

Achievement Motivation and Parental Support to Adolescents

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The parental support exerts most direct influence upon the acquisition of achievement motivation. Thus the present investigation provides an important perspective of the relationship between achievement motivation and parental support. The present study was undertaken to investigate the relationship between achievement motivation and parental support, and to examine the gender differences in parental support. The sample for the present study consisted of 500 adolescents in the age group of 16 to 18 years from Varanasi city who were enrolled in class 11th and 12th. Deo Mohan achievement motivation scale and family support scale were used to assess achievement motivation and parental support, respectively. The results indicate a positive correlation between achievement motivation and parental support. Girls are sensitive to parental support as compared to boys. Achievement motivation is related to success in life, life satisfaction and quality of life. The study revealed that parental support for their children seems to have a strong influence on achievement motivation. The results of the study are generally positive and have an important implication for educators and parents. In particular, parents should support educational activities of their children to enhance their academic motivation.

Parents play a key role in shaping students' aspiration and achievement (Beyer, 1995; Eccles & Harold, 1993; Hossler & Stage, 1992; and Paulson, 1996). Family factors such as parent's level of education, parental expectations, and parental support for their children seem to extent some influences on adolescents' achievement motivation (Beyer, 1995). Achievement Motivation can be defined as a concern for excellence in performance as reflected in competition with the standards set by others or over unique accomplishment or long time involvement (McClelland, 1953). It is the basic ingredients necessary for one's success in life. There has been extensive research on the influences on students' achievement motivation. Psychological research has identified multiple factors which play an important role in predicting adolescents' achievement motivation. These factors are parental level

of education, parental expectations, encouragement and support.

Parents play an important role in the educational motivation of their children. They provide necessary facilities and educational environment which results in better performance in school. Parents approve and appreciate activities related to education and remove any difficulty felt by their wards. This type of behavior of parents is known as parental support. In other words parental support refers to the guidance, communication and interest shown by the parents to promote their wards' progress in school. Student progress is facilitated when parents give frequent verbal support and praise, regular feedback for school work and talk directly about school work and activities. Parents also enhance academic achievement of their children by teach them problem solving and negotiation skills. All the

above supportive behaviors of parents help children to learn and achieve. (Christenson & Peterson, 2007)

Parental support plays an important part of adolescent's educational aspiration (Hosler & Stage, 1992). Parental support also seems to be related to predisposition toward post secondary education. Parental support for their children is positively correlated with children's grades, IQ scores, educational aspiration educational attainment and achievement motivation. Beyer (1995) and Clark, (1990) described some factors which improve students' performance in school. These factors are parents' and teachers' frequent verbal support to students, praise to student's skill performance, progress and efforts, and care about them and their school performance. Talking with children about schoolwork and school functions of the children were identified by Peng and Lee (1992) as one of the important family variables that showed the strongest relationship with students' achievement. Similarly, parents who are involved (both at school and at home), with their children's schooling, enhance student, achievement (Comer, 1984; Henderson & Berla, 1994).

Parental support for learning and interventions programs of school are also associated with students' achievement (Jordan, Snow, & Porche, 2000). Family involvement that is linked to students' learning has a greater effect on achievement than general forms of involvement such as volunteering and decision making (Christenson & Sheridan, 2001). It was also found that the more family support to their children's learning and educational progress (both in quantity and over time), the more their children tend to do well in school and further their education after graduation (Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Marcon, 1999; Miedel & Reynolds, 1999; Sanders & Herting, 2000). Studies demonstrated that parents' involvement was positively associated with grades and test scores. Parents with high

involvement tended to have children with higher grades and test scores. Studies also demonstrated that positive effects of parental support on achievement motivation are similar for the parents of entire income level group (Henderson & Mapp, 2002).

A study related to home environmental influences on students' achievement, identified the following characteristics of academic guidance and support as positive and significant correlates of academic achievement viz., (a) frequent encouragement of children for their schoolwork, (b) parental knowledge of strengths and weaknesses in children's school learning and supportive help when needed (e.g., knowledge so supervision of homework is smoother or supplemental tutoring is provided), and (c) availability of a quiet place for study with appropriate books, references materials, and other learning materials (Kellaghan, Sloane, Alvarez, & Bloom 1993). Knowledge of the child's schooling as been documented as a positive correlate of students' school performance (Baker & Stevenson, 1986).

