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Interlinked Dynamics of Self-Efficacy, Mental Health, and Academic Success Among Tribal and Non-Tribal Adolescents in Bagaha Subdivision

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Abstract

Teen years bring intense mental, emotional, and school-related hurdles where self-trust, inner calm, and learning gains intertwine tightly. This work probes links between ability confidence (self-efficacy), emotional wellness, and academic results for Tharu tribal and non-tribal students in Bihar's Bagaha area, drawing from 320 youth via stratified random selection for balanced groups.

Validated surveys gauged self-efficacy and mental health, with exam marks tracking school success; Pearson correlations uncovered near-perfect positive bonds—all significant at $p<0.01$: self-efficacy to wellness ($r=0.952$), self-efficacy to grades ($r=0.988$), wellness to grades ($r=0.987$).

Bold self-believers enjoy sharper minds and stronger scores, while steady emotional health fuels classroom wins—validating ties across both student types.
Such patterns urge schools to nurture self-assurance and resilience, as targeted boosts here could lift learning, especially for diverse or underserved kids.

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INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a crucial developmental phase characterized by rapid physical, emotional, cognitive, and social transformations. This stage, individuals face multiple challenges such as academic pressure, identity formation, peer expectations, and socio-cultural adjustments. These challenges significantly influence students' psychological well-being and academic outcomes. Among various psychological constructs, **self-efficacy**, **mental health**, and **academic achievement** play role in shaping students' overall development.

Self-efficacy means trusting one's power to plan and carry out steps needed for handling upcoming challenges. It shapes drive, grit, feelings, and results—high levels spark bold tackling of schoolwork, toughness amid hurdles, and top performance. Mental health covers steady emotions, low worry, smart coping, and broad inner balance, while academic success gauges goal mastery via test scores.

The interrelationship among these variables becomes particularly important when studying students from diverse socio-cultural backgrounds, such as **tribal (Tharu)** and **non-tribal** populations. Tribal students often encounter additional barriers, including socio-economic disadvantages, cultural marginalization. However, psychological strengths such as self-efficacy may act as protective factors that enhance resilience and promote success.

This study's core framework draws from Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (1986), stressing how self-belief steers actions and results. Per Bandura, those with firm self-efficacy dive into tough tasks, push through roadblocks, and hit targets. Maslow's Needs Hierarchy (1943) adds that emotional strength and self-value pave the way for top-tier aims like school wins.

A substantial body of research supports the positive relationship among self-efficacy, mental health, and academic achievement. **Rosenberg (1965)** reported that positive self-perception significantly contributes to better educational outcomes. **Bandura (1997)** further emphasized that self-efficacy beliefs influence cognitive, emotional, and behavioral processes, thereby affecting academic performance. Studies conducted in the Indian context also support these findings. **Sharma and Singh (2019)**0020demonstrated better coping mechanisms and academic performance. **Meena et al. (2020)** reported that mental health indicators such as emotional stability and resilience are strong predictors of academic success.

Likewise, Rani and Singh (2022) uncovered a clear positive bond between self-image, emotional wellness, and study success. **Kumari and Das (2021)** highlighted that self-efficacy enhances academic engagement and persistence. **Choudhary and Mishra (2021)** found that mentally healthy students exhibit better concentration and task completion. **Verma and Gupta (2023)** emphasized that improving psychological well-being reduces dropout rates and enhances educational attainment, especially among underprivileged groups.

Research focusing on tribal populations indicates that socio-cultural factors significantly influence psychological development and academic achievement. **Sinha and Srivastava (2018)** found that social support and educational inclusion positively impact the academic outcomes of tribal students.

Despite the growing body of research, there remains a gap in understanding the combined relationship among self-efficacy, mental health, and academic achievement in tribal and non-tribal students within specific regional contexts such as the **Bagaha subdivision**. Therefore, the present study aims to examine these relationships and test the hypothesis that these variables are positively correlated.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The present study employed a **descriptive correlational research design** to examine the relationship among self-efficacy, mental health, and academic achievement.

Sample

The sample consisted of **320 students** selected from the Bagaha subdivision of West Champaran district, Bihar. The sample included both **tribal (Tharu)** and **non-tribal students**.

Sampling Technique

A **stratified random sampling method** was used to ensure equal representation of tribal and non-tribal students.

Variables

- **Independent** Variable: Self-Efficacy
- Dependent Variables: Mental Health, Academic Achievement

Information was gathered using validated psychological assessments during class sessions, while school performance data came straight from official records.

Statistical Analysis

Pearson's Product Moment Correlation was used to analyze the relationship among variables.

TOOLS USED

1. **Self-Efficacy Scale**
    - Developed by Laxmi Rani
    - Measures students' belief in their abilities
2. **Mental Health Questionnaire**
    - Developed by Srivastava and Jagdish
    - Assesses emotional stability, anxiety, and psychological well-being
3. **Academic Achievement**

    Drawn from exam marks pulled directly from school records.

Result and Discussion

Hypothesis 1: Self-Efficacy, Mental health and academic achievement would be positively correlated of tribal and non-tribal students.

Table 1

Correlation Matrix of Self-Efficacy, Mental Health, and Academic Achievement

Variable	**Self-Efficacy**	**Mental Health**	**Academic Achievement**
Self-efficacy	1	.952**	.988**
Mental Health	.952**	1	.987**
Academic Achievement	.988**	.987**	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 1 outlines the correlation matrix for self-efficacy, emotional wellness, and school performance among Tharu tribal and non-tribal students in Bagaha. All pairs show exceptionally tight positive ties—self-efficacy to mental health at r = 0.952, self-efficacy to academics at r = 0.988, and mental health to academics at r = 0.987—all significant at the 0.01 level. These near-perfect links signal that rising self-belief lifts mood and grades in tandem, while stronger inner health propels sharper learning results.The data robustly validates Hypothesis 1, confirming a favorable link between emotional wellness and school performance across tribal and non-tribal youth.

