

The Influence of Peer Environment on Student Learning Outcomes at the High School Level

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ABSTRACT

Peers as social elements have an important role in shaping the learning achievement of high school students. Adolescents in general interact intensely with their peers which can influence their attitudes, motivation to learn, and daily activities. Therefore, this study examines the impact of peer environment on the learning outcomes of high school students. Using qualitative methods with literature studies. Data was obtained through literature searches from scientific books, national and international journals, as well as relevant previous research related to peer interaction and learning processes. The analysis was carried out in a descriptive-qualitative manner through identification, grouping, and interpretation of findings from the literature. The findings of the analysis indicate that the peer environment has a positive and significant impact on the learning achievement of high school students. If the interaction is positive, then the motivation to learn increases, students become more active in the classroom, and learning habits become better. However, if the social environment is negative, interest in learning decreases and academic achievement also decreases. Schools should create a conducive social environment through collaborative learning, academic group activities, and strengthening a positive learning culture. Thus, if managed properly, the learning outcomes of high school students can be optimized optimally and sustainably.

Keywords: Peer environment, Learning outcomes, High school students, Social interaction, Learning motivation, Academic achievement.

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INTRODUCTION

Education is an important foundation to form competent human resources so that it becomes a crucial factor that determines the development and future of a nation (Darmawan & Khoiroh, 2025). Education has a big role in encouraging social mobility for children to get a more decent life in the future (Hartono & Sulisty, 2022). Education plays a crucial role in shaping the intellectual, social, and emotional aspects of students. Equitable access to education is the main strategy in overcoming the disparities that occur in developing countries (Rojak & Khayru, 2022). The process of transferring knowledge and values is known as learning which is then evaluated to assess the level of achievement of goals and learning outcomes obtained (Shodiq et al., 2025). In the world of modern education, the application of various learning theories is very necessary to support the effectiveness of the knowledge transfer process (Kurniawan & Darmawan, 2024). At the high school level, adolescents are facing a stage of growth where the desire to interact socially and be accepted by peers is getting stronger. At that time, students' attention was no longer limited to lessons in the classroom, but also to expanding the network of friends in the surrounding environment. Social education has a responsibility in shaping students' global awareness to be able to adapt to the wider environment (Hariani & Mardikaningsih, 2022). The social environment, which can also be understood as a learning environment, is not only a place for students to carry out daily activities, but also acts as a reference for real learning that can influence the student learning cycle (Hamdiyah et al., 2024). Positive environmental conditions also support adaptation readiness for novice educators in facing dynamics in the school world (Liwak et al., 2023). This social interaction between students can have a big impact on their attitudes, learning motivation, and behavior patterns in learning. In addition, strengthening public awareness through education is needed to create sustainable behavioral change in society (Gautama & Mardikaningsih, 2022). This confirms how vital the social environment is in facilitating or hindering the learning process of students. Therefore, the peer environment as a key element of the social context deserves serious attention to boost the quality of learning outcomes at the high school level.

Learning outcomes are competencies that students obtain after taking the learning mechanism shown through attitude transformation which includes increasing understanding, insight, behavior, and competence until they change more optimally than before (Rofuiddin & Darmawan, 2024). The use of varied learning methods is very helpful for students in achieving the desired learning outcomes (Mardikaningsih, 2014b). Learning outcomes are a measure of the success of the learning process experienced by students at school. Usually, this is reflected in the academic grades achieved by students after undergoing learning activities during a certain period. The use of varied learning methods is very helpful for students in achieving the desired learning outcomes (Mardikaningsih, 2014b). More than that, the learning outcomes also show the extent to which students understand the subject matter, as well as their ability to hone critical and analytical thinking. Structured mentoring programs are even used to help students' career development through the evaluation of learning outcomes (Chada, 2023). In this study, the indicators include increasing academic scores, mastery of concepts, critical thinking skills, and problem-solving skills. At the secondary education level, the determining factor for learning outcomes does not only depend on students' intellectual intelligence, but also various other elements such as the conditions of the learning environment and the dynamics of social interaction they face. Strong learning habits and motivation are significant internal drivers of student academic achievement (Amrulloh et al., 2024). A conducive learning environment can stimulate learners to be more motivated and proactively involved in the learning process, ultimately improving their academic achievement. The existence of an environment supported by social media today also acts as a means of disseminating educational information that

supports the learning process in the digital era (Darmawan & Fajar, 2024). On the other hand, if the environment is less supportive, interest in learning can decline and academic achievement is hampered. In addition to environmental factors, the protection of the right to education for every child regardless of social status remains a fundamental legal aspect (Fajar et al., 2022). Therefore, students' learning outcomes are the main benchmark for evaluating educational success, as well as reflecting the various factors that shape their academic progress (Pridayanti *et al.*, 2019).

