



Building Academic Resilience In Adolescence, A Qualitative Study On The Role Of Classroom Environment In Enhancing Student Performance

¹Ashu Tyagi, ²Prof. (Dr.) Poonam Devdutt

¹Research Scholar, ²Director (Centre for Psychology and Human behavior)

¹Department of Education,

¹Shobhit Institute of Engineering and Technology (Deemed to be University), Meerut, India

Abstract: Academic resilience, defined as a student's capacity to successfully overcome academic setbacks and challenges, has emerged as a crucial factor in determining long-term academic success and psychological well-being. The present study aimed to investigate the role of the classroom environment in building academic resilience among adolescents and to explore how a supportive school ecosystem contributes to enhanced student performance. This research was conducted using a qualitative approach, allowing for an in-depth understanding of individual student experiences and institutional practices that foster resilience. The study specifically focused on the influence of teacher support, classroom climate, counselling interventions, and leadership engagement in improving students' ability to cope with academic stressors and social challenges. This qualitative research explored the impact of classroom environment on academic resilience. Among adolescents, the study was conducted with a small group of students whose academic performance was initially below average.

IndexTerms – Academic Resilience, Classroom Environment, Adolescence

I. INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a critical developmental stage that marks the transition from childhood to adulthood. It typically occurs between the ages of 10 and 19, though this range can vary slightly depending on cultural and biological factors.

Resilience is defined as the capacity of a person to prosper in spite of facing adverse circumstances. The term resilience is made from the term which is derived from Latin word 'resilire' which means to rebound or to recoil. Academic resilience refers to achieving good academic outcomes by students in spite of encountering adverse situations. Martin & Marsh (2003), "Academic resilience is defined as the ability to effectively deal with setback, stress or pressure in the academic setting". Martin and Marsh (2003) propounded that there are five determinants of academic resilience - the 5 C's:

1. Confidence (Self-belief)
2. Control (a sense of control)
3. Composure (low anxiety)
4. Commitment (Persistence)
5. Coordination (Collaboration)

Kaur and Mallick (2016) defined academic resilience as "good academic achievement in spite of adversity in the educational process. It is the ability of the child to maintain academic performance in the face of life."

Thus, Academic Resilience means the ability of a student to handle the academic pressure, stress and difficulties in the academic or school life. It is the child's ability to maintain academic performance in the face of life. Academic resilience may be defined as academic confidence, motivation and ability to get goals, sense of well-being, emotional regulation & physical health and relationships with peers and adults despite of difficult circumstances.

Researchers, educators, school administrators, and managers of school systems have all paid more attention to the study of classroom settings throughout the past 35 years. Movies like "To Sir With Love," "Up the Down Staircase," and "Dead Poet's Society," as well as "Glenview High," "Class of 75," "Beverly Hills 90210," and "Boston Public," all provide vivid descriptions and images of schools, all of which attest to the centrality of the environment to the character-defining nature of schools and classrooms. When used in educational settings, the term "environment" refers to the atmosphere, ambiance, tone, or temperature that permeates the specific setting. This can also be thought of as the "climate." It is essential to keep in mind right from the bat that learning contexts, such as classrooms, are still human environments. As a result, the historical emphasis of study on this topic has been placed on the psychosocial dimensions of the environment. These are the features of the environment that center on human behavior, either in terms of their genesis or outcomes (Boy & Pine, 1988).

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to conduct an investigation into the potential connections that exist between Academic Resilience and Classroom Environment.

3.1 Population and Sample

In this research I have taken three students from Scottish International School, Shamli. The Academic achievement of these three Students is analyzed in this research. This analysis is done by unstructured interviews with the participants, who were the three highest scorers. Given the qualitative nature of the study, the aim is not to generalize to the entire population but to explore, context rich understanding from students who have experience the phenomena being studied.

