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## Gender differences in academic motivation among elementary school students

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### Abstract

Present study is an attempt to assess gender differences in academic motivation among elementary school students. A sample of 400 students (200 males and 200 females) of 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> class were collected from urban and rural areas of Haryana and Bihar. The study used mean differences with a sample students selected via random sampling from 16 schools. Objective of study was to assess the gender differences in the academic motivation among elementary school students. Academic Motivation Scale was used as measuring instruments. The instruments were administered to the participants in a classroom seating position and the data was analyzed using Z test. In case of academic motivation the difference between means scores of male and female sample in rural and urban area of both states which is found non-significant at .05 level of significance. The results showed that there was an academic motivation means score in rural and urban area of Haryana and Bihar was more in male elementary school children as compared to female children that indicated males performed significantly better than females in academic motivation.

**Keywords:** Intrinsic Motivation-to know, intrinsic motivation-towards accomplishment, intrinsic motivation-to experience simulation, extrinsic motivation-identified, extrinsic motivation- interjected, extrinsic motivation-external and a motivation

### Introduction

Education is the basic need for human development. With education, employments are expanded and income levels are increased. An elementary school child plays a significant role in developing the nation's staffing requirements for rapid development. In India, although the percentage of literacy is getting higher, the number of illiterate children in the age group of 6 to 14 years is also increasing. Elementary school plays the vital role in the foundation for children's education. It becomes fundamental to develop children from the early stage. Academic motivation in schools becomes a topic of great concern. Lack of academic motivation is a big barrier in learning and a relevant cause is the deterioration of educational standards. Elementary schooling of utmost significance as it begins the foundation from which the learning of children takes place. Elementary schooling is very beneficial not only to children, but also the nation at large. It is the foundation of complex learning in later life. Progress in elementary school children, particularly the earliest years of formal schooling, has received relatively interest in research from a life course perspective. When children start schooling, they acquire a new definition of academic motivation about academic activities and add new activities to their academic roles. Elementary school children are no longer wholly dependent on the family, and their work is consider by parents, teachers, peers and ultimately by society as whole. A child ages 6-12 exhibit tremendous physical growth and cognitive and emotional development. The Indian government set prominence on primary education (Class I-VIII) also referred to as elementary education, to children aged 6 to 14 years old. A child with positive academic motivation wants to learn, likes learning-related exercises, and accepts that school is an important. Positive academic motivation enables children to succeed in school, yet additionally encourages the elementary school children to see that learning is fulfilling and significant in all parts of life-school, work, and network. Even academic motivation modifies the academic goals and academic achievement of the students (Amrai *et al.* 2011). Academic motivation can develop self-belief in one's ability along with an increased significance of education and desire to learn. It is closely related to learning achieving a desired thing and attains an academic goal. The use of positive or negative support given by the teacher may respectively encourage or reduce academic motivation of the students. The motivation specially used in academic interaction where students are actively involved.

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Academic motivated boy and girl are born in different social, economic and political circumstances. Education is that procedure through which we can bring out the potentialities or ability of an individual or a child.

Academic motivation is vital to a student's academic success at any age. Because students shape the development of early academic motivation at a young age, have significant implications for later academic careers. In daily life, motivation word is used frequently to refer why a person is doing something. Academic motivation is the force which derives one child to act in a particular way for academic success.

Whenever a need arises it gives rise to motive, this motive derives student's behavior towards a particular goal in academic setting. Student strives to get to that particular goal in order to maintain the state of homeostasis for academic achievement. Student high in academic motivation are more likely to have increased levels of academic success and lower failure rates. There has been tremendous interest in student motivation, specifically concerning changes in motivation, as students' progress from elementary school to middle school. Adolescent academic success and inspiration can be highly influenced by peer group, self-esteem, and self-image (E. M. Anderman & Maehr, 1994; Eccles & Midgley, 1989; Hootstein, 1994).

Further, there are often negative changes in academic achievement, attitude, academic motivation, and behavior as children progress from elementary to middle grades, with such changes influenced by school environments, peer groups, and teachers. Socialization and academic success experiences play an important role in the development of gender differences in motivation. Because gender differences are found so early in development, the elementary school student home environment plays an important role in the shaping of their competency thinking and interests in academic activities.

At school, students have an opportunity to support, refine, and perform their gender attitude and performance. According to the Eccles *et al.* (1983) model, both parents and teachers contribute to gender differences in academic motivation by (a) modeling sex-typed performance, (b) talk different academic expectations and goals for boys and girls, and (c) encouraging different academic activities and skill. Biswal (2016) <sup>[2]</sup> revealed that mean score of boys and girls in academic success are 103.60 and 103.22 respectively. Both boys and girls were above average in their academic success.

## Methodology

### Locale

The study was conducted in Haryana and Bihar states respectively. The eight schools of the each state were selected as research base to draw sample of elementary school children for the study. From each state two districts was selected randomly. From the selected district schools was selected randomly for selection of respondents.

