

## **ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION TOWARDS SOCIAL STUDIES ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA**

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**ABSTRACT:** *This research examined Achievement motivation towards Social Studies on students' academic achievement in tertiary institutions in Cross River State, Nigeria. To achieve the purpose of this study, one hypothesis was formulated to direct the study. Ex-post facto research design was adopted for the study. A sample of six hundred and seventy-three (673) students was randomly selected for the study. The instruments for data collection were the Achievement Motivation towards social Studies Questionnaire (AMTOSSQ) and Social Studies Achievement Test (SOSAT) developed by the researchers which were subjected to validation by experts in measurement and evaluation and psychology. The reliability estimates of the instruments were established through the split-half reliability method and it associate Spearman Brown prophesy formula. Pearson product moment correlation analysis was adopted to test the hypothesis at .05 level of significance. The result of the analysis revealed that achievement motivation towards Social Studies on students' academic achievement has a significant positive relationship in the subject. Based on the finding of the study, it was recommended that students should develop high achievement motivation towards social studies and other subjects as this will manifest in higher academic achievement and vice versa.*

**KEYWORDS:** Achievement Motivation, Social Studies, Students, Academic Achievement

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### **INTRODUCTION/LITERATURE REVIEW**

Achievement motivation could be seen as the desire or the hope the learner has to achieve in relation to his exposure to a particular learning experience. Maya (2005) postulated that high-need achievers are moderate risk takers, have an energetic approach to work and prefer jobs that give them personal responsibility for outcomes. Maya posited that factors such as parents' level of education and parental support and expectations for their children seem to exert some influence on adolescents' achievement motivation. The relationship may exist because more educated parents might be more involved in their children's education than less educated parents. Franken (2002) opined that these set of people would like to get immediate regular concrete feedback on how well they are performing a task.

Akubuiro (2008) asserted that self-regulated learning strategies are strongly associated with motivational factors, control of learner's beliefs, self efficacy, self-regulation, control of time and study environment and effort regulation are time motivational factors that have been useful in fostering academic success. Control of learner beliefs refers to students' beliefs that efforts to learn will bring positive outcome. This motivational factor pertains to the belief that outcomes are contingent on one's effort. If students feel that, they can control their academic performance they are more likely to exert the effort necessary to change their learning behaviour (Garcia and Pintrich 1994).

Achievement motivation has also been defined as the extent to which individuals differ in their need to strive to attain rewards, such as physical satisfaction, praise from others and feelings of personal mastery (McClelland, 1998). Wilkins (2007) submitted that theories of the underlying processes of achievement motivation range from cognitive focus on individual personality traits and reaction to task difficulty. Though these approaches vary in their framework to studying achievement motivation, yet each approach views achievement motivation as a process that occurs at the individual level. Wilkins explained that achievement motivation is better characterized as multi-dimensional, encompassing differences in learning goals and orientations towards learning.

In another study, McGregor and Eliot (2002) found that individuals with mastery achievement goals had the most positive outcomes examination preparation and calmness before examination taking. Individuals with performance goals and approach achievement orientation also demonstrated somewhat positive outcomes for examination preparation and calmness before examination taking, although these outcomes were not as positive as those with mastery approach orientation. Individuals with performance goals as an avoidance achievement orientation had the most negative outcomes for the examination preparation and calmness before examination taking. These findings suggested that individuals with mastery goals and avoidance achievement orientation are most at risk for negative academic outcomes and individuals with mastery goals and approach achievement oriented are most likely to show positive academic behaviour (Wilkins 2007).

In a study carried out to investigate how achievement motivation relates to demographic factors (immigration, age, gender, grade), perception of academic climate, and outcomes and how these associations change over time. Wilkins (2007) used a sample of 143 Latino adolescents for the study. The data was analyzed using Elliot and McGregor's (2002) 2 x2 achievement motivation (mastering approach, mastery-avoidance, performance approach and performance-avoidance) model. Girls reported higher levels of mastery avoidance achievement motivation and 8<sup>th</sup> graders reported a greater increase in mastery-approach achievement motivation overtime. A comparative analysis on the relationship between family environment and educational achievement was conducted by Swift (2005) the study was strictly based on the concept of values. The results revealed that social class membership of parents had tremendous effect on the achievement motivation of pupils. The middle class children in the study had higher achievement motivation than their working class counterparts because their parents supervised their leisure activities and they themselves would want to reflect the values of their class. However, the upwardly mobile working class boy was found to have achievement motivation similar to his middle class co-pupil and different from the non mobile members of the class.

