

# STUDY ON ACADEMIC SELF CONCEPT AND ACADEMIC MOTIVATION AMONG HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN MADURAI TAMILNADU

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## ABSTRACT

*Our Education system is geared towards teaching and testing knowledge at every level as opposed to teaching skills. "Give a man a fish and feed him one day, teach him how to catch fishes and feed him for a life time." It is clear that if we teach a man a skill, he enable it for a life time. One's academic self concept relates to how well the individual does in school or how well one demonstrates an ability to learn the academic context. Brigham (1986) states that self concept is not innate but is constructed and developed by the individual through the interaction with the environment and reflecting on that interaction. Children are naturally motivated to learn when they are infants. A baby's struggle to reach a toy, learn to walk or eat without the help. This early motivation to learn is later applied to school related activities such as reading and writing. The method adopted for the present study is normative survey method. The academic self concept and academic motivation questionnaire consist of 50 items out of which first 25 items were to find out the level of academic motivation and the rest to find the level of self concept and the items were given to 83 boys and 217 girls in the selected schools in Madurai using the random sampling technique. The results of the study reveal that academic motivation and academic self concept has a significant impact on student learning and achievement. The correlation analysis revealed that there exists a positive significant relationship between academic motivation and academic self concept.*

*Key words: Self concept, Motivation. Learning, achievement*

## INTRODUCTION:

Education is important to cultivate the people in the society. It helps the men to develop their life style. The ultimate goal of school is to educate young people to become responsible. Education is the complete development of individuality of the child so that the man can make an original contribution to human life according to the best of their capacity. Motivation is a psychological feature that induces an organism to act towards a desired goal and elicit control and sustain certain goal directed behaviours. Goal setting is hypothesized to be an important cognitive process affecting motivation (Bandura, 1988; Locke & Latham, 1990; Schunk, 1989). This can

be illustrated with students who set a goal or the goal given by the teachers. Academic Motivation refers to internal processes that instigate and sustain activities aimed at achieving specific academic goals. A child who is academically motivated has a desire to learn, likes learning-related activities, and believes that school is important. Positive academic motivation not only helps a child to succeed in school, but also helps the child to see that learning is rewarding and important in all aspects of life- School, work and community. Hence Motivation in education found to have several effects on how students learn and how they behave towards subject matters.

Academic motivation is a subtype of the general construct of *reflectance motivation*, which is defined as the “need” to be successful or effective in dealing with ones environment (Gresham, 1988). Academic self-concept and learning motivation are highly correlated and positive perceptions of academic self will certainly lead to stronger motivation to learn, and hopefully results in the better learning outcomes. Self-concept is formed through a person’s experiences and interaction with the environment (Bong & Skaalvik, 2003; Marsh & Shavelson, 1985), the strong link between academic self-concept and learning motivation suggests that motivation is also subject to change. A wide range of factors may contribute to the formation of the construct. Wigfield, E and Rodriguez (1998) suggest that learning is a “social activity.” Motivation to learn may involve not only learners’ self-perceptions but also learners’ reciprocal relations with teacher, school, and classroom environmental factors. Thus, there is always hope and room for more effort to enhance students’ academic self-concept and learning motivation. Maintaining a positive academic-self concept and increasing students’ motivation to learn is not the easy task and they need to be regarded as important educational objective for the students to attain their academic excellence. The results of the numerous research findings reveal that academic self-concept is an important determinant of students’ academic performance (Byrne, 1990; Choi, 2005; Marsh, Hau, & Kong, 2002; Muijs, 1997). No one will dispute that motivation plays a crucial role in language acquisition (Crookes & Schmidt, 1991; Oxford & Shearin, 1994; Wigfield, Eccles, & Rodriguez, 1998).

Most studies have supported the contention that academic self-concept and achievement have a reciprocal relationship. Change in one variable may lead to changes in the other. Byrne (1988) noted that social comparison plays a vital role in the development of self-concept. Students are inclined to form their perceptions of selves using their classmates or schoolmates as a reference group. In school competitions where someone always wins feel happy and highly motivated whereas someone always loses will be discouraged and they feel that they can never be the best at school, even they work hard and learn a lot. Children who don't experience success or whose successes are not recognized may also develop poor academic motivation. Hence the teachers play a crucial role in providing opportunities for successes. If the children feel success they are more likely to try new things. Hence the investigator made an attempt to study the academic self concept and academic motivation of high school students.

#### OBJECTIVES:

- To find out the level of academic self concept and academic motivation with regard to gender.
- To find the relationship between academic self concept and academic motivation among the high school students in Madurai.

#### MATERIAL AND METHOD:

The method of the study adopted for the present study is normative survey method. The questionnaire adopted from Dr. Shaljan Areepattamannil, Queen's University, Canada (2011) was used to measure the student's academic motivation and academic self concept. It consists of 50 items out of which the first 25 items were to find out their level of academic motivation and the rest of the items were to find out their level of academic self concept. The item scoring is for yes it carries one mark and for no it carries zero mark. The sample of the study includes 300 high school students from the government, government aided and private schools in Madurai. The sampling technique adopted for the study is random sampling technique.

**DATA ANALYSIS:**

The accumulated data was analyzed using SPSS soft ware package. The statistics were defined in tables and it was inferred. Independent T –test differences between means and correlation analysis were analyzed.

**RESULTS AND INTERPRETATIONS:**

**Table No: 1 Mean difference between Boys and Girls in their academic motivation and self concept**

Respondents	N	Mean	S.D	Calculated t-value
Boys	83	23.301	1.454	2.521*
Girls	217	22.649	2.175	

\*Significance at 0.05% level

From the above table, the calculated “t” value is less than table value at 0.05% level of significance. It is inferred that boys show better academic motivation and self concept than the girls. Hence the results reveal that the present study coincide with the study of academic self concept by Mary R.S.and Paul .J(2005) boys and girls differ significantly in their academic self concept. The teachers can increase the student’s academic motivation by having the good relationship and letting the child to know that school is important to enhance the academic effort and teach good study habits by providing recognition for his or her successes to have their confidence upon the self concept.

**Table : 2 Relationship between the Academic Motivation and Academic Self Concept of high school students**

Respondents	Correlation Coefficient	“P” Value	Level of Significance
Academic Motivation	0.117	0.004	Significant
Self concept			

It is inferred that the correlation coefficient between academic motivation and academic self concept is 0.117 which indicate the positive relationship between the variables. The result reveals that Self concept is an individual's collective self-perceptions that are formed through experiences and interpretations of the environment and are heavily influenced by reinforcement and evaluation done by teachers, peers and other persons (Shavelson & Bolus, 1982). Self-concept is multidimensional and comprises self- esteem, self -confidence, stability, and self-crystallization (Rosenberg & Kaplan, 1982).

#### CONCLUSION:

In a learning space, Academic Motivation and Academic Self concept play a vital role in achieving the goals. .Students need to establish and maintain a positive learning environment for attaining success. Students are not sufficiently trained to deal with today's behavioral problems of life. Hence it is a need of an hour for the teachers to learn the effective strategies for enhancing the student's academic achievement. The research enables that there should be a good relationship between the students, peers and their teachers to excel in their academic performance. Hence Teacher's special attention and care will serve as a stimulating force in restoring back the achievement level in pupils.

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