ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF HIGHER SECONDARY STUDENTS: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

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Abstract

Academic performance is a critical determinant of students' intellectual growth and future opportunities. This study investigates the key factors influencing the academic performance of higher secondary students, emphasizing both intrinsic and extrinsic determinants. The research explores the impact of sociodemographic characteristics, digital screen exposure, study habits, and socioeconomic status on students' learning outcomes. A descriptive survey method was adopted, employing stratified random sampling to collect data from 60 higher secondary students in the Kunnamangalam Block of Kozhikode District, Kerala, India. Data collection was conducted through a structured questionnaire and standardized academic performance scale. The study found that a significant proportion of students engage in recreational screen activities, with 93% involved in social media and gaming. While 93% of respondents followed a self-study approach, only a minority demonstrated high academic performance. Findings also indicate a potential correlation between screen-time engagement and lower academic achievement. The study underscores the importance of balanced digital consumption, structured study habits, and socio-environmental support. It suggests social work interventions, including casework and group work, to assist adolescents in managing screen time and improving academic performance. Further research is recommended to examine gender-specific influences and long-term impacts of digital engagement on adolescent learning and well-being.

Keywords: Adolescents, Higher Secondary Students, Academic Performance.

INTRODUCTION

Academic performance is a crucial indicator of students' intellectual development and future opportunities. In the higher secondary stage, students face increasing academic demands, pressure to excel in examinations, and the challenge of balancing extracurricular activities with studies. Numerous elements influence students' academic performance, such as their socioeconomic background, the learning environment, and their use of digital devices. This study aims to explore the key determinants of academic performance among higher secondary students, analyzing both intrinsic and extrinsic factors that contribute to their success or challenges. By examining these aspects, the research seeks to provide insights into effective educational strategies that can enhance students' academic achievements.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Mappadang, Khusaini, Sinaga, and Elizabeth (2022) examine the influence of academic interest on the academic performance of undergraduate accounting students using a multinomial logit model. Their study highlights how varying levels of interest in the subject contribute to differences in students' academic achievements. The findings suggest that students with a strong academic interest are more likely to perform better, while those with lower interest levels tend to struggle. By utilising statistical analysis, the research provides empirical evidence supporting the crucial role of academic motivation in shaping students' educational outcomes.

Suvarna and Bhata (2016) in their study investigates the relationship between academic achievement and personality traits among 300 secondary school students in Mandya, Karnataka. Using Raven's Standard Progressive Matrices to assess academic scores and the Eysenck Personality Inventory for personality traits, the findings indicate a negligible positive correlation between the two variables. The study also explores differences across demographic factors, revealing significant variations in academic performance and personality based on age and gender, while language and religion showed no significant impact on academic achievement. The results highlight the role of personality traits in shaping students' academic success, emphasizing the need for structured educational and social environments to foster both academic and personal growth.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

A number of internal and external issues make it difficult for many higher secondary students to obtain excellent academic performance. The classroom setting, resource availability, and study habits all have an impact on students' academic performance. Social media, online entertainment, and the growing usage of digital gadgets may have a detrimental effect on students' concentration, output, and academic performance. Student learning experiences and performance are greatly influenced by family income, parental education, and access to academic resources. Peer pressure, high academic expectations, and exam-related stress all contribute to students' mental health problems and impair their performance. Examining possible disparities in male and female students' academic performance is necessary to comprehend gender-specific difficulties.

OBJECTIVES

- To study the socio-economic development of the Higher Secondary Students.
- To analyse the academic performance of the Higher Secondary Students.

HYPOTHESIS

H1 - There is a significant relationship between demographic variables and academic performance.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Descriptive survey method is used in this study, in which stratified random sampling technique under probability sampling was employed to collect data. Universe is the whole population of the research study. The population is divided into two strata: students from Plus One and Plus Two and the researcher selected higher secondary students from five schools of Kunnamangalam Block of Kozhikode District, Kerala, India. The sample size for this study is determined based on Morgan's Table, ensuring statistical adequacy and representativeness. Sample size of the study is 60. Academic performance is the dependent variable. Independent variables include sociodemographic characteristics (age, gender, class, group, study type, status of parenting, income of parents per month, data recharging amount per month, device owned by you, type of screen-type activities)

Operational Definitions

Academic performance: The learning, understanding, interest and percentage achieved by higher secondary students in their education and most recent examination.

Higher secondary students: Students currently enrolled in 11th and 12th grade in Kunnamangalam Block of Kozhikode District in Kerala in India, aged between 15 to 18 depending on regional education system.