Atkinson (1999) opined that individuals with high achievement motivation perform with great intensity, believing that the outcome is mostly determined by effort exerted on a task. However, individuals low in achievement motivation do not recognize the importance of effort in goal attainment. Chauhan (2002) stated that changes in religious beliefs, personal and social values and orientation towards achievement may result in high achievement motivation. The author further maintained that parental expectations are indeed directly related to level of achievement motivation in their sons and daughters.

Umoinyang (1999) asserted that some people evaluate roles on the basis of the opportunities for excellence rather than those for prestige. Their concern for achievement is not affected by having to work for a group rather than for themselves, they choose to pick experts rather than

friends as work partners. They would prefer situation in which they can take personality for the outcomes of the efforts. They like to control their destinies rather than leave things up to fate, chance or luck (McClelland, Clark, Atkinson and Lowell, 1993). Achievement oriented people set their goals carefully after considering the probabilities of success in a variety of alternatives. Their goals tend to be at moderate risks of which their efforts are neither doom to failure nor guaranteed for success (Mitchell, 2002).

Hitch (1998) carried out a study to find out how achievement motivation relates to academic performance and discovered that, the operative factor in academic performance of students depended more on future goals than past performance. The procedure adopted was based on prediction analysis and the use of mean scores as established by McQuitty Cluster Analysis (McQuitty, 1977). It was found that students who failed in one or more subjects in their first attempt widened the differences between schools. The observed values were  $r=0.0373$  for social class  $r=0.377$  for applied science, Ruhland, Gold and Feld (2000), on exposing children to one or more sections, discovered that there was a positive relationship ( $r=28$ ;  $P < 0.05$ ) between a socially based measure of achievement motivation and scholastic performance for upper graders who experience low role conflict and also for upper graders  $r=.38$ ,  $p < 0.05$  who are high in socio-metric status.

Zenzen (2002) also maintained that if the student feels the task has no value, the student chooses not to do the task, even though he is perfectly capable of accomplishing the task. Zenzen went on to state that, still others, who may or may not be capable, plod on with their task, some achieving accomplishment others not. Then there is a final group, Zenzen went on to say, who choose not to do the task. These students are afraid probably because they will not be able to accomplish the task. They have fear of failure. Rather than face humiliation of not being able to complete the task, thus facing the task, these students choose not to do the task at all.

### **Theoretical background**

The researchers examined the social system theory since the study dealt with relationships and interactions between variables within a social system (in this context, the tertiary institutions). According to Kimbrough and Nunnery (1983) scholars in the late 1950s who were concerned with the organization of complex organizations began to view organization as a system. The underlying thesis was that to understand the phenomenon, the whole must be recognized as being greater than the sum of the parts. Hall and Fegen (1968) defined a system as a set of objects together with relationship between the objects and between their attributes, whereas Choforas (1965) view a system as a group of interdependent element acting together to accomplish a predetermined goal.

Educational institutions according to Peretomode (1999) are formulations of systems and sub-systems in which the components among others include people. A system is made up of inputs and the external environment. These inputs include raw materials, human resources and capital that may transform them into outputs. The external environment reacts on these outputs through a feedback loop and this becomes an input for the cycle of the system. Although the system theory has some limitations as opined by Silver (1983) and Lipman and Hoeh (1974), its implication for the study is very important because it concerns the efficiency and effectiveness of input and process and these are the areas in which this study is focused.

Given the system theory, it sounds logical to expect variations in the inputs to be reflected in variations in output. Specifically, does input variable such as achievement motivation towards social studies relate to a system output such as academic achievement?