3.2 Data, Sources of Data and Assessment Tools used

The current study makes extensive use of primary data and is predicated on an in-depth analysis of the studies that came before it that are pertinent. In order to find research analyzing the effects of classroom environment on the academic resiliency of teenagers, a wide array of medical, psychiatric, and scientific databases was explored. This was done in an effort to acquire as many relevant citations as was practically possible in the given time frame. In addition to the computerized searches, we also carried out human searches of the Google Scholar database, the Scopus index, and the SCI database. In addition to that, a variety of the internet's search engines were used in order to look for websites that could provide references. Because of this effort, a significant number of citations were collected, and papers that were pertinent to the review were selected from among those citations. Following an analysis of the possible value of these sources, a great number of citations were rejected on the grounds that they were irrelevant. The entire articles of the remaining citations were reviewed, and for the purpose of this inquiry, those studies that were directly connected to the impacts of various classroom environment on the academic resilience of teenagers were chosen. The two standardized tools were used to gather baseline data:

1. Academic Resilience Scale- The scale was developed by Dr. Mihir Kumar Malik and Simranjeet Kaur, this scale was used to assess each student's ability to cope with academic challenges, maintain effort, and bounce back from failure.
2. Classroom Environment Scale- The scale was developed by Prof. M.C. Joshi and Dr. Om Prakash R. Vyas, this tool assessed students' perceptions of their classroom climate, including teacher support, peer relationships, discipline, and learning atmosphere.

These tools provided a comprehensive psychological and environmental profile of each student prior to intervention.

Participants

Dhairya Garg

Dhairya Garg, a student of Class 10 at Scottish International School, initially exhibited significantly low levels of academic resilience. He was identified through the academic resilience assessment as a student requiring urgent support. Dhariya displayed characteristics of extreme introversion and struggled with low self-confidence. His social adaptability was notably poor; he rarely interacted with his peers, hardly made friends, and found it difficult to express his thoughts and emotions to others. Although he consistently performed his academic tasks with sincerity and discipline, his lack of emotional expression and minimal social engagement hindered his ability to cope with academic pressures and classroom challenges. His silent withdrawal from group activities and limited participation in discussions further highlighted his emotional and social difficulties.

Following targeted counselling sessions and the provision of a more supportive and inclusive classroom environment, Dhariya showed gradual but remarkable improvement. The counselling process focused on enhancing his self-esteem, developing his communication skills, and building his social confidence. Teachers and the school counsellor worked together to encourage Dhariya's active involvement in class activities and peer interactions. Over time, Dhariya began to participate more openly, seek clarifications confidently, and slowly formed positive peer relationships. His academic resilience significantly improved as he developed better coping strategies and became more engaged both socially and academically. This positive transformation was reflected in his outstanding performance in the CBSE Class 10 board examinations, where he secured an impressive 97.6%. Dhariya's case is a strong example of how timely intervention, personal attention, and a conducive school environment can transform a student's academic trajectory.

Ishi Aggarwal

Ishi Agarwal, a Class 10 student at Scottish International School, was identified as having significantly low academic resilience following a period of emotional turmoil and personal loss. Ishi exhibited challenging behavioral tendencies such as impulsivity, mood swings, and frequent adamant behavior. She often displayed difficulty in regulating her emotions, took considerable time to open up to others, and frequently engaged in illogical conversations. Her relationship with her family, particularly with her mother, became severely strained after the sudden loss of her father due to COVID-19. Ishi developed a strong sense of resistance and non-cooperation towards her mother and distanced herself from her two brothers. This behavioral shift was in sharp contrast to her earlier disposition; prior to her father's passing, Ishi had been a bright, well-adjusted, and disciplined child with a promising academic record. The emotional trauma significantly impacted her social interactions and academic resilience.

In response to her deteriorating condition, the school provided Ishi with focused counselling sessions and continuous emotional support within the classroom. The school counsellors and teachers worked in close coordination to offer her individual attention, emotional validation, and a safe space to gradually rebuild her trust and self-confidence. Over time, with persistent efforts and empathetic intervention, Ishi showed remarkable progress. She became more emotionally stable, began to cooperate with her family, and gradually re-engaged with academic activities. Her active classroom participation and improved social interactions were clear indicators of her recovery. This positive transformation was reflected in her outstanding performance in the CBSE Class 10 board examinations, where she secured an stellar 93%. Ishi's case strongly illustrates the critical role of timely

psychological intervention and a supportive school environment in restoring academic resilience and emotional well-being among adolescents facing significant.

