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Effect of achievement motivation on academic performance of upper primary students studying in West Bengal (India) govt. schools

Debasis Bhattacharyya
HOD of Debnarayan Siksha Sansthan (NCTE affiliated B.Ed &D.El.Ed College) and Research Scholar of Sri Satya Sai University of Technology & Medical Sciences , Sehore (M.P) India.
Corresponding Author: Debasis Bhattacharyya

Abstract: *Achievement Motivation(AM) is a desire to do well relative to some standard of excellence. It is a social form of motivation involving a competitive desire to meet standard of excellence. This study aspires to investigate the Effect of Achievement Motivation on academic performance of upper primary students studying in West Bengal Board of Primary Education and West Bengal Board of Secondary Education affiliated schools. Participants included 1003 students that studied in Class-VIII (eight) from 10 West Bengal Govt. Schools .There were 470 Boys and 543 Girls in the range of age between 13 and 15 years. .Rao Achievement Motivation Test collected from Agra Psychological Research Cell was administered on all of them and two groups are formed on the basis of obtained scores viz., High AM related group and General AM related group. For data collection both the groups are exposed to same method of teaching under same learning condition. The collected data was analyzed by inferential statistical tests such as a t-test at the 0.05 level of significance. Results showed that the difference between learning performances of 2 groups were significant at the 0.05 level of significance and the High AM related group was better than the General AM related group in terms of learning performance.*
Key Words*: Achievement motivation, Interactive learning, Joyful environment, Creativity.*

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I. Introduction

Achievement motivation is a motivation sprouting from internal striving for success. Human being under AM always exerts to the fullest extent relentlessly to achieve the goal taking off all prohibitions. It is regarded as a central human motivation and is a key determinant of aspiration and persistence when an individual expects that his or her performance will be evaluated on the basis of some standard of excellence. Motivation to achieve is set off creating great unrest within a child and the child knows that he or she is responsible for the success of a task and anticipates explicit knowledge of results that will define success or failure. Uncertainty about the outcome of one's effort is the pre-condition. For better performance in relation to a standard of excellence or when compared with other competitors, achievement-oriented activity in elementary schools is a need of the day. The topic of achievement motivation is of practical importance in education and industry, and relates to the sociological study of the achievement of mobility through life. Through David C. McClelland's study of the relationship between achievement motivation and entrepreneurial activity, this topic has also become a matter of considerable interest to historians, economists, and others concerned with economic development. Individuals differ in their ability to self-motivate, and different activities pose different challenges to different people. The strength of achievement motivation in a particular person is an indicator of his or her personality. Environmental factors, confidence levels and physical strength of course are determinants of such strength. Development of achievement motive is affected by a number of variables in home, school and society. Home plays an important role in the early training of children for the development of attitude and motives. Parental expectation and guidance to the child develop need for high achievement motivation. The teachers can play a very crucial role in this process of development.

II. Materials And Methods

Psychological studies conducted under various rubrics, such as success and failure, ego-involvement, and level of aspiration have included roots of the concept of achievement motivation. There was no common method for assessment of motivation to anchor research findings. Shortly after World War II (1939-1945) there was a methodological innovation, especially the experimental validation method of measuring achievement motivation and the systematic use of this new tool in behavioral and societal studies. The career ladder is one measure of achievement and success in life, in which attaining goals leads to an increase in responsibility and

stature. McClelland's hypothesis states that it is "in part responsible for economic growth". In the 1950s, McClelland and his co-workers demonstrated that the motivational state of an individual can be diagnosed by means of content analysis of his or her fantasy or imaginative behavior as revealed, for instance, in the Thematic Apperception Test. Achievement imagery in fantasy takes the form of thoughts about performing a task well, trying various means of achieving, and of experiencing joy or sadness depending on the result of the effort. Experimental fact has identified the particular diagnostic signs of achievement motivation, while the results of validating experiments have been replicated in other societies and social groups. The method of content analysis is applied to analysis of imaginative stories that are written by different people under standard conditions, in order to study antecedents or effects of individual differences. Individuals producing the most achievement imagery in a standard assessment situation are considered the most highly motivated to achieve.

