

Relationship between Social Factors and Student Academic Achievement: A cross-sectional study of University level students in AJ&K

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
ARTICLE HISTORY Received: May 03, 2023 Accepted: June 11, 2023 Published: June 22, 2023	This study was conducted to find out the relationship between social factors and academic achievement of university students. The study was quantitative in nature, descriptive in method and a survey technique was used to collect the data. A simple random sampling technique was used to draw the sample from the population. A Five- Pointed Likert Scale questionnaire was developed for students. Data were collected personally by the researcher after testing the reliability and validity of the instrument. The collected data were analyzed using mean, frequency and percentage through Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). It was found that students spend most of their time with their fellows and help each other if they have difficulty. Furthermore, all students follow discipline according to university rules. It is recommended that seminars and conferences may be arranged for university students about how to cooperate with each other and know how to deal with problems.
KEYWORDS <i>Social factors;</i> <i>Peer group;</i> <i>Classroom climate;</i> <i>Home environment;</i> <i>Parents involvement;</i> <i>Academic achievement</i>	
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INTRODUCTION

Education is a focused activity aimed at achieving specific objectives, such as imparting knowledge, fostering personal development, and nurturing desirable character traits. These objectives may include the cultivation of critical thinking, wisdom, thoughtfulness, and honesty (Barana et al., 2019). Education has a transformative impact on critical thinking. It actively engages individuals in learning to exercise judgment when making decisions and collaborating with others, thereby enhancing creativity and effective time management skills. Education provides individuals with the necessary qualifications to secure better job opportunities, increasing their likelihood of secure employment (Pithers & Soden, 2000). The main purpose of education is the essential development of an individual. Additionally, it serves as a source of numerous benefits for an improved and fulfilling life. Education can contribute significantly to the betterment of society as a whole by fostering awareness of rights and responsibilities among its members. Social issues often pose challenges that affect many individuals within a society. These issues represent a collective set of problems in contemporary society, prompting the concerted efforts of many people to find solutions. They often underscore the significance of factors that lie beyond an individual's control.

Social issues are distinct from economic issues, although some, like migration, possess both social and economic aspects. Certain issues do not neatly fall into either category, such as conflicts. Social factors encompass various elements that impact an individual's existence. These factors include prosperity, religion, consumer behavior, educational attainment, family size and structure, and population density (Goyat, 2011). Academic accomplishment refers to the extent to which a student, teacher, or organization has achieved their short or long-term educational goals. Educational milestones such as secondary school diplomas and bachelor's degrees serve as indicators of academic achievement. Evaluating academic attainment is typically done through examinations and ongoing assessments, but there is no universally agreed-upon method for determining the most effective evaluation criteria or identifying which aspects are most crucial, such as practical skills versus declarative knowledge. Moreover, there are varying opinions regarding the individual factors that effectively predict academic performance, with considerations such as test anxiety, environment, motivation, and emotions needing to be considered when developing school achievement models. Currently, schools are receiving funding based on their students' academic achievements, wherein a school with greater academic accomplishments receives more funding than a school with fewer achievements (Preeti, 2013).

Students' academic progress and knowledge attainment are influenced by various factors, including gender, age, teaching effectiveness, type of schooling, socioeconomic status of the student's father/guardian, residential area, the language of instruction in schools, educational trends, daily study hours, and study environment, whether as a resident or a day scholar. A student's educational achievement is significantly influenced by the social standing of

their parents in society. Considine & Zappalà (2002) observed the same that parent's income or social status positively affects the student test score in the examination. According to Ewumi (2012), the Higher Education Act places considerable emphasis on the academic performance of graduate students. Durden and Ellis have highlighted that 'the measurement of students' prior educational outcomes is the most significant predictor of their future achievement.' This suggests that higher previous attendance is associated with better academic performance in future endeavors. It is important to note that a student's educational success is significantly influenced by the social status of their parents in society (Considine & Zappalà, 2002) noticed the same that parent's income or social status positively affects the student's test scores in examinations.

