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Research Paper

The Correlational Study of Family Environment, Study Habits, and Self-Esteem among High School Students

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ABSTRACT

The present study investigated the relationships among family environment, study habits, and self-esteem among high school students. A sample of 100 students (aged 13–18 years) was assessed using the Family Environment Scale, Study Habits Inventory, and Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale. Spearman's rank order correlation analysis indicated significant positive associations between family expressiveness ($r = .590$, $p < .001$), organization ($r = .346$, $p < .001$), and control ($r = .404$, $p < .001$) with study habits, whereas family conflict demonstrated a significant negative association ($r = -.253$, $p < .05$). With regard to self-esteem, conflict emerged as the most prominent negative correlate ($r = -.650$, $p < .001$), with organization and control yielding modest yet statistically significant positive correlations. These findings suggest that a structured and emotionally expressive home environment serves as a meaningful psychological context for the development of adaptive academic behaviours and positive self-regard during adolescence.

Keywords: *Family Environment, Study Habits, Self-Esteem, Adolescents, High School Students, Correlational Research*

Education is widely regarded as one of the virtually powerful determinants of an individual's future, shaping not entirely career trajectories but likewise personality, friendly relationships, and general well-being. Within the educational context, academic success is seldom the product of intelligence alone — it is deeply intertwined with psychological and environmental factors that either support or hinder a student's ability to learn, persist, and thrive. Among the significant of these factors are the family environment in which a student is raised, the study habits they develop complete time, and the level of self-esteem they carry into academic situations. The family is considered the primary social institution in a child's life, serving as the first and virtually enduring context for emotional development, behavioural learning, and value formation. Long before a child enters a classroom, the family environment has already begun shaping their attitudes toward learning, their capacity to regulate emotions, and their sense of self-worth. Research systematically indicates that the quality of the home environment — including the degree of emotional

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expressiveness, organizational structure, parental control, and the presence or absence of conflict — exerts a significant influence on children's academic engagement and psychological outcomes (Brown, 1996; Mishra, 2014). Families that foster impartial communication, maintain consistent routines, and minimize conflict tend to produce students who are better equipped to meet academic demands.

Study habits refer to the patterns and practices students adopt in their approach to learning — including time management, concentration, note taking, revision, and examination preparation.

These habits are not innate but are mostly shaped by the environment in which a student grows up. good study habits have been systematically linked to higher academic achievement across educational levels (Palsane, 2015; Singh, 2017). However, the development of such habits does not occur in a vacuum — students who experience a stable, supportive, and well organized home environment are more likely to internalize the kind of discipline and motivation that translates into productive academic behavior.

Self-esteem, broadly defined as the positive or negative evaluation of one's own self-worth (Rosenberg, 1965), plays a critical role in determining how students respond to academic challenges. Students with eminent self-esteem tend to approach difficult tasks with confidence, persist in the face of setbacks, and maintain motivation even under pressure. In contrast, low self-esteem is associated with enhanced academic anxiety, avoidance of challenges, and a tendency toward underachievement (Smith, 2012). The family environment is a essential source through which self-esteem is developed and reinforced — children who grow up in households characterized by warmth, encouragement, and low conflict are more likely to develop a positive self-concept that supports their academic functioning. High school is a especially crucial period for the study of these variables. Adolescents during this stage undergo fast cognitive, social, and emotional changes, and are simultaneously navigating enhanced pedantic pressure and identity formation. The interplay between family dynamics, academic behavior, and self-perception is therefore especially salient during these years. Despite a growing body of research on each of these variables independently, relatively fewer studies — particularly within the Indian context — have examined the relationships among all three together in a high school population.

