

Factors Affecting Students' Achievement Motivation in Private Colleges of Kathmandu Valley

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Abstract

This research study aims to examine the factors affecting students' achievement motivation with a sample size of 104 students from 37 private colleges in Kathmandu. The study followed a cross-sectional research design, where the structured questionnaire was distributed online and offline, and the data were analysed using multiple regression. The results showed positive classroom relationship as the factor most influencing the students' achievement motivation and should be considered. In a nutshell, this study identified the possible factors for student achievement motivation that might help develop strategies for improving the student's academic performance.

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INTRODUCTION AND STUDY OBJECTIVES

Motivation is a key factor for success. So, it needs to appear within oneself to bring excellence in performance (Busato et al., 2000). McClelland (2000) found that the internal desire to succeed makes almost

64% of the contribution to determining an individual's academic achievement. However, the motivation for academic achievement differs among students (Singh, 2011). Students with high motivation to achieve has longer study period compared to a low level of achievement motivation (Mamin et al., 2020).

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Motivation is essential to an individual's academic success (Steinmayr et al., 2019) and is necessary for every academic institution to acquire adequate understanding to get better student results. A plethora of research was conducted to comprehend the antecedents of achievement motivation. For example, Self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977), self-regulated learning (Pekrun et al., 2007), self-perception of ability (Tempelaar et al., 2007), internal locus of control (Centinkalp, 2010), academic goals (Yusuf, 2011) and positive classroom relationship (Mohamod et al., 2013) were mostly explored antecedents of achievement motivation. Similarly, socioeconomic status (Pant, 2020), classroom size, and teacher level (Subedi, 2003) were considered factors affecting achievement motivation in Nepal. Among the studies of Nepal, most of them were focused on extrinsic factors and still lacked focus on intrinsic factors that affect achievement motivation. So, this study aims to analyse personal resources like self-efficacy, internal locus of control, positive classroom relationship, including academic goals to assess the achievement motivation phenomenon

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to McClelland (1961, 1962), it is inevitable that people will accumulate emotions, both positive and negative, regarding certain events and situations that occur to and around them; thus, certain situations stimulate a sense of achievement in a person. For instance, difficult assignments can stimulate feelings of joy; in this case, a person will

ultimately be defined as achievement motivated. For achievement-motivated individuals, achievement remains at the top of the motive hierarchy; it takes only minor achievement cues to turn on the desire of pleasure, raising the chance of achievement striving (Miner, 2005). Individuals driven with a strong need for achievement show 3 characteristics— First, they achieve success with their own efforts/abilities rather than mere chances, and in these situations, they take personal responsibility and do not look for credit from others due to which their achievement is intrinsically satisfying to them (Miner, 2005). Second, people motivated to succeed often think about the risks involved in different situations and pick the ones where they feel challenged, but not too much (Miner, 2005). Third, these achievement-motivated individuals need to have clear feedback on the success of their efforts because when they cannot distinguish between success and failure, there is limited possibility for achievement fulfilment; hence, the circumstance must give knowledge of results within a reasonable time (Miner, 2005). McClelland (1961, 1962) further explains two achievement situations— achievement motivation brings innovation in a person and novel solutions that allow a greater sense of satisfaction and make a person distinct and future-oriented, i.e., 'anticipation of future possibilities.'

In a nutshell, achievement motivation allows an individual to behave outstandingly while doing a certain activity, raising the 'Need for Achievement' (Fini & Yousefzadeh, 2011). McClelland

et al. (1953) reported, in many studies, his observation that there is a notable (i.e., 51%) relationship between the need for achievement and college scores. Students with 'inward high motivation' spend their time on schoolwork due to which their learning is also better (Fini & Yousefzadeh, 2011) and these students who need high achievement have more expectations of getting high scores which is why the relationship between the need for achievement and college score is indefinite.

More research has been done on why people want to achieve things. One achievement motivation theory, called the 'Hierarchical Model of Achievement Motivation' developed by Elliot and Church (1997), stated that people's motivation is affected by how confident they are in their ability to do something; this is true for students too. Here, confidence in self-ability is termed self-efficacy, which is a motivational belief about their competence for choosing to do a task as per their academic goals. Further, the expectancy-value theory conceptualises how achievement motivation was developed based on the socio-cognitive approach, i.e., how people think and interact with others (Chouinard et al., 2017).

Academic Goals and Students' achievement motivation

An academic goal is an educational objective a student sets for themselves, whose dynamics change with priorities (Regueiro et al., 2016). Academic goals directly influence achievement motivation (Yusuf, 2011), and the person with such

motivation improves personal excellence towards the work (Neumann et al., 1988). Likewise, Regueiro et al. (2016) claimed that favourable educational outcomes, viz., high persistence, interest, and comprehensive learning, can be accomplished by setting academic goals.