Higher education performance depends on graduate students' academic achievement (Warren, 2018). Durden & Ellis (1995) described that it has been observed that 'the measurement of students' previous educational outcomes is the most crucial determinant of their future achievement.' This implies that higher levels of prior academic engagement lead to better performance in subsequent activities. However, it is worth noting that no such study has been conducted in Kotli, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, and numerous social factors influence students' academic achievement at the University of Kotli, Azad Jammu and Kashmir. Society plays a pivotal role in the teaching and learning process, and most social factors significantly impact students' academic performance. Unfortunately, these social factors have been overlooked in the local context. Consequently, the researcher has undertaken this study to explore the relationship between social factors and academic achievement at the university level.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Education is a method of learning in which people's habits, skills, and knowledge are passed down through education, training, or research from one generation to the next. Education results in academic performance or achievements. Exams or continuous assessments are common ways to measure academic achievement, but no one can agree on the best way to test it or which aspect of procedural knowledge, like facts, is most important. The exams are usually taken to advance to the next grade. Teachers, students, and textbooks are the fundamental pillars of education. Society is positively impacted by education. The instructor directs the student in the right direction through education. The students participate in school-based co-curricular and curricular activities with their classmates. No two people are the same in terms of cognitive abilities, habits, and so on. Personality, academic, and social performance all undergo shifts as a result of these differences (Tyler & Blader, 2013).

Tertiary education is another name for university education. All formal post-secondary education, including public and private universities, colleges, technical training institutes, and vocational schools, is referred to as tertiary education. Tertiary schooling is instrumental in cultivating development, diminishing destitution, and supporting shared success. A profoundly talented labor force, with deep-rooted admittance to strong post-optional instruction, is essential for development. Tertiary training benefits the individual, yet society overall. Higher education graduates are more concerned about the environment, have healthier routines, and participate more actively in civic life. Additionally, stronger nations result from larger families, healthier children, and increased tax revenues from higher earnings. In a nutshell, tertiary institutions prepare students for employment by equipping them with the necessary and relevant skills and participation in their communities and societies (Hout, 2012). In addition to traditional university coursework, tertiary technical and vocational education and training can provide students with labor market-relevant skills and knowledge (Fry, 2003). Governments increasingly realize that the entire educational system, from primary through tertiary education, must reflect the global knowledge economy's new social and economic requirements, which increasingly require a workforce with better training, greater skill, and greater adaptability (Guruz, 2011). A social issue is one that has an impact on a large number of people in society. It is a collection of issues that are prevalent in contemporary society and that numerous individuals attempt to resolve (Spector & Kitsuse, 2017). It frequently occurs as a result of external forces beyond an individual's control. Conflicting opinions about what is morally right or wrong to do in one's personal or interpersonal social life decisions stem from social issues (Briñol & Petty, 2022). Economic concerns are distinct from social concerns; On the other hand, some issues, like immigration, have both social and economic ramifications. A few issues don't fall into one or the other classification, like fighting (Blumer, 1971).

Social factors

Following are some social factors that contribute to the students' academic achievement.

Peer Group

Students' motivation for success and energy can be boosted by peer influence. Positive role models can come from peers. On the off chance that an understudy is impacted adversely, it influences his scholarly presentation. Stronger students improve overall academic performance and have an impact on their peers (Mishra, 2020). A splendid kid encircled by dull companions would lose interest in learning. On the other hand, a member of a peer group that is inclined to study would benefit from it and pique his or her interest in learning. Friendship groups establish certain social norms, and behavior that conforms to these norms is rewarded with expressions of support and approval, whereas behavior that deviates from the norms of the group may result in disapproval or rejection (Olalekan,

2016). Negative effects of peer pressure include your child trying drugs, alcohol, or smoking. On the other hand, peer pressure can make it possible for certain groups to impact your child positively. It is impossible to predict how your child will be affected accurately. From your child's musical preferences to their choice of school subjects, peer pressure can impact any aspect of their life (Ben-Arieh, 2010).

