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“A STUDY ON MOTIVATION OF UNDERACHIEVER HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS FOR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE”

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Abstract

The present paper summarizes the findings and conclusions of the study based on the analysis and interpretation of data on the topic “A STUDY ON MOTIVATION OF UNDERACHIEVER HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS FOR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE”.

The present study found that there is a significant difference in Academic Motivation between high and low achievers of Class IX students. As the difference is in favour of high achievers, it indicates that high achievers have higher academic motivation as compared to low achievers. The above finding goes in line with the findings of Srivastava (1982), who found that high achievers continuously score higher on the list of academic motivation in comparison to low achievers. Jabeen and Khan (2013) in their study found that high achievers have high need achievement, possess hope of success, perseverance, have realistic attitude which might have led to higher academic motivation among the high achievers' students, while low achievers have low need achievement, have fear of failure, not perseverant and have unrealistic attitude which might make them low motivated.

Thus, from the above discussion inference can be drawn that high achievers have interest in achieving excellence and success and are goal-oriented and focussed that makes them motivated towards their academics. On the other hand, the low achievers may be less motivated due to their chronic failing experiences.

Introduction

Human beings are naturally motivated to learn and to achieve. All human actions are directed towards the achievement of a particular goal. A baby's struggles to reach for a toy, to learn to walk or talk are examples of natural motivation to learn.

But this natural motivation of human beings to achieve their goals is hampered by a lot of hurdles and contradictions, which demotivates them and makes them anxious and frustrated.

In the academic context too, children are naturally motivated to school related activities such as reading and writing. But something gets in the way of their natural motivation and that affects their academic performance. They believe that they cannot do well in school-related task, becomes easily frustrated and gives up when learning is difficult (Brown & Keith, 19981). Thus, the academic performance which is of paramount importance in a student's life is affected by number of factors and which hampers in drawing out the true potential in them.

In the present-day world with the advent of knowledge explosion and population explosion, there is more and more demand for the up-coming generations to improve their skills and proficiencies. And these skills and proficiencies of the pupils can be evaluated through their achievement in schools. The effectiveness of any educational system is gauged to the extent the pupils involved in the system achieve, whether it is in cognitive, conative or psychomotor domains. In general terms, achievement refers to the scholastic or academic achievement of the students at the end of an educational programme (Anand & Padma, 19833). But there are a host of factors that affects the academic achievement of a child like personality variables, curricular variables, school and teacher variables, home environment variables, societal variables and so on. This has led to interest and curiosity among the educationists, teachers and others to investigate into these factors that hampers in the child's performance. And these research studies have been very fruitful in promoting achievement and also removing the deterrents.

The various factors may either lead to academic achievement or academic underachievement among the students. Deka (19894) observes that while considering the factors of school achievement one possibly ignores those aspects in which individuals differ from one another. If we consider a group of students, a few students are found to be high achievers on one hand, and a few are low achievers on the other, while a sizable number of students always appear as moderate achievers.

The question arises why such a difference in achievement appears when the schools provide more or less uniform instructional and environmental facilities? Is this difference due to certain psychological factors? Does this difference depend upon inherent qualities? Or is there any single factor or host of factors which account for all differences in scholastic achievement?

Researchers have identified a large number of variables that affects the academic achievement of students. Review studies conducted on academic achievement by researchers' have identified around 138 variables significantly related to school performance (Huitt et al, 20097). The factors that affect academic achievement or academic underachievement are cognitive factors and non-Cognitive factors.

Need and Justification of the Study

Education plays a very vital role in building a society. But the effectiveness of any educational system is gauged to the extent the pupils involved in the system achieve. There are a host of factors that affects the academic achievement of a child like personality variables, curricular variables, school and teacher variables, home environment variables, societal variables and so on. Studies reveal that many intelligent persons are underachievers while some persons of average intelligence achieve much higher than what is expected from them. So, the questionaries as to why such differences in achievement appear when schools provide more or less uniform instructional facilities? And how to detect and control these factors? So, it is of great necessity that for better performance in academic life theresponsible factors are detected and controlled.

Statement of the Problem

On the basis of the brief introduction, need and significance and reviews described above the problem under study is specifically titled as follows, **“A STUDY ON MOTIVATION OF UNDER ACHIEVER HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS FOR ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE”**

The Present Study involves the following key terms which are operationally defined as follows:

a) Academic Achievement

It is the outcome of instructions provided to the children in schools which is determined by grades or marks secured by the students in the District Board Examination of Meerut at Class IX level. It is the measure of knowledge gained in formal education generally indicated by test-scores.

b) Academic Anxiety

Academic Anxiety is a kind of state anxiety which relates to the impending danger from the environment of the academic institutions including teachers, certain subjects like Mathematics, English, Science etc and also test-anxiety.

c) Academic Motivation

Academic Motivation is the driving force behind student's motivation to learn. It is the need and desire to excel in academic work and one's determination to succeed in academic studies.

Objectives of the Study

The following objectives were formulated for the present study-

- (i) To assess the academic motivation among high and low achiever high school students.
- (ii) To assess the academic anxiety among high and low achiever high school students.
- (iii) To study the relationship between academic motivation and academic anxiety in high school students.
- (iv) To study the gender difference in academic motivation in high school students.
- (v) To study the gender difference in academic anxiety in high school students.

Delimitation of the Study

The Study is delimited to the Class IX students studying in the secondary schools of Meerut district of Uttar Pradesh.

Hypotheses of the Study

For the present study the following null hypotheses were formulated-

- (i) High achiever students will show higher academic motivation than low achiever students.
- (ii) There will be an inverse relationship between the academic anxiety and the academic achievement of high and low achiever students.
- (iii) There will be significant relationship between academic motivation and academic anxiety.
- (iv) There will be significant gender difference with respect to academic motivation in high school students.
- (v) There will be significant gender difference with respect to academic anxiety in high school students.