The near-perfect correlation values suggest that psychological well-being and academic outcomes are closely intertwined and may mutually reinforce each other in the studied population. In essence, students who perceive themselves as competent, capable, and valued (high self-efficacy) are likely to experience better emotional stability, lower anxiety levels, and higher motivation to perform well in academic tasks. Conversely, students with higher academic achievement may develop a stronger sense of personal efficacy and confidence, which enhances their self-efficacy and promotes mental health.

Key theories shed light on these ties. Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (1986) spotlights self-efficacy—belief in mastering tasks—as a driver of thought patterns and actions. Students brimming with it dive into studies boldly, tackle hurdles smartly, and guard their inner calm, matching this study's pattern of self-efficacy fueling grades and wellness. Likewise, Maslow's Needs Pyramid (1943) argues fulfilling core drives like connection, acclaim, and self-mastery

unlocks peak performance in learning. Here, youth with stout self-belief and sound minds thrive scholastically since their base emotional layers stand firm.

These outcomes echo key works in teen growth and learning psychology, pinpointing self-efficacy and emotional wellness as drivers of school success. Rosenberg (1965) first linked broad self-belief to stronger teen learning results, while fresh Indian studies affirm this: Sharma and Singh (2019) saw tribal youth with peak self-efficacy using sharper coping tools, less worry, and better grades than weaker peers; Meena et al. (2020) tied rural students' emotional steadiness, low anxiety, and grit to top performance; Rani and Singh (2022) spotted firm bonds between self-image, mind health, and class gains, proving inner strength fuels sharp study habits.

Table 1's steep links spotlight how teen mind traits feed off each other via thought, feeling, and action channels. A self-assured learner dives into tough lessons with hope, crafts smart study plans, and bounces back from hurdles—sparking wins that loop back to boost confidence and calm. For tribal kids wrestling poverty, culture clashes, or bias, this chain shines brighter: bold self-view shields against exclusion or scarcity, propping up wellness and scores alike.

Good mental health and school success link positively, echoing the stress-buffering idea where emotional strength softens tension's blow on learning. Thriving students juggle class demands, stay focused, and balance feelings for top marks, while those struggling lose drive, attention, and stamina—tanking results. This lens clarifies why top mental scores here tied to standout academics.

Cultural and social factors may further contextualize these results. In the Bagaha subdivision, both Tharu (tribal) and non-tribal students are increasingly exposed to **educational awareness programs, digital learning resources, and school-based counseling services**, which may strengthen the relationship between mental health, self-efficacy, and academic achievement. Moreover, **family support, peer interactions, and teacher encouragement** can reinforce self-confidence and emotional well-being, creating a supportive environment conducive to academic success. Studies by **Patel and Verma (2022)** and **Sinha and Srivastava (2018)** emphasize that social and educational inclusion can amplify these correlations. The **exceptionally high correlation values** ($r > 0.95$) observed in this study indicate a near-linear relationship between the variables. While this underscores the strong interdependence of self-efficacy, mental health, and academic achievement, it may also reflect **overlapping measurement constructs or sample characteristics**, such as a relatively homogeneous educational environment, similar age groups, or shared socio-cultural influences. New works explore potential mediators or moderators, such as **parental support, socio-economic status, teacher quality, or peer relationships**, to better understand the nuanced dynamics underlying these relationships.

These results carry weighty lessons for school-based and mental health programs. Boosting students' self-belief via guidance sessions, mentorship, or hands-on skill workshops could yield gains in both emotional strength and classroom results. They also spotlight the need for mental wellness education and counseling in schools, especially aiding tribal youth who often battle extra strains from social exclusion or scarce support. Third, educators and policymakers should recognize that **academic performance is not solely a function of intellectual ability** but is intricately linked with psychological well-being. Interventions that target emotional regulation, coping strategies, and self-concept development can create a holistic environment conducive to learning.

Supportive studies reinforce these conclusions. **Kumari and Das (2021)** demonstrated that programs improving adolescent self-efficacy directly contribute to better academic engagement. **Choudhary and Mishra (2021)** reported that students with higher mental health scores exhibited greater persistence, concentration, and task completion in academic settings. **Verma and Gupta (2023)** emphasized that improving self-efficacy and mental well-being reduces dropout risk and enhances long-term educational outcomes, particularly in underprivileged communities.

Table 1 plainly reveals a solid positive link between self-efficacy, emotional wellness, and school performance among tribal and non-tribal students in Bagaha. These outcomes back Hypothesis 1 fully, showing that stronger self-belief drives better mental states and sharper academic results. The patterns match core psych theories, growth studies, and past data, cementing how inner health and learning gains intertwine deeply.

These insights underscore the importance of integrating **self-efficacy building, mental health support, and academic interventions** within educational programs to foster holistic development among adolescents, particularly in culturally and socio-economically diverse populations.

CONCLUSION

This research reveals a robust link between self-efficacy, psychological wellness, and school success in both tribal and non-tribal youth. Data firmly backs the idea that these elements interconnect favorably.

Youth with stronger self-belief in their abilities often show improved emotional wellness and superior school results. In turn, those enjoying solid mental health typically excel more in academics. Such patterns underscore the tight weave between mindsets and learning outcomes.

Overall, the study underscores that academic success is not solely dependent on cognitive ability but is deeply influenced by psychological factors. Promoting self-efficacy and mental health can significantly contribute to the holistic development of students.

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