

Comparative Study

Achievement Motivation and Optimism Among Adolescents: A Comparative Study

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of education is the harmonious growth of individuals and achieving excellence is one of the important milestones in this process. This journey of achievement becomes more satisfied when factors like hope and motivation to achieve are associated with it. Young ones are the important source to a nation. They have to be optimistic in their lives and achievement motivation has to be high as both these factors will contribute in creating something extraordinary. Present research takes into account the assessment of achievement motivation and optimism among adolescents. A sample of 100 adolescents (50 boys and 50 girls) with a mean age of 14.6 years have been taken from private school of district Fatehabad, Haryana. Result of the study shows that optimism is highly positively correlated with compensatory effort, eagerness to learn, flexibility, independence, preference for difficult task, pride in productivity, status orientation and overall achievement motivation of the adolescents. Significant mean difference is found in overall achievement motivation and its different dimensions viz. confidence in success, dominance, flow, Independence and pride in productivity between boys and girls. Highly significant mean difference is also found in optimism level of boys and girls. Present study calls for the role of positive psychology in educational sector. Programs by educational institutions to enhance the optimism among students will surely help them to achieve great heights in their lives.

Keywords: *Achievement Motivation, Optimism, Adolescents*

A positive environment in educational institutions assists in achieving excellence and better performance, however efforts are required to create it. If students in schools are hopeful for their future and their lives, then they will feel motivated automatically to achieve accomplishments in different curricular and co-curricular activities. It is essential to understand and assess these factors as they play an important role in taking any institution to new heights. Students have to feel motivated and optimistic to achieve something incredible. Achievement motivation can be characterized as the endeavouring to increment or to keep as high as could be expected. It is one's own abilities in all exercises in which a norm of greatness is thought to apply and where the execution of such exercises, can accordingly either succeed or fizzle (Heckhausen, 1967). It comprises of a changed and complex series of expectations, evaluations, forecasts, inductions, values, norms, full of feeling responses that might be

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nonsensical, erroneous, and opposing (Dweck & Elliott 1983). Achievement behaviour is best characterized as conduct on ability undertakings, or if nothing else, on assignments where people accept, or feel that their skill influences results.

Optimism means a tendency of the people in believing that good things are going to happen. In other words, they believe that the actual world is the best of all possible worlds. Furthermore, people with higher level of optimism experience more life satisfaction and quality of life (Misra, 2012). Optimism has been demonstrated to be a helpful indicator for less tension and sadness. It is also linked with predictor of mental health and it also shows that if a person keeps optimistic point of view, it is a sign of mental balance. Optimism is associated with greater physical and psychological well-being (Hansen et al., 2014). It affects cognitive flexibility, happiness and better adjustment to university life of students too (Demirtas,2020).

Objectives of the Study

- 1) To study co-relation between achievement motivation and optimism among adolescents.
- 2) To compare the achievement motivation between boys and girls.
- 3) To compare optimism between boys and girls.

Hypotheses

- 1) There is a significant correlation between achievement motivation and optimism among adolescents.
- 2) There is no significant difference in the achievement motivation between boys and girls.
- 3) There is no significant difference in optimism between boys and girls.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

The sample for the study consists of 100 students including 50 boys and 50 girls from VIII, IX, X, XI and XII classes. In the present study, stratified random sampling technique was used. 20 students from each class were included in the sample for the present study. In this way, data of 100 adolescents were included for this study. Following criteria has been used as inclusion criteria for a student as a part of the sample from population.

- He/ she should a regular student in the school.
- He/ she should be in age group of 11 to 18 years.

Tools

The following tools were used to collect the requisite data.

- 1) **Achievement Motivation Scale:** Achievement motivation scale is developed by Dr. R. Protia (2016). It is prepared to make use of social oriented dimensions as constructs rather than cognitive and effective dimensions. The instrument includes 43 items measuring 17 dimensions of achievement motivation. The reliability of the developed scale has been established by Cronbach Alpha co- efficient of 0.729 and factorial validity has been established. The tool consists of 43 highly valid and reliable items. All the items included under seventeen dimensions are positive in nature. Therefore, the scoring of the responses of the subjects would be as 5 for strongly agree, 4 for agree, 3 for undecided, 2 for disagree, and 1 for strongly disagree.

