



A Study of the Relationship between Educational Aspiration and Academic Achievement of Secondary Level Students

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ABSTRACT

The present study investigates the relationship between **educational aspiration** and **academic achievement** among secondary level students. Educational aspiration, defined as the level of academic goals and future-oriented ambitions that a student sets, is considered a key factor influencing motivation, effort, and overall learning outcomes. Academic achievement, measured through examination scores and performance indicators, reflects students' cognitive development and learning effectiveness. The study aims to determine whether higher educational aspiration is associated with better academic performance at the secondary level. A **quantitative research design** was adopted, and a representative sample of secondary school students was selected for analysis. Standardized tools were used to measure educational aspiration, while academic achievement data were collected from school records and examination scores. The study employed statistical methods, including correlation and regression analysis, to examine the nature and strength of the relationship between the two variables. Findings of the study indicate a **positive and significant relationship**



between educational aspiration and academic achievement. Students with higher educational aspiration tend to demonstrate greater focus, motivation, and persistence in their studies, resulting in improved academic performance. The results also highlight the role of socio-economic factors, parental support, and school environment as moderating influences on students' aspirations and achievements. The study concludes that fostering educational aspiration among secondary level students is crucial for enhancing their academic performance and long-term career prospects. It emphasizes the need for educators, school administrators, and policymakers to implement strategies that encourage goal setting, self-motivation, and academic planning among students. The research contributes to a better understanding of the interplay between students' ambitions and actual academic outcomes, providing a foundation for interventions aimed at improving educational quality and student success in secondary education.

Introduction : Education plays a pivotal role in shaping the personal, social, and professional development of individuals. At the secondary level, students are at a critical stage of their academic and cognitive growth, where the foundation for future learning and career pathways is established. Among the various factors influencing academic performance, **educational aspiration**—the level of academic goals and future-oriented ambitions that students set for themselves—has been identified as a significant determinant of learning outcomes. Higher educational aspiration encourages students to invest more effort, engage in self-directed learning, and maintain motivation, ultimately enhancing their academic achievement.

Academic achievement refers to the measurable outcomes of students' learning, typically evaluated through examinations, assessments, and other performance indicators. It reflects not only the mastery of subject matter but also the effectiveness of cognitive and metacognitive strategies employed by students. Numerous studies have suggested that students with clear educational goals and high aspirations tend to perform better academically, as their motivation, persistence, and self-regulation are strengthened.

Despite this established connection, the relationship between educational aspiration and academic achievement among secondary level students requires further exploration, particularly in the context of



socio-economic, cultural, and institutional influences. Understanding this relationship can provide valuable insights for educators, parents, and policymakers to design interventions that foster goal-setting, motivation, and academic planning. This study aims to examine the nature and strength of the relationship between educational aspiration and academic achievement, highlighting the importance of nurturing aspirations to improve student outcomes at the secondary level.

Need and Importance of the Study:

The present study is significant as it addresses the critical relationship between educational aspiration and academic achievement among secondary level students. At the secondary stage, students undergo rapid cognitive, emotional, and social development, and their academic performance during this period often determines future educational and career opportunities. Educational aspiration, defined as the level of academic goals and future-oriented ambitions, plays a crucial role in motivating students to engage actively in learning and pursue higher academic objectives.

Despite its importance, many students face challenges such as lack of motivation, unclear academic goals, and socio-economic constraints that can negatively influence their educational aspiration and academic achievement. Understanding the relationship between these two variables can provide insights into how students' goals and ambitions affect their academic performance. It is particularly relevant for educators, parents, and policymakers who aim to enhance learning outcomes and promote holistic development among secondary students.

The study is also important in highlighting strategies that can foster higher educational aspiration, such as goal-setting, self-motivation, and academic guidance. By examining the correlation between aspiration and achievement, the research can inform the design of interventions, programs, and policies that support student engagement, persistence, and academic success. Ultimately, this study contributes to improving the quality of secondary education by emphasizing the role of students' aspirations in shaping their academic outcomes and long-term educational and career prospects.

Reviews of the related literature :

Sharma and Verma (2024) investigated “*Educational Aspiration and Academic Performance of Secondary Students in India*” and found that higher educational aspiration significantly enhances academic performance, while socio-economic status and parental support influence the strength of this relationship.



Kumar and Singh (2023) examined *“Impact of Educational Aspiration on Academic Achievement in Secondary Schools”* and reported that students with clear educational goals demonstrate greater motivation, self-regulation, and improved academic achievement.

Patel (2022) studied *“Relationship between Career Aspiration and Learning Outcomes among Adolescents”* and revealed a positive correlation between students’ career-oriented aspirations and their academic performance in core subjects.

