

Wajiha Kanwal *

Tahir Aziz †

Saqib Shahzad ‡

Impact of Academic Achievement Orientation in the Context of Private and Public Sector University Students

Abstract *The problem of the study was to explore the impact of academic achievement orientation in the context of private and public sector university students; it further aimed to investigate the impact of demographic variations such as gender, age, semester, birth order, number of siblings, discipline and family income in determining the level of academic achievement orientation of private and public sector university students. The achievement orientation attitude scale developed by Ansari was used to measure achievement orientations, which was consisted of 10 items. Data was collected through a stratified random sampling technique. Data were analyzed with various statistics, which provided an insight that students differ in terms of academic achievement orientations. Results revealed that students of public sector universities have higher academic achievement orientations. It is also recommended that at the university level, students may also learn self-management and ought to work hard in order to achieve their academic goals without an external push.*

Key Words: Academic Achievement Orientations, Sector, Private Universities, Public Universities, Students

Introduction

Education significantly affects individuals' cognitions, temperament or adjustment; through the process of education, knowledge, cultural norms, values and skills are transmitted from one generation to another (as cited in [Lefcourt, H. M. \(2000\)](#)).

Dewey defined it as "a process of modernization or reformation of experience which adds to the meaning of experiences which increases the ability to direct the course consequently" (as cited in [May, R., & Yalom, I. \(2000\)](#)).

Education is a basic foundation that brings changes in the societal configuration, economy and overall approach of the state. Education plays a significant role in monetary enlargement, and its main foundation is to improve interconnected problems and accelerates the flow of the readiness amongst students to obtain knowledge and skills (as cited in [Maqbool, E. \(2002\)](#)). It assists students in completing acquaintance with new techniques and methods for national enlargement, which is according to societal needs ([Marsh, H.W. & Ayaotte, V. 2003](#)). Therefore, countries continue to upgrade the education system as a social enhancement strategy. Developed countries mainly place even more stress on education in order to fortify the capabilities and self-reliance of their youth. [Mruk \(2006\)](#) studied the relationship between national development and achievement motivation and uncovered that countries with a large number of people who scored high on the achievement motivation scale had high rates of academic achievement and economic development as compared to those who score lower on achievement motivation. It indicated that high scores on achievement motivation might be a good factor for the active participation of individuals in the national development (as cited in [Maslow, A.H. \(2004\)](#)). This concept was much researched in the Western context but in the Pakistani cultural context is still unfamiliar and unknown. As university students are a national asset, in fact, they are the future professionals if they trained and groomed carefully,

* Chairperson/ HOD/ Assistant Professor, Department of Education, University of Wah, Punjab, Pakistan.

Email: dr.wajihakanwal@uow.edu.pk

† PhD Scholar, Department of Education, University of Wah, Punjab, Pakistan.

‡ Associate Professor, Department of Education, Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan, KP, Pakistan.

positive thinking and positive behavior can be expected from them (as cited in [Myers, D.G \(2004\)](#)). It is expected that in future, they will work with a true professional spirit, so the presents study is design to unravel the impact of academic achievement orientations among private and public sector Master university students(as cited in [Naushaba, A.C.\(2006\)](#)).

Individual Differences Influencing Academic Performance

Individual differences in academic performance have been linked to differences in intelligence and personality. Students with higher mental ability, as demonstrated by IQ tests, and those who are higher in conscientiousness (linked to effort and achievement motivation) tend to achieve highly in academic settings. A recent meta-analysis suggested that mental curiosity (as measured by typical intellectual engagement) has an important influence on academic achievement in addition to intelligence and conscientiousness.

Children's semi-structured home learning environment transitions into a more structured learning environment when children start first grade. Early academic achievement enhances later academic achievement.

Chart of Comparative Performance in GCSE Results

Parent's academic socialization is a term describing the way parents influence students' academic achievement by shaping students' skills, behaviors and attitudes towards school. Parents influence students through the environment and discourse parents have with their children. Academic socialization can be influenced by parents' socioeconomic status. Highly educated parents tend to have more stimulating learning environments. Further, recent research indicates that the relationship quality with parents will influence the development of academic self-efficacy among adolescent-aged children, which will, in turn, affect their academic performance.