A peer environment refers to a group of people of the same age who interact with each other regularly in their daily lives, whether at school or outside of it. Quality social interaction has a reciprocal relationship with the psychological well-being of each individual (Darmawan & Gani, 2024). Interaction with peers provides students with the opportunity to hone social and emotional skills, including the ability to communicate and manage emotions better (Firmansyah et al., 2024). The preparation of technical and social competencies is crucial for students to face the world of work that is now technology-based (Mendonca et al., 2021). In the realm of education, this usually involves students in the same class, level, or gang of friends who have close social ties. Counseling services in schools also contribute to shaping students' character through a personal approach (Rojak et al., 2024). The form of interaction can be learning together, group discussions, sharing information about lessons, or other social activities. The psychological outlook in modern society emphasizes the importance of understanding individual behavior in the midst of changing times (Darmawan et al., 2021). This study measured the indicators through the intensity of interaction with peers, learning support from them, the influence on learning motivation, and the quality of social relations in the group. Social stereotypes that arise in social environments sometimes create boundaries or inequalities in interactions between groups (Sajjapong et al., 2022). This kind of interaction often has a big impact on behaviors, attitudes, and habits in learning. The impact of these negative views or stereotypes must be managed so that relations between groups in society remain harmonious (Zahid & Darmawan, 2022). However, if the association is not supportive, it can actually damage the learning process, for example, decreased focus and weak academic interest. Therefore, the quality of interaction in peer groups is a key element that affects students' academic progress.

The relationship between peer environment and learning achievement illustrates how the quality of social interaction between students contributes to their academic success. Positive peer interaction creates a conducive learning atmosphere, making students more enthusiastic about participating in the learning process. In a supportive group, they can help each other understand the material, share information, and encourage each other to achieve higher grades. Not only that, this social bond also forms healthy competition that spurs academic ability. So, positive interaction among peers has a big impact on improving student learning outcomes.

From the description above, it is clear that the empirical study of the impact of the peer environment on the learning achievement of high school students is very relevant to be explored further. This study specifically wanted to measure the extent to which the quality of peer interaction affected students' academic achievement. It is hoped that this study can provide a sharper picture of the relationship between the peer environment and learning outcomes at the high school level. Not only that, the results are expected to be valuable input for teachers and school managers to develop more effective learning strategies, as well as build a supportive social climate. If the learning environment is positive and peer support is okay, students are likely to be more motivated and achieve optimal achievements. Therefore, this research not only adds theoretical insight in the field of education, but also has practical value to improve the quality of high school education.

METHOD

This study applies a qualitative approach through the literature review method to examine the impact of the peer environment on the learning outcomes of high school students. The process involves the study of various relevant literature, ranging from supporting theories, the results of previous research, to educational literature that is in accordance with the topic of adolescent social interaction and academic achievement. Data sources are obtained from scientific journals, academic textbooks, research reports, and credible sources available on various scientific databases. The selection of sources is carried out carefully by considering the suitability of the theme, the credibility of the source, and its relationship with the foundation of the research theory. Peer environment is an independent variable, while student learning outcomes are bound variables. The analysis is carried out in a descriptive-qualitative manner, namely through the process of identifying, grouping, and interpreting literature findings so that the relationship between the two variables can be comprehensively described. It is hoped that this method will be able to reveal a deeper understanding of how the peer environment affects learning outcomes at the high school level.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The behavior and educational achievement of students at the high school level have a strong influence of the surrounding social environment, especially social relations between peers. During adolescence, student involvement in peer groups is an important factor that helps shape attitudes, motivations, and patterns of learning habits. A positive and supportive friendship environment is able to invite students to play a more active role during learning, be responsible for completing assignments, and have an orientation towards academic achievement. On the other hand, peer associations that are not conducive have the potential to have negative impacts, such as decreased motivation to learn, the emergence of deviant behaviors, and low academic achievement. This condition can ultimately affect the low academic achievement of students.

1. Siahaan et al. (2024)

The study is intended to examine the impact of learning habits and peer friendship environment on the learning outcomes of grade XI students at SMA Negeri 2 Pematangsiantar. The study applied a quantitative method, the data was collected by questionnaire. Although the population is not elaborated in detail in the summary, the sample includes 106 students. Data processing was carried out using the SPSS version 24 application, including multiple linear regression, t-test, f-test, and determination coefficient. As a first step before testing the hypothesis, a classical assumption examination is carried out in the form of normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity tests. Key findings indicate that learning habits and peer environments significantly affect students' academic achievement.

