Academic Motivation and Academic Achievements

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Introduction

Motivation refers to "the reasons underlying behaviour" (Guay, F. & Vallerand, R. J. (1997). Gredler, Broussard and Garrison (2004) broadly define Motivation as "the attribute that moves us to do or not to do something". Motivation, according to the explanations, can be divided in to many categories, but this study focuses only the Academic Motivation and the connection of the Academic Motivation and Academic Achievements

Academic Motivation

Academic Motivation is defined by a student's desire (as reflected in approach, persistence, and level of interest) regarding academic subjects when the student's competence is judged against a standard of performance or excellence (McClelland, 1953). Academic Motivation also known as the Achievement Motivation is a broad term incorporating many concepts studied by scholars to include Self-efficacy, Determination, Resilience, etc. All of these terms incorporate characteristics related to Motivation. While connections were drawn between Academic Motivation and some of these terms, for the purpose of this study, the definition of Academic Motivation will encompass these terms.

Academic Achievement

Academic Achievement (AA) or Educational Achievement (EA) refers to cognitive learning outcomes that are products of instruction or aimed at by instruction within

a school context. There are many studies are on Educational Achievements and they have explained some prerequisites for better Educational Achievements too.

Educational Achievement has been defined as the degree of students' academic learning. Assessment of the existence, extent, or depth of such learning is conducted by using a number of measurement tools across research, policy, and interventions; the most commonly used indicators are grades in maths, science, and reading, standardized achievement tests, and IQ tests (Helmke, Schrader,2001). Although high correlations are reported among these various measures of academic performance, they also capture a unique aspect of individual student learning. For instance, achievement tests are specifically designed to measure efficiently the amount of knowledge and/ or skill a person has acquired at school using a comparison with a standard or norm that is usually based on an expected level of mastery in a content area. Often, these tests are used to measure and compare students, schools, districts, and states, based on norm-referenced scales of achievement. Similarly, IQ tests are intended to assess general cognitive competence, rather than measuring learning in a particular area of schooling (Selcuk Sirin, Gupta, 2015).

There are two categorical determiners or prerequisites of Educational Achievements as Environmental and Cognitive. Cognitive and Motivational determinants are outlined as part of a complex model comprising to the environmental factors like individual, parental, and school-related factors as well as cultural background. The most important cognitive determinants are intelligence, learning styles and strategies, and prior knowledge. Intelligence and prior knowledge account for high portions of individual differences. Whereas intelligence is a general capacity enabling persons to deal with new problems and complex

situations in different domains, prior knowledge comprises domain-specific prerequisites for achievement. Learning styles and strategies are characteristic modes of thinking and regulating learning processes that explain knowledge acquisition.

To sum up, it is obvious that the Educational Achievement refers to Test Scores determined by both environmental factors and the cognitive factors in which the cognitive factors are more effective.

Studies on Academic Motivation

Although the earliest scientific studies of Human Motivation date back to Freud's work in the late 19th century (Atkinson, 1964; McClelland, 1961), it is believed that research based theories of Achievement Motivation using clinical approaches were derived from Murray's concept of motives and grounded in experimental studies conducted by McClelland and his colleagues (McClelland, Atkinson, Clark, & Lowell, 1961).

Murray (1938) defined Achievement (need for achievement), as the need 'to overcome obstacles, to exercise power, to strive to do something difficult as well and as quickly as possible.

Maslow (1954) proposed a basic need hierarchy consisting of physiological needs, safety needs, belongingness and love needs, esteem needs, and self-actualization needs. The esteem needs include the desire for achievement, mastery, and competence (Maslow, 1954). These various theories of Achievement Motivation were widely studied until the beginning of the 1970s.

In response to these criticisms, studies of Educational Achievement changed from a trait paradigm to a social-cognitive

paradigm that focuses on the relationship between antecedents, mental representations, and consequences (Olson & Dweck, 2008). Achievement Motivation was described in terms of psychosocial mechanisms, environment, and interventions, rather than as a trait (Olson & Dweck, 2008).

Kumar (1988) conducted a study on perception of classroom social climate with reference to prediction of dimensions of Academic Motivation of high school students. The sample consisted of 1251 students of Std X. The hypothesis framed was that there is a significant relationship between nine dimensions of classroom climate and fourteen dimensions of Academic Motivation. The tools used were 'Trickett and Moose Classroom Environment Scale' and 'Moen and Doyle Academic Motivation Scale'. The data were analysed using multiple correlations and multiple regressions. The findings showed that there existed a positive relationship between classroom environment and the fourteen dimensions of Academic Motivation. The findings are important to the present research as it links classroom environment characterized by opportunities and challenges to Academic Motivation.