Researches explored some difference in parental support with high academic achieving and low academic achieving student. In a study Clark (1983) found that parents of high achieving students displayed a greater sense of responsibility in helping their children to gain general knowledge and literacy skills and initiated more contacts with school personnel than did the parents of low achieving students. In another study, Clark (1993) also explored that parent of high and low achieving students engaged in similar behaviors. Both the parents of high and low achieving students; talked to their children about homework, and monitored completion of classroom assignments. But the parents of high achieving students were more involved in home learning activities and spend more time in supporting their homework. Again it was concluded that all parents were enacting some positive behaviors that

contributed to student success but the parents of academically successful students apparently give a wide variety of additional supportive behaviors to their children.

Several researches on parental support explored some important and relevant variable related to children learning and progress in school i.e., (1) encouraging children's learning and progress in school, including maintaining a supportive learning environment, (2) helping with homework, (3) discussing the value of good education and possible career options, and (4) staying in touch with school staff about the youth's progress (Amato & Ochiltree, 1986; Baker & Stevenson, 1986; Eagle, 1989; Mitrsonwong & Hawley, 1993; Stevenson & Baker, 1987).

Studies explored that the type of parental support differs according to grade level, parents' involvement in home, reinforcement for positive behavior and performance in school enhances children's self-esteem and grades, especially for preschoolers and elementary students. In a similar study Ziegler (1987) found that students' achievement was enhanced by parents' participation. The type of participation differed for elementary and secondary level students. Parent's participation in reading and literacy enhanced elementary students' achievement whereas parent's awareness of their children school work, regular communication with teachers, and reinforcement for schoolwork, made greater achievement gains for middle and high school students.

In a number of studies it was found that perceived support from parents predicted adolescents' academic goal orientations (Wentzel, 1998). Parental communication and home support for learning has an effect on students' postsecondary enrollment and education plans. Trusty (1999) explored that if students' believed their parents communicated with them and supported their learning in eighth grade, they were more plans to continue their high school (higher

education). Regardless of income and family background, students' expectations for further schooling were affected by parental support. Thus, the more students perceive parental involvement and support, the farther they expect to go in school. Enhancing learning opportunities at home, specifically related to postsecondary options, has demonstrated positive outcomes for 12th graders irrespective of family backgrounds (race, parental education, income). Students are more likely to enroll in a challenging academic program, earn more credits toward graduation, and make higher test scores when parents express high expectations, keep discussing about attending college, and help students prepare for college (Catsambis, 1998). The most effective types of parental involvement are aimed at advising and guiding teens' academic decisions for future endeavors rather than supervising students' behavior (e.g., making contact with the school, excessive monitoring, focusing only on high school graduation). Parental communication and home support for learning has an effect on students' postsecondary enrollment and education plans, the more students perceive parental involvement and support, the farther they expect to go in school. Thus the purpose of the present study was to ascertain the relationship between achievement motivation and parental support and to examine the gender differences in parental support.

Hypothesis:

It was hypothesized that achievement motivation would be positively correlated with parental support and girls would be perceived significantly higher support from parents than boys.

Method

Sample:

The sample for the study consisted of 500 (250 male and 250 female) adolescents, in the age group of 16 to 18 years, who were

enrolled in class 11th and 12th in different schools of Varanasi city.

Tools:

The achievement motivation was measured by Deo-Mohan achievement motivation scale developed by Deo and Mohan (1985). The scale consists of fifty items related to academic motivation of adolescents. The parental support was measured by family support scale developed by Rajneesh (2004). The scale consists of 45 items related to five dimensions of family support to adolescents' i.e. academic support, motivational support, emotional support, financial support and other kinds of support. . The reliability of the two scales is .91and.94 respectively.

