



Influence Of Interest In Social Studies On Academic Achievement Among Secondary School Students In Hassan District

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Abstract: Students' academic success is shaped by a range of psychological and environmental factors, one of which is their interest in specific subjects. Social Studies, in particular, play a significant role in influencing students' motivation, engagement and overall academic performance. This study investigates how students' interest in social studies effects their overall academic achievement among secondary school students in Arsikere, Hassan District. The current study looks at the impact of social studies interest on academic achievement among secondary school students in Hassan District, Karnataka. A stratified random sample of 90 Class IX students was drawn from a variety of schools to ensure that both boys and girls were represented. Self-developed the Interest Scale in Social Studies to examine the students' interest in social studies and academic achievement scores were obtained from school office records. The data was analyzed using Karl Pearson's correlation and the independent samples 't'-test. The study found a substantial positive relationship between social studies interest and academic achievement. Furthermore, students from government schools outperformed those from private aided and unaided schools, demonstrating that both social studies interest and school type are important factors in students' academic achievement. These findings highlight the need of increasing student engagement in social studies and improving the academic environment across all school types.

Index Terms - Social Studies, Interest, Academic Achievement, Secondary School Students, Influence

1. INTRODUCTION

Education in India, as well as across the world, is undergoing significant transformations due to rapid technological advancements, expansion of knowledge and growing socio-economic challenges. The educational setting is being reshaped through increasing digitization, integration of modern pedagogical tools and a heightened focus on skill development (NCERT, 2020). In this dynamic environment, there is a pressing need to reform educational systems in a manner that encourages critical thinking, civic awareness and informed decision-making- core objectives outlined in the National Education Policy, 2020.

Academic achievement continues to be a key indicator of a student's educational development and future prospects. In the Indian context, it holds critical importance for both personal growth and national development, helping to cultivate a competent citizenry capable of addressing the social, political and economic issues of the present and future (Sampath, 2018). Among various school subjects, Social Studies plays a crucial role in shaping socially responsible individuals by imparting knowledge related to history, geography, political science, economics and societal values. It fosters awareness of one's rights and duties, cultural heritage and contemporary global issues, all of which are essential for nurturing informed and engaged citizens (Kaur, 2019).

Interest in social studies is considered a key motivational factor that enhances student engagement and academic performance. According to Hidi and Renninger (2006), interest significantly influences learning by increasing attention and sustained effort. Salma's (2017) research in the Indian context has shown that students with a higher level of interest in social subjects tend to perform better academically. This highlights the importance of teaching practices and learning environments that stimulate curiosity and long-term interest in social studies. Therefore, understanding the influence of interest in social studies on academic achievement is particularly relevant for educational stakeholders, especially in regions like Hassan district, where diverse educational contexts provide meaningful opportunities to examine these relationships.

Secondary school students often perceive social studies as a theoretical or non-essential subject, leading to reduced interest and suboptimal academic performance (Johnston, 1991). This issue is further exacerbated by conventional teaching methods that may lack innovation, relevance and active student participation. When classroom activities are monotonous and disconnected from students' real-life experiences, it can result in disengagement and poor academic outcomes (Green-Demers, Pelletier, & Menard, 2006). However, a strong foundation in social studies is essential in the 21st century, as it equips learners with critical thinking, decision-making and civic literacy skills necessary for understanding and addressing contemporary issues in society (Kaysar & Pasquale, 2008).

In the Indian context, social studies education plays a vital role in shaping responsible citizens by promoting awareness about the Constitution, democratic values, economic development, environmental sustainability and social justice (NCERT, 2020). Despite its importance, many students tend to view social studies as a subject centered on memorization of facts, often failing to see its relevance to their lives. This perception decreases motivation and interest in learning (Salma, 2017). Teachers also face challenges in maintaining student engagement when instructional strategies do not connect the subject matter with practical and societal applications (Bilhler & Snowman, 2003). As a result, students may exhibit low enthusiasm, limited understanding and even behavioral issues during social studies classes. Therefore, it is essential to examine whether current teaching and assessment practices effectively stimulate student interest and support higher-order thinking in social studies. The present study seeks to explore the relationship between students' interest in social studies and their academic achievement. The findings can provide valuable knowledge for developing more interactive, relevant and student-centered pedagogies that enhance learning outcomes, especially among secondary school students in districts like Hassan, where diverse socio-educational settings offer a meaningful context for such investigation.

3. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

Understanding the relationship between students' interest in social studies and their academic achievement is crucial in improving educational outcomes. Social studies, as a subject, play a significant role in shaping students' awareness of society, history and civic responsibility. However, students often perceive it as boring or difficult, leading to low engagement and poor performance. Various national and international studies have shown that students' interest is a key factor influencing learning and academic achievement. This review explores the relevant research that examines how interest in social studies affects academic achievement, especially among secondary school students.

Studies related to Achievement in Social Studies and Interest

Hanley et al. (2002) conducted an action research study to investigate how a Multiple Intelligence (MI) approach could enhance both student interest and academic performance in social studies among fifth graders in a Midwest U.S. school. Their findings revealed that traditional curriculum often fails to align with students' diverse intelligences and many teachers are either untrained or reluctant to adapt to MI-based

instruction. As a result of implementing MI strategies from September to December 2001, the researchers reported an 11% increase in student interest and a notable improvement in achievement levels in the experimental group compared to the control group. This study highlights how differentiated instruction catering to multiple intelligences can lead to better educational outcomes (Hanley, Hermiz, Lagioia-Peddy, & Levine-Albuck, 2002). Similarly, Sathiya Priya and Premalatha (2023) explored learning difficulties in social studies among high school students in Tamil Nadu, India. Their normative survey study revealed that variables such as gender, locality and medium of instruction significantly influenced the learning difficulties experienced by students. Interestingly, factors like type of family and school type did not show any significant impact. This suggests that while demographic and instructional language contexts matter, institutional type may be less relevant in determining academic challenges in this subject (Sathiya Priya & Premalatha, 2023). Gunawan (2019), examining the context of Social Sciences education in Indonesia during the 4.0 industrial era, found that student learning in junior high schools was often hindered by excessive curriculum content and a shortage of specialized teachers. The study, using survey methods among postgraduate students, concluded that there was a clear awareness among learners about the challenges in the social sciences and they were able to identify innovative solutions to address them. The study emphasized the need for comprehensive teacher skills and curriculum reform to meet the demands of modern education (Gunawan, 2019). Kaur and Sharma (2021) investigated the relationship between achievement in social science and variables like school environment and parental involvement among secondary school students in Punjab, India. The study, involving 607 students, demonstrated that both the school environment and the degree of parental involvement significantly influenced students' performance. Moreover, gender differences were also evident, with varying achievement outcomes among boys and girls. The authors concluded that a nurturing environment both at school and home is crucial for academic success in social studies (Kaur & Sharma, 2021). In another context, a study conducted by Essien, Akpan and Obot (2015) in Nigeria examined the link between student interest in social studies and their academic performance at the tertiary level. Using an ex-post facto research design, they found a significant positive correlation between students' interest and their achievement in the subject. This suggests that fostering interest in social studies is critical for enhancing academic outcomes and supports the broader pedagogical principle that engagement is closely tied to performance (Essien, Akpan, & Obot, 2015).

Overview of Related Literature:

Several studies have highlighted that a positive interest in social studies enhances student motivation, participation and understanding, thereby improving academic achievement. For instance, Hanley et al. (2002) demonstrated that using a multiple intelligence approach can increase both interest and achievement in social studies. Studies in India, such as by Sathiya Priya & Premalatha (2023), identified gender and medium of instruction as influencing factors in learning difficulties in social studies. Similarly, research by Kulwinder Kaur & Latika Sharma (2021) emphasized the role of school environment and parental involvement in shaping students' performance in social science. Studies from Nigeria and Indonesia have also revealed that interest plays a major role in how students engage with the subject and perform academically.

