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A study on the relationship between social support systems and achievement motivation of higher secondary school students

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Abstract

The study aimed to examine the relationship between social support systems and achievement motivation among higher secondary school students. A total of 240 adolescents (120 boys and 120 girls) were selected as sample from 12 government high schools located under six zones in Hyderabad city of Telangana state through a purposive random sampling method. The data was collected using a social support system questionnaire developed by Indira Dhull and Sangeeta Godara (2004) assesses the secondary school students' level of social support from family, teacher, peer/friend, and online support. The achievement motivation scale developed by Beena Shah (1986) assesses the need for academic success, need for vocational achievement, need for social achievement and need for skill achievement. After conducting a correlational analysis using Karl Pearson's product-moment correlation between social support system and achievement motivation, a highly significant and strong positive correlation ($r = 0.948^{**}$) was observed, which was found to be significant at 0.01 level of probability. It implies that higher levels of social support were associated with increased achievement motivation among higher secondary school students. Surprisingly, our findings suggests that a well-balanced support network consisting of family, teachers, and peers plays a crucial role in helping students set academic goals, overcome challenges, and remain motivated to achieve success and it is consistent with our findings across research.

Keywords: Social support system, achievement motivation, higher secondary school students and adolescents

Introduction

High school is a time for adolescents to learn valuable skills for life from both peers and professionals. High School is an "incubation period" where they can learn, explore, prepare themselves for higher education and lay the foundation for a successful career. During these crucial years, support systems play a vital role by providing essential academic, emotional, and social support that significantly influences students' development.

A social support system is a network of individuals, resources and institutions that provide emotional, social, and practical assistance to help the individuals to face the challenges, achieve goals, and maintain well-being (Gurung 2010)^[9]. The social support system includes family, friends, teachers, community organizations, and digital resources that offer guidance, encouragement, and aid in various aspects of life to the adolescents. Therefore, students with higher and better social support are expected to outperform in their academics and lack of support from social relations may make individuals feel devalued and rejected, leading to low levels of motivation. Students with good social support system will achieve better in academics having greater sense

of achievement motivation.

Achievement motivation, a psychological construct referring to the inner desire or drive to succeed, has received significant attention in the field of education (Eccles & Wigfield, 2020)^[7]. It is considered crucial during the school years, as it directly influences students' engagement, persistence, and perseverance in their academic activities. A strong sense of achievement motivation enables learners to put consistent effort into their studies, overcome challenges, and sustain enthusiasm for learning. In contrast, low levels of achievement motivation often lead to poor academic performance, reduced effort, lack of interest in learning, and eventual disengagement from school. Over time, this can negatively affect students' self-esteem, personal growth, and future opportunities for success. Hence, achievement motivation plays a decisive role in shaping the academic and overall development of adolescents.

Research evidence highlights these differences across educational settings. For instance, Bharanbe (2016)^[4] found that private school students in Jalgaon, India, exhibited higher achievement motivation compared to their counterparts in government schools. Such findings indicate

that school environment and available resources may play a role in shaping students' motivation. At the same time, achievement motivation cannot be understood in isolation. Adolescence is a developmental stage strongly influenced by social support systems. Tomas *et al.* (2020) ^[19] observed that social support from parents, teachers, and peers significantly contributed to adolescents' achievement motivation. Among these, family support was found to have a direct and more prominent impact.

Despite the importance of achievement motivation, there is a need to further examine how social support systems interact with school context to influence adolescents' motivation levels. While previous studies highlight differences between private and government school students, limited research has specifically addressed this issue in the context of Hyderabad city, particularly among higher secondary school children. Therefore, the present study is justified as it seeks to explore the relationship between social support systems and students' achievement motivation in government schools. Understanding these connections will provide valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and parents to create supportive learning environments that foster higher achievement motivation among adolescents.

Review of literature

Cirik (2015) ^[6] examined the relationship between perceived social support, motivation, and science achievement. The study confirmed that higher levels of social support had a positive effect on students' motivation as well as their science achievement.

