

Correlates of Family Environment and Peer Support among Secondary Students

Nida Tariq Hafeez¹, Dr. (Mrs.) S. S. Masih²

¹Researcher, Department of Teacher Education, Allahabad School of Education, SHUATS, Prayagraj

²Supervisor, Head & Associate Dean, Department of Teacher Education, Allahabad School of Education,, SHUATS, Prayagraj

Abstract:

The present study investigates the correlates of Family Environment and Peer Support among Secondary School Students. Adolescence is a sensitive developmental stage in which family relationships and peer interaction significantly influence emotional adjustment, social behaviour, and educational experiences. The study was conducted through the Descriptive Survey Method on a sample of 200 secondary school students selected from government and private schools. Standardized tools were used to measure Family Environment and Peer Support. Statistical analysis through Product Moment Correlation revealed a significant positive relationship between Family Environment and Peer Support among total students, government students, private students, boys, and girls. The findings indicate that supportive family conditions positively contribute to healthy peer relationships and psychosocial adjustment among adolescents. The study emphasizes the importance of emotionally supportive family and school environments for promoting social confidence, interpersonal understanding, and balanced personality development among secondary school students.

Keywords: Family Environment, Peer Support, Secondary Students

Introduction

The developmental experiences of secondary school students are strongly influenced by family environment and peer support. Adolescence is a transitional stage marked by emotional, social, and psychological changes in which students seek identity, acceptance, and independence. In this context, the family acts as the first social institution that shapes behaviour, emotional stability, values, and academic attitudes. A positive family environment characterized by affection, communication, cooperation, and parental support helps adolescents develop confidence, emotional balance, and healthy interpersonal skills. On the other hand, family conflict, neglect, and lack of emotional support may create stress and maladjustment among students. Researchers such as Diana Baumrind and Urie Bronfenbrenner emphasized that supportive family relationships positively influence adolescent adjustment and personality development. Therefore, family environment plays an important role in shaping students' emotional and social experiences during secondary education.

Peer support is equally important during adolescence because students increasingly depend on friendships and peer groups for emotional security, communication, and social acceptance. Positive peer relationships contribute to confidence, cooperation, academic motivation, and psychological well-being, whereas negative peer influence may lead to stress, behavioural problems, and academic disengagement.

Studies by Lev Vygotsky and Albert Bandura highlighted the importance of social interaction and observational learning in adolescent development. Adolescents who experience emotional support at home often establish healthier peer relationships and demonstrate stronger social competence. In contemporary educational settings, however, peer pressure, cyberbullying, and social comparison have become major concerns affecting students' emotional adjustment. Therefore, understanding the relationship between family environment and peer support is educationally significant because both factors collectively influence adolescents' behaviour, emotional maturity, and educational experiences during secondary schooling.

The study of correlates of family environment and peer support among secondary students is important because changing social conditions, academic pressure, and digital lifestyles are increasingly affecting adolescents' emotional and interpersonal development. Previous studies have separately examined family climate and peer relationships, but limited attention has been given to their combined influence on adolescent adjustment in school settings. Positive family relationships often strengthen social confidence and help students establish supportive friendships, while unhealthy family conditions may negatively affect peer interaction and emotional well-being. Understanding this relationship may help teachers, counselors, parents, and policymakers create supportive educational environments that promote healthy social behaviour and psychological adjustment among adolescents. The study is also significant for strengthening guidance services, family-school cooperation, and socio-emotional learning programs in secondary education. Therefore, examining family environment and peer support together can contribute meaningfully to balanced personality development, emotional stability, and educational well-being among secondary school students.

Devi and Singh (2024) examined the role of family support in adolescents' mental health. The study revealed that supportive family relationships improve emotional stability, self-confidence, and social adjustment among adolescents, thereby contributing positively to their psychological well-being and educational development. Qiu (2023) studied family communication and adolescent social challenges. The findings indicated that emotionally secure family environments help adolescents manage peer pressure effectively and develop positive coping strategies, emotional balance, and healthy interpersonal behaviour during secondary education. Lyu (2025) investigated family environment and adolescent mental health. The study found that parental warmth, communication, and emotional support significantly strengthen adolescents' emotional adjustment, confidence, and behavioural stability, while negative family conditions increase psychological stress and emotional insecurity among students. Widyasih (2025) conducted a review on family-based prevention strategies in adolescent development. The study emphasized that healthy family environments enhance resilience, emotional security, and behavioural adjustment, whereas weak parental support negatively affects adolescents' psychological and educational well-being.