Sharma (2005) wrote an article titled, 'Motivational Techniques of the Day' in which the author dwells on the focal point around which motivational techniques resolve and asserts that an enormous gap exists between knowing that learning must be motivated and identifying the motivational components of any particular act. The article discussed three variables on which Motivation depends viz; value, expectancy and emotions. It pays attention to modern motivational techniques like good environment provision, creation of curiosity, positive expectations and so on. It also stressed on the use of modern technology to enhance achievement academic or any other form of Intrinsic or Extrinsic Motivation. Thus, the article focuses on

conducive environment with minimal adversities to sustain and develop Motivation.

Lakshmana Rao (2010) studied the impact of Academic Motivation and perceptions of classroom climate on Academic Achievement of secondary school students of North Coastal Andhra Region. The sample consists of 480 students from North Coastal Andhra region using non-proportionate stratified random sampling method. Their responses were correlated with Academic Achievement. The scores obtained by different groups were compared across the variables like class, sex, area, management and district and selected aspects of classroom climate co-operative learning, individualistic learning, competitive learning, feeling of alienation from school and social support. The results indicated that there is a positive strong correlation among Academic Motivation, perceptions of classroom climate and Academic Achievement. These findings are important to the present research as it has linked perceptions of classroom climate often characterized by adversities to Academic Motivation and Academic Achievement both of which are critical variables for the present study.

Ajay, Shashi and Kiran (2011) studied Academic Motivation among urban and rural students on traditional vs. open education system in India. This study aimed to find out learning Motivation of students taking education from Open Education System (OES) and Traditional Education System (TES). This study incorporated comparison between urban and rural students studying under the two systems. The normative survey method was used in the research. It was used stratified random sampling method and had a sample size of 151 students belonging to OES and 200 students belonging to TES. Questionnaire used was a self-developed tool named as Academic Motivation Scale (AMS). Results suggest that significant difference in Motivation

level exist when students of TES and OES are compared. This significant difference also exists when urban based students of the two education systems are compared. Similarly, when rural based students of the two education systems are compared, a significant difference is found in the Motivation level. The findings of this study are important to the present research as it throws light on the influence of urban and rural backgrounds, both characterized by their respective challenges on the Academic Motivation of students.

Areepattamannil, Freeman, and Klinger (2011) studied Intrinsic Motivation, Extrinsic Motivation, and Academic Achievement among Indian adolescents in Canada and India. The purpose of the study was to examine the relationships among Intrinsic Motivation, Extrinsic Motivation, and Academic Achievement for the Indian immigrant adolescents in Canada in comparison to their counterparts in India. Descriptive discriminant analysis indicated that the Indian immigrant adolescents in Canada had higher Intrinsic Motivation and Academic Achievement than their peers in India. By contrast, the Indian adolescents in India had higher Extrinsic Motivation than their counterparts in Canada. Hierarchical multiple regression analyses revealed the positive predictive effects of Intrinsic Motivation on Academic Achievement for both the Indian immigrant and Indian adolescents. While Extrinsic Motivation had a negative predictive effect on Academic Achievement for the Indian immigrant adolescents in Canada, it was not a significant predictor of Academic Achievement for the Indian adolescents in India. The findings of this study are important to the present research as it has linked Motivation to Academic Achievement.

Komarraju and Karau (2003) studied the impact of the five big personality dimensions on Academic Motivation.

The study predicted that conscientiousness and openness to experience would be positively related to many positive aspects of Academic Motivation. Personality showed a significant impact on Academic Motivation. The study is important to the present research as it throws light on how different personality traits influence Academic Motivation. While some of our resilience is associated with inborn personality traits, its link to Academic Motivation is vital.

Alfaro, Umaña-Taylor, and Bámaca (2006) examined the extent to which mothers, fathers, teachers, and teenage friends influenced Latino adolescents' Academic Motivation. Using path analysis, separate models were tested for 154 Latino boys and 156 Latina girls. Findings indicated that mothers' and teachers' academic support were positively related to adolescent girls' Academic Motivation, and fathers' and teachers' academic support were positively related to adolescent boys' Academic Motivation. The findings are important to the present research as it throws light on how a supportive environment enhances Academic Motivation.