Quality Education

On the skills of thinking and providing an appropriate teaching–learning environment is one of the strategies today. Around the world, every country is seriously thinking of promoting the quality of education system. Globalization has led to a technical development in communication that allows us to access and exchange information whenever we want from anywhere. Technology has an important effect on education. Children need various skills in today's competitive world, which are beyond knowledge and require analyzing, combination power, and evaluation. In this regard, the role of smart schools is quite important.

Quality of education is an essential need in today's competitive environment. Technology has benefitted us in every aspect of our life, right from communication to education. However, effective use of technology to enhance the quality of teaching is a very challenging problem. The technology has been used to improve the quality of instruction. With the passage of time and progress in science and technology, new methods of teaching have been introduced, and today we witness one of the most versatile gifts of science, known as smart school. Smart schools refer to schools that have internet for all students and take advantage of the latest technologies in teaching and school management. Classes are equipped with features such as cameras, television screens, electronic whiteboard and other educational tools, and a computer laboratory for leisure time and searching for scientific articles. In these schools, students can use laptops or mobiles with wireless networks and software facilities and internet. Hence, smart schools have necessary and sufficient substructures to develop information technology and prepare facilities for use of all students and teachers. Students at smart schools have the roles of learners and teachers. In these schools, the curriculum is not restrictive, i.e., students can go ahead of curriculum, and the teaching method is student centered leading towards self-efficacy and motivation.

Creativity, Achievement Motivation & Smart schools

The creativity is the generation of new and valuable ideas. Vernon knows that creativity is an ability to generate ideas, insights, reconstructions, innovations, or artistic matters, which, according to experts, has scientific, aesthetic, social, and technological values. Guildford defines creativity as an equivalent to divergent thinking (to achieve new approaches to solve the problems) versus convergent thinking (achieving the correct answer). In his opinion, creativity is made of some factors such as fluency, flexibility, and invention, which constitute productive thinking. Creative thinking is one of the ten basic skills and it is a powerful way to engage students in learning. Questioning in class makes creativity. Creativity is an index of intrinsic motivation of an individual.

Students could not be creative if they are asked to do things in the way which they were trained. Torrance investigation showed that pure creativity usually has visual forms. Therefore, digital arts activate students in creating visual creativity (art, industry), and this has a dramatic effect on their minds' stimulation. On review of the previous researches, it is concluded that the effectiveness of this type of learning is more than other types of learning. The results of research showed that the curriculum which is based on e-learning is effective on creativity of students of upper primary schools.

Achievement motivation is expressed as the personal enthusiasm and effort to reach the goal of achieving a mastery of objects, things, people, ideas, or a superior measure. In other words, the concept of achievement motivation is incentive to overcome obstacles and fight with what is known as difficulties. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) can play a role in motivation in three ways; (1) involving students in learning, (2) stimulating interests of students, and (3) making learning more pleasant using a variety of contents: sounds, pictures, and films.

Various researches showed that using ICT by learners has an important role in increasing the motivation to learn and make them more confident so that they can be involved in the learning process. The findings of Rostami et al. also indicate that smart schools increase the motivation to learn, read and understand the materials.

ICT causes positive attitude in students toward smart schools. They demand the use of technology in the learning process and they know it as a privilege. Meshkat and Froozeshnia also found that the use of

computers will create a positive attitude and motivation for learners. Overall, smart training makes significant changes in the process of teaching– learning by integration of ICT and curriculum. In this type of schools in which teachers are guides, the role of students as active, creative, and participatory members changes, the evaluation system becomes process oriented instead of product oriented. Creativity and motivational achievement of the students are increased.