Research Gap:

Although numerous studies have explored the link between interest and academic achievement in social studies across different regions, limited research is available focusing on this relationship among secondary school students in Hassan District. The existing literature does not sufficiently address the local socio-cultural and educational contexts that may influence students' interest levels and academic outcomes. Hence, this study aims to fill the gap by investigating how students' interest in social studies affects their academic achievement specifically in the secondary schools of Hassan District.

4. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The research problem identified for the current investigation is: **“INFLUENCE OF INTEREST IN SOCIAL STUDIES ON ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN HASSAN DISTRICT.”**

5. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the research are as follows:

1. To investigate the relationship between Academic Achievement and Interest in Social Studies of secondary school students.
2. To examine the differences in the Academic Achievement of high school students having different levels of interest in social studies learning.
3. To assess the differences in the Academic Achievement of secondary school students with respect to type of school management.

6. RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

Following are the research hypotheses for the present research:

1. There is no significant relationship between Academic Achievement and Interest in Social Studies of secondary school students.
2. There is no significant difference in the Academic Achievement of secondary school students having less and average levels of interest in social studies.
3. There is no significant difference in the Academic Achievement of secondary school students having average and more levels of interest in social studies.
4. There is no significant difference in the Academic Achievement of secondary school students having less and more levels of interest in social studies.
5. There is no significant difference in the Academic Achievement of secondary school students studying in government and private aided schools.
6. There is no significant difference in the Academic Achievement of secondary school students studying in private aided and private unaided schools.
7. There is no significant difference in the Academic Achievement of secondary school students studying in government and private unaided schools.

7. METHOD USED

Population: The population is consists of secondary school students studying in schools situated at Arsikere, Hassan District, Karnataka, India.

Sample Size: A sample of 90 students in class ninth standard students studying in varied type of schools would be drawn using stratified random sampling technique. Data representation would be given to boys and girls. The sample of 90 class ninth standard students was administered with the research questionnaire and academic achievement from office records for obtaining data for the present study.

Tools of the Study: Interest in Social Studies Inventory developed and standardized by the researcher was used to measure the interest in social studies and academic achievement scores were collected from the Office Records from the respective schools along with Personal Proforma.

Statistical Techniques:

To test the hypotheses, the following statistical techniques were employed:

- Karl Pearson's Product Moment Coefficient of Correlation to examine the relationship between interest in social studies and academic achievement.
- Independent Samples 't'-test to analyze the differences in academic achievement among students with varying levels of interest in social studies.

In all cases, the level of significance was fixed at 0.05 and 0.01. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS and MS Office Applications.

8. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Table-1: Shows mean, standard deviation, 'r' value and level of significance on scores Academic Achievement and interest in social studies of secondary school students.

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	Obtained 'r' value	Level. of Sig.
Academic Achievement	65.688	20.668	0.235	*
Interest in Social Studies	23.755	5.026		

*Significant at 0.05 level (0.205)

The above table-1 shows that correlation between secondary school students' academic achievement and interest in social studies scores are given. The obtained 'r' value of 0.235 are greater than table value 0.205 at 0.05 level which shows significant positive relationship between Academic Achievement and interest in Social Studies. Hence, the stated null hypothesis is **rejected** and alternative hypothesis has been formulated that "there is a significant positive relationship between Academic Achievement and Interest in Social Studies of secondary school students." It concludes that the students who have more social studies interest had better academic achievement and vice versa.

Table-2: Independent 't' test results related to Academic Achievement scores of secondary school students with regard to interest levels in social studies.

Interest in Social Studies	Sample	Mean	Std. Deviation	't' Value	Sig. level
Less	6	55.666	23.938	0.83	NS
Average	68	64.029	20.176		
Average	68	64.029	20.176	2.37	*
More	16	76.500	18.658		
Less	6	55.666	23.938	1.92	NS
More	16	76.500	18.658		

^{NS}Not Significant level ['t' Table Value for N=90; df=88 is 1.99 (*)].

The above Table 2 shows that variable, sample, mean, standard deviation, 't' value and significance level related to Academic Achievement scores of secondary school students due to variations in interest in social studies.