Children's first few years of life are crucial to the development of language and social skills. School preparedness in these areas helps students adjust to academic expectancies.

Studies have shown that physical activity can increase neural activity in the brain, specifically increasing executive brain functions such as attention span and working memory, and improve academic performance in both elementary school children and college freshmen.

Non-Cognitive Factors

Non-cognitive factors or skills are a set of "attitudes, behaviors, and strategies" that promotes academic and professional success, such as academic self-efficacy, self-control, motivation, expectancy and goal setting theories, emotional intelligence, and determination. To create attention on factors other than those measured by cognitive test scores, sociologists Bowles and Gintis coined the term in the 1970s. The term serves as a distinction of cognitive factors, which are measured by teachers through tests and quizzes. Non-cognitive skills are increasingly gaining popularity because they provide a better explanation for academic and professional outcomes.

Self-efficacy is one of the best predictors of academic success. Self-efficacy is the belief in being able to do something. Stajković et al. looked at the Big Five traits on academic success as well and saw that conscientiousness and emotional stability were predictors of self-efficacy in over half of their analyses. However, self-efficacy was more indicative of academic performance than personality in all of the analyses. This suggests that parents who want their children to have academic achievement can look to increase their child's sense of self-efficacy at school.

Motivation is the reasoning behind an individual's actions. Research has found that students with higher academic performance, motivation and persistence use intrinsic goals rather than extrinsic ones. Furthermore, students who are motivated to improve upon their previous or upcoming performance tend to perform better academically than peers with lower motivation. In other words, students with a higher need for achievement have greater academic performance.

Self-control, in the academic setting, is related to self-discipline, self-regulation, delay of gratification and impulse control. Baumeister, Vohs, and Tice defined self-control as "the capacity for altering one's own responses, especially to bring them into line with standards such as ideals, values, morals, and social expectations, and to support the attainment of long-term goals." [15] In other words, self-control is the ability to prioritize long-term goals over the temptation of short-term impulses. Self-control is usually measured through self-completed questionnaires. Researchers often use the Self-Control Scale developed by Tangney, Baumeister, & Boone in 2004.

Through a longitudinal study of the marshmallow test, researchers found a relationship between the time spent waiting for the second marshmallow and higher academic achievement. However, this finding only applied to participants who had the marshmallow in plain sight and were placed without any distraction tactics.

High locus of control, where an individual attributes success to personal decision making and positive behaviors such as discipline, is a ramification of self-control. A high locus of control has been found to have a positive predictive relationship with a high collegiate GPA.

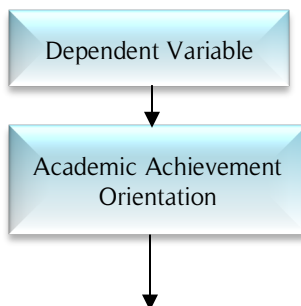
Extracurricular Activities

Organized extracurricular activities have yielded a positive relationship with high academic performance, including increasing attendance rates, school engagement, GPA, postsecondary education, as well as a decrease in dropout rates and depression. Additionally, positive developmental outcomes have been found in youth that engages in organized extracurricular activities. High school athletics have been linked with strong academic performance, particularly among urban youth. However, involvement in athletics has been linked to increased alcohol consumption and abuse for high school students, along with increased truancy.

While research suggests that there is a positive link between academic performance and participation in extracurricular activities, the practice behind this relationship is not always clear. Moreover, there are many unrelated factors that influence the relationship between academic achievement and participation in extracurricular activities (Mahoney et al., 2005). These variables include civic engagement, identity development, positive social relationships and behaviors, and mental health (Mahoney et al., 2005). In other research on youth, it was reported that positive social support and development, which can be acquired through organized after school activities, is beneficial for achieving academic success (Eccles & Templeton, 2002). In terms of academic performance, there are a whole other group of variables to consider. Some of these variables include demographic and familial influences, individual characteristics, and program resources and content (Mahoney et al., 2005). For example, socioeconomic status has been found to play a role in the number of students participating in extracurricular activities (Covay & Carbonaro, 2010). Furthermore, it is suggested that the peer relationships and support that develop in extracurricular activities often affect how individuals perform in school (Eccles & Templeton, 2002). With all these variables to consider, it is important to create a better understanding of how academic achievement can be seen in both a negative and positive light.