Based on the preceding review, the relationship between student's self-set academic goals and achievement has been hypothesised as-

H₁: A student's self-set academic goal positively impacts their achievement motivation.

Self-efficacy and Students' achievement motivation

Self-efficacy is the student's self-confidence and attitude toward their ability to gain academic achievement, perform academic tasks, and learn new things (Bandura, 1977). The current expectancy-value models (WigWeld & Eccles, 2002; Pintrich & Schunk, 2002) say that two important factors that motivate achievement: how confident the student is in their capability and how difficult they think the task is. Here, the 'personal judgment of one's capabilities and the aptitude to formulate and pursue educational goals plays a vital role in fostering achievement motivation directly and indirectly to accomplish academic aspiration (Bandura, 1977).

As per the theory, students' emotions drive their self-regulated learning, which, in turn, affects academic achievement and progress (Pekrun et al., 2007). Students who can easily combine their

study activities with their self-efficacy to construct useful learning techniques are more likely to be successful, which motivates them to improve (Pintrich, 2004). Green et al. (2004) observed that the student's with self-belief tend to perform better academically.

With reference to the review of the above relevant literature, the relationship between student's self-efficacy and achievement has been hypothesised as-

H₂: A student's self-efficacy positively impacts their achievement motivation.

Internal Locus of Control and Students' achievement motivation

The concept of Locus of control (LOC)-the idea of how people deal with a situation-was introduced by Rotter (1966) as a part of social learning theory on current expectancy-value models. There are two types of LOC: internal & external (Singh et al., 2020; Rotter, 1966). Internal locus of control is the self-directedness in individuals who believe they are responsible for what happens to them (Pascarella et al., 1996). People who feel like they have control over their life, i.e., those with high internal LOC, tend to be more aware of their surroundings and take responsibility for what happens in it (Kang et al., 2015; Singh et al., 2020). Previous research has shown that those with internal LOC have a higher drive to achieve goals and accomplish greater results than people with external LOC (Centinkalp, 2010; Rastegar et al., 2012; Zaidi & Mohsin, 2013). Meaning that students with a high internal locus of control and a high need for achievement

put more effort into their assignments, and they like to use their own skills to get good grades instead of leaving it to their fate/luck (Fini & Yousefzadeh, 2011).

Based on the literature review above, the relationship between student's internal locus of control and achievement has been hypothesised as -

H₃: Students' internal locus of control positively impacts their achievement motivation.

Positive classroom relationship and Students' achievement motivation

Walberg's (1981) theory of educational productivity states that there are three categories that can help a student learn better and do well in college, i.e., good teaching/instruction (quality & quantity), their aptitude to learn and grow (ability, growth, and motivation), and the classroom and other peers around them. Additionally, Walberg's (1981) theory also has nine characteristics: emotions, cognitive thinking, & behaviour (Farooq et al., 2011; Roberts, 2007). Similarly, other researchers have written about these concepts; for instance, Adams and Singh (1998) and Wentzel (1998) explored on the construct relationships with teachers' where it has been mentioned that it is important for teachers to provide warmth and support, and have less conflicts with students (Chouinard et al., 2017).

Positive Classroom relationship means having a constructive classroom atmosphere with teachers to increase self-regulated learning like metacognitive self-regulation with awareness, knowl-

edge, and control of cognition, organization strategy with deeper processing, and peer learning with collaboration, communication, and discussion during the learning process (Mohamad et al., 2013). Teachers have a big impact on how motivated students are to do well in school as they assess student's skills and ask for their opinions on how they feel about their abilities which helps teachers understand how to encourage their students to learn and value their education, in this sense, teachers significantly influence students' achievement motivation (Patrick et al., 2007). And when teachers make students appreciated and valued, they work harder due to their motivation and put more effort into the classroom (Chouinard et al., 2017; Roorda et al., 2011; Wang & Eccles, 2012). Hence, what teachers tell students can affect how motivated they

are to do well and achieve (Chouinard et al., 2017). This support helps students to manage their learning, i.e., metacognitive self-regulation, stay organized, and increase peer learning which directly influences student achievement motivation (Mohamad et al., 2013).