Faremi and Jita (2018) ^[8] assessed the impact of family support systems and learner variables on academic achievement motivation in secondary schools. The study concluded that students' achievement motivation was largely influenced by their family environment and their position within the family.

Affuso *et al.* (2023) ^[1] studied the impact of teacher support and parental monitoring on academic performance in 419 adolescents. The results showed that both teacher support and parental monitoring improved academic performance over time by enhancing motivation.

Saeed *et al.* (2023) ^[15] explored the impact of social support on academic achievement and self-esteem, as well as the mediating role of self-esteem. The study concluded that students who perceive higher social support had higher self-esteem, and that they tend to outperform in their academic achievement.

Nurhikmah *et al.* (2024) ^[14] investigated the relationship between social media access and student achievement motivation using a quantitative survey method. The findings showed a positive association ($p = 0.002$), indicating a strong relationship. Social media was found to influence motivation by providing exposure to positive content and facilitating access to learning materials and competition information.

Shao *et al.* (2024) ^[17] explored the influence of peer relationships on high school students' academic achievement. Their findings showed a strong positive relationship between peer relationships and academic success. The positive peer interactions boost students' motivation to learn, which in turn enhances their engagement in academic activities.

Materials and Methods Location of the study

The present study was aimed to study the relationship between social support system and achievement motivation of higher secondary school students. The study was carried out in Hyderabad city of Telangana State because the city's ethnography has a diverse demographic population from various parts of Telangana state. The city was divided into six zones and 12 government high schools were randomly selected from these zones.

Sample size

A total of 240 adolescents, comprising 120 boys and 120 girls, were selected as a sample for the study.

Tools used for the study

A Questionnaire on Social Support System, standardized by Indira Dhull and Sangeeta Godara (2004), was used in the study. It consists of 40 items across four dimensions: family support, teacher support, peer support, and online support. For assessing achievement motivation, the Achievement Motivation Scale developed by Beena Shah (1986) was selected. This scale includes 40 statements covering four components: need for academic success, need for vocational achievement, need for social achievement, and need for skill achievement.

Statistical Analysis

The SPSS 16.0 package program was used to analyze the data. Karl Pearson's product-moment correlation was used to measure the relationship.

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Relationship between social support system and achievement motivation

S. No	Variables	Need for academic success	Need for vocational achievement	Need for social achievement	Need for skill achievement	Overall achievement motivation
1	Family support	0.651**	0.147*	0.649**	0.303**	0.975**
2	Teacher support	0.702**	0.694**	0.700**	0.272**	0.975**
3	Peer/Friend support	0.295*	0.681**	0.116NS	0.097NS	0.982*
4	Online support	0.005NS	-0.141*	-0.067NS	-0.020NS	-0.988**
5	Overall social support system	0.983**	0.977**	0.986**	0.748**	0.948**

Note: Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 1 describes the relationship between social support system and achievement motivation of higher secondary school students. It was crucial to notice from the table that

both overall social support system and its four components, such as family support, teacher support, peer support and online support, exhibited a strong, positive and statistically

significant relationship with both overall achievement motivation and its four components viz., need for academic success, need for vocational achievement, need for social achievement and need for skill achievement. Here, the interpretation is described for the relationship between the components of social support system and achievement motivation to avoid repetition and to explain the association in a broader context.

Relationship between family support and overall achievement motivation

The dimension “family support” of social support system exhibited a highly significant and positive relationship ($r = 0.975$), with overall achievement motivation of higher secondary school students at 0.01 level of probability. This significant positive correlation suggested that a higher level of family support was associated with increased achievement motivation among the students. It indicated that those who received consistent emotional and academic encouragement from their families were more motivated to achieve, as such support fostered goal-setting, self-discipline and a positive attitude towards learning.

These findings were consistent with a study by Santoro and Schmidt (2023) ^[16], emphasized that adolescents from supportive family environments demonstrated higher levels of goal orientation, effort regulation and sustained motivation toward academic tasks. In addition, Chu *et al.* (2020) ^[5], reported that emotional support from family contributed positively to adolescents’ motivation, particularly in navigating academic challenges and managing stress.

