                | 297.22 | 64.706             | 200         |
|   | Female | Very Poor            | 262.89 | 60.316             | 18          |
|   |        | Poor                 | 314.62 | 53.227             | 48          |
|   |        | Average              | 335.64 | 49.991             | 129         |
|   |        | Good                 | 366.60 | 72.321             | 5           |
|   |        | Total                | 324.83 | 56.430             | 200         |

The statistical values presented in Table (3.1) indicate that, across various levels of mental health (good, average, poor, very poor), the mean academic achievement of female participants studying in the rural area is better related to their male counterparts. Additionally, it is shown that even at the aggregate level of mental health, the mean academic achievement of rural female students (324.83) is superior to that of rural male students (297.22).

**Table No. 3.2: Mean and Standard Deviation (SD) of academic achievements scores of all students studying at secondary level in the urban area according to different levels of mental health**

| Dependent Variable - Academic Achievement Scores |        |                     |        |                    |             |
|--|--------|---------------------|--------|--------------------|-------------|
| Area   | Gender | Mental Health Level | Mean   | Standard Deviation | Participant |
| Urban  | Male   | Very Poor           | 272.41 | 69.870             | 17          |
|  |        | Poor                | 285.29 | 72.890             | 49          |
|  |        | Average             | 332.11 | 70.987             | 128         |
|  |        | Good                | 321.00 | 72.818             | 6           |
|  |        | Total               | 315.23 | 74.732             | 200         |
|  | Female | Very Poor           | 263.00 | 89.125             | 22          |
|  |        | Poor                | 316.70 | 87.492             | 46          |
|  |        | Average             | 335.69 | 65.674             | 125         |
|  |        | Good                | 376.43 | 50.803             | 7           |
|  |        | Total               | 324.75 | 77.073             | 200         |

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The statistical analysis related to the four levels of mental health (IV) on academic achievement (DV), as shown in Table no. of 3.2, indicates that even in the urban environment among secondary level students, female participants have a higher mean score compared to male participants (however, male score higher at a Very Poor level). Furthermore, the obtained statistical values also reveal that at the overall level of mental health, the mean academic achievement score of urban male students (315.23) is comparatively lower than that of female students (324.75). After the preliminary comparison of group means, a factorial ANOVA (2X2X4) was conducted to test the significance of the effects of mental health, area, and gender on academic achievement:

**Table No. 4: Results of factorial ANOVA (2X2X4) on the effect of mental health on academic achievement based on area and gender of secondary level participants**

| Dependent Variable - Academic Achievement Scores |                |     |             |        |      |
|--|----------------|-----|-------------|--------|------|
| Sources  | Sum of Squares | df  | Mean Square | F      | Sig. |
| Area   | 1993.605       | 1   | 1993.605    | .466   | .495 |
| Gender   | 34475.801      | 1   | 34475.801   | 8.058  | .005 |
| Mental Health                                    | 366604.895     | 3   | 122201.632  | 28.561 | .000 |
| Area X Gender                                    | 399.738        | 1   | 399.738     | .093   | .760 |
| Area X Mental Health                             | 3992.596       | 3   | 1330.865    | .311   | .817 |
| Gender X Mental Health                           | 20370.713      | 3   | 6790.238    | 1.587  | .191 |
| Area X Gender X Mental Health                    | 7282.718       | 3   | 2427.573    | .567   | .637 |
| Error  | 3354473.930    | 784 | 4278.666    |        |      |
| Total  | 83497073.000   | 800 |             |        |      |

The three-way ANOVA (Table 4) reveals that the total sum of squares (SS) is 83,497,073 with 800 degrees of freedom (df), the corrected total SS is 3,861,717.969 with 799 df, and the error SS is 3,354,473.930 with 784 df. The mean square (MS) of the error is 4,278.666. For the independent variable Area (Rural - 400 participants; Urban - 400 participants), the SS is 1,993.605 and MS is 1,993.605, with an F-value of 0.466. This F-value (0.466) at 1 df is not significant ( $p > 0.05$ ), with a significance level of 0.495, indicating no statistically significant difference in academic achievement based on area among the participants (N=800). Similarly, the analysis (2x2x4) shows that for the independent variable Gender (Male - 400; Female - 400), the sum of squares is 34,475.801 and the mean square is 34,475.801, with an F-value of 8.058. This F-value (8.058) is significant at 1 df ( $p < 0.01$ ), indicating a significant difference in academic achievement between male and female participants. For the dependent variable Academic Achievement concerning Mental Health and its four levels, the SS and MS values are 366,604.895 and 122,201.632 respectively, with an F-value of 28.561. This F-value (28.561) is also significant at 3 df ( $p < 0.01$ ), indicating significant differences in academic achievement among participants (N=800) across different levels of mental health. Regarding the interaction effects among the variables, the 2x2x4 ANOVA (Table 4) shows no significant interaction effects ( $p > 0.05$ ) for Area  $\times$  Gender, Area  $\times$  Mental Health, Gender  $\times$  Mental Health, or the three-way interaction Area  $\times$  Gender  $\times$  Mental Health.

## DISCUSSION

The findings related to the first objective indicate that the mental health of secondary level students has a significant effect (influence) on their academic achievement. This conclusion is supported by studies conducted by various researchers (Maurya & Maurya, 2025; Maurya & Singh, 2024c; Tiwari & Singh, 2017; Bang et al., 2016) which indicate that student's

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mental health levels significantly affect their academic achievement. This research also found that participants with lower levels of mental health scored lower academic achievement marks, whereas those with higher mental health levels scored higher academic achievement marks. Similarly, the findings of Chu et al. (2023), Kapil (2023), and Maurya and Singh (2025) suggest that level of mental health is positively associated with academic achievement.

Results concerning the second objective reveal that the area (rural or urban) of secondary level students does not have a significant effect on their academic achievement. Similarly, the results of Maurya and Singh (2025) indicate that the area does not significantly influence students' academic achievement. The outcomes related with the third objective show that gender differences among secondary level students have a significant effect on their academic achievement. This finding was also reported by Vats (2019), who concluded that gender significantly influences students' academic achievement. The study also found that at the secondary education level, the academic achievement of female is greater to male students. The interaction effects of area, gender, levels of mental health on dependent variable (academic achievement) were not found significant.

### CONCLUSION

The present study found a significant effect of mental health (Very Poor, Poor, Average, and Good) and gender (male and female) on the academic achievement of secondary level students, whereas no significant effect of the area (rural and urban) was found; furthermore, no interaction effect was observed among mental health, area, and gender on academic achievement.

### *Educational Implications and Suggestions*

The findings of presented research clearly indicate that mental health is a significant factor influencing academic achievement. Therefore, both schools and families need to remain particularly aware and pay special attention to the mental health of students. Teachers should be specially trained to understand the emotional, mental, cognitive, and social aspects of adolescents so that students in adolescence can be provided with a stress-free, motivating, diagnostic, and supportive environment, along with giving special attention to their mental health. The study also revealed that regional/geographical differences (urban or rural) do not significantly affect academic achievement. This suggests that if equal educational resources and opportunities are provided, students from any environment (rural or urban) can certainly achieve excellent academic success. Therefore, educational stakeholders should implement educational policies with an inclusive approach. The findings based on gender indicate a significant difference in academic achievement between male-female students. Although in the current study, female was found to have better academic achievement than male students. Hence, male students at the secondary level require special attention towards their studies. At the same time, it is essential to provide all students, regardless of their gender, with an equitable, sensitive, and motivational teaching-learning environment, so that both groups (boys and girls) can develop their full potential without any discrimination.

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### **Conflict of Interest**

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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