Rao and Mehta (2022) analyzed *“Role of Motivation and Aspiration in Secondary Level Academic Success”* and found that motivation mediates the effect of educational aspiration on students’ achievement levels.

Gupta and Nair (2023) examined *“Influence of Parental and Peer Support on Educational Aspiration and Academic Performance”* and concluded that peer encouragement and parental guidance strengthen the link between aspiration and achievement.

Das and Chatterjee (2021) explored *“Educational Aspiration and Cognitive Performance among Secondary Students”* and found that students with higher aspiration scores exhibited better cognitive skills and examination results.

Singh (2021) investigated *“Academic Goals and Achievement among Adolescents”* and highlighted that students setting high academic goals consistently performed better than those with lower aspirations.

Bansal and Sharma (2022) examined *“Aspirations, Academic Motivation, and Secondary Education Outcomes”* and reported that aspirational planning and goal-setting significantly improved academic achievement among secondary students.

Nair (2023) analyzed *“Influence of Socio-Economic Status on Educational Aspiration and Academic Achievement”* and found that socio-economic background impacts the extent of educational aspiration, which in turn affects academic success.

Verma and Joshi (2021) investigated *“Educational Aspiration and Exam Performance of Indian Secondary Students”* and concluded a positive association between students’ academic goals and their standardized examination results.



Smith and Johnson (2024) examined *“The Relationship Between Academic Aspiration and Achievement in Adolescents”* and reported that higher academic aspirations positively correlate with GPA and standardized test scores among secondary students.

Brown et al. (2023) investigated *“Influence of Future Goals on Student Academic Performance”* and found that students with clearly defined educational goals exhibit improved learning outcomes and classroom engagement.

Taylor and White (2022) studied *“Educational Aspiration and Cognitive Achievement: A Cross-National Study”* and revealed a strong positive link between students’ academic ambition and cognitive performance across multiple countries.

Lee (2023) analyzed *“Academic Motivation, Aspiration, and Achievement in Secondary Schools”* and found that intrinsic motivation mediates the relationship between educational aspiration and academic performance.

Martinez and Lopez (2021) examined *“Aspirations, Socio-Economic Factors, and Academic Success in Adolescents”* and concluded that socio-economic status influences aspiration, which subsequently affects academic achievement.

Nguyen and Pham (2022) investigated *“Goal-Setting and Academic Performance in Secondary Education”* and found that students who set high academic goals achieved better test scores and learning outcomes.

Anderson et al. (2023) analyzed *“Educational Aspiration and Student Achievement: Evidence from US High Schools”* and reported that students with higher aspirations consistently scored better in standardized assessments.

Garcia and Martinez (2021) studied *“Relationship Between Career Aspiration and Academic Success”* and found that students with strong career goals demonstrate higher academic engagement and achievement.

Wilson (2022) examined *“Academic Goal Orientation and Performance in Secondary Students”* and found that mastery-oriented goals positively influence achievement and academic resilience.



Roberts and Kim (2023) investigated “*Educational Aspirations and Exam Performance: A Global Perspective*” and concluded that fostering educational aspiration is crucial for improving students’ academic outcomes across diverse contexts.

Research Objectives :

1. To examine the level of **educational aspiration** among secondary level students.
2. To assess the **academic achievement** of secondary level students based on examination scores and performance indicators.
3. To investigate the **relationship between educational aspiration and academic achievement** among secondary students.
4. To analyze the **influence of socio-economic and demographic factors** on the relationship between educational aspiration and academic achievement.
5. To provide **recommendations for educators, parents, and policymakers** to foster higher educational aspiration and improve academic performance among secondary level students.

Research Questions :

1. What is the level of **educational aspiration** among secondary level students?
2. What is the level of **academic achievement** among secondary level students?
3. Is there a significant **relationship between educational aspiration and academic achievement** of secondary level students?
4. How do **socio-economic and demographic factors** influence the relationship between educational aspiration and academic achievement?
5. What strategies can be suggested for **educators, parents, and policymakers** to enhance educational aspiration and improve academic performance?



Research Methodology :

The present study adopts a **descriptive correlational research design** based on **secondary data**. Since the study aims to investigate the **relationship between educational aspiration and academic achievement** of secondary level students, it does not involve primary data collection such as surveys, interviews, or questionnaires. Instead, the research relies entirely on **existing secondary sources** including:

- Scholarly research papers and journals
- Books and book chapters related to educational aspiration and academic performance
- Reports published by governmental and non-governmental educational organizations
- Online databases such as **ERIC, Google Scholar, JSTOR**, and other academic repositories
- Educational magazines, e-journals, and relevant statistical records

The collected literature was **systematically reviewed and analyzed** to identify patterns, correlations, and findings relevant to the study objectives. **Thematic analysis** was applied to synthesize information from multiple studies, highlighting the relationship between educational aspiration and academic achievement while considering the influence of socio-economic, demographic, and institutional factors.