Data Collection

For the quantitative phase of this study, the questionnaire method and survey was employed as the primary method of data collection. Researcher collected data directly from the respondents from schools. Standardized scale was utilized to measure the variables under investigation, ensuring reliability and validity in capturing the required data. The data collection was started from November 1, 2024 and completed by the end of December 2024.

Tools of data collection

1. Socio-demographic Profile: Self-made questions Likert type scale with 10 items.

2. Academic Performance Scale (2015): Developed by Carson Birchmeier, Emily Grattan, Sarah Hornbacher, and Christopher McGregory of Saginaw Valley State University.

Inclusion Criteria: Higher Secondary Students under Kunnamangalam Block of Kozhikode District, Kerala from the age 15 to 18 are included as the respondents of this study.

Exclusion Criteria: Higher secondary students with mental disorders are not included in this study. The students from 1 Standard to 10 Standard were excluded from the study.

FINDINGS
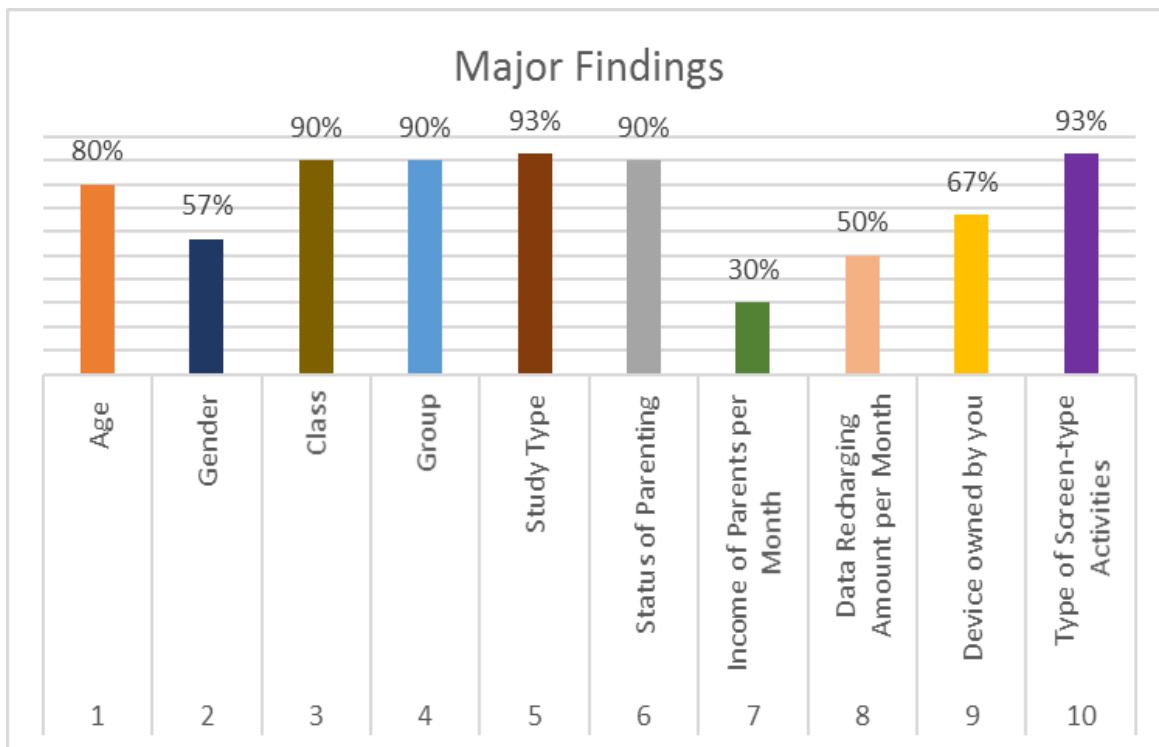
Findings of Independent Variables		
S. No.	**Particulars**	**Major Findings**
1	Age	80% of the respondents are 16 years old.
2	Gender	57% of the respondents are males.
3	Class	90% of the respondents are plus one student.
4	Group	90% of the respondents are humanities batch students.
5	Study Type	93% of the respondents' study type is self-study.
6	Status of Parenting	90% of the respondents' parents are staying with the child.
7	Income of Parents per Month	30% of respondents' parents' monthly income is 30001 and above.
8	Data Recharging Amount per Month	50% of respondents' monthly data recharging amount is 301-500 rupees.
9	Device Owned by you	67% of respondents owned smartphones.
10	Type of Screen-type Activities	93% of respondents do recreational (social media, gaming) screen-type activities.
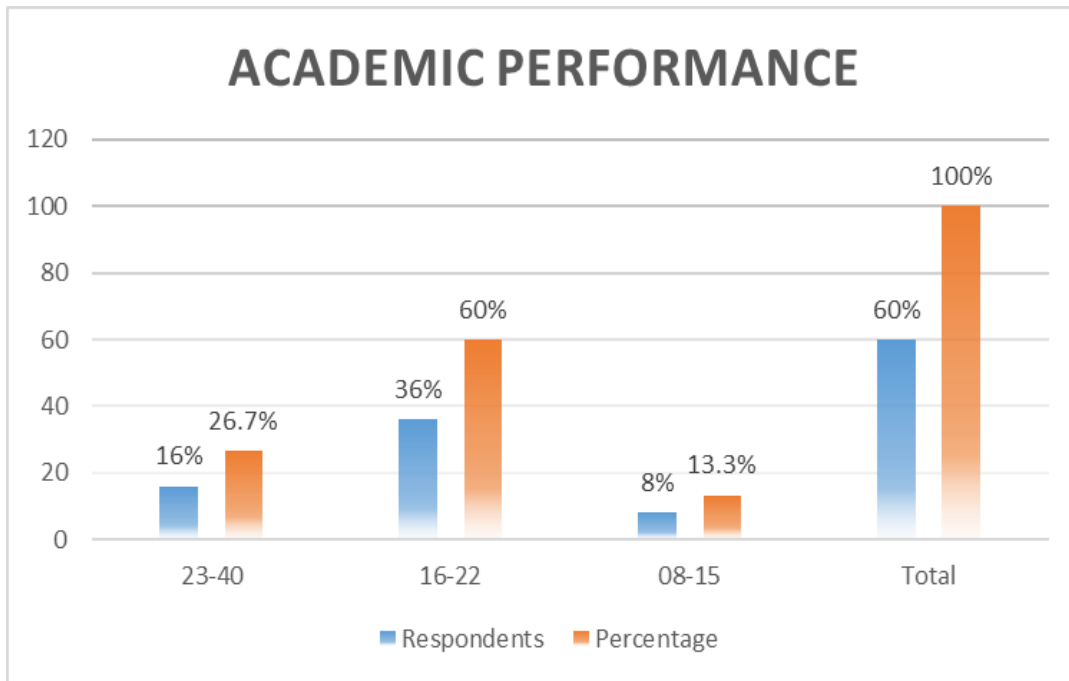
Findings of Dependent Variable		
Academic Performance	**Respondents**	**Percentage**
23-40	8	26.7
16-22	36	60.0
8-15	16	13.3
Total	60	100.0