Classroom Climate

Ambrose et al. (2010) define classroom climate as the intellectual, social, emotional and physical environment in which learning occurs. Classroom climate is influenced by various factors, including teacher-student interactions, student-teacher interactions, the course's demographics, the course, the social content of the course (such as political and moral issues), and the content of the instruction. The tone of voice (Aydin, 2021). It is important to remember that not all students will have the same experience with climate. According to research, the atmosphere of a classroom can range from a distinctly marginalized classroom (characterized by hostility, hostility, and exclusion) to a distinctly focused classroom (characterized by a marked and calculated effort to include a variety of viewpoints) (Tavares, 2017). Both types of classroom atmospheres were found to fall on a continuum. In between are the implicit centralization and marginalization stages, involving environments with subtle and/or unintentional exclusion and accommodation of different viewpoints, respectively.

Classroom climate is influenced by various factors, including teacher-student interaction, student-teacher interaction, the course's demographics, the course, the social content of the course (such as political and moral issues), and the teacher's tone (Aydin, 2021). It is essential to keep in mind that not all students will have the same experience with the climate. According to research, the climate of a classroom can range anywhere from an explicitly marginalizing classroom, characterized as hostile, hostile, and exclusive, to an explicitly centralizing classroom, characterized by obvious and planned efforts to include a variety of perspectives (Tavares, 2017). Classroom Climate refers to the physical, emotional, and social components of the classroom as well as the social and emotional climate. It's the notion that educators have an impact on how students develop and behave. For students to establish social bonds with their peers and instructor, their safety and well-being come first. Teachers must be more mindful of how to categorize kids and how that grouping might create a positive environment as education becomes more inclusive. The effectiveness of the classroom depends on having well-organized classrooms since they encourage greater discussion (Barana et al., 2019). A teacher must keep track of and manage pupils' influence on one another to have an impact on their behavior. A teacher must fight against inappropriate behavior. Teachers must evaluate how the classroom is set up and observe students (Lakey, 2020). As a result of the rising use of technology, instructors may eventually be replaced, which would completely eliminate the social component of a classroom environment since students would instead be learning from robots or machines and wouldn't have the crucial teacher-student relationship."

Parents involvement

Working together with the school to enhance children's educational experience and academic performance is discussed as "parent involvement." Many studies have demonstrated that parental involvement in education is vital to a child's academic success. Guardians can become involved with schoolwork in numerous ways (Wong et al., 2018). Thoughts after school, support with homework, contribution to extracurricular activities, severe care academic progress, introducing parental ethics, joining parent meetings, participating in school activities, and offering in the classroom are all examples of parental involvement (Muller & Kerbow, 2018). A child's future is worked by his or her parents' education, which is such a driving force for them. It is approved that children of cultured parents are more confident, practical and well-informed than children of parents without education.

The family accepts a significant part in formal and chance training. Several variable stars, including education, income, beliefs, job, and family size, have an impact on children's performance. According to (Coleman, 1991), the truest forecaster of student academic achievement is the parent's socioeconomic status. Additionally, parental education is considered the most durable socioeconomic status needle. According to (Ben-Arieh, 2010), maternal involvement in their children's culture improves a child's morale, attitude, and academic achievement across all subject areas and endorses better behavior and social adjustment. It further says that family connection in teaching helps children to grow up to be imaginative, accountable members of the society.

Social Class

A social class is an alliance of people into a set of graded social sorts, with the upper, middle, and lower classes being the most prevalent (Marsh, 2018). Education, wealth, profession, income, and suggestions in a particular grouping or social network can all pay for one's social class affiliation. Sociologists, political experts, anthropologists, and social historians are all training classes (Rosenberg, 2016). The term has a wide-ranging range of meanings, some of which are contradictory, and there is no general promise on how to outline class. Others oppose that class limitations do not exist because of social obsessiveness. In mutual usage, the rapports "social class" and "socio-economic class" are repeatedly used interchangeably. Socio-economic class is definite as individuals with equal social, economic, cultural, dogmatic, or educational status, such as the period "social class" is used by academics to refer to a person's fairly invariable sociocultural background. In contrast, "socioeconomic

status" denotes a person's recent social and economic condition, which is more impulsive over time. The higher class is the social class made up of people who are well-off, commanding, well-born, or an assortment of those things.