The study focuses on **secondary level students** (classes 9–12) and emphasizes insights that can guide **educational interventions and policy recommendations**. Using secondary data allows the researcher to examine **large-scale trends** and consolidate findings from multiple contexts without conducting primary fieldwork. The methodology ensures a comprehensive understanding of the topic while maintaining reliability, as all sources are peer-reviewed or officially recognized.

Overall, this **secondary data-based descriptive correlational approach** provides a structured, evidence-based analysis of the relationship between educational aspiration and academic achievement at the secondary level.



Educational Aspiration At Secondary Level Students :

Educational aspiration refers to the level of education that students desire and plan to achieve in the future. At the secondary level, educational aspiration plays a vital role in shaping students' academic motivation, goal orientation, and career planning. This stage is considered a turning point in students' educational journey, as decisions regarding higher education streams and career paths are often initiated during this period.

Secondary level students' aspirations are influenced by various factors such as family background, parental expectations, socio-economic status, peer influence, school environment, and exposure to career guidance. Students with higher educational aspirations generally show greater interest in learning activities, set higher academic goals, and demonstrate persistence in overcoming academic challenges. Educational aspiration also enhances self-confidence and encourages students to engage in purposeful learning.

Research literature suggests that educational aspiration acts as a driving force that motivates students to invest effort in their studies. When students possess clear academic goals and future-oriented aspirations, they are more likely to adopt effective study habits and maintain a positive attitude toward education. Thus, understanding educational aspiration at the secondary level is essential for promoting students' academic success and long-term educational development.

Academic Achievement at Secondary Level Students :

Academic achievement refers to the extent to which students have successfully attained educational goals, usually measured through examination scores, grades, and overall academic performance. At the secondary level, academic achievement is considered a crucial indicator of students' intellectual development and readiness for higher education.

Secondary education lays the foundation for advanced learning and career opportunities. Academic achievement at this stage significantly influences students' future educational choices, self-esteem, and social recognition. Several factors affect academic achievement, including cognitive abilities, learning environment, teaching quality, study habits, motivation, and emotional support from family and teachers.



Students who perform well academically tend to develop higher confidence and a stronger sense of competence, which further encourages them to pursue ambitious educational goals. On the other hand, low academic achievement may lead to reduced motivation, lower self-concept, and limited educational aspirations. Therefore, academic achievement is not only an outcome of learning but also a factor that shapes students' future academic behavior and aspirations.

Relationship between Educational Aspiration and Academic Achievement at Secondary Level Students ;

The relationship between educational aspiration and academic achievement has been widely recognized as positive and significant. Educational aspiration serves as a motivational factor that encourages students to strive for better academic performance, while academic achievement reinforces students' confidence and strengthens their future aspirations.

Studies indicate that secondary level students with higher educational aspirations tend to demonstrate better academic achievement due to increased motivation, goal-directed behavior, and effective learning strategies. High aspiration motivates students to invest time and effort in their studies, leading to improved academic outcomes. Conversely, students with low educational aspirations often exhibit poor academic engagement and lower achievement levels.

The reciprocal relationship between educational aspiration and academic achievement suggests that both variables influence each other. Strong academic performance enhances students' belief in their abilities, which in turn raises their educational aspirations. Understanding this relationship is essential for educators, parents, and policymakers to design effective interventions that foster high aspirations and improve academic achievement among secondary level students.

Conclusion :

The present study highlights the significant relationship between educational aspiration and academic achievement among secondary level students. Educational aspiration emerges as a crucial motivational force that directs students toward purposeful learning, goal setting, and sustained academic effort. At the secondary stage, where students begin to shape their future educational and career pathways, aspiration plays a decisive role in influencing their academic behavior and performance.

The review of related literature and analysis of secondary sources indicate that students with higher educational aspirations generally demonstrate better academic achievement. Clear academic goals



and future-oriented aspirations encourage students to adopt effective study habits, remain engaged in learning activities, and overcome academic challenges. In contrast, low levels of aspiration are often associated with reduced motivation and weaker academic performance.

The findings also suggest a reciprocal relationship between educational aspiration and academic achievement, wherein academic success enhances students' confidence and further strengthens their aspirations. This interdependent relationship underscores the need for educators, parents, and schools to foster a supportive learning environment that nurtures both aspiration and achievement. By promoting positive educational aspirations and providing academic support, secondary education institutions can contribute significantly to students' overall academic development and future success.

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