DISCUSSION

The demographic characteristics of the respondents provide a focused insight into the study group. The data reveals that 80% of the respondents are 16 years old, indicating that the study primarily captures the experiences of mid-adolescents. A majority (57%) of the respondents are male, which suggests a slight gender imbalance in the sample. In terms of education, 90% of the respondents are Plus One student and belong to the humanities stream. This suggests that the sample primarily consists of students in the initial stage of higher secondary education, potentially influencing their study habits and screen-time activities. Regarding study habits, a significant 93% of the respondents follow a self-study approach, indicating that most students rely on their own learning methods rather than tuition or guided instruction. Additionally, 90% of the respondents live with their parents, which could be a stabilizing factor in their academics and well-being.

The financial status of the respondents' families varies, with 30% of parents earning rupees 30,001 or more per month. This suggests that a substantial portion of students come from relatively well-off backgrounds. Additionally, 50% of respondents spend rupees 301-500 per month on mobile data recharges, reflecting a moderate investment in internet access for their digital activities. A majority (67%) of respondents own a

smartphone, emphasizing their accessibility to digital platforms. Furthermore, 93% of respondents engage in recreational screen activities such as social media and gaming, highlighting a strong preference for non-academic screen usage.

The academic performance data indicates that 60% of the respondents scored between 16-22 marks, while 26.7% scored between 23-40 marks, and 13.3% scored between 8-15 marks. This suggests that a majority of students have moderate academic performance, with only a small proportion excelling. Given that a high percentage of students engage in recreational screen activities, this might be influencing their academic outcomes.

CONCLUSION

The findings indicate that while most respondents have access to digital devices and stable home environments, their screen time is predominantly recreational. The academic performance data suggests that screen habits might have an impact on learning outcomes, particularly among those with lower scores. Further analysis could explore the relationship between screen time, study habits, and academic achievement to draw deeper insights.

Social work interventions using casework and group work help adolescents manage screen time and enhance academics. Casework offers counselling for screen addiction and study skills, while group work fosters peer support and study groups. Parental workshops educate on digital monitoring, promoting balanced screen use, emotional well-being, and academic success.

References

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