The present study, therefore, aims to investigate the correlational relationships between dimensions of family environment (cohesion, expressiveness, conflict, organization, and control), study habits, and self-esteem among high school students. By doing so, it seeks to contribute meaningful insights for educators, school counselors, and parents regarding the role of the home environment in shaping both academic behavior and psychological well-being during adolescence.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Family Environment

Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory positions the family as the most proximal microsystem shaping children's cognitive and emotional development. Brown (1996) established that home environments characterized by emotional warmth, open communication, and organizational stability are significantly associated with higher academic achievement and psychosocial adjustment. Parental involvement has been identified as a robust predictor of academic success; Epstein (1995) demonstrated that students with

consistently involved parents showed higher homework completion, better attendance, and stronger academic aspirations. Conversely, Mishra (2014) highlighted that family conflict, neglect, and poor communication significantly impair concentration and negatively impact academic performance among Indian students. Sirin's (2005) meta-analysis further confirmed that socioeconomic stressors compound these effects by restricting access to educational resources.

Study Habits

Credé and Kuncel's (2008) meta-analysis of over 72 studies confirmed that study habits explain significant variance in academic performance beyond cognitive ability alone. Britton and Tesser (1991) found that short-range planning skills were a stronger predictor of GPA than scholastic aptitude, underscoring the primacy of consistent daily routines over raw intellectual capacity. Dunlosky et al. (2013) demonstrated that active strategies such as spaced practice and self-testing produced superior long-term retention compared to passive re-reading. Singh (2017) and Palsane (2015) confirmed in the Indian context that disciplined study routines were associated with higher academic scores and reduced stress, with benefits largely consistent across gender.

Self-Esteem

Rosenberg (1965) defined self-esteem as the individual's overall positive or negative evaluation of self-worth. Students with high self-esteem approach challenges with greater confidence and persistence, and interpret setbacks constructively rather than as reflections of fixed ability (Dweck, 2006). Low self-esteem is linked to anxiety, fear of failure, and avoidance behaviours, often producing a self-reinforcing cycle of underachievement (Bandura, 1997). Smith (2012) confirmed its positive association with academic adjustment and active participation.

Interrelationships Among the Variables

Family environment, study habits, and self-esteem function as an interconnected psychosocial system rather than independent variables (Allison, 1999). Supportive family environments scaffold self-regulatory skills underpinning effective study habits (Vygotsky, 1978), while simultaneously fostering healthy self-esteem through emotional security and encouragement. Students with positive self-evaluations are more likely to approach studying with persistence and attribute academic difficulty to effort rather than fixed inability (Weiner, 1985). Taken together, the literature points to a transactional model in which family environment forms the distal foundation, self-esteem serves as the mediating psychological resource, and study habits constitute the proximal behavioural mechanism through which academic performance is realized.

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The study involved 100 high school students aged 13–18, predominantly from nuclear families. Convenience sampling was used. Inclusion criteria required students aged 13-18years, currently in high schools, having regular interaction with family members, able to understand the questionnaire language, and willing to participate voluntarily. Exclusion criteria comprised students living away from family, those with known psychiatric condition and those who submitted incomplete responses.

Measures

- **Family Environment Scale (FES):** The Family Environment Scale (FES), originally developed by Rudolf H. Moos and Bernice S. Moos, was adapted for Indian settings by Bhatia and Chaddha. It measures cohesion, expressiveness, conflict, acceptance and caring, independence, active-recreational orientation, organization, and control. Split-half reliability coefficients ranged from 0.48 to 0.92. Face and content validity were established through expert judgment, with 75% agreement required for item retention.
- **Study Habits Inventory:** The Study Habits Inventory, developed by M. N. Palsane and Anuradha Sharma, was used to assess study habits such as time management, reading ability, concentration, note-taking, and examination preparation. The inventory has reported split-half reliability of.56 and test-retest reliability of.88. It has satisfactory face and content validity.
- **Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES):** The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES), developed by Morris Rosenberg (1965), was used to measure global self-worth. It consists of 10 items and demonstrates a Guttman coefficient of reproducibility of.92. Test-retest reliability over two weeks has been reported at.85 and.88. The scale has strong concurrent, predictive, and construct validity.

Procedure

After obtaining permissions, standardized questionnaires were administered. Data confidentiality and informed consent were ensured.

Statistical Analysis

Descriptive statistics, tests of normality, and Spearman's rho correlation analysis were computed to examine the relationships among the variables.

RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1 showing Descriptive Statistics of variables studied.

