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A STUDY ON THE ACADEMIC MOTIVATION OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN SOME SELECT SCHOOLS OF GUWAHATI CITY, ASSAM

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ABSTRACT

Today's technologically advanced world has seen a rise in the demotivation of students towards their studies, particularly as they approach high school. This is because at this point their focus is divided and diverted by a variety of factors, including peer groups, heterogeneous relationships, fashion and endless entertainment. So, the present paper is an attempt to find out the Academic Motivation level of class IX students in some select schools of Guwahati city and the views of the Principals of the sample schools regarding the signs of poor motivation among the students. Tools used for the present study are Academic Achievement Motivation Test by T.R. Sharma and an unstructured interview schedule. Data is analysed using percentages, Mean, Standard Deviation and t-test. Results show that a very few number of students are highly motivated towards their academic career. There is a significant difference in Academic Motivation between Male and Female Students of High Schools. Females are found to be more Academically Motivated than Males. There is no significant difference in Academic Motivation between students of Private and Government Schools.

KEYWORDS: *Academic Motivation, High School, Students.*

INTRODUCTION

Motivation is the vital factor that leads a student to learn. Motivation is widely acknowledged to enhance performance and efficacy in any human action (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Academic Motivation is the driving force

behind student's motivation to learn. It is the need and desire to excel in academic work. Academic behaviours can be seen as intrinsically motivated, extrinsically motivated or amotivated. Academic Motivation is a complex phenomenon, partly because its boundaries stretch beyond the education domain to the broader social context in which the student is situated (Pelletier et al, 2006). Research shows that one of the most prominent academic problems plaguing today's teenage youth is lack of motivation towards academic activities. Year after year, for reasons yet to be understood, numerous high school students find themselves in a state in which they do not have desire to carry out the academic tasks required of them (Green-Demers & Pelletier, 2003). Lack of Academic Motivation can lead to feelings of frustration and discontentment and can encumber productivity and well-being. Although academic motivation has received much conceptual and empirical focus, the fact remains that an abundance of high school students lack academic motivation (Snyder & Hoffman, 2002); Statistics Canada, 2002). Lack of Motivation is a real and pressing problem. 40% of high school students are chronically disengaged from school, according to a 2003 National Research Council report on motivation.

Students' self-concept of ability has been identified as a defining factor in Academic Motivation. So, if students have low self-concept and ability beliefs will be amotivated towards academics. Students seem to be amotivated in school for four distinct classes of reasons: lack of belief in their ability, lack of belief in their effort capacity, unappealing characteristics of the academic task, and finally lack of value placed on the task (Pelletier et al. 2006). Wright (2012) observes that the student is unmotivated because he/she cannot do the assigned work, classroom instruction does not engage, low self-efficacy, lack of confidence that he/she can do the assigned work and lacks a positive relationship with the teacher.

Moula (2010) observed that the home environment is one of the determinants of academic achievement motivation. An academically favourable home environment is likely to enhance the child's motivation to achieve academic success which in turn will contribute to good performance in school. In a study conducted by Koseoglu (2013), the analysis showed statistically significant difference between male and female students in academic motivation. It has been found that female students are more intrinsically and extrinsically motivated than the males overall. Hirunval (1980) investigated on Pupils Self-concept, Academic Motivation, Classroom Climate and Academic Performance. From his study he reported that academic motivation was positively related to self-concept and some of its components like goal-oriented activity, problem-avoidance. It was negatively related to other components of self-concept such as parental dependence, social commitment, and not related to awareness of personal block and initiative. Boys were more academically motivated than girls. Pupils in rural areas were more academically motivated than those in the urban areas. The self-concept of pupils and their classroom climate showed positive relationship. Classroom climate bore a positive relationship to pupil's performance. Pupils of twelve years of age were more academically motivated and had a better self-concept than older