Result and Discussion

The analysis of the table 1 indicated that perceived academic support is significantly positively correlated to achievement motivation in academic area for girls (r=.28) and boys(r=.30). Emotional support is also significantly positively correlated with academic area of achievement motivation for the sample of girls(r=.28) and boys(r=.28).Similarly motivational, financial and other supports are significantly positively correlated with achievement motivation in academic area of achievement motivation for

both the samples. The table further indicated that academic and emotional support are significantly positively correlated with general interest area of girls' achievement motivation but not for the sample of boys. Financial support and motivational support are also significantly positively correlated with general interest area of girls' achievement motivation. This table does not prove the significant relationship in the sample of boys. The table also revealed that academic, emotional, motivational, financial and other supports are also not significantly related with achievement motivation in dramatics area of achievement motivation for both the samples. Academic, emotional and other supports are also not significantly related with achievement motivation in sports area of achievement motivation for both the samples. Motivational support is significantly positively correlated with achievement motivation in sports area for boys (r=.14) and but not for girls(r =.12).

Financial support is significantly positively correlated with achievement motivation in sports area for girls(r=.21) and but not for boys(r=.05). This result implies that adolescent's achievement motivation is directly associated with parental support. This study investigated the influence of parental support on adolescent's achievement motivation. As predicated that the

Table 1. Summary of correlation analysis between achievement motivation and parental support (N=250)

		Academic	General interest	Dramatics	Sports
Academic support	Girls	.279**	.139**	-.044	.056
	Boys	.299**	.015	.033	.115
Emotional support	Girls	.257**	.151**	.029	.090
	Boys	.227**	-0.02	.041	.083
Motivational support	Girls	.306**	.185*	.021	.124
	Boys	.334**	.051	.100	.144*
Financial support	Girls	.237**	.198**	.074	.212**
	Boys	.149**	-.060	.159	.075
Other support	Girls	.285**	.107	.030	.093
	Boys	.221**	.021	.111	.046

**p>.01, *p>.05

adolescents' perceived parental support were directly associated with the adolescents' achievement motivation. Thus, the result of this study are consistent with that of Hossler, Schmit and Vespero(1992) who established that parental support was an important factor associated with adolescents' achievement motivation. This finding is also consistent with Sadjapad, Strong and Suwanna (2001) who demonstrated that parental support was predicator of achievement motivation. Similarly Maya (2001) also found that parental support was positive correlated with achievement motivation of adolescents and was strongest predictor of achievement motivation. In a recent study Chen (2005) has also investigated that parents, teachers and peers perceive that academic support has the strongest influence on child's achievement. These results support from a number of earlier investigations which have implicated the role of parental support in achievement of adolescents. During the developmental process, adolescents tend to seek out their parents for advice and emotional support (Fulgini & Eccles, 1993; Fulgini et al. 2001).

The table 2 demonstrated that there is no significant difference between correlation of achievement motivation and academic support for the sample of boys and girls. Children are motivated to achieve and appear to do their best. When parents are warm and supportive, spend generous amounts of time with children, monitor children's behavior, expect children to follow rules and encourage open communication. In line with present finding Ainsworth and Bowlby's (1991) have also presented the importance of parental care and support in a child's security which is related to students' adjustment and school performance for both boys and girls adolescents.

Similarly the table 3 also shows that there is no significant difference between correlation of achievement motivation and emotional support for the sample of boys and

girls. Ainsworth and Bowlby's(1991) research also revealed that children felt secure only when they had parents to care and support them. Adolescents (both boys and girls) became curious with the world, more confident to learn and motivated to achieve, if they had a secure base to return to in times of insecurity and uncertainty. Therefore, having a secure base with a parent to return to the times of uneasiness allow the children to be more confident and comfortable in exploring new situations.