### Sample

The sample for the study was the 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> standard elementary school children from Haryana and Bihar states. A total number of 400 students from rural and urban areas of Haryana and Bihar. The sample was selected using simple random sampling technique. Out of these 400 students 200 were girls and 200 were boys. All the participants taken were in the age group of 6-14 years.

## Research tools

Self – prepared questionnaire was used to delineate socio-personal variables. Academic Motivation Scale was used to measure the academic motivation of the participants. The scale has been constructed by Vallerand *et al.* (1992) a version in both Hindi and English was used for data collection. The scale consists of 28 items representing dimensions of academic motivation that is Intrinsic Motivation- to know, Intrinsic Motivation- towards accomplishment, Intrinsic Motivation- to experience simulation, Extrinsic Motivation- Identified, Extrinsic Motivation- introjected, Extrinsic Motivation-External regulation and Amotivation dimensions.

## Data collection

Prior permission to contact elementary school children of the present study in the school itself was sought from principals of the selected schools. Thereafter, randomly selected students were approached and their consent for participation in the study was obtained. Elementary school children were administered research tools assuring confidentiality of their responses and expectation of their honest response on it.

## Results and Discussion

A close perusal of Table 1 depicts gender wise comparison of selected sample non significant difference existed in all the dimensions of academic motivation that is Intrinsic Motivation- to know ( $z=0.18$  and  $z=0.69$ ), Intrinsic Motivation- towards accomplishment ( $z=0.09$  and  $z=0.13$ ), Intrinsic Motivation- to experience simulation ( $z=0.005$  and  $z=0.17$ ), Extrinsic Motivation- Identified ( $z=0.27$  and  $z=0.96$ ), Extrinsic Motivation- interjected ( $z=0.85$  and  $z=0.034$ ), Extrinsic Motivation-External regulation ( $z=0.03$  and  $z=0.64$ ), and Amotivation ( $z=0.24$  and  $z=0.26$ ), and ( $z=12.34^*$  and  $z=12.19^*$ ) overall academic motivation across gender of both rural and urban area of Haryana.

Mean score highlighted that in rural area of Haryana Intrinsic Motivation- to know ( $\bar{X}=6.61$ ), Intrinsic Motivation- towards accomplishment ( $\bar{X}=7.53$ ), Intrinsic Motivation- to experience simulation ( $\bar{X}=6.91$ ), Intrinsic Extrinsic Motivation- Identified ( $\bar{X}=7.41$ ), Extrinsic Motivation- interjected ( $\bar{X}=6.69$ ), Extrinsic Motivation-External regulation ( $\bar{X}=7.16$ ) and Amotivation ( $\bar{X}=11.20$ ) was more in male elementary school children.

Similarly in urban area of Haryana male elementary school children had high Intrinsic Motivation- to know ( $\bar{X}=15.04$ ), Intrinsic Motivation- towards accomplishment ( $\bar{X}=14.08$ ), Intrinsic Motivation- to experience simulation ( $\bar{X}=14.42$ ) Extrinsic Motivation- Identified ( $\bar{X}=15.85$ ), Extrinsic Motivation- introjected ( $\bar{X}=14.23$ ) and Extrinsic Motivation-External regulation ( $\bar{X}=15.77$ ) while Amotivation ( $\bar{X}=9.54$ ) was also high in male elementary school children. Overall academic motivation showed that mean score in rural and urban area of Haryana was more in male children ( $\bar{X}=71.88$  and  $\bar{X}=72.26$  respectively).

From Bihar non significance differences for all dimensions of academic motivation that is Intrinsic Motivation- to know ( $z=0.10$  and  $z=0.10$ ), Intrinsic Motivation- towards accomplishment ( $z=0.09$  and  $z=0.51$ ), Intrinsic Motivation- to experience simulation ( $z=0.12$  and  $z=0.16$ ), Extrinsic Motivation- Identified ( $z=0.50$  and  $z=0.16$ ), Extrinsic Motivation- introjected ( $z=0.20$  and  $z=0.31$ ), Extrinsic Motivation-External regulation ( $z=0.07$  and  $z=0.20$ ), and Amotivation ( $z=0.89$  and  $z=0.85$ ), and

( $z=12.40^*$  and  $z=13.85^*$ ) overall academic motivation across gender of both rural and urban area.

Mean score determined that in rural area of Bihar male elementary school children had high Motivation-to know ( $\bar{X}=7.35$ ), Intrinsic Motivation- towards accomplishment ( $\bar{X}=7.43$ ), Intrinsic Motivation- to experience simulation ( $\bar{X}=8.02$ ), Extrinsic Motivation- Identified ( $\bar{X}=7.39$ ), Extrinsic Motivation-introjected ( $\bar{X}=8.31$ ), Extrinsic Motivation-External regulation ( $\bar{X}=7.25$ ) and Amotivation ( $\bar{X}=12.41$ ).