Items of the Achievement Motivation Scale – Dimension wise

Sr. No.	Dimensions	Items
1	Compensatory effort	1,9, 17
2	Competitiveness	2, 10, 18
3	Confidence in success	3, 11, 19
4	Dominance	4, 12, 20
5	Eagerness to learn	5, 13
6	Engagements	6, 14
7	Fearlessness	7, 15, 21
8	Flexibility	8, 16, 22
9	Flow	23, 32, 41
10	Goal setting	24, 33
11	Independence	25, 34, 42
12	Internality	26, 35
13	Persistence	27, 36
14	Preference for difficult task	28, 37
15	Pride in productivity	29, 38
16	Self-control	30, 39, 43
17	Status orientation	31, 40

- 1. Compensation effort:** Compensation is a strategy whereby one covers up, consciously or unconsciously, weaknesses, frustrations, desires, and feelings of inadequacy or incompetence in one life area through the gratification or (drive towards) excellence in another area.
- 2. Competitiveness:** Competitiveness is a personality trait and form of social behaviour in which people rise to the challenge of competition and rivalry. Many philosophers and psychologists have identified a trait in most living organisms which drive the particular organism to compete.
- 3. Confidence in success:** Confidence is full trust belief in the powers, trustworthiness, or reliability of a person or thing. They have every confidence in their ability to succeed. His lack of confidence defeated him.
- 4. Dominance:** The dominance of a particular person or thing is the fact that they are more powerful, successful, or important than other people or things.
- 5. Engagements:** In terms of positive psychology, it describes a specific way of being involved with a task. It is often described as being so invested in a task that time flies by an experience causes positive emotions, such as curiosity or joy.
- 6. Eagerness to learn:** It is a specific emotion or band of emotions that are quite visible. The students look very bright, very enthusiastic, and are eager to move forward. They are willing and able to learn.
- 7. Fearlessness:** Courageous people are as afraid as anyone else. It is actually their fear that makes them courageous, not the lack of it. But they manage their fear differently.
- 8. Flexibility:** Flexibility is a personality trait that describes the extent to which a person can cope with changes in circumstances and think about problems and tasks in novel, creative ways. This trait is used when stressors or unexpected events occur, requiring a person to change their stance, outlook, or commitment.
- 9. Flow:** In positive psychology a flow state also known colloquially as being in the zone, is the mental state in which a person performing some activity is fully immersed in a

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feeling of energized focus, full involvement, and enjoyment in the process of the activity.

10. **Goal setting:** It involves the development of an action plan designed to motivate and guide a person or group toward a goal. Goal setting can be guided by goal- setting criteria such as smart criteria. Goal setting is a major component of component of personal- development and management literature.
 11. **Independence:** Independence is a personality trait in which a person consistently prefers to act on his/her own thoughts and feelings than take in the views of others.
 12. **Internality:** Internalization is directly associated with learning with in an organism and recalling what has been learned. In psychology and sociology, internalization involves the integration of attitudes, values, standards and the opinions of others into one's own identity or sense of self.
 13. **Persistence:** In psychology, persistence is a personality trait. It is measured in the temperament and character inventory and is considered one of the four temperament traits. Persistence refers to perseverance in spite of fatigue or frustration.
 14. **Preference for difficult task:** Perceived task- difficulty refers to our beliefs about how much effort would be needed to succeed at a task. It also includes our perception of ho likely we shall be successful, if at all. And, of course, task difficulty is related to our intentions to engage in the behaviour.
 15. **Pride in productivity:** When you take pride in your productivity performance, you think done instead of perfect. That does not mean that you are not giving it your all.
 16. **Self-control:** Self-control, an aspect of inhibitory control, is the ability to regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviour in the face of temptations and impulses. As an executive function, self-control is a cognitive process that is necessary for regulating one's behaviour in order to achieve specific goals.
 17. **Status orientation:** Orientation is a function of the mind involving awareness of three dimensions time, place and person. Problems with orientation lead to disorientation, and can be due to various conditions, from delirium to intoxication. Typically, disorientation is first in time, then in place and finally in person.
- 2) **Life Orientation Test (R):** Life orientation test is given by M. F. Scherer, C. S. Carver and M.W. Bridges (1994). It is a standard psychological instrument that assesses one's dispositional level of optimism, providing meaningful insight into possible interventions, such as those to address harmful thought patterns. This scale includes 10 items and measures optimism versus pessimism. Of the 10 items, 3 items measure optimism, 3 items measure pessimism (reversed scored) and 4 items serve as fillers. Respondents rate each item on a 5 point scale viz. 0=Strongly Disagree, 1=Disagree, 2= Neutral, 3=Agree and 4=Strongly Agree. LOT- R is a revised version of the original LOT. Items 3, 7, and 9 are reverse scored and items 2, 5, 6 and 8 are fillers and should not be scored. Scoring is kept continuous- there is no benchmark for being an optimist/pessimist. The original LOT had 12 items: 4 worded positively, 4 worded negatively, and 4 fillers. This revised scale was constructed in order to eliminate two items from the original scale, which dealt more with coping style than with positive expectations for future outcomes. The correlation between the revised scale and the original scale is 0.95. Original scale has a Cronbach alpha reliability of .76 and convergent validity of the scale revealed that scale related positively (.60) to measures of internal locus of control and self-esteem.