2. Swarni (2024)

The study was conducted to examine the impact of Peer on the Learning Outcomes of grade X students of SMAN 1 Pendalian, Rokan Hulu Regency through a correlational quantitative method. The research population was 40 students, with a total sampling technique. Data was collected through questionnaires and documentation. The data were analyzed by quantitative descriptive analysis, linearity test, normality test and correlation test. The findings of the study show that there is a relationship between peer influence on learning outcomes.

3. Khairinal et al. (2020)

This study is intended to examine the impact of learning motivation and peer environment on student learning outcomes. The approach chosen is quantitative descriptive. Data was collected with questionnaires and documentation. The population includes students in grade XI social studies at SMAN Titian Teras, while the sample is 72 students.

The data was analyzed through SPSS version 20. The findings of the study revealed that learning motivation and peer interaction also influence students' learning discipline and academic achievement.

4. Zakaria (2020)

The study was conducted to reveal the impact of the peer environment on the learning outcomes of students. The approach is quantitative with the explanatory survey method. The population consisted of 367 students of class XI IIS at a State High School in Sumedang Regency, and all of them were selected through a saturated sample technique, so that the respondents also reached 367 students. The data were analyzed using multiple linear regression involving mediation variables as well as control variables. The findings of the analysis show that students' academic achievement is at a low to moderate level, and is influenced by the peer friendship environment.

5. Rahayu (2021)

This study is intended to analyze the impact of peer environment and learning outcomes on the learning achievement of IIS class X students at Sewon High School. The approach used is quantitative using an ex post facto design. All 106 students of class X IIS were used as research populations, and all of them were used as samples. Data processing is carried out through multiple linear regression to test the relationship between variables. The findings of the study indicate that the peer environment and learning motivation have a positive and significant influence on student learning achievement.

6. Amaliyah and Hakim (2025)

The study was conducted to examine the impact of learning skills and peer environment on student learning outcomes, through the self-confidence moderation variable. The approach is quantitative through ex post facto design. The population consisted of students in grade XI of Accounting at SMK Negeri 1 Kemlagi, while the sample reached 105 students who were selected through saturated sampling techniques. The data was analyzed using the regression method. The findings of the analysis indicate that learning skills and the peer environment affect student learning outcomes, and confidence can strengthen these connections.

7. Pridayanti et al. (2019)

The study was conducted to reveal the impact of learning motivation, learning environment conditions, and peers on the learning outcomes of economics subjects. A quantitative approach through causal methods is applied. The study determined grade XI students as the population, and the sample was 35 students. The data was collected with documentation and questionnaires, while the analysis utilized multiple linear regression through the SPSS version 16 application. The findings of the analysis indicate that learning motivation and the peer environment have a positive and significant influence on student learning outcomes.

8. Billa and Marna (2023)

The study was conducted to examine the impact of the role of parents, peer environment and learning motivation on the learning outcomes of SMAN 1 Akabiluru students. With a quantitative approach based on descriptive design. The research sample involved 151 students through the proportional random sampling method. Data processing uses path analysis. The results revealed that there was an impact on the role of parents, peer environment and learning motivation on learning outcomes.

Table 1. Previous Studies

<i>Researcher</i>	<i>Research Location</i>	<i>Study Focus</i>	<i>Key Findings</i>
<i>Siabaan et al. (2024)</i>	SMA Negeri 2 Pematang Siantar	The impact of learning routines and peer association on learning outcomes.	Learning routines as well as peer environments significantly affect learning outcomes.
<i>Swarni (2024)</i>	SMA Negeri 1 Pandalian, Kabupaten Rokan Hulu	The impact of peers on learning outcomes	The peer environment turns out to affect the results of Economics lessons.
<i>Khairinal et al. (2020)</i>	SMAN Titian Teras	The impact of learning motivation and peer environment on student learning outcomes	Learning motivation and peer environment have an influence on student learning outcomes.
<i>Zakaria (2020)</i>	SMA Negeri di Kota dan Kab. Sumedang	The impact of the peer environment on learning outcomes	Student learning outcomes are influenced by the peer environment
<i>Rahayu (2021)</i>	SMA Sewon	The impact of peer environment and learning motivation on student learning outcomes	Peer environment and learning motivation affect learning outcomes positively and significantly.
<i>Amaliyah and Hakim (2025)</i>	SMK Negeri 1 Kemlagi	The influence of learning skills and peer environment on learning outcomes through confidence moderation variables	Learning skills and peer environment affect learning outcomes and confidence strengthens these influences.
<i>Pridayanti et al. (2019)</i>	SMA Ayodhya Pura Selat	The influence of learning motivation, learning environment conditions, and peers on learning outcomes	Learning motivation and peer environment have a positive and significant effect on learning outcomes.
<i>Billa and Marna (2023)</i>	SMAN 1 Akabiluru	The influence of individual behavior, peer environment, and learning motivation on learning outcomes	Learning motivation, parental roles, and peer environment have a significant relationship with learning outcomes