In the recent years, many efforts have been made to develop skills of observation. Measurement using tools, understanding and interpretation of data, problem-solving, the development of creativity and motivation are considered as the main objectives of education. In other words, strategies adopted for the development of creativity and achievement motivation in the current curriculum are not enough. Realization of these goals is possible only through precise designed training and necessary increase of investment in education in general and in elementary education in particular.

Characteristics of upper primary students of West Bengal

If we study Enrolment Status of Upper Primary Students of West Bengal , we shall get 1,41,601 students between the age group 9+ and 13+ are still remaining out of school in spite of having 75,77,914 net enrolment. **(Source: Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan as on 01.04.2011).** The 42nd round of National Sample Survey ascertained the reasons behind nonparticipation in the available schooling system. Out of all the non-enrolled children in school 10% mentioned the reason as want of facilities, 46% mentioned of various economic reasons including household chores and another 29.5% mentioned that they were not interested in education. Out of those who discontinued 30.83% did so because of economic reasons, 16.3% did so because of their failure and they were rather pushed out of the system rather than they dropping out. Another 26% dropped out because of lack of interest implying that a large number of children do not find the schooling interesting. . The two major challenges remain as to how to make the education outcome meaningful to those who are not interested in schooling and how to reduce the economic pressure in not opting to join and continue in schools renouncing whatever little income they can earn for the family as child labour. In fact the return from schooling has to exceed the opportunity cost of schooling.

There are scholars who believe that improving quality of teaching creating achievement motivation to help learning facilitate vocational skill development without any support from others outside schools either through private tuition or assistance of family members, which is not available for first generation learners, is very crucial in this respect.

Creation of Achievement Motivation

Teachers can create achievement motivation in learners by

- Exposing learners to encouraging stories of successful individuals.
- Allowing learners to develop their capabilities which bring them lots of joy and social recognition.
- Applauding learners for their achievements by knowledge of results at every step of their development.
- Arranging diversified co-curricular activities in the school.
- Awarding certificates for each and every activity to learners for their good performance.
- Helping students to develop self-confidence and socialize.
- Facilitating manifestation of learners' in-born qualities.
- Showing them good films and theatrical performances.
- Setting examples of successful living in better living conditions.
- Disseminating knowledge with the help of audio-visual teaching learning materials.
- Motivating parents by organization of parent-teacher meet at regular frequent intervals.
- Organization of educational tours.
- Taking students to visit reputed institutions, corporate and government organization.
- Arranging joyful lecture sessions by scientists and litterateurs.

Hypothesis

There is no significant difference between mean values of academic performance of a group of students possessing high achievement motivation and academic performance of other group of students of same class (from same population) having general achievement motivation.

Methodology

This study aspires to investigate the Effect of Achievement Motivation on academic performance of upper primary students studying in West Bengal Board of Primary Education and West Bengal Board of

Secondary Education affiliated schools. Participants included 1003 students that studied in Class-VIII (eight) from 10 randomly selected West Bengal Govt. Sponsored Schools .There were 470 Boys and 543 Girls in the range of age between 13 and 15 years. They were exposed to encouraging stories, quiz contests, getting acquainted with meritorious students of their school, awareness programme regarding requirement of academic success for getting job leading to better living standard. Guardians are also made aware about the potentialities present in their wards. All these are done for provoking achievement motivation in learners.

Now Rao Achievement Motivation Test published by Agra Psychological Research Cell (developed by Dr.D.Gopal Rao, Reader in Education of NCERT, New Delhi) is administered on all 1003 students. Based on the results of the test, two groups are formed viz.,High achievement motivation related group (HAR) and General achievement motivation related group (GAR).

Statistical analysis

For data collection both the HAR and GAR groups are exposed to same method of teaching under same learning conditions. The collected data on evaluation by standardized achievement test was analyzed by statistical tools viz., spreadsheet, basic graphs, SPSS and qualitative data analysis tools. An Inferential statistical test such as Student's t-test was used to ascertain the significance of differences between mean values of performance of two groups of students. The level $P < 0.05$ was considered as the cutoff value or significance.