Achievement

The process of achieving something, the success of a goal, or the result of using effort: accomplishment receiving appreciation for a significant scientific achievement in addition to her academic achievements

A great accomplishment is something achieved with great skill or effort. Achieve and achievement frequently refer to accomplishing a significant or difficult task, a lofty objective, or a great feat. Achievement comes with high school graduation. An accomplishment is learning a new language (Wahyudi, 2022). After reviewing the literature following research questions were formulated:

1. What are the social activities of students at the university level?
2. What are the academic achievements of students at the university level?
3. To what extent does the relationship exist between social factors and students' academic achievements at the university level?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative research approach to design the overall study. Within this approach, a descriptive method was utilized to conduct the research. The study population consisted of all undergraduate students at the University of Kotli. A simple random sampling technique was employed to select the sample for the study. A questionnaire was developed as a research instrument to gather data, focusing on the social factors affecting students. Participants responded to the questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale. The instrument's reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha statistical technique, implemented through SPSS software. Data collection involved the researcher personally visiting all departments of the University of Kotli, AJ&K. For data analysis, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was employed. Percentage and mean values were computed to analyze the data, and the findings are presented in tabular form.

RESULTS

Table 1: Analysis of Demographic Variables

	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	85	29.7%
Female	195	68.2%
Session		
2019-2023	81	28.9%
2020-2024	114	40.7%
2021-2025	85	30.4%
Department		
Urdu	46	16.4%
English	34	12.1%
Education	94	33.6%
Islamic Study	21	7.5%
Economic	40	14.3%
Psychology	21	7.5%
Law	24	8.6%
Semester		
2nd	85	30.4%
5th	113	40.4%
7th	80	28.6%

Table 1 presents data on gender, session, department, and semester distributions within a sample population. It reveals that females dominate the sample, accounting for 68.2% of the total, while males comprise 29.7%. In terms of sessions, the highest proportion falls within the 2020-2024 session (40.7%), followed by the 2019-2023 session (28.9%) and the 2021-2025 session (30.4%). Regarding departments, education has the largest representation, with 33.6%, followed by Urdu (16.4%) and economics (14.3%). The most populous semester is the 5th, making up 40.4% of the sample, followed by the 2nd (30.4%) and the 7th (28.6%).

Table 2: Mean analysis of Peer group

Sr. No.	Statement	N	Mean
1.	You spent much time with your peer group	280	4.14
2.	Your peer group always helps each other	280	3.93
3.	Your peer group tries to resolve their academic difficulties	280	3.98
4.	You and your friends are always punctual in classes	280	3.98
5.	It is very difficult for you to concentrate on your studies with your friend	280	3.63
6.	Good grades are important to me	280	4.12

Table 2 shows the mean score of the Peer group. The table further represented that the mean score of You spent much time with your peer group; N=280, M=4.14, Your peer group always helps each other; N=280, M= 3.93; Your peer group tries to resolve their academic difficulties.; N=280, M= 3.98; You and your friends are always punctual in classes; N=280, M=3.98, It is very difficult for you to concentrate on studies with your friend; N=280, M= 3.36 and Good grades are important for me; N=280, M=4.12. Furthermore, results indicated that You spent much time with your peer group, with the highest mean score in the mean peer group analysis.

Table 3: Mean analysis of Parents' involvement

Sr. No.	Statement	N	Mean
1.	Your parents monitor your studies at home	280	4.22
2.	You think that parent's involvement is important for students' success	280	4.23
3.	Your parents encourage you to work hard in studies	280	4.20
4.	Your parents take interest regarding your grades	280	4.11
5.	Your parents discuss with you about your routine	280	4.09

Table 3 shows the mean score of Parents' involvement. The table further represented that the mean score of Your parents monitors your studies at home; N=280, M=4.22, You think that parent's involvement is important for students' success; N=280, M= 4.23; Your parents encourage you to work hard in studies; N=280, M= 4.20; Your parents take interest regarding your grades; N=280, M=4.11 and Your parents discuss with you about your routine; N=280, M= 4.09. Furthermore, results directed that You think that parent's involvement is important for students' success has the highest mean score in the mean analysis of parent's involvement.