Dave (2024) examined peer support among adolescents and reported that positive peer relationships reduce emotional stress and social isolation. Supportive friendships were found to improve confidence, communication skills, emotional well-being, and adjustment among secondary school students. Liu (2025) studied peer influence on adolescent psychological adjustment. The findings revealed that supportive peer interaction positively strengthens emotional flexibility, stress management, and interpersonal competence, thereby improving adolescents' confidence and psychological well-being in school environments. Li (2025) explored the relationship between family closeness and peer support among adolescents. The study found that students experiencing positive family relationships received

stronger peer support and demonstrated healthier social interaction and emotional adjustment during adolescence. Carapeto (2025) investigated the dual role of peer relationships in adolescent mental health. The study concluded that supportive peer networks promote emotional security and adjustment, whereas negative peer influence increases stress, behavioural problems, and emotional difficulties among adolescents.

The present study holds considerable educational and psychological significance because adolescence is a sensitive stage during which family relationships and peer interactions strongly influence students' emotional stability, social adjustment, behavioural development, and academic experiences. A supportive family environment helps adolescents develop confidence, emotional security, and positive interpersonal behaviour, while healthy peer support strengthens communication skills, cooperation, motivation, and psychological well-being. In contemporary society, increasing academic pressure, digital exposure, social comparison, and changing family structures have created several emotional and social challenges for secondary school students. Therefore, understanding the relationship between family environment and peer support is essential for promoting balanced adolescent development. The study may provide valuable insights for teachers, parents, counselors, and educational planners in developing supportive educational and social environments. It can also contribute to strengthening guidance services, emotional support systems, and school-based intervention programs aimed at improving students' mental health, social competence, emotional adjustment, and overall educational well-being during adolescence.

Objectives

1. To study the relationship between Family Environment and Peer Support among Secondary School Students.
2. To study the relationship between Family Environment and Peer Support among Government Secondary School Students.
3. To study the relationship between Family Environment and Peer Support among Private Secondary School Students.
4. To study the relationship between Family Environment and Peer Support among Secondary School Boys Students.
5. To study the relationship between Family Environment and Peer Support among Secondary School Girls Students.

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between Family Environment and Peer Support among Secondary School Students.
2. There is no significant relationship between Family Environment and Peer Support among Government Secondary School Students.
3. There is no significant relationship between Family Environment and Peer Support among Private Secondary School Students.
4. There is no significant relationship between Family Environment and Peer Support among Secondary School Boys Students.
5. There is no significant relationship between Family Environment and Peer Support among Secondary School Girls Students.

Methodology

In the present study, Correlational Survey Method of Descriptive Research was used to investigate the correlates of Family Environment and Peer Support among Secondary School Students. The population of the study consisted of secondary school students studying in different government and private schools of Prayagraj District. For the selection of sample, Simple Random Sampling Technique was employed. A sample of 100 secondary school students was selected from various secondary schools of Prayagraj district. To measure Family Environment, Peer Support among secondary students, standardized tools were used. Family Environment Scale constructed and developed by Aisha Khatoon and Gunjan Dubey, Peer Support Scale developed by the investigator were administered for data collection. The collected data were analyzed statistically through Product Moment Correlation Method in order to determine the relationship among the selected variables.

Analysis of Data

Hypothesis No. 1 There is no significant relationship between Family Environment and Peer Support among Secondary School Students.