### Hypothesis

The under stated hypothesis was formulated in pursuance of the objective of this study. Achievement motivation towards Social Studies has no significant influence on students' academic achievement.

### DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The design adopted for this study was ex-post facto because the researchers had no direct control of the independent variable as their manifestations had already occurred. The study was carried out in Cross River State, Nigeria. The population was made up all NCE 2 students in the College of Education, Akamkpa and the Federal College of Education, Obudu offering social studies totaling 1,343. The sample drawn from the study consisted of 673 students from the 2 tertiary institutions a breakdown showed 480 representing 60% from Obudu while 273 students were selected from Akamkpa representing 50% through simple random sampling technique. The instrument for data collection comprised a set of questionnaire and social studies achievement test designed by the researchers and validated by three experts in educational measurement and evaluation and psychology who affirmed with 94% agreement that the entire instruments were suitable for measuring what it purported to measure. The split-half reliability method and its associate Spearman Brown was used to establish the reliability index at 0.94.

### Data analysis/discussion

The data collected were analyzed using Pearson product moment correlation analysis. The hypothesis was tested at .05 level of significance and 751 degree of freedom.

**TABLE 1: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis of the relationship between achievement motivation towards Social Studies and students' academic achievement (N=673)**

Variable	$\bar{X}$	SD	r-value
Achievement motivation	19.99	2.25	0.27
Academic achievement	21.23	1.85	

\* Significant at .05, critical  $r = .062$ ,  $df = 671$

The result of the analysis as presented in Table 1 revealed that the calculated r-value of 0.27 is higher than the critical r-value of .062 at .05 level of significance with 671 degree of freedom. With this result, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between achievement motivation towards Social Studies and students' academic achievement was rejected. This result implied that, achievement motivation has a significant positive relationship with students' academic achievement. The positive r showed that, the higher achievement motivation towards Social Studies, the higher the students' academic

achievement tends to be. On the other hand the lower their achievement motivation towards Social Studies the lower their academic achievement tends to be.

## **DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

The finding of this hypothesis is in line with the view of McGregor and Eliot (2002) who found that individuals with mastery achievement goals had the most positive outcome examination preparation and calmness before examination taking. Individuals with performance goals and approach achievement orientation also demonstrated somewhat positive outcomes for examination preparation and calmness before examination taking, although these outcomes were not as positive as those with mastery approach orientation. Individuals with performance goals as an avoidance achievement orientation had the most negative outcomes for the examination preparation and calmness before exam taking. Franke, (2002) opined that these set of people would like to get immediate regular concrete feedback on how well they are performing a task.

This finding also agreed with Maya (2005) who postulated that high-need achievers are moderate risk takers, have an energetic approach to work and prefer jobs that give them personal responsibility for outcomes. Maya posited that factors such as parents' level of education, parental support and expectations for their children seem to exert some influence on adolescents' achievement motivation. The relationship may exist because more educated parents might be more involved in their children's education than less educated parents. They will not work harder in a task just because money is offered as a reward. The finding is consistent with Wilkins (2007) who asserted that individuals with a high motive to achieve set goals that are challenging in which tie outcomes are more uncertain. They are found to be more concerned with medium, than with a long range future. They show a greater anticipation of the future and prefer larger rewards in the future rather than small rewards in the present.

The result is in line with Akubuiro (2008) who asserted self-regulated learning strategies are strongly associated with motivational factors, control of learner's beliefs, self efficacy, self-regulation, control of time and study environment and effort regulation are time motivational factors that have been useful in fostering academic success. Control of learner beliefs refers to students' beliefs that efforts to learn will bring positive outcome. This motivational factor pertains to the belief that outcomes are contingent on one's effort. If students feel that they can control their academic performance they are more likely to exert the effort necessary to change their learning behaviour.

It has been found that individuals with a high achievement motivation are more interested in excellence for its own sake rather than for the rewards it brings. Also student with high achievement motivation tend to perform better academically than those with low achievement motivation.

## **CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that, achievement motivation towards social studies significantly relate to students' academic achievement in the subject. It was

recommended that students should develop high achievement motivation towards social studies and other subjects as this will manifest in higher academic achievement and vice versa.

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