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Procedure

The study was conducted on school students. The consent was taken from the students and school administration for the data collection. The scales were distributed in classroom in a group of 20 students at a time in their respective classrooms. At first, basic instructions were given about the data collection. As both the scales were self-reported, so the students filled these scales by themselves. Lastly, they were thanked for their participation in the research.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The coefficient of correlation was computed to analyse the relationship between different dimensions of achievement motivation and optimism. In order to get a frugal picture of comparison of boys and girls on different dimensions of both variables, t-test was used in the study.

The aim of the study was to study the relationship between Achievement Motivation and Optimism among adolescents. Pearson product-moment method was applied and the bivariate correlation is shown in Table-1. The analysis showed that Optimism was positively and significantly correlated with nine dimensions of achievement motivation and with overall achievement motivation.

Table-1 A Co-relational Analysis of Achievement Motivation and Optimism Among Adolescents (N=100)

Sr.No.	Dimensions of Achievements Motivation	Optimism
1.	Compensatory Effort	.281**
2.	Competitiveness	.168
3.	Confidence in success	.037
4.	Dominance	.095
5.	Eagerness to learn	.288**
6.	Engagements	.030
7.	Fearlessness	.259**
8.	Flexibility	.348**
9.	Flow	.181
10.	Goal setting	.205*
11.	Independence	.232*
12.	Internality	.086
13.	Persistence	.178
14.	Preference for difficult task	.202*
15.	Pride in productivity	.283**
16.	Self-control	.136
17.	Status orientation	.214*
Over All Achievement Motivation		.299**

** p< .01 level, * p<.05 level

Analysis of above table explains that the Optimism is positively and significantly correlated with Compensatory effort ($r=.281^{**}$, $p<.01$ level), Eagerness to Learn ($r=.288^{**}$, $p<.01$ level), Flexibility ($r=.348^{**}$, $p<.01$ level), Goal setting ($r=.205^{*}$, $p<.05$ level), Independence ($r=.232^{*}$, $p<.05$ level), Preference for difficult task ($r=.202^{*}$, $p<.05$ level), Pride in productivity ($r= .283^{**}$, $p<.01$ level) and Status orientation ($r= .214^{*}$, $p<.05$ level). On the bases of above analysis, it can be said the first hypothesis that there is a significant correlation between achievement motivation and optimism among adolescents is partially accepted

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because nine dimensions of achievement motivation have significant correlation with optimism. Overall achievement motivation is also significantly correlated ($r=.299^{**}$, $p<.01$) with optimism. This finding is consistent with the study of Chamuah & Sankar (2018) which explains that achievement motivation and learned optimism are positively and significantly correlated with happiness. This research concludes that people having high level of achievement motivation and high level of learned optimism also have excellent level of happiness.