Table No. 1 The correlation is established between Family Environment and Peer Support among Secondary School Students

No. of Students	Degree of freedom	Value of .05 level	Value at .01 level	r	Significance level
200	198	0.138	0.116	0.68	Significant

According to Table No. 1, it is clear that the obtained value of correlation coefficient 0.68 is greater than the table values at both .05 and .01 levels of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. It shows that there is a significant positive correlation between Family Environment and Peer Support among Secondary School Students. This indicates that students having supportive and healthy family environments also receive better peer support and demonstrate positive social relationships.

Hypothesis No. 2 There is no significant relationship between Family Environment and Peer Support among Government Secondary School Students.

Table No. 2 The correlation is established between Family Environment and Peer Support among Government Secondary School Students

No. of Government Students	Degree of freedom	Value of .05 level	Value at .01 level	r	Significance level
100	98	0.195	0.164	0.59	Significant

According to Table No. 2, it is evident that the obtained value of correlation coefficient 0.59 is higher than the table values at both .05 and .01 levels of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. It indicates that there is a significant positive correlation between Family Environment and Peer Support among Government Secondary School Students. This means that positive family conditions contribute significantly to healthy peer interaction and social adjustment among government school students.

Hypothesis No. 3 There is no significant relationship between Family Environment and Peer Support among Private Secondary School Students.

Table No. 3 The correlation is established between Family Environment and Peer Support among Private Secondary School Students

No. of Private Students	Degree of freedom	Value of .05 level	Value at .01 level	r	Significance level
100	98	0.195	0.164	0.72	Significant

According to Table No. 3, it is clear that the obtained value of correlation coefficient 0.72 is greater than the table values at both .05 and .01 levels of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. It reveals that there is a significant positive correlation between Family Environment and Peer Support among Private Secondary School Students. This indicates that students from supportive family backgrounds tend to develop stronger peer relationships and better interpersonal understanding in private schools.

Hypothesis No. 4 There is no significant relationship between Family Environment and Peer Support among Secondary School Boys Students.

Table No. 4 The correlation is established between Family Environment and Peer Support among Secondary School Boys Students

No. of Boys Students	Degree of freedom	Value of .05 level	Value at .01 level	r	Significance level
100	98	0.195	0.164	0.61	Significant

According to Table No. 4, it is found that the obtained value of correlation coefficient 0.61 is higher than the table values at both .05 and .01 levels of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. It shows that there is a significant positive correlation between Family Environment and Peer Support among Secondary School Boys Students. This suggests that supportive family environments positively influence peer interaction, emotional adjustment, and social confidence among boys students.

Hypothesis No. 5 There is no significant relationship between Family Environment and Peer Support among Secondary School Girls Students.

Table No. 5 The correlation is established between Family Environment and Peer Support among Secondary School Girls Students

No. of Girls Students	Degree of freedom	Value of .05 level	Value at .01 level	r	Significance level
100	98	0.195	0.164	0.75	Significant

According to Table No. 5, it is evident that the obtained value of correlation coefficient 0.75 is greater than the table values at both .05 and .01 levels of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. It indicates that there is a significant positive correlation between Family Environment and Peer Support among Secondary School Girls Students. This means that girls students belonging to emotionally supportive family environments tend to develop stronger peer support, emotional security, and healthier social relationships.

Conclusion

The findings of the present study clearly indicate that Family Environment and Peer Support are positively and significantly related among Secondary School Students, including government school students, private school students, boys, and girls. The study highlights that emotionally supportive, cooperative, and communicative family environments help adolescents develop healthy peer relationships, emotional security, social confidence, and better interpersonal adjustment. The comparatively higher correlation among girls and private school students further suggests that family interaction and social support systems strongly influence adolescents' psychosocial development. The results emphasize that adolescents require both family encouragement and positive peer acceptance for balanced educational and emotional growth. Educationally, the study implies that schools should promote guidance services, value-oriented education, peer interaction programs, and counseling activities to strengthen students' social adjustment and emotional well-being. Teachers should establish supportive classroom environments that encourage cooperation, empathy, and healthy communication among students. Parents should also be made aware of their role in creating emotionally secure home environments. Therefore, coordinated efforts of families, schools, and society are essential for promoting positive adolescent development and healthy educational experiences among secondary school students.

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