In conclusion, most research suggests that extracurricular activities are positively correlated to academic achievement (Mahoney et al., 2005). It has been mentioned that more research could be conducted to better understand the direction of this relationship (Eccles & Templeton, 2002). Together this information can give us a better understanding of the exact aspects to consider when considering the impact that participation in extracurricular activities can have on academic achievement. The detailed theoretical framework is given below in a graphic representation.

Theoretical Frame Work of Study



The present study was intended to measure the impact of academic achievement orientations in the context of public and private sectors university students. In this study, the academic achievement orientations of the respondents were treated as dependent variables of private and public sector university students. The study was intended with the following objectives:

- To determine the impact of academic achievement orientations among private and public sector university students.
- To measure the impact of biographic variations, i.e., gender, age discipline and family income, in determining the level of academic achievement orientations among private and Public Sector University students.

Research Questions

- 1 What do you think about female students have higher academic achievement orientations than male students?
- 2 How students from high-income families have higher academic achievement orientations than students with fewer income families?
- 3 Have students of public sector universities shows higher academic achievement orientations than the students of private sector universities?
- 4 Why and on which bases students of management sciences and natural sciences have higher academic achievement orientations than students of social sciences and humanities?
- 5 How older students have higher academic achievement orientations than younger students?

Methodology

The respondents were contacted at their respective universities. After providing satisfactory information about the rationale of the study, they were requested to participate in the research. After getting their consents for participation in the study, the research tools were handed over to them with a request to fill them in one sitting. The assurances of privacy and anonymity were provided to them.

Due to inadequate resources and time Master level students of 10 public and private universities located at Rawalpindi & Islamabad. Stratified random sampling was used, and a sample of 510 students was selected for the study, and the population was divided into two stratum. Students' age ranged from 20-40 years, and the targeted student's family income ranged from PKR 20,000 to above 70,000.

The distribution of the sample by the department is as

- A sample of 255 male & 255 female students was collected from each stratum.
- 138 from Social Sciences,
- 130 from Natural Sciences,
- 122 from Management Sciences and
- 120 from Humanities.

In this study, one research instrument was used, such as the Achievement orientation attitude scale developed by [Ansari \(1969\)](#).

Delimitations of the Study

The study was delimited to:
Universities located at Rawalpindi and Islamabad.

Results

After the data collection, it was carefully entered into the computer for statistical analysis with the help of SPSS. Norms were developed through percentile analysis percentile rankings of the university students' scores on the achievement orientations attitude scale ranged from 15 to 45. A score of 27 falls on 25 percentile, characteristic as low achievement orientations, a score of 32 falls on 50th percentile, illustrated as moderate achievement orientations, whereas a score of 37 falls on 75th percentile demonstrated as higher academic achievement orientations of the male and female university students.

Table 1. Gender Wise Comparison of Respondents' Scores on Achievement Orientation Attitude Scale (N=510)

Category	Sub Groups	Mean	SD
Gender	Male	26.5	2.5
	Female	28.5	2.2
Sector	Public	35.5	4.25
	Private	24.65	3.87

Table 1 is giving information regarding achievement orientations of male and female university students. The result shows that female students have higher mean scores than male students on the achievement orientation attitude scale. The table also shows the sector-wise comparison of university students' scores on the Achievement Orientation Scale. It can be seen from the table that students from public sector universities have a higher score on achievement orientations scores as compared to the students' of private sector universities (Public M=35.5, Private M= 24.65).

