

A Study of Achievement Motivation and Locus of Control in Gifted and Non-Gifted Students

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ABSTRACT

Aim: The purpose of the present study is to compare of achievement motivation and locus of control in gifted and non-gifted students. **Method:** A group of 170 (N=170) first grade of high school in the Birjand city (Iran) students (40 gifted girls, 40 gifted boys and 45 non-gifted girls, 45 non-gifted boys) were selected by a random method. The between-group difference was assessed using the student's t-test for dependent data. **Result:** The level of $p < 0.01$ was considered significant. Significant between group differences were found among gifted and non-gifted students with the achievement motivation and locus of control.

Keywords: Achievement Motivation, Locus Of Control, Gifted, Non-Gifted Students

Researchers, faculty, and administrators in high school have attempted for years to fit the many pieces of the puzzle together regarding academic success. Throughout the literature on student retention, multiple social and psychological factors affecting academic success have been cited. Achievement motivation and locus of control have been two of those factors under consideration. Motivation is one of the most important factors of learning. It holds a pivotal role in the teaching learning process. Though the teacher's motivation level occupies a very important position, yet it is always dependent on the students' process. Motivation is the heart of learning. Adequate motivation not only sets in motion the activity, which results in learning, but also sustains and directs it. It is concerned with the arousal of interest in learning (Chand, 1990). Over the past thirty years, achievement goal theory has emerged as one of the “most prominent theories of achievement motivation” (Meece, Anderman & Anderman, 2006). The source of motivation has been explained as a social cognitive process (Anderman & Wolters, 2006).

Considerable research is based upon the theories of motivation. Current theories of motivation include Maslow's hierarchy of needs, McClelland's Achievement Motivation,

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Rotter's Locus of Control, Wiener's Attribution Theory (Crowl, Sally & David, 1997). The first variable of the proposed research is "locus of control". The term 'locus of control' was originally introduced by Rotter (1954) whose thinking reflects a blend of human and behaviorist tradition. Rotter was not only the first to define the concept, but also presented a social learning theory framework, in which it could be incorporated. The dimensions (internal vs. external) of locus of control were analyzed in relation to the other important aspects in daily life of college and university students, such as academic achievement, self-esteem, academic procrastination, self-efficacy, optimism, self-concept, sense of mastery, and so on (Abouserie, 1994; Park & Kim, 1998; Jansenn & Carton, 1999; Beck, Koons, & Milgrim, 2000; Nilson-Whitten, Morder, & Kapakla, 2007; Sheikhi Fini & Yousefzadeh, 2011; Sagone & De Caroli, 2014; Gujjar & Aijaz, 2014; Visi, 2015). More recently, Nwankwo and colleagues (2012) noted a significantly positive relationship between high levels of self-esteem and internal locus of control in a sample of well-functioning older adolescents. These beliefs give the kind of attitude people adopt towards an event. In other words, the locus of control has a correlation link with attitude. Thus, Locus of control refers to an individual's generalized expectation concerning where control over subsequent events resides. A number of previous studies have identified significant relationships between locus of control and achievement motivation (Singh Bal, Singh & Singh, 2010; Labhane, Nikam and Baviskar, 2015). From these studies, it was concluded that internals tend to show superior achievement in comparison to their external counterparts. Other research presented by Umoh (1991) confirmed the evidence that there is a relationship between locus of control and academic achievement levels. Also, many researches on academic achievement had focused on students' perceptions of the psychological factors related to academic achievement (Williams, 1990). Thus, internally oriented and externally oriented students tend to follow different strategies to acquire learning (Grimes, Millea & Woodruff, 2004). Research in educational psychology shows that internally oriented student tend to perform better academically than externally oriented students, as reflected by their GPA scores (Carden et al., 2004; shepherded, Fitch, Owen, & Marshall, 2006). The present study was planned and performed for comparison between achievement motivation and locus of control among the gifted and non-gifted student.

Hypotheses

First hypothesis: there is a significant differentiate between locus of control in gifted and non-gifted students.

Second hypothesis: there is a significant differentiate between locus of control in girls and boy students.

Third hypothesis: there is a significant differentiate between achievement motivation in gifted and non-gifted students

Fourth hypothesis: there is a significant differentiate between achievement motivation in girls and boy students.

METHODOLOGY

Subjects: the subjects of this study were 170 students of high school in Birjand (Iran) gifted and non-gifted (40 gifted girls, 40 gifted boys and 45 non-gifted girls, 45 non-gifted boys) that were selected by a random method.

In this study, gifted students were high school students who were identified as being gifted within the education system and non-gifted students were high school students who were not identified as being gifted within the education system.