The independent 't' value for Academic Achievement of secondary school students having average and more interest in social studies is found to be 2.37 which is significant at 0.05 level of significance. This means 'there is a significant difference in the Academic Achievement between secondary school students having average and more interest in social studies.' However, the mean scores of secondary school students having more interest in social studies (M=76.500) are found to be higher than the mean scores of students having average interest in social studies (M= 64.029). It was concluded that students having more interest in social studies had higher achievement in academics than students having average interest in social studies.

Also the independent 't' value for Academic Achievement of secondary school students having less and average & less and more interest in social studies are found to be 0.83 and 1.92 respectively which was not significant even at 0.05 level of significance. This means 'there is no significant differences in the Academic Achievement between secondary school students having less and average & less and more interest in social studies.' The same has been graphically presented in fig.1.

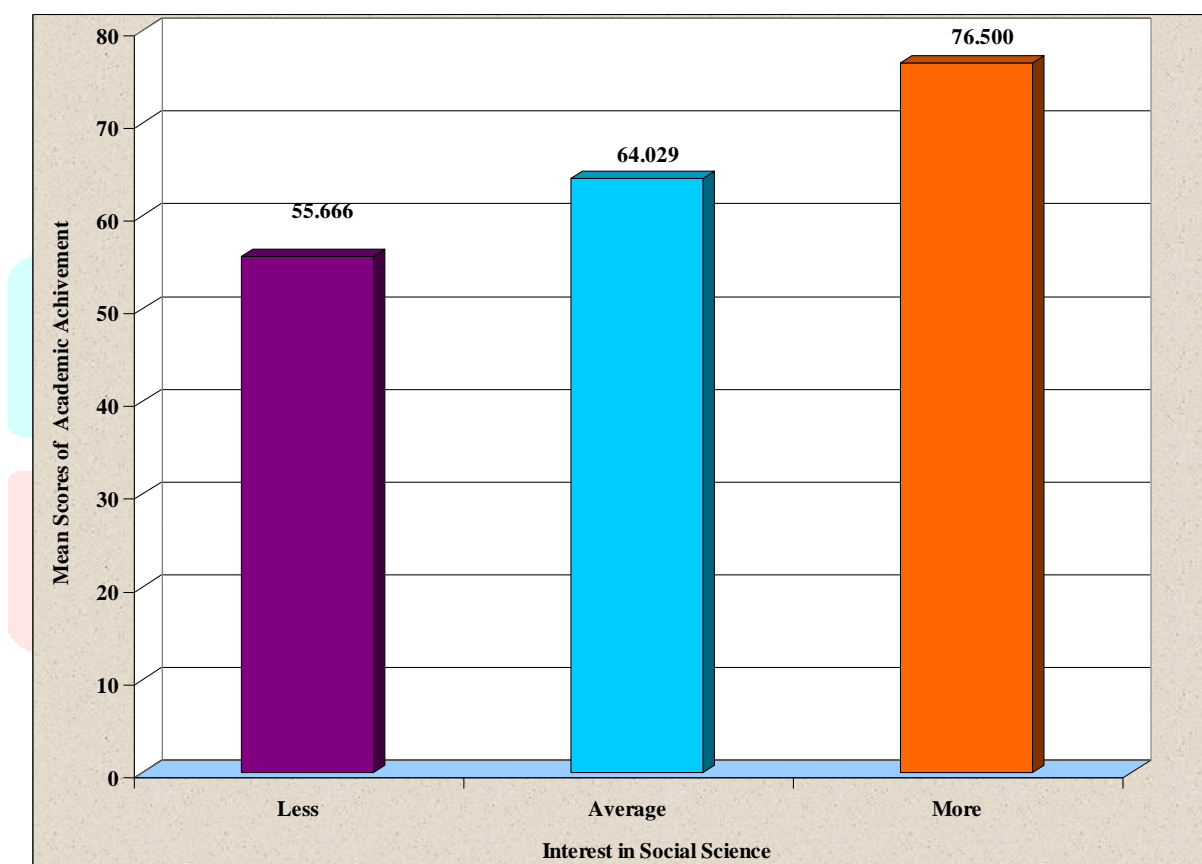


Fig 1: Comparison of mean academic achievement scores between secondary school students having less, average and more interest in social studies levels.