Table 2. Age, Semester and Discipline Wise Achievement Orientation Attitude

Area	Group	Mean	SD
Age	20-25 year	26.4	2.3
	25-30 year	26.6	2.4
	30-35 year	27.2	3.6
	35-40 year	29	2.1
Semesters	1 st Semester	25.4	2.1
	2 nd Semester	26.4	2.3
	3 rd semester	27.3	2.62
	4 th semester	28.9	2.6
Disciplines	Social Sciences	26.62	2.4
	Natural Sciences	28.86	2.0
	Management Sciences	29.3	2.9
	Humanities	27.1	1.9

Table 2 is describing the age-wise comparison between the achievement orientations attitude scale of university students. The result illustrated that students belong to the age group 35 to 40 years have higher mean scores than students belonging to other age groups. The table also represents the

semester wise comparison of students' scores on the achievement orientation attitude scale. Results show that students of the 4th semester have higher achievement orientation than students of other semesters. It further described the discipline wise comparison between students' scores on the achievement orientation attitude scale. Results indicate that students of management sciences and natural sciences have higher achievement orientations as compared to students of other disciplines.

Table 3

Category	Sub Group	Mean	SD
Birth Order	1 st	36.5	4.7
	2 nd	30.3	5.4
	3 rd	29.3	2.8
	4 th	27.4	1.9
	5 th	25.5	1.8
	6 th	27.17	1.7
	7 th	26.7	1.6
	8 th	30.2	2.3
Family Monthly Income In Rs.	20000-30000	29.53	2.7
	30000-40000	28.90	2.5
	40000-50000	28.2	2.1
	50000-60000	26.71	1.5
	60000-70000	25.5	1.9
	Above 70000	33.2	1.5
No. of Siblings	1	35.97	3.2
	2	30.6	4.8
	3	32.96	3.8
	4	31.5	3.96
	5	29.2	1.47
	6	28.7	1.44
	7	26.85	1.5
	8	24.3	1.2

Table 3 provides information regarding achievement orientations of university students for the variable of birth order. The result shows that students having 1st birth order have higher achievement orientations than students born on other birth orders. Differences in the achievement orientations of university students were calculated in relation to family income through mean and SD. The table also provides details about family income-wise differences between students' scores on the achievement orientation attitude scale. The result indicates that students with higher-income families have higher mean achievement orientation scores as compared to others income groups. It further shows the differences between students' achievement orientations due to the variable number of siblings. The result tells that students with fewer numbers of siblings have higher achievement orientations as compared to students with more numbers siblings.

Discussion

The study was primarily designed to examine the research objectives, which included; to explore the impact of academic achievement orientation of the private and public sector university students, to determine the impact of demographic variables such as gender, age, discipline, socioeconomic status, future aim, profession and levels of self-esteem of the universities students. Research Questions were also formulated to test the above-mentioned research objectives. 1st question was about gender differences that female university students possess higher achievement orientations than male students do. Results of the study showed that female students have higher achievement orientations

than male students. The reason may be that the female students may feel that they are caught in the pressure to do well academically as well as socially; besides this concept, they are as intelligent as male university students. Women are capable of monopolizing the superior services as a politician, a teacher, an administrator, a doctor, engineer, architecture, and many other fields. The old concept of a woman as the weaker vessel is dying out. No doubt, a woman is physically weak, but she is equal to a man in all other respects, and present research has revealed this result. 2nd question was related to achievement orientation that students from high-income families have high achievement orientations than students with low-income families. Results indicated that students who belong to higher socioeconomic status have higher achievement orientations than students with the lower socioeconomic group. This could be due to the reason that students who have high socioeconomic status may get better education facilities, more chances for personal development as compared with students with low socioeconomic status; moreover, high socioeconomic, higher socioeconomic status provides them more confidence.

The 3rd question said that students of public sector universities have higher achievement orientations than the students of private sector universities; the finding confirmed this hypothesis. Previous researches in this area also provided similar information that achievement orientations have an effect on students self-concept. Better academic performance and positive feedback can enhance academic competence.

The 4th question narrated that students of management sciences and natural sciences have higher achievement orientations than students of social sciences and humanities. The finding of the study also confirmed it. The reason could be this that those who studied these disciplines may have more opportunity to engage in more practical oriented task related with real issues of nature, management or marketing, because of nature of their subject they are educated, train and groomed in a specific way which ultimately boots their achievement orientations as compared to other groups of the students.