Similarly in Bihar urban area male elementary school children had high Intrinsic Motivation- to know ( $\bar{X}=18.10$ ), Intrinsic Motivation- towards accomplishment ( $\bar{X}=17.14$ ), Intrinsic Motivation- to experience simulation ( $\bar{X}=17.37$ ), Extrinsic Motivation- Identified ( $\bar{X}=17.47$ ), Extrinsic Motivation-introjected ( $\bar{X}=17.78$ ), Extrinsic Motivation-External regulation ( $\bar{X}=17.37$ ) and Amotivation ( $\bar{X}=10.92$ ). Overall academic motivation showed that means score in rural and

urban area of Bihar was more in male elementary school children. Studies utilizing the Brophy-Good system have consistently documented that boys tend to have more interactions of all types than do girls (Altermatt, Jovanic, & Perry, 1998; Jones & Dindia, 2004; Meece, 1987; Parsons, Kaczala, & Meece, 1982) <sup>[1, 8, 11]</sup>. Results show that boys are called on more than girls to answer process, abstract, and complex questions, at both the elementary and secondary levels. Further, compared with girls, boys also receive more acknowledgement, approval, encouragement, criticism, and corrective feedback in response to their answers. Salili (1996) <sup>[12]</sup> investigated the gender differences in achievement motivation. The study was conducted on British high school and Chinese students, Results revealed that female subjects of both the cultures had higher scores than the females. Gurgova (2016) <sup>[6]</sup> performed a research on 213 university students out of which 102 are women and 111 are men, she found that females are less motivated than males.

**Table 1:** Comparison of academic motivation among children as per gender

Sl. No	Academic Motivation	Haryana (n=200)			Bihar(n=200)		
		Rural (n=100)			Rural (n=100)		
		Male (n=50)	Female (n=50)	Z test value	Male (n=50)	Female (n=50)	Z test value
		Mean ± SD	Mean ± SD		Mean ± SD	Mean ± SD	
1	Intrinsic Motivation- to know	06.61 ± 03.89	06.47 ± 03.63	00.18	07.35 ± 05.57	07.24 ± 05.24	00.10
2	Intrinsic Motivation- towards accomplishment	07.53 ± 04.46	07.45±04.05	00.09	07.43 ± 04.74	07.35 ± 05.03	00.09
3	Intrinsic Motivation- to experience simulation	06.91 ± 03.94	06.90 ±03.63	0.005	08.02 ± 05.26	07.90 ± 04.24	00.12
4	Extrinsic Motivation- Identified	07.41 ± 04.14	07.20 ± 03.62	00.27	07.39 ± 05.00	06.88 ± 05.29	00.50
5	Extrinsic Motivation- introjected	06.69 ± 03.64	06.10 ± 03.35	00.85	08.31 ± 05.68	07.00 ± 05.23	01.20
6	Extrinsic Motivation-External regulation	07.16 ± 04.01	07.14 ± 03.95	00.03	07.25 ± 05.22	07.18 ± 05.19	00.07
7	Amotivation	11.20 ± 02.66	11.08 ± 02.18	00.24	12.41 ± 03.33	11.86 ± 02.86	00.89
8	Overall	71.88 ±41.50	66.10 ± 38.343	12.34*	83.34 ± 47.49	79.74 ± 42.04	12.40*
Sl. No	Academic Motivation	Urban (n=100)			Urban (n=100)		
		Male (n=50)	Female (n=50)	Z test value	Male (50)	Female (50)	Z test value
		Mean ± SD	Mean ± SD		Mean ± SD	Mean ± SD	
		1	Intrinsic Motivation- to know	15.04 ± 08.17	13.87 ± 08.79	00.69	18.10 ± 08.09
2	Intrinsic Motivation- towards accomplishment	14.08 ± 07.90	13.88 ± 07.46	00.13	17.14 ± 07.55	16.35 ± 07.85	00.51
3	Intrinsic Motivation- to experience simulation	14.42 ± 07.01	14.19 ± 06.78	00.17	17.37 ± 07.63	17.14 ± 06.47	00.16
4	Extrinsic Motivation- Identified	15.85 ± 07.74	14.35 ± 08.02	00.96	17.47 ± 07.96	17.20 ± 08.67	00.16
5	Extrinsic Motivation- introjected	14.23 ± 07.82	14.17 ± 08.49	0.034	17.78 ± 08.45	17.22 ± 09.12	00.31
6	Extrinsic Motivation-External regulation	15.77 ± 08.74	14.65 ± 08.72	00.64	17.37 ± 08.38	17.02 ± 08.72	00.20
7	Amotivation	09.54 ± 03.84	09.35 ± 03.63	00.26	10.92 ± 04.18	10.16 ± 04.64	00.85
8	Overall	72.26 ± 41.41	70.24 ± 37.75	12.19*	100.96 ± 45.81	97.06 ± 49.550	13.85*

**Conclusion**

Hence, it can be concluded that there was an academic motivation means scores in rural and urban area of Haryana and Bihar was more in male elementary school children as compared to female children that indicate males performed significantly better than females in academic motivation.

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