Variable	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Expressiveness	41.1	3.40	-.027	-.613
Study Habits	45.59	6.86	.569	2.238
Self-Esteem	14.93	2.43	-.732	.940
Conflict	37.43	3.80	.112	-1.265
Organization	11.36	3.20	2.384	12.90
Control	15.05	2.78	-.496	-.527

Descriptive analysis indicated that participants reported high levels of family expressiveness (M = 41.1, SD = 3.40) and organization (M = 11.36, SD = 3.20) as per FES norms, while control scores (M = 15.05, SD = 2.78) fell within the average range. Conflict scores (M = 37.43, SD = 3.80) were at the borderline of high conflict as per scale norms. Study habits scores (M = 45.59, SD = 6.86) and self-esteem scores (M = 14.93, SD = 2.43) indicated moderate levels on their respective scales. Inspection of skewness and kurtosis values indicated that most variables demonstrated acceptable distributions; however, organization showed notable kurtosis (12.90) and study habits evidenced mild positive skewness (.569), suggesting departure from normality. These findings supported the use of Spearman's rank-order correlation as the primary analytical method.

Correlation Analysis

Table 2 showing Spearman's Rho Correlations among variables

Variables	Spearman's rho	Sig. 2 tailed
Expressiveness & study habits	.590**	<.001
Organization& study habits	.346**	<.001
Control & study habits	.404**	<.001
Conflict & study habits	-.253*	<.011
Expressiveness & self esteem	.111	.272
Organization & self esteem	.218*	.029
Control & self esteem	.216*	.031
Conflict & self esteem	-.650	<.001

*Note : **p <.001 and *p <.05.*

Key findings include significant positive correlations of expressiveness, organization, and control with study habits, and a significant negative correlation between conflict and study habits. Organization showed a modest positive correlation with self-esteem.

DISCUSSION

The present study examined the relationship between family environment dimensions — Expressiveness, Organization, Control, and Conflict — and study habits and self-esteem among adolescents.

Family Environment and Study Habits

Expressiveness showed the strongest positive correlation with study habits (r =.590, p <.001), indicating that families encouraging open emotional communication foster greater pedantic engagement. Organization and Control likewise showed profound enthusiastic correlations with study habits (r =.346 and r =.404 respectively, p <.001), suggesting that regular and predictable home environments reinforce disciplined academic routines. Victorino et al. (2025) highlighted that a structured and encouraging home environment plays a key role in helping students develop good study habits and succeed academically. Conflict demonstrated a profound negative correlation with study habits (r = -.253, p <.05). Wang et al. (2022) found that external academic performance and internal cognitive engagement in adolescents, which supports the present finding.

Family Environment and Self-Esteem

Among correlations with self-esteem, Conflict showed the strongest correlation of self-esteem (r = -.650, p <.001), indicating that higher family conflict is strongly associated with lower adolescent self-esteem. Bansal (2016) conducted an Indian study using the Family Environment Scale and found that the conflict dimension negatively correlated with self-esteem among adolescents, directly consistent with the present findings. Similar findings were established in study done by Nguyen et al. (2023), which found that having conflict with parents negatively relates to adolescent wellbeing and self-perception. Organization and Control showed modest but significant positive correlations with self-esteem (r =.218 and r =.216, p <.05 respectively), suggesting that household structure and parental guidance contribute to adolescents' sense of competence and self-worth. However, Expressiveness did not significantly predict self-esteem (r =.111, p =.272). Kench and Irwin (2000) noted that poor family expressiveness alone is not an independent predictor of all psychological

outcomes — dimensions such as cohesion and active validation may need to co-occur for expressiveness to meaningfully shape self-concept.

Summary

Collectively, these findings underscore the significant role of family environment in shaping both academic behavior and self-perception during adolescence. Family conflict consistently emerged as a risk factor across both outcomes, while structure and emotional openness functioned as protective influences. These results carry implications for school counselors and family-based interventions aimed at improving adolescent academic and psychological wellbeing.

CONCLUSION

A supportive, communicative, and organized family environment fosters effective study habits in high school students. Conflict detracts from academic focus. While family environment influences self-esteem less directly, it remains important for academic behaviors. Future research should explore additional psychosocial factors and broader samples.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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