The 5th question of the study was that older students have higher achievement orientations than younger students. Results of the study also confirmed this hypothesis. The reason may be that mature student are more focused and goal-directed; due to their sense of responsibility and behavioral maturity, they proved to be a good learner. Due to a better understanding of the subject matter, they may receive self-appreciation as well as aspirations from others which consequently create achievement motivation in them.

Conclusions

On the basis of the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn.

1. Female students are higher score on the achievement orientations scale.
2. Older students have a higher score on the achievement orientations scale.
3. Students of the 4th semester have a higher score on the achievement orientations scale.
4. Students of management's sciences have a higher score on the achievement orientations scale.
5. Students having 1st birth order have a higher score on achievement orientations.
6. Students from higher-income families have a higher score on the achievement orientations scale.
7. Students with fewer siblings have a higher score on the achievement orientations scale.
8. Students from public sector universities have a higher score on the achievement orientations scale as compared to private sector universities students.

Recommendations

1. It is recommended that the university may develop students support service to address the issues related to diversity. Teachers may also instruct to create a prejudiced free classroom culture that can ensure respect for all students.

2. Management ensured that there is a complete respectful learning environment in which well-groomed teachers with fair, clear and consistent teaching methodologies are imparting education to learners.
3. Educational institutions may reduce the class difference among students by providing them equal educational opportunities for the students of all economic status; needy students may be provided scholarship.
4. The present study identifies various differences in the achievement orientations of university students due to demographic variations such as gender, age, discipline, semesters, family income, birth order and a number of siblings. This can provide an insight to parent's planners and educational psychologists, administrators to deal effectively with this diversity.

References

- Ansari, K., & Aftab, S. (2007). A Study of the Relationship between Parenting Styles, Academic Motivation & Academic Performance. *Pakistan Journal of Psychology*, 11-25.
- Ansari, Z. A. (1969). Development of an abbreviated Urdu version of Moghnis Test of Achievement-Oriented Attitude & its relationship with Academic Achievement .ATDO Motivation Project, Department of Psychology, University of Peshawar, Pakistan.
- Lefcourt, H. M. (2000). Locus of control. In Kazdin, A.E. (Ed).54, 321-366. *Encyclopedia of Psychology*, Vol. 5. American psychological Association: Oxford University press.
- Maqbool, E. (2002). Relationship between self-esteem and achievement among reading and non-reading disables school children. *Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, Karachi University, Karachi*.54, 665-787.
- Marsh, H. W., & Ayaotte, V. (2003). Do Multiple Dimensions of Self-esteem: Preadolescence to early childhood. *Journal of Educational Research*, 27, 89-118.
- Maslow, A. H., (2004). A theory human Motivation, *Psychological Review* 50, (4) (1943):370-9 (vol. 8) Oxford: Pergamum press.20,
- May, R., & Yalom, I. (2000). Existential therapy. In R.J. Corsini & D. wedding (Eds.), *current psychotherapies* (6th ed). It asca, 1L: F.E. Peacock.21, 321-334.
- Minke, K. M. E., Bear, G. G. (Eds.). (2000). Preventing school problems, promoting school Monthly Bulletin statistics April 2004 Vol. 52, 4 GOP statistics division, *Federal bureau statistics*.21, 443-544.
- Mruk, C. J. (2006). *Self Esteem Research, Theory, and Practice, Toward a Positive Psychology self-esteem*, (3rd ed) Springer Publishing Company. New York.43, 332-344.
- Myers, D. G. (2004). *Psychology*, New York: Worth Publishers.45, 332-354.
- Naushaba, A. C. (2006). A Study Differential Self- Concept Development Adults, unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, *Education Department, National University Modern Languages*. 55-89.
- Papalia, D. E, Olds, S. W., & Feldman, R. D. (2004). *Human Development* (9th ed) Mc Gram Hill.49,221-243.
- Schutz, D. P., & Schutz, S. E. (2005). *Theories of personality* (Eight addition) Wadsworth: Thomson. ISBN: 0-534-62403-2.
- Shiraeve, E., & Levy, D. (2004). *Cross cultural psychology: Critical thinking and contemporary applications*. (second edition) Boston: Pearson, ISBN 0-205-38612-1.