III. Results

Table-1

Result of Rao Achievement Motivation Test

Sample Size =N	No.of students scoring 40--50	No.of students scoring 51--60	HAR	GAR
1003	423	580	580	423

Table-2

High achievement motivation related group viz., HAR(N_1= 580) is found to have meanM_1 and variance S_1^2. Similarly for General achievement motivation related group GAR(N_2=423), mean is M_2 and variance is S_2^2. Formula for calculation of **t** for testing the null hypothesis is

$$\mathbf{t = (M_1 – M_2) \div \sqrt{(S_1^2/ N_1 + S_2^2/N_2)}}$$

N_1	N_2	M_1	M_2	S_1^2	S_2^2	t
580	423	58	44.6	20519.24	1713.15	2.13

IV. Discussion

Educational researchers and those studying academic motivation and self-regulated learning have heavily drawn upon self-efficacy theory. Self-efficacy refers to a person's judgment of their confidence to learn, perform academic tasks, or succeed in academic endeavors (Bandura). Unlike more global beliefs such as self-concept, self-confidence, and locus of control; self-efficacy involves judgments concerning one's ability to attain a certain level of performance in a particular activity or situation. Research has consistently shown that self-efficacy beliefs are important mediators of all types of achievement-related behaviors, such as effort and task persistence, self-regulatory strategies and vocation choices.

Building on the work of Atkinson (1957, 1964) and Weiner (1985), Eccles and colleagues (1983) proposed a social cognitive model of achievement choice for understanding adolescent performance and choice in the domain of mathematics. Eccles et al.'s (1983) model has several unique features that take it beyond traditional expectancy-value models. The new model identifies developmental sources of children's and adult's expectancy and value beliefs. More specifically, the development of expectancies and task values are influenced, directly and interactively, by proximal psychological constructs (e.g., goals and affective memories) as well as by socialization agents such as parents, peers, and teachers.

Situational **motivation** is a phenomenon in which aspects of the immediate environment enhance **motivation** to learn particular things or behave in particular ways. Educators can do many things to create a classroom environment that motivates students to learn and behave in ways that promote their long-term success.

Excellent performance of individuals is highly related to personal achievements (Spence & Helmreich, 1983). **1.** Mastery of needs: An individual prefers jobs that are challenging, intellectually demanding, and thought-oriented. He or she enjoys playing a leadership role in groups and is able to complete tasks already started**. 2.** Work orientation: An individual takes a proactive attitude toward work and loves what he or she does. **3.** Competition: An individual hopes for victory and has the desire to win over others. **4.** Personal unconcern: An individual does not consider success or stellar performance to be the cause of being rejected by others. In other words, there is no fear of success. Therefore, achievement motivation is a subjective and internal psychological drive, enabling individuals to pursue work they perceive to be valuable and prompting them to reach their goals.

This study focused on the eighth grade students of 10 randomly selected upper primary schools of West Bengal Board and cannot be generalized on other grades and boards and levels of school. Researchers can conduct research on other groups and courses. Another limitation was moderate sample size. It is recommended to conduct research on a larger sample size. Furthermore, in this study, quantitative methods were used. It is suggested to use qualitative methods such as interviews and observations for measurement of creativity and achievement motivation.

V. Conclusion

As it was a two tailed test with moderately large sample, the 5 percent area of rejection will be divided between the upper and lower tails of the curve /distribution and it is necessary to go out to ± 1.96 on the sigma scale to reach the area of rejection. Since a t- value of 2.13 exceeds 1.96, the null hypothesis may be rejected at the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore evidently the results showed that the difference between academic performances (learning) of 2 groups viz., a group of students possessing high achievement motivation and the other group of students of same class (from same population) having general achievement motivation were significant at the 0.05 level of significance and the High AM related group was better than the General AM related group in terms of learning .Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected.

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