Table 4: Mean analysis of Classroom climate

Sr. No.	Statement	N	Mean
1.	Your teachers involve you in classroom activities	280	3.99
2.	You participate in classroom discussion	280	3.65
3.	Your classroom is properly organized with Av aids	280	3.59
4.	The seats in your classroom are comfortable	280	3.65
5.	Your classroom is large and ventilated	280	3.65

Table 4 shows the mean score of Classroom Climate. The table further represented that the mean score of Your teachers involve you in classroom activities; N=280, M=3.99, You participate in classroom discussion; N=280, M= 3,65; Your classroom is properly organized with Av aids; N=280, M= 3.59; The seats in your classroom are comfortable; N=280, M=3.65 and Your classroom is large and ventilated; N=280, M= 3.65. Furthermore, results directed that Your teachers involve you in classroom activities have the highest mean score in the mean analysis of Classroom climate.

Table 5: Mean analysis of Academic performance

Sr. No.	Statement	N	Mean
1.	You think your household affects your academic performance	280	3.76
2.	You think weak relationship with your parents affects your academic performance	280	3.89
3.	Disagreement between parents affects your academic performance	280	3.80
4.	You think that the positive attitude of family members towards education enhances your academic achievement	280	4.06
5.	You have a separate place at your home for studying	280	4.14

Table 5 shows the mean score of Academic performance. The table further represented that You think your household affects your academic performance; N=280, M=3.76, You think a weak relationship with parents affects your academic performance; N=280, M= 3,89; Disagreement between parents affect your academic performance; N=280, M= 3.80; You think that positive attitude of family members towards education enhance your academic achievement; N=280, M=4.06 and You have a separate place at your home for studying; N=280, M= 4.14. Furthermore, results directed that You have a separate place at your home for studying has the highest mean score in the mean analysis of Academic performances.

Table 6: Mean analysis of socioeconomic status

Sr. No.	Statement	N	Mean
1.	You think that the socioeconomic status of the family influences confidence	280	3.77
2.	You think that most undesired social behaviors are related to the different social backgrounds of students	280	3.71
3.	You think poverty has an impact on students' performance	280	4.02
4.	You think low income has an impact on students' performance	280	3.57
5.	You think middle-class students lack in confidence	280	3.37
6.	You think lower class students participate less in classroom	280	3.13
7.	You think the upper classes are more confident in the classroom	280	3.56

Table 6 shows the mean score of socio-economic status. The table further represented that You think that the socio-economic status of family influences confidence; N=280, M=3.77, You think that most of the undesired social behaviors are related to the different social background of students; N=280, M= 3.71; You think poverty has an impact on students' performance; N=280, M= 4.02; You think low income has an impact on students' performance; N=280, M=3.57, You think middle-class students lack in confidence; N=280, M= 3.37, You think lower class students less participate in the classroom; N=280, M= 3.13 and You think upper classes are more confident in the classroom; N=280, M= 3.13. Furthermore, results directed that You think poverty has an impact on students' performance has the highest mean score in the mean analysis of socio-economic status.

Table 7: Pearson correlation of social factors and academic achievement

Variable	Mean	SD	R	Sig
Social Factors	3.7503	.38999	.445**	.000
Academic Achievement	3.43	.951	.445**	.000

Table 7 represents the analysis of means, standard deviations (SD) and correlation coefficient (R) for Social Factors and Academic Achievement variables. The mean for Social Factors is 3.7503, indicating a relatively high average level of social factors. The standard deviation of 0.38999 suggests some variability in the data. The correlation coefficient (R) between Social Factors and Academic Achievement is 0.445**, indicating a strong positive relationship between the two variables. It is further suggested that higher levels of social factors are associated with higher academic achievement.

Table 8: Correlation of the parameters of social factors and academic achievement

	Peer Group	Parental Involvement	Classroom Climate	Home Environment	Social Class of Students	Academic Achievement
Peer Group	1					
Parental Involvement	.357**	1				
Classroom Climate	.263**	.273**	1			
Home Environment	.256**	.218**	.295**	1		
Social Class of Students	.132*	.211**	.267**	.254**	1	
Academic Achievement	.668**	.271**	.291**	.239**	.090	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The table indicates the correlation coefficients between different social factors and academic achievement. The results showed significant positive correlations between academic achievement and several factors. Peer group shows the strongest positive correlation with academic achievement ($r = 0.668^{**}$), followed by parental involvement ($r = 0.271^{**}$), classroom climate ($r = 0.291^{**}$), and home environment ($r = 0.239^{**}$). These results suggested that students with positive interactions and relationships with their peers, involved parents, supportive classroom climates, and conducive home environments achieve higher academically. On the other hand, the relationship between the social class of students and academic achievement appears to be weak and not statistically significant ($r = 0.090$).