There is a relationship that has a positive and significant impact between the peer friendship environment and student learning outcomes at the high school level. These findings indicate that the better the quality of interaction, academic support, and learning norms formed in peer groups, the more student learning outcomes will also improve. A friendly environment that stimulates a responsive role in the learning process, channels mutual motivation, and has an orientation to academic achievement is verified efficiently to encourage student learning achievement in a meaningful way. In the adolescent development stage, peers play an important role in shaping students' attitudes, learning habits, and academic motivation. Students tend to adjust their learning behavior to the norms and values that develop in their group of friends. Peers are able to function as a forum for psychological support and a means of exchanging academic information, as well as being role models in learning behavior. School is the main social space where intensive peer interaction occurs.

A supportive school climate, harmonious interpersonal relationships between students, and a positive academic culture will strengthen the impact of the peer environment on learning outcomes. Schools that succeed in building a culture of collaboration, healthy competition, and mutual respect between students have been proven to be able to increase student learning engagement and academic achievement (Slavin, 2020). Research by Siahaan et al. (2024) states that learning routines and peer environments significantly affect students' academic achievements. Research by Khairinal et al. (2020), which states that learning motivation and peer environment have an effect on student learning outcomes. Research by Amaliyah and Hakim (2025), also states that learning skills and peer environment affect learning outcomes and confidence strengthen these influences.

Students' learning outcomes are not formed directly, but through a process that is influenced by social interaction that takes place continuously. The quality of social interaction with teachers and schoolmates has a real influence on academic achievement (Rafiuiddin & Darmawan, 2023). Social Learning Theory explains that the learning process occurs through the mechanism of observation, imitation, and reinforcement of behaviors obtained from the surrounding environment. In the educational environment, the use of multidisciplinary methods is very useful for fostering social competence in children (Hariani et al., 2021). In this context, students tend to adopt learning habits, attitudes towards tasks, and achievement orientations shown by their peers (Bandura, 2021).

It is also important to note that a person's psychological well-being is closely related to the way they interact socially (Oluwatosin & Darmawan, 2024). When students join a group of peers who have a high learning ethic, these positive behaviors will be further strengthened through social recognition, group support, and academic success achieved together. In addition, from the perspective of adolescent development, peers have a significant contribution to the formation of students' academic identity. It is important for students to have the ability to adapt to the challenges of identity differences and social stigma (Pakpahan et al., 2022). Santrock (2021) stated that at the high school level, adolescents tend to be more sensitive to social acceptance from peer groups than to the influence of adults. Therefore, the norms and values that develop in peer groups are important factors in shaping attitudes towards learning, academic discipline, and student learning outcomes.

Thus, the peer environment makes a meaningful contribution to the learning outcomes of high school students. This social interaction factor, along with learning independence, plays a major role in increasing student activity in school (Nada et al., 2024). This influence is not only reflected in the cognitive aspect in the form of academic achievement, but also in learning motivation, the level of activity in the learning process, and the pattern of students' learning habits. This indicates that social interaction between students has an important role to support

the learning cycle. These findings imply that schools need to build a conducive social environment by directing peer-to-peer interactions in a positive direction. The use of interesting learning methods, such as storytelling, can be an alternative to improve students' literacy skills in the midst of globalization (Darmawan et al., 2026). These efforts can be made through collaborative learning, the implementation of academic group activities, and the strengthening of a constructive learning culture. So that the improvement of student learning outcomes can be achieved optimally in a maximum and sustainable way.

CONCLUSION

According to the findings of the analysis, the peer environment significantly affects the learning outcomes of high school students. Positive social relationships, academic support between friends, and learning norms that develop in peer groups have been proven to increase motivation, discipline, and involvement of students in the learning cycle. Meanwhile, an unsupportive social environment has the potential to reduce students' academic achievement. Peers play a role not only as social partners, but also as a source of motivation, a model of learning behavior, and a reinforcement of academic habits. Therefore, schools need to manage and direct interactions between students through collaborative learning strategies, group-based academic activities, and strengthening a positive learning culture. With effective peer environment management, the improvement of student learning outcomes can be achieved in a maximum and sustainable way.

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