Table 2. Correlation coefficient of achievement motivation and academic support of Girls (N=250) Boys (N=250)

Achievement Motivation	Academic support		r	z	Diff.
	r	z			
Academic General	0.28	0.29	0.29	0.31	0.22
interest	0.14	0.14	0.02	0.02	1.33
Dramatics	-0.04	-0.04	0.03	0.03	0.78
Sports	0.06	0.06	0.12	0.12	0.67

**p>.01, *p>.05

Table 3. Correlation coefficient of achievement motivation and emotional support of Girls (N=250) Boys (N=250)

Achievement motivation	Emotional support		r	z	Diff.
	r	z			
Academic General	0.26	0.27	0.23	0.23	0.44
interest	0.15	0.15	-0.02	-0.02	1.89
Dramatics	0.03	0.03	0.04	0.04	0.11
Sports	0.09	0.09	0.08	0.08	0.11

**p>.01, *p>.05

Table 4. Correlation coefficient of achievement motivation and motivational support of Girls (N=250) Boys (N=250)

Achievement motivation	Motivation support		r	z	Diff.
	r	z			
Academic General	0.31	0.32	0.33	0.34	0.22
interest	0.19	0.19	0.05	0.05	.155
Dramatics	0.02	0.02	0.10	0.10	0.89
Sports	0.12	0.12	0.14	0.14	0.22

**p>.01, *p>.05

The table 4 also revealed that there is no significant difference between correlation of achievement motivation and emotional support for the sample of boys and girls. Similarly study by Unger, McLeod, Brown, and Tressell (2000) also found that less support from the family was associated with decreased level of desire or motivation in adolescents. This finding was then followed by the discussion that the student's grades and self-concept were negatively affected by the lack of parental support for male and female adolescents.

Table 5. Correlation coefficient of achievement motivation and financial support of Girls (N=250) Boys (N=250)

Achievement Motivation	Other support				Diff.
	r	z	r	z	
Academic	0.29	0.30	0.22	0.22	0.89
General interest	0.11	0.11	0.02	0.02	1.00
Dramatics	0.03	0.03	0.11	.011	0.89
Sports	0.09	0.09	0.05	0.05	0.44

**p>.01, *p>.05

The table 5 shows that there is no significant difference between correlation in academics ,dramatics and sports area of achievement motivation and emotional support for the sample of boys and girls but there is significant difference between correlation of achievement motivation and financial support for the sample of boys and girls. Girls' achievement motivation in general interest area is more influenced by financial support than boys. Consistent with the present finding, studies revealed that receiving money from parents for good grade actually motivate the children for high achievement. Similarly financial support from parents predicted the academic achievement and extrinsic or external motivation of the adolescents.. (Deci & Ryan,1985). More perceived financial support from parents protect adolescents from financial stress and greater availability of financial help in problematic condition

increases the security in the adolescents while lower support indicates risk for financial stress in them.

Table 6. Correlation coefficient of achievement motivation and other support of Girls (N=250) Boys (N=250)

Achievement Motivation	Financial support				tvalue
	r	z	r	z	
Academic	0.24	0.24	0.15	0.15	1.00
General interest	0.20	0.20	-0.06	-0.06	2.88**
Dramatics	0.07	0.07	0.16	0.16	1.00
Sports	0.21	0.21	0.08	0.08	1.44

**p>.01, *p>.05

It was clear from the table 6 that there is no significant difference between correlation of achievement motivation and other support for the sample of boys and girls. Consistent with the present finding researchers suggest that there are three sources of potential influence on academic success of adolescents. First is the parents' modeling of academic performance attainment, second parental verbalization of support for such performances and third parents' structuring of conditions for children's academic success. Parental encouragement, support, direct instruction at home and good communications with school improves students' school achievement (Mau, 1997).

Conclusion

The finding of the study reveal that there is a positive correlation between achievement motivation and perceived parental support which leads to conclusion that parental support helps the students to internalize educational values. When parents show an interest and enthusiasm for what their children are learning, they provide a support system at home that facilitated the child's academic learning and reinforces the value of schooling. By providing such emotional support, parents establish a foundation for socializing children's motivation to learn. Parents communicate the importance of education. Students are motivated when they

observe that their parents take an active interest in school. When parents communicate their values about education and learning, students' schools performance were more enhanced and had higher perceived academic competence (Marchant, Paulson, & Rothlisberg, 2001). A home environment that focuses on the value of education, learning and availability of learning resources has been shown to be more valuable for the achievement of students than a home environment focused on direct assistance with schoolwork (Halle, Kurtz-Costes, & Mahoney, 1997).

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