Table-3: Independent 't' test results related to Academic Achievement scores of secondary school students with regard to type of school management.

Type of School Management	Sample	Mean	Std. Deviation	' t ' Value	Sig. level
Government	30	77.666	16.595	2.59	*
Private Aided	30	65.733	18.953		
Private Aided	30	65.733	18.953	2.43	*
Private Unaided	30	53.666	19.455		
Government	30	77.666	16.595	5.14	**
Private Unaided	30	53.666	19.455		

[‘t’ Table Value for N=60; df=58 is 2.00(*)-Significant at 0.05 level; 2.66(**)-Significant at 0.01 level].

The above table 3 shows that variable, sample, mean, standard deviation, ‘t’ value and significance level related to Academic Achievement scores of secondary school students due to variations in type of school management.

- The independent ‘t’ value for Academic Achievement of secondary school students studying in government and private aided schools is found to be 2.59 which is significant at 0.05 level of significance. This means ‘there is a significant difference in the Academic Achievement between secondary school students studying in government and private aided schools.’ However, the mean scores of secondary school students studying in government schools (M=77.666) are found to be higher than the mean scores of private aided school students (M=65.733). It was concluded that students studying in government schools had higher achievement in academics than private aided school students.
- The independent ‘t’ value for Academic Achievement of secondary school students studying in private aided and private unaided schools is found to be 2.43 which is significant at 0.05 level of significance. This means ‘there is a significant difference in the Academic Achievement between secondary school students studying in private aided and private unaided schools.’ However, the mean scores of secondary school students studying in private aided schools (M=65.733) are found to be higher than the mean scores of private unaided school students (M=53.666). It was concluded that students studying in private aided schools had higher achievement in academics than private unaided school students.
- The independent ‘t’ value for Academic Achievement of secondary school students studying in government and private unaided schools is found to be 5.14 which is significant at 0.01 level of significance. This means ‘there is a significant difference in the Academic Achievement between secondary school students studying in government and private unaided schools.’ However, the mean scores of secondary school students studying in government schools (M=77.666) are found to be higher than the mean scores of private unaided school students (M=53.666). It was concluded that students studying in government schools had higher achievement in academics than private unaided school students. The same has been graphically presented in Fig.2.