Akshita

Akshita, a Class 10 student at Scottish International School, was identified as having significantly low academic resilience based on the standardized assessment administered during the study. Akshita displayed several behavioral and emotional characteristics that contributed to her low resilience levels. She is naturally introverted, socially withdrawn, and exhibited very low self-confidence. She often preferred isolation, avoided social interactions, and found it difficult to share her thoughts and feelings, even with her parents. Her tendency to give up easily in the face of academic or personal challenges, along with her limited coping strategies, placed her at a higher risk of academic underachievement. Although she possessed a unique talent as a skilled dancer, she struggled to channel her strengths into building broader social or academic confidence. At home, Akshita's emotional regulation was also a concern, as she frequently displayed aggressive outbursts and would shout during family interactions, further reflecting her internal emotional distress.

Recognizing her fragile emotional state and low resilience, the school's counsellors and teachers collaborated to provide Akshita with sustained psychological support and a nurturing, student-friendly classroom environment. She was regularly engaged in counselling sessions aimed at improving her self-esteem, emotional regulation, and problem-solving abilities. Teachers also provided her with consistent encouragement, one-on-one attention, and a safe space where she felt comfortable seeking help and participating actively. Over time, Akshita began to show significant improvement in her ability to persevere through academic challenges and her readiness to remain engaged in the learning process. The positive impact of the school's supportive interventions was evident in her academic performance, as she achieved an excellent 94% in the CBSE Class 10 board examinations. Akshita's case powerfully demonstrates the importance of individualized attention, emotional support, and a conducive school environment in transforming the academic and emotional outcomes of students with low academic resilience.

SCOTTISH INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

SCOTTISH INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL, established on 12th February 2012, is a co-educational institution committed to providing a holistic, student-centric learning environment. The school is known for offering a highly conducive and supportive atmosphere that promotes both academic excellence and personal growth. Special attention is given not only to scholastic achievements but also to co-curricular and extra-curricular activities, ensuring the well-rounded development of every student. The school actively encourages participation in a wide range of hobbies, creative pursuits, and sports activities, fostering diverse interests and life skills among its students. With its balanced approach to academics, sports, and cultural programs, Scottish International School consistently strives to nurture capable, confident, and resilient learners who are well-prepared for the challenges of life. Scottish International School has consistently demonstrated a strong culture of academic excellence, supported by a structured and resilience-focused educational approach. Over the years, the school has produced exceptional board examination results at the national level, which reflects the academic resilience fostered among its students. In the academic session 2017–2018, Nandini Garg secured the position of national topper in the Class 10 CBSE examinations. Similarly, in the 2021–2022 session, Diya Namdev achieved national topper status in Class 10. Continuing this tradition of excellence, in the 2024–2025 academic session, Savi Jain attained the distinction of national topper in the Class 12 CBSE examinations. These consistent national-level achievements serve as qualitative evidence of the school's sustained commitment to fostering academic resilience.

The school systematically administers academic resilience assessments for its students. Those identified with lower levels of resilience are provided with targeted support, including individualized counseling and specific enhancements in the classroom environment. These interventions are designed to strengthen the students' coping mechanisms, motivation, and academic self-efficacy. Observations over time indicate that such supportive practices have led to measurable improvements in both student well-being and academic outcomes. The present study's findings are consistent with these institutional practices, underscoring the significant role of a nurturing classroom environment and timely psychological support in enhancing the academic resilience.

A dedicated team, including clinical psychologists, is available to offer timely psychological support and address the emotional and academic needs of students. Individual attention is a hallmark of the school's approach, ensuring that each student receives personalized academic guidance and emotional care. The school fosters an open and conducive environment where students feel comfortable discussing their doubts with teachers, who are readily accessible for individual remedial classes whenever required. The principal plays a pivotal role in maintaining the academic and emotional well-being of the students. She is highly engaged in the daily functioning of the school, regularly visiting classrooms, reviewing students' written work, interacting directly with both students and teachers, and ensuring that every aspect of schooling is closely monitored and continuously improved. Her visible leadership and hands-on involvement create a strong sense of accountability, belongingness, and motivation among students and staff alike. This positive and supportive school environment significantly contributes to building academic resilience and fostering consistent high achievement among the students.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Cross case Analysis

A detailed examination of the three selected cases—Dharia Garg, Ishi Agarwal, and Akshita Singhal—reveals common patterns as well as unique individual challenges faced by students with low academic resilience. Despite variations in personal background, emotional responses, and behavioral tendencies, all three students initially demonstrated significant difficulty in coping with academic pressures, managing emotions, and building social connections.