Relationship between teacher support and overall achievement motivation

The analysis of social support system dimension “teacher support” exhibited a highly significant positive relationship ($r = 0.975$), with overall achievement motivation of higher secondary school students at 0.01 level of probability. This significant positive correlation suggested that a higher level of teacher support was associated with increased achievement motivation among higher secondary school students. This indicated that teachers who provide constructive feedback and created a positive learning atmosphere play a crucial role in enhancing students’ achievement motivation and positive classroom environment develop confidence in their abilities.

These above lines are aligned with the study of Longobardi *et al.* (2019) ^[12] reported that positive teacher–student relationships predicted higher academic motivation and persistence during school transitions. Further, Zee and Koomen (2018) ^[20] suggest that teacher self-efficacy and support positively influenced students’ academic motivation and engagement.

Relationship between Peer support and overall achievement motivation

The study found that the social support system dimension labelled “Peer support” exhibited a highly significant positive relationship ($r = 0.982$) with overall achievement motivation of higher secondary school students at 0.01 level of probability. This significant positive correlation indicated that a higher level of peer support was associated with

increased achievement motivation among higher secondary school students. This suggested that students who shared supportive relationships with their peers were more motivated to perform well, as encouragement from friends and collaborative learning helped them to model effective strategies, receive feedback and sustain motivation during challenging academic situations.

These results are consistent with Alhadabi and Karpinski (2020) ^[2] highlighted that peer encouragement and collaboration positively influenced achievement motivation in digital and traditional learning contexts. Similarly, Li and Lerner (2019) ^[11] Showed that peer support buffered academic stress and enhanced adolescents’ motivation to engage in school-related tasks.

Relationship between online support and overall achievement motivation

The dimension “online support” showed a strong negative correlation ($r = -0.988$) with the overall achievement motivation of higher secondary school students at the 0.01 level of probability. This indicated that increased reliance on online support systems was associated with lower achievement motivation. This might have been due to distractions from academic goals, exposure to misinformation and the lack of personalized guidance in digital environments. Although online platforms provided useful resources, excessive dependence often hindered focused academic effort.

These above lines were similar to Junco (2019) ^[10], who found that higher engagement in online social platforms correlated with lower academic focus and reduced intrinsic motivation. Similarly, Bessiere *et al.* (2020), reported that excessive online interaction can divert attention from academic goals, leading to procrastination and decreased task persistence among adolescents.

Relationship between overall social support system and overall achievement motivation

The analysis of the overall social support system exhibited a highly significant positive relationship ($r = 0.948$) with the overall achievement motivation of higher secondary school students at the 0.01 level of probability. This significant positive correlation suggested that higher levels of social support was associated with increased achievement motivation among students. It reflected the combined influence of family, teacher, and peer support in fostering achievement motivation. A well-balanced support network enabled students to set goals, overcome challenges, and sustain a strong commitment to academic success.

These findings were consistent with a study by Morales and Tudge (2023) ^[13], Showed that multi-source social support such as family, peers, teachers was a strong predictor of adolescents’ self-regulated learning and achievement motivation across diverse cultural contexts. In addition, Suldo *et al.* (2019) ^[18], found that adolescents receiving consistent support from family, teachers, and peers exhibited higher levels of academic motivation and engagement.

Conclusion

The study can be concluded that social support system exhibited a highly significant positive relationship with the

overall achievement motivation of higher secondary school students at the 0.01 level of probability. This significant positive correlation suggested that higher levels of social support was associated with increased achievement motivation among students. It reflected the combined influence of family, teacher, and peer support in fostering achievement motivation. A well-balanced support network enabled students to set goals, overcome challenges, and sustain a strong commitment to academic success.

Future scope

This study highlights the crucial role of family, teacher, and peer support in shaping adolescents' achievement motivation. Expanding future research across diverse socio-economic, cultural, and geographic contexts will enrich the understanding of how support systems function in varied settings. Exploring intervention-based approaches, digital learning environments, and gender differences can further provide evidence-based strategies to strengthen support networks and enhance academic motivation among higher secondary school students.

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Conflict of Interest

None

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