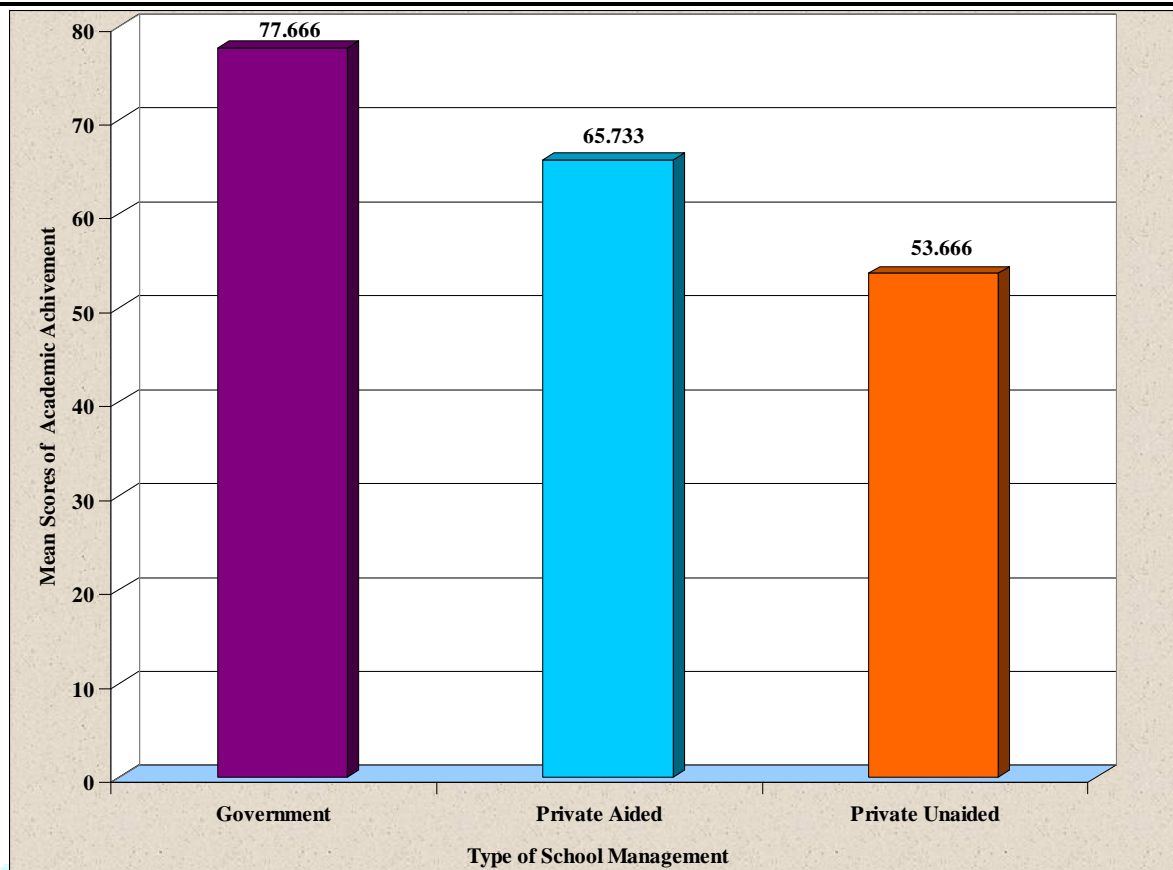


Fig 2: Comparison of mean academic achievement scores between secondary school students studying in government, private aided and private unaided schools.

9. RESULTS

1. There was a significant and positive relationship between Academic Achievement and Interest in Social Studies of secondary school students ($r' = 0.235$ at 0.05 level).
2. There was no significant difference in the Academic Achievement between secondary school students having less and average interest in social studies.
3. There was a significant difference in the Academic Achievement between secondary school students having average and more interest in social studies ($t' = 237$ at 0.05 level). Students having more interest in social studies had higher achievement in academics than students having average interest in social studies.
4. There was no significant difference in the Academic Achievement between secondary school students having less and more interest in social studies.
5. There was a significant difference in the Academic Achievement between secondary school students studying in government and private aided schools ($t' = 2.59$ at 0.05 level). Students studying in government schools had higher achievement in academics than private aided school students.
6. There was a significant difference in the Academic Achievement between secondary school students studying in private aided and private unaided schools ($t' = 2.43$ at 0.05 level). Students studying in private aided schools had higher achievement in academics than private unaided school students.
7. There was a significant difference in the Academic Achievement between secondary school students studying in government and private unaided schools ($t' = 5.14$ at 0.01 level). Students studying in government schools had higher achievement in academics than private unaided school students.

10. CONCLUSION

The study reveals that there was a significant relationship between students' interest in social studies and their academic achievement. Students who show more interest in social studies tend to perform better in their studies. The type of school plays an important role in academic performance. Government school students outperformed both private aided and private unaided school students and private aided students did better than those in private unaided schools. These results suggest that school environment and student interest in social studies are both important factors influencing educational success.

11. EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

- Teachers and schools should develop engaging social studies teaching methods and activities to increase students' interest in the subject. Interest in social studies has a direct impact on academic performance, so making social studies enjoyable and relevant can boost overall learning.
- Since students with average or low interest in social studies did not show significantly different academic performance, more focus should be placed on motivating these students and remedial classes, social studies clubs, interactive activities and experiential learning (like field trips and role plays) can help increase their interest.
- The finding that government school students performed better than those in private schools suggests a need to evaluate the teaching practices and learning environments in private institutions, especially unaided ones. Quality control measures and teacher training can help bridge this gap.
- Educational policies should consider student interest levels and school types while designing interventions and importance should be placed on improving social studies education and ensuring all schools, regardless of management type, provide a supportive academic environment.
- More studies are needed to understand why government school students are performing better and how interest in social studies develops among students from different backgrounds and these findings helps modify future educational programmes more effectively.

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