Dhariya Garg presented as an extremely introverted student with low self-confidence and limited social engagement. His academic discipline and hard-working nature were evident, yet his inability to express himself or seek help contributed to his poor academic resilience. Similarly, Akshita Singhal showed signs of social withdrawal, low self-esteem, and a readiness to give up easily. She struggled to maintain emotional balance at home and in school, which further weakened her resilience. In contrast, Ishi Agarwal's case was deeply affected by personal trauma following the loss of her father during the COVID-19 pandemic. Her behavioral challenges included mood swings, impulsivity, and family conflicts, particularly with her mother. Unlike Dhariya and Akshita, Ishi's case was complicated by unresolved grief and emotional volatility.

Despite these individual differences, a common thread across all three cases was the transformational role played by the school's structured counselling interventions and a supportive classroom environment. Each student responded positively to the multi-layered approach that included individual counselling, emotional support, one-on-one attention from teachers, and the creation of a non-threatening, encouraging school atmosphere. Their academic outcomes, reflected in their exceptional board examination scores—Dhariya's 97.6% significant improvement, Ishi's 93%, and Akshita's 94%—serve as evidence of their enhanced academic resilience and personal growth.

The following major themes emerged from the cross-case analysis:

1. Impact of Emotional and Social Deficits on Academic Resilience

All three cases demonstrated that emotional struggles, social isolation, and poor self-confidence are primary barriers to academic resilience. Whether rooted in personal loss, family dynamics, or innate personality traits, these deficits significantly impacted the students' ability to persist in the face of academic challenges.

2. Role of School Counselling and Targeted Interventions

The cases highlighted the critical importance of timely psychological support. The structured counselling sessions provided emotional stability, helped build coping mechanisms, and gradually improved students' willingness to face academic pressures.

3. Importance of a Supportive and Conducive Classroom Environment

Across all cases, the presence of empathetic teachers, individual attention, and the availability of remedial support played a decisive role in improving academic resilience. The school's open-door policy, which allowed students to approach teachers freely, was instrumental in their progress.

4. Leadership Engagement and School Culture

The visible and active involvement of the school Principal in monitoring student well-being and academic progress contributed to creating a positive, accountable school culture. Her direct engagement fostered trust, belongingness, and a sense of security among students.

Result and Analysis

The present qualitative study aimed to explore how the classroom environment contributes to building academic resilience among adolescents and enhancing their academic performance. Data were collected through observation, counselling reports, student performance records, and in-depth case studies of selected students who initially exhibited poor academic resilience.

The study found that a supportive and structured classroom environment played a significant role in improving the academic resilience of adolescents. Students who were initially identified as having low academic resilience demonstrated substantial improvement in both their academic performance and emotional stability after receiving targeted support from teachers, counsellors, and school leadership.

The following key outcomes were observed:

- **Individualized Attention and Teacher Support:** Students who received personal attention and emotional encouragement from teachers were more likely to engage with academic tasks and showed improved persistence.
- **Counselling Interventions:** School-based counselling significantly improved students' self-confidence, emotional regulation, and social participation.
- **Leadership Engagement:** The active involvement of the principal and school leadership in classroom visits, student monitoring, and one-on-one interactions created a strong sense of care and accountability.
- **Positive Performance Outcomes:** Students like Dhariya Garg, Ishi Agarwal, and Akshita Singhal, who initially showed poor academic resilience, were able to achieve outstanding results in their CBSE Class 10 board examinations (including scores of 93% and 94%) after consistent intervention and classroom support.

These results suggest that academic resilience is not static but can be developed through targeted school-based strategies.

Discussion

The findings of this study align with existing literature that emphasizes the importance of environmental factors in shaping academic resilience among adolescents. While individual personality traits, family background, and life experiences undoubtedly influence a student's ability to cope with academic challenges, this study highlights the transformational role of the school environment.

1. Role of Classroom Environment

The study demonstrated that a nurturing, student-centered classroom environment is a key contributor to building resilience. Teachers who offered emotional support, maintained open communication, and provided opportunities for individual remedial

sessions helped create a space where students felt safe to express themselves and seek help. Such an environment encouraged students to persist through academic difficulties and reduced the tendency to give up easily.