Study instrument

1. **Rotter's internal-external scale:** This scale consists of 29 statements each has two choices A and B. 6 statements are neutral, which make the test ambiguous for the subjects. The scoring of the test is according to the sum of scores derived from the checkmarks put in front of the questions.
2. **Hermans achievement motivation questionnaire:** This questionnaire has 29 questions, multiple choice. Some of the questions positively and some negatively presented. In questions 1, 4, 9, 10, 14, 15, 16, 20, 23, 27, 28, 29, to a first score, a score of 2 to C-3 score of 4 is given to evidence, and in the rest of the questions are scored as a picture. The range is between 29 and 116. Hermans to evaluate the validity, content validity method to do that, based on previous research on achievement motivation was. He also questions the correlation of the two, with progressive behavior estimated that indicates the validity of the test (($r = 0/88$, respectively. To estimate the reliability, Cronbach's alpha trial and after 3 weeks was used as reliability, 0/82 and 0/85 respectively obtained (Ismail, 2005).

Statistical Method

The statistical test used for data analysis is a student's t test for dependent data.

Table 1. Comparison on locus of control between gifted and Non-gifted group

Locus of control		N	mean	SD	t	df	p
	gifted	80	14/037	3/436	2/05	168	0/01*
	Non-gifted	90	12/9	3/743			

Table 2. Comparison on locus of control between Boys and Girls group

Locus of control		N	mean	SD	t	df	p
	Boys	85	14/27	3/46	3/06	168	0/01*
	Girls	85	12/6	3/63			

Table 3 Comparison on achievement motivation between gifted and Non-gifted group

Achievement motivation		N	mean	SD	t	df	p
	gifted	80	80/07	10/31	2/128	168	0/01*
	Non-gifted	90	76/75	10			

Table 4. Comparison on achievement motivation between Boys and Girls group

Achievement motivation		N	mean	SD	t	df	p
	Boys	85	80/62	3/46	3/99	168	0/01*
	Girls	85	76/01	9/96			

CONCLUSION

The current paper was focused on the comparison locus of control and achievement motivation in two groups, gifted and non-gifted high school students.

These findings could be considered useful to realize training pathways to help the non-gifted students to improve in order to reduce the academic procrastination and drop out in all courses.

First hypothesis result obtained after its analysis data are shown table no-01 reveals that there would be significant difference was found in locus of control between gifted and Non-gifted students. This significant “t” value (2.05) indicates gifted students have a high level of internal locus of control than non-gifted students. Individuals with external locus of control believe that their behaviors or their skills make no difference in getting reinforcement and they do not value their efforts. These people have less belief that they can control their lives in the present or future. That is why the above finding can be supported by the conclusion of the studies carried out by Sheikhi Fini & Yousefzadeh (2011); Labhane, Nikam & Baviskar (2015). A second hypothesis result obtained after analysis data are shown table no-02 reveals that there would be significant difference was found in locus of control between boys and girls group. This significant “t” value (3.06) indicates that boy students have very high levels of internal locus of control than girls students. Hummer explained that individual differences influence the locus of control of the responses, because individuals with internal locus of control tend to resist to the effects and external invasions. Those students with internal locus of control believe that their educational achievement and grades depend on their efforts and their planning. On the other hand, they put all the positive and negative events in their lives under their yoke; they accept the responsibility of their performances, behaviors, and its consequents (Hrbakova, Hladik & Vavrova, 2012). In other words, students may take more responsibility for learning if they believe themselves to be competent (Araromi, 2010). A third hypothesis result obtained after analysis data are shown table no-03 reveals that there would be significant difference was found in achievement motivation between gifted and Non-gifted group. This significant “t” value (2.128) indicates that gifted students have a better level of achievement motivation than non-gifted students. In explaining these results we can say, achievement motivation, the movement necessary for the successful completion of a task, goal or achieve a certain degree of competence in their work will follow, until they can be successful in learning, and achievement of business them. On the other hand, the motivation for academic achievement is more, in their quest for knowledge, learning and education is more active and more pain and trouble, it will undergo to achieve the ultimate goal. When one of high achievement motivation, the well cared assignments, homework takes seriously, and further tries, more information than in the classroom to learn, learn. The fourth hypothesis result obtained after analysis data are shown table no-04 reveals that there

A Study of Achievement Motivation and Locus of Control in Gifted and Non-Gifted Students

would be significant difference was found between boys and girls students with reference to their achievement motivation. This significant “t” value (3.99) indicates that sex significantly affects the achievement motivation. This reveals the fact that boy students have a high level of achievement motivation than girl students.

Regarding this study, teachers, parents and those who are involved in education must be creating achievement motivation in students by modeling successful individuals. Parents expect a wisely behavior from their child and expect their success, this expectation increases child's success. Educational conditions must emphasize the learning not achievement. Emphasizing on learning encourages student's efforts and by emphasizing the student's activity, necessary feedbacks and the mistakes could be corrected.

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A Study of Achievement Motivation and Locus of Control in Gifted and Non-Gifted Students

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