Rusillo and Arias (2004) studied gender differences in Academic Motivation of secondary school students. A sample of 521 students was selected from second cycle of mandatory secondary education. The results indicated girls having lower level of Extrinsic Motivation, taking more responsibility for their failures. Gender differences were not found in academic self-concept, in Intrinsic Motivation and in success related attributions. The findings of this research are important to the present one as throws light on the Academic Motivation based on gender.

Chelliah Arulmoly (2017) A scholar from Eastern University of Sri Lanka has done a research on The “Impact of

Academic Motivation on Student's Academic Achievement and Learning Outcomes in Mathematics among Secondary School Students in Paddiruppu Educational Zone in the Batticallo District."

The objective of the study was to investigate the relationship between student's Academic Achievement (AA) and Learning Outcomes (LO) of mathematics as on impact of Academic Motivation (AM) among the junior secondary students in type II School in Paddiruppu Educational zone, Batticaloa District. The study was carried out on 300 junior secondary students randomly selected (grade 9 which are transformation group from junior secondary to senior secondary grade10).

H.K.T.C Halloluwa, Hakim Usoof, K.P Hewagamage, (2014) Stimulating Learners' Motivation in Primary Education in Sri Lanka. This paper highlights some of the issues that the primary school learners of developing countries are facing, the current educational systems and the potential contribution of technology and game based learning in primary education. It also discusses the use of computer games in teaching and learning with an analysis of different types of games such as simulations, serious games and edutainment systems. Furthermore, the paper discusses the technological aspect of learning and the opportunities that arise with the introduction of tablets in teaching. Finally, the paper discusses the possibility of establishing an ICT-enabled learning environment employing a Learning Management System and tablets to use games as learning modality in primary education.

De Silva, Udara I. (2015) has studied the effect of Motivation on Academic Achievements on "Language Learning, Motivation and Achievement: Sri Lankan University Students of Japanese as a Foreign Language"

This study explores the motivational dimensions and their relationship with Japanese language achievement of Sri Lankan university students. An exploratory factor analysis demonstrated 7 factors of Motivation and a regression analysis showed that only 2 motivational factors significantly affect achievement. Goal Achievement showed a positive significant effect, whereas Incentive Orientation showed a negative significant effect on Japanese language achievement. Influenced by social, cultural and contextual factors in Sri Lanka, student goals seemed to be more outbound towards the target country, Japan and long term instrumentalities seemed to shape achievement as opposed to short-term instrumentalities.

Motivation and Academic Achievement

Numerous studies have shown that students with higher Motivation are more likely to attain better academic outcomes (Covington, 2000). Martin (2009) argued that secondary school students are less likely to be motivated and engaged when compared to elementary school and college students. Less motivated students are more likely to show poor Academic Achievement and therefore, have a greater likelihood of dropping out between grades 10 and 12 (Rumberger & Lim, 2008).

Furthermore, Heckman and Rubinstein (2001), who examined students with General Education Degrees (GEDs), found that, even though GED recipients had higher average ability than other high-school drop outs, GED recipients demonstrated poor persistence and an inability to plan ahead when compared with peers who had not dropped out of high school. One possible explanation of relationships between Motivation and Academic Achievement is that students who are highly motivated academically choose more stimulating learning environments where they develop better academic skills.

Not all studies support the importance of Motivation in the prediction of achievement. For an example, Gagné and St Pére (2001) studied female 8th graders in an all the girl high school and found Motivation did not predict Academic Achievement after controlling for students' cognitive ability. Critics of the study suggested that the failure of observe effects for Motivation reflected a restricted range of Motivation in the sample, the use of an instrument lacking construct validity, a domain-unspecific measure, or a short-term study design (Hustinx et al., 2009).

Bandura (1997) described how the perceived causes of success and failure influence an individual's anticipatory cognitive motivators which, in turn, affect performance. There may be sex differences in the types of attributions students make. For example, Assoiling and her colleagues found that female gifted students were more likely to attribute general school academic success to long-term effort, whereas male gifted students were more likely to attribute success to ability (Assouline, Colangelo, Ihrig, & Forstadt, 2006).

Summery

Academic Motivation has been a fairly explored area in the field of education. The researches focused from knowing the causes of low Academic Motivation, characteristics of students at different levels of Academic Motivation to developing programmes and strategies to motivate students at different levels of education. Academic Motivation has also been studied in relation to a number of educational constructs like academic performance, locus of control and so on. The past researches have validated the relationship between Academic Motivation and positive constructs like parent Motivation and teacher support. This is the guiding line to analyse relationship between Academic Motivation and Educational Achievements.

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