pupils. Dubey (2010) observed that there is a positive relationship between academic motivation and achievement in English and as compared to students with low motivation; students with high and moderate motivation have high achievement in English. Pelletier et al (2006) observes that academic attitudes and behaviours are strongly influenced by key social agents in the students' environment, whether these are teachers, parents or friends. Students who perceive their social support networks (e.g. parents and teachers) as supporting and fuelling their autonomy and competence are more intrinsically motivated at school (Reeve et al., 1999). Research supports the conclusion that students motivation benefits when teachers support their autonomy. Feeling competent is an important source of motivation. It is therefore important that an individual's social network support his or her feelings of competence and mastery. Students need interpersonal affiliation and are met when they have the occasion to develop enriching relationships with others and when they feel that key social figures really care about them. In a study conducted by Wilkesmann et al. (2012) on the Academic Motivation of German Students found that flexibility, information and participation have positive impact on intrinsic academic motivation. Motivation seems to be independent from the parents' educational status. Scientific orientation has a very huge impact on intrinsic motivation. Female students are more intrinsically motivated than male students. So, they concluded their study with the advice to inspire students and give them freedom for action. Teaching students scientific thinking will enhance their academic motivation.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This paper is designed to study the following objectives:

1. To study the Academic Motivation level of high school students
2. To find out the differences in Academic Motivation between Male and Female Students
3. To find out the differences in Academic Motivation between students of Private and Government Schools

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

1. There is no significant difference in Academic Motivation between Male and Female Students
2. There is no significant difference in Academic Motivation between students of Private and Government Schools

METHODOLOGY

Sample: Simple Random Sampling method was used for selecting the sample for the present study. The sample consists of 120 students (53 males and 67 females) of four schools from different locations of Guwahati city.

Tools: The following tools are used for the present study:

1. Academic Achievement Motivation Test by T.R. Sharma.
2. Unstructured Interview for the Principal.

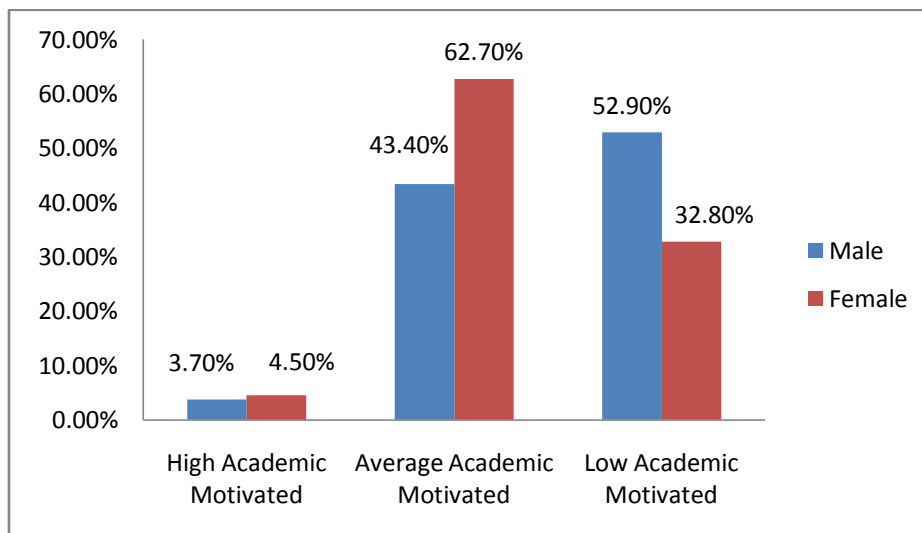
Statistical Techniques: The data is analysed in the form of percentages and also by using Mean, Standard Deviation and t-test.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The results of the study are discussed below according to the objectives mentioned above:

1. The first objective of the study was to find out the Academic Motivation level of High school students and the results shows a varying degree of motivational level among the male and female students. The results are shown below in the form of Bar Diagram.

Figure.1: Bar Diagram showing the level of Academic Motivation in Male and Female Students



It can be observed from the Bar Graph above that the level of academic motivation among the males is lower (52.9%) than the females (32.8%). But in case of females the level of motivation is average which is (62.7%) and in case of males it is 43.4% respectively. On the other hand, in the level of High Academic Motivation almost similar kind of responses (male =3.7% and female=4.5%) were found. From the findings it is observed that a few numbers of the students are highly motivated towards their academic career, and the percentage is high towards the average academic motivation in case of girls and the percentage is high towards low academic motivation in case of boys.