Review of related literature

Achievement motivation energizes and directs behaviour toward achievement and therefore is known to be an important determinant of academic success (e.g., Robbins et al., 2004; Plante et al., 2013; Wigfield et al., 2016). Many studies have been conducted in India on the relationship between test-anxiety and academic achievement. Saikia and Kalita (2013) studied on achievement motivation in relation to gender on a sample of high school students of Guwahati City. Kaur (2013) investigated on the Academic Achievement and Achievement Motivation of High School Students of Punjab State. Chetri (2014) studied the Achievement Motivation and its relationship with Academic Achievement on a sample of 480 secondary school students studying in different schools of Sikkim and found a significant relationship between achievement motivation and academic achievement.

Dhall (2014) conducted a study of Academic Achievement among adolescents of Ludhiana City, in relation to Achievement Motivation and home environment. Kumari and Chamundeswari (2015) studied on achievement motivation, study habits and academic achievement of students at secondary level. Singh (2015) studied on the Impact of Anxiety on Academic Achievement of U.G Students drawn from three universities of Varanasi City and found that high level of anxiety was negatively correlated with academic achievement. Gohain (2016) studied on Test Anxiety and Academic Achievement of Undergraduate students of Uttar Pradesh and the results revealed a significant positive correlation between test-anxiety and academic achievement. Kumar et al. (2016) studied on the Impact of Achievement Motivation on Academic Achievement on senior secondary school students.

Research Methods and tools

For the present study, descriptive method was followed. The descriptive research method has undoubtedly been the most popular and the most widely used research method in education.

Population

The population for the present study consists of all the students studying in Class IX in the Government and Private secondary schools of Meerut, Uttar Pradesh. The Meerut has a total of 197 secondary schools out of which 87 are government and 110 are private schools. The total enrolment of students in Class IX in these schools are approximately 28000 for the year 2021.

Sample

The sample for the present study consists of 200 students of Class IX which is selected randomly by giving a fair representation to all private and government secondary schools situated in different blocks under rural areas and different wards under urban areas.

Tools Used

The following tools were used for the present study-

A) Academic Anxiety Scale for children by A.K. Singh and A. Sengupta (2009)

B) Academic Achievement Motivation Test by T.R. Sharma (2006).

Analysis and interpretation of data

The following table shows the classification of Academic Anxiety in respect of Male(N=100), Female (N= 100) and the Total Sample (N=200).

Table.4.1.1

Showing the classification of Academic Anxiety for Male, Female and the Total Sample

Percentile Rank	Limits of the Scores	Male		Female		Total Sample		Description*	Interpretation*
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		
P₈₀ and above	15 and above	24	24	37	37.37	30	30.65	Very Anxious	High Academic Anxiety
P₆₀ to P₇₉	13-14	24	24	21	21.62	22	22.81	Anxious	
P₄₅ to P₅₉	12	13	13	10	9.69	11	11.36	Average	Average Academic Anxiety
P₂₅ to P₄₄	10-11	20	20	16	15.76	18	18.09	Less Anxious	Low Academic Anxiety
P₂₄ and below	9 and below	19	19	16	15.56	17	17.09	Very Less Anxious	

The above table shows:

1. Most of the students i.e. 48% (Male), 58.99% (Female) and 53.47% (Total sample) fall in the category of High Academic Anxiety.
2. While 13% (Male), 9.69% (Female) and 11.36% (Total Sample) students fall in the category of Average Academic Anxiety.
3. About 39% (Male), 31.32% (Female) and 35.17% (Total Sample) students fall in the category of Low Academic Anxiety.

Hence, the above findings indicate that most of the students are having high academic anxiety, a good number of students are having low academic anxiety and a few numbers of students are having average academic anxiety.

Results

The present study found that there is a significant difference in academic anxiety between male and female students within high achievers' group. Since the difference is in favour of females, it indicates that females have higher academic anxiety than males within high achievers' group. The study also found that there is a significant difference in academic anxiety between male and female students within low achievers' group. Since the difference is in favour of females, it indicates that females have higher academic anxiety than males within low achievers' group.

It can be inferred from the above findings that in both the high achievers and low achievers group females are having higher academic anxiety than males. This might be due to the fact that today's girls are getting more involved in career worries and competitions. Cassady and Johnson (2002) in their study explains that the differences in test anxiety on the basis of gender is that males and females feel same levels of test worry, but females have higher levels of emotionality.

The above findings are in agreement with the findings of Cassady and Johnson (2001), Jayanthi and Padmanaban (2008), Deb et al (2010), Ergene (2011), Muchhal and Chand (2011), Al-Qaisy (2011), Nadeem et al (2012), Daset al (2014), Syokwaa et al (2014), Haldar and Mishra (2014). However, it contradicts the findings of

Balasubramanian (1994), Ganesan (1995), Mokashiet al (2012), where males were found to have higher anxiety than females and some studies found that sex is not a determining factor of students' anxiety.

From the above discussion, we find that the present study goes well with most of the studies. It leads us to conclude that gender has a significant influence on academic anxiety, with females having more academic anxiety in both the high and low achievers' group. Females are growing more and more competitive and having more career worries in the present-day world. Whether the female students are in the high achievers or low achievers' group, anxiety seems to affect them.

Implications

The study found a significant sex difference in Academic Anxiety within high and low achievers, where females were found to be more academically anxious than the males in both the high and low achievers' group. This finding implies that females are more nervous, worried and apprehensive of the stressful events in the academic environment. Thus, the teachers at school and parents at home should be conscious of the higher levels of academic anxiety faced by the females and pay special attention and support to them.

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