2. Impact of Counselling

School counselling was found to be an essential component in rebuilding students' self-confidence and emotional stability. The counselling sessions not only addressed academic concerns but also helped students manage personal trauma, social withdrawal, and behavioral challenges. This is particularly evident in the case of Ishi Agarwal, who experienced severe emotional distress after the loss of her father but showed remarkable recovery through sustained school counselling and support.

3. Leadership and School Culture

The leadership style of the school principal, Mrs. Ashu Tyagi, emerged as a significant factor in creating a resilient school culture. Her active classroom engagement, direct student interactions, and consistent supervision cultivated a highly accountable, responsive, and student-focused atmosphere. This leadership involvement further motivated teachers to provide individualized care and contributed to the overall academic success of the students.

4. Improvement in Academic Outcomes

The most compelling evidence of improved academic resilience was the marked enhancement in students' board examination scores. Students who were initially at risk due to poor resilience achieved commendable results after appropriate interventions. For instance, Akshita Singhal, who struggled with social anxiety, low self-confidence, and emotional aggression, secured 94% in the Class 10 CBSE board exams after benefiting from the school's resilience-building framework.

5. Theoretical Implications

The study reinforces the ecological systems theory, which suggests that adolescents' development is significantly influenced by their immediate environment, particularly the classroom setting. Academic resilience can be strengthened when students experience emotional safety, feel supported by adults, and are provided with consistent opportunities to succeed.

Summary of Findings

- A supportive classroom environment directly contributes to improved academic resilience.
- Timely counselling helps address emotional and behavioural barriers to learning.
- Leadership engagement strengthens the school's resilience-building culture.
- Academic resilience is a dynamic quality that can be developed with appropriate school-based interventions.

Conclusion

This qualitative study strongly supports the view that academic resilience is not solely an innate quality but can be developed and enhanced through structured support systems within the school environment. The cases of Dhariya Garg, Ishi Agarwal, and Akshita Singhal illustrate that students facing emotional, social, or behavioural challenges can significantly improve when provided with timely counselling, personal attention, and a nurturing classroom setting. The school's holistic approach—combining emotional handholding, consistent teacher support, and leadership engagement—played a pivotal role in transforming the academic trajectories of these students. The findings reinforce the critical importance of early identification of low-resilience students and the need for continuous, individualized interventions to foster academic resilience. Ultimately, the success stories of these students affirm that a conducive school environment can empower adolescents to overcome personal barriers, rebuild confidence, and achieve academic excellence.

REFERENCES

- [1] Malik, M. K., & Kaur, S. (2020). Academic Resilience Scale (ARS). National Psychological Corporation, Agra.
- [2] Joshi, M. C., & Vyas, O. P. R. (2000). Classroom Environment Scale. National Psychological Corporation, Agra.
- [3] Llistosella, M., Castillón, J. J., & Ortiz, A. (2023). Effectiveness of resilience-based interventions in schools for adolescents: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 14, Article 1133154.
- [4] Martin, A. J., & Marsh, H. W. (2008). Academic buoyancy: Towards an understanding of students' everyday academic resilience. *Journal of School Psychology*, 46(1), 53–83.
- [5] Reyes, M. R., Brackett, M. A., Rivers, S. E., White, M., & Salovey, P. (2012). Classroom emotional climate, student engagement, and academic achievement. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 104(3), 700–712.
- [6] Seçer, İ., & Ulaş, S. (2020). The mediator role of academic resilience in the relationship of anxiety sensitivity, social and adaptive functioning, and school refusal with school attachment in high school students. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11, Article 557251.
- [7] Giorgio, A., Martelli, A., & Bertrando, P. (2021). Academic resilience and engagement in high school students: The mediating role of perceived teacher emotional support. *Journal of Adolescence*, 89(1), 77–87.
- [8] González, S., Navaridas-Nalda, F., & Conde, Á. (2023). School adjustment in adolescence explained by social support, resilience and positive affect. *European Journal of Psychology of Education*, 38(3), 991–1010.
- [9] Springer, M. C., Kaufman, T. M., & Phillips, D. L. (2024). Social support, self-concept and resilience as protectors against school maladjustment during adolescence. *School Mental Health*, 16(2), 321–334.
- [10] The Guardian. (2024, November 15). Resilience interventions do work, say school leaders. *The Guardian*.