2. The second objective of the study is to find out the differences in Academic Motivation between male and female students. The results are shown in the table below.

Table.1: Significance of Difference between Male and Female students In Academic Motivation

Sex	N	Mean	SD	t-ratio	Level of Significance
Male	53	23.79	7.05	4.07	Significant at 0.01
Female	67	28.01	4.2		

It is evident from table.1 that the Mean of males is 23.79 and that of females is 28.01.

The Standard Deviations for the same group is 7.05 and 4.2 respectively. The t-value is found to be 4.07 and is significant at 0.01 level. Hence the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in Academic Motivation between Male and Female Students is rejected. It is concluded that there is significant difference in Academic Motivation between Male and Female Students of High Schools and that, Females are more Academically Motivated than Males.

3. The third objective of the study is to find out the differences in Academic Motivation between students of Private and Government Schools. The results are shown in the table below.

Table.2: Significance of Difference between Private and Government School students in Academic Motivation

Type of School	N	Mean	SD	t-ratio	Level of Significance
Private school students	70	25.91	6.54	0.50	Not Significant at 0.05
Government school students	50	26.48	5.18		

From table.2.it is clear that the Mean of Private School Students is 25.91 and that of Government School students is 26.48. The SDs of the same group is 6.54 and 5.18 respectively. The t-value is found to be 0.50 and is not significant at 0.05 level. Hence the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in Academic Motivation between students of Private and Government Schools is accepted.

RESPONSES FROM THE PRINCIPALS REGARDING THE ACADEMIC MOTIVATION OF THE STUDENTS

An Informal Interview was also conducted with the Principals of the four sample schools regarding the motivation of the students. The responses from the Principals are categorised into the following themes:

- 1.Lack of attention and interest in studies:** There is lack of motivation among the students. They show lack of attention and interest in studies and have distracted behaviours. They like discussing only out of course topics. They are attracted more towards outside sources like mobiles, internet, facebook etc. They are not bothered nor do they show any sign of remorse or sadness when they perform poorly in academics.
- 2. Incomplete task:**The students do not submit assignments on time and their homework or classwork are incomplete. The teachers have to remind them frequently since they do not do it by themselves.
- 3. Parents are not co-operative:**10 to 20% parents are not co-operative. Most of the parents depend more on private tutors' even though they are educated and have enough time.

MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- A very few number of students are highly motivated towards their academic career (male =3.7% and female=4.5%), and the percentage is high towards the average academic motivation in case of girls (62.7%) and the percentage is high towards low academic motivation in case of boys(52.9%).
- There is a significant difference in Academic Motivation between Male and Female Students of High Schools. Females are found to be more Academically Motivated than Males.
- There is no significant difference in Academic Motivation between students of Private and Government Schools.
- The signs of lack of motivation that can be observed among the students are lack of attentiveness in class, distracted behaviour, incomplete task (classwork/homework), underperformance in academics, and are attracted more towards outside sources like mobiles, internet, facebook etc.

SUGGESTIONS AND EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

The findings from the above study implies that the present day high school students are not fully motivated towards their Academic career and they get very easily distracted towards the incessant entertainment that is creeping up in this world of technological advancement. Their concentration level has also decreased and they lack patience.

The researcher, on the basis of the findings, suggests that the schools can introduce technology in the teaching-learning process along with the traditional method of teaching, as the students of today are more attracted and involved in technological use. Teachers can also follow variety of teaching methods like small group presentations, audio-visual presentations, brainstorming, demonstrations, guest speakers etc, as variety reawakens students' involvement in the course and their motivation. Teachers should create an atmosphere that is open and positive and should show a deep seated interest for the student and their problems and provide frequent positive feedbacks that support students' beliefs that they can do well.

Parents should talk to their children openly, without judgement, which may help to find out the root cause of lack of motivation. Fear of failure, lack of confidence in themselves and the future, lack of academic success, social pressures and lack of goals can all contribute to amotivation of the students.

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