Table-2 Mean difference between Boys and Girls on Achievement Motivation

Variables	Boys (50)		Girls (50)		t
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Compensatory effort	12.90	1.65	12.60	2.04	.80
Competitiveness	12.38	1.92	11.62	1.85	2.01*
Confidence in success	12.52	1.54	11.24	2.08	3.49**
Dominance	11.56	1.95	10.68	2.10	2.16*
Eagerness to learn	8.56	1.28	8.46	1.70	2.16*
Engagements	6.72	1.57	6.42	1.63	.93
Fearlessness	11.48	2.61	11.12	2.27	.73
Flexibility	12.66	1.96	12.10	2.70	1.14
Flow	11.34	2.19	9.88	2.36	3.20**
Goal setting	7.96	1.87	7.52	2.02	1.12
Independence	11.94	1.63	10.62	2.34	3.26**
Internality	8.40	1.40	8.02	1.94	3.26**
Persistence	7.80	1.77	7.26	1.72	1.54
Preference for difficult task	7.94	1.81	7.42	1.64	1.50
Pride in productivity	8.32	1.40	7.38	1.95	2.75**
Self-Control	11.80	2.61	11.10	2.61	1.34
Status orientation	7.78	2.06	7.48	2.10	.72
Overall Achievement Motivation	172.06	15.04	160.58	19.27	2.84**

** $p < .01$ level, * $p < .05$ level

Motivation is a planned and action-oriented process and it imbibes an individual's personal feeling which is need based. On the bases of above analysis in Table-2, it can be concluded that significant mean difference has been observed in eight dimensions of achievement motivation and in overall achievement motivation. The observed significant mean difference between boys and girls in different dimensions are viz., competitiveness ($t=2.01^*$, $p<.05$), confidence in success ($t=3.49^{**}$, $p<.01$), dominance ($t=2.16^*$, $p<.05$), eagerness to learn ($t=2.16^*$, $p<.05$), flow ($t=3.20^{**}$, $p<.01$), independence ($t=3.26^{**}$, $p<.01$), internality ($t=3.26^{**}$, $p <.01$) and pride in productivity ($t=2.75^{**}$, $p<.01$) and overall achievement motivation ($t=2.84^{**}$, $p<.01$). On the bases of the results of it, second hypothesis is partially accepted as out of seventeen dimensions, significant mean difference has been observed on eight dimensions and on overall achievement motivation. Present research findings are consistent with the study of Patel and Jansari (2020), explains that higher secondary school boys having more achievement motivation than higher secondary girl students. Achievement motivation also leads to higher academic achievement. A study conducted by Hassan and Sarkar (2018) found that academic achievement and achievement motivation is positively correlated in secondary school girls.

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Table-3 An Analysis of Mean difference between Boys and Girls on LOT(R)

Variable	Boys (N=50)		Girls (50)		t
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Optimism	13.14	2.94	14.68	3.36	2.47**

** $p < .01$ level

Optimism is a generalized disposition to think good for the future. On the bases of above analysis in Table-3, it can be concluded that on optimism, there is significant mean difference between boys and girls on optimism and hence our third hypothesis is fully accepted. The t-value (2.47) is significant at .01 level. Optimism measures a tendency of an individual's belief that good things are going to happen and things will be fine in their respective areas. The result of the research is consistent with the study of Das & Sheron (2019) that there is significant difference between males and females with regard to optimism and life satisfaction. Thus, gender seems to influence optimistic- pessimistic attitude of the respondents in present study. Girls are more optimistic than boys as it is clear from their higher mean scores (14.68) and SD (3.36) than boys' mean score (13.14), and SD (2.94) which shows a significant difference between two after further analysis.

CONCLUSION

Positive psychology explains, emphasizes and helps in uncovering of human's strengths as they can lead to the positive functioning. Present research is another step in contributing in strengthening of positive aspects of human behavior. If optimism among students is enhanced, then it may lead to motivate the students to have achievement in various dimensions as it is very obvious with the results of the study. This research emphasizes the organization of programs on positive aspects of behavior by counsellors, psychologists and mental health professionals. Students have to be helped in generation of optimism in their lives so that they can perform well in different areas of curricular, co-curricular activities and in broader terms in their personal lives too.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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