DISCUSSION

Student cooperation is an important component of the learning process. According to research, peer interaction can help students succeed academically because they can clarify concepts, share ideas, and help one another learn (Vygotsky & Cole, 1978). It has been discovered that students' problem-solving abilities and general academic achievement are improved in cooperative learning situations (Kena et al., 2014). Students can develop a sense of accountability and motivation among their peer group when they study together. Peer motivation can improve academic performance and create a favorable learning environment (Wentzel, 1998). Studies have found collaborative learning spaces to increase students' intrinsic motivation and engagement (Kena et al., 2014). The involvement of parents is essential to students' academic performance. According to research, students tend to have better academic accomplishment, more motivation, and better social-emotional development when their parents are actively involved in their education (Desforges & Abouchaar, 2003). Routine supervision and parental encouragement can considerably influence students' motivation and study habits. Participating in classroom discussions and activities with students encourages active learning and student involvement. Learning results and student satisfaction have been linked to active learning strategies like student-centered education and participatory teaching techniques (Prince, 2004). Effective classroom conversations foster communication abilities, critical thinking, and a greater comprehension of the material. Students' learning experiences can be improved by having a well-organized classroom with suitable audiovisual resources and supportive seating. Utilizing audiovisual tools can improve understanding and information retention. Examples of these tools include multimedia presentations and instructive movies (Mayer et al., 2001). A suitable environment for learning is created by comfortable sitting and a well-ventilated area, which encourages students' focus and concentration (Barrett et al., 2015). According to

research, a student's socioeconomic background may affect their degree of confidence, academic success, and social behaviors (Sirin, 2005). Low socioeconomic status students may experience additional difficulties, such as restricted access to resources or support networks, which can harm their self-esteem and overall academic performance. The effect of socioeconomic factors on student results can be lessened by recognizing these gaps and putting initiatives to address them into practice, such as offering targeted support and resources.

CONCLUSIONS

It is concluded that students spend most of their time with their fellows and help each other if they feel any difficulty. Furthermore, all students follow discipline according to university rules. It is further concluded that students at the university level study together and complete their regular tasks; they motivate their peers/fellows to learn more and get good marks. Moreover, parents monitor students' studies at home and are fully involved in students' success; parents encourage students to work hard. It is concluded that teachers involve students in classroom activities and discussions. It is also concluded that the classrooms in the university are properly organized with AV Aids, the seats are comfortable, and the classrooms are large and ventilated. Furthermore, the socio-economic status of the family influences the students' confidence and undesired social behaviors are related to the different social background of students. It is further concluded that a strong positive relationship exists between Social Factors and Academic Achievement. The result suggests that social factors play a significant role in influencing academic achievement. Moreover, social factors, such as peer group, parental involvement, classroom climate, and home environment, are significantly associated with academic achievement. These results suggest that students with positive interactions and relationships with their peers, involved parents, supportive classroom climates, and conducive home environments achieve higher academically. However, no significant relationship was found between the social class of student's academic achievement.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that there may be arranged seminars and conferences for university students about how to cooperate with each other and know how to deal with problems. Furthermore, the parents may know about the routine of their children, and they may encourage them to work hard to get good results and care about their grades. It is also recommended that teachers may motivate and guide the students to participate in classroom activities, and they may also encourage the students to take part in class discussions. The result indicated that social factors significantly influence academic achievement; therefore, it is recommended that schools may promote opportunities for positive peer interactions through collaborative projects and group work. They may actively involve parents in their children's education by providing regular communication and workshops. Teachers may create a positive classroom climate through clear expectations, support, and active participation. Schools may also provide resources and guidance to parents to create a supportive home environment for learning.

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