In the backdrop of the above review, the relationship between student's classroom relationship and achievement has been hypothesised as-

H₄: A student's classroom relationship positively impacts their achievement motivation.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework followed in this present study is presented and discussed below:

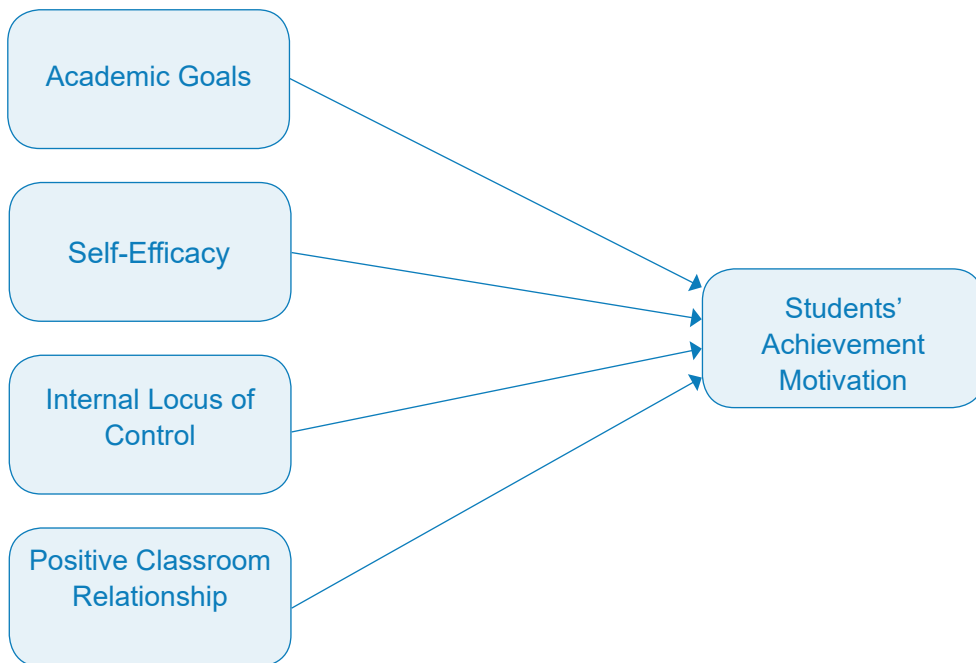


Figure 1. *Conceptual Framework*

This model is used to investigate the top and least influential factors that influence the students' achievement motivation and the relationship between the factors of academic goals (Regueiro et al., 2016), self-efficacy (Yusuf, 2011), internal locus of control (Singh et al., 2020), & positive classroom relationship (Chouinard et al., 2017) and students achievement motivation using correlation and regression.

RESEARCH METHODS

This section presents research design, sampling techniques and other methodological aspects.

Research Design & Methods

The study has adopted a quantitative research design employing cross-sectional methods to explain and examine the relationships between dependent and independent variables. The same research design and methods has been used by Mamin et al. (2020).

Sample, Sample Size, and Sampling Technique

The focus of this study was students that go to private colleges in Kathmandu Valley. They can be studying at any private institution and enrolled in any course but must fall under the Undergraduate, Graduate, or Post-graduate category.

In this study, the data quality remained the utmost priority rather than the quantity. So, the questions were asked to those students who volunteer in Youth Clubs as they show volunteer participation during data collection and are helpful.

Besides that, Youth Clubs are readily available in Kathmandu Valley because the Nepalese government empowers and supports youths to form clubs. Hence, these clubs have many students from various private/public colleges in Kathmandu Valley volunteering together for a cause.

A simple random sampling technique was used by using RAND (random number) function in Ms. Excel to generate the random number and select the sample or subset of the population. This process was done to make the study accurate and to include different types of students with different personalities, ways of learning, and learning styles. Hence, this study gave equitable opportunity to every participant, and every participant had a fair probability of being part of the study (Horton et al., 2022).

It was noted that selection bias could occur due to the nature of voluntary response sampling in the sampling technique and its small sample size to represent the target population (Šimundić, 2013).

Of the total 147 students who attended the weekly meetings and social work, 104 students from 37 colleges agreed to be part of this study. Overall, the sample was skewed toward males who were undergraduate college students, and were under 23 years old.

According to (Babbie, 1973), a response rate of 50% suffice as acceptable enough to conduct research and write about it. Chouinard (2017) and other researchers used a sample size between 200 and

Table 1
Demographic Profile of the Participants

Variables	Category	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Female	48	46.2
	Male	56	53.8
Age Category	16-19	15	14.4
	20-23	74	71.2
	24-27	11	10.6
	28-more	4	3.8
Educational Background	Undergraduate	72	69.2
	Graduate	22	21.2
	Post-Graduate	10	9.6

Note. Calculations based on the Survey, 2022

300. However, one researcher (Landine, 1998) had a sample size of 108 where he took (Babbie, 1973) reference to justify it.

Tools of Data Collection and Their Reliability and Validity

A journal-adapted structured questionnaire with 38 items is used to collect data from such students who felt disconnected from college or doubted their ability to do well in college because they worry about their skills, knowledge, and control over their environment (Graham, 2007).

Data analysis was carried out using SPSS-26. The basic characteristics of the data were presented using descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis. Inferential statistics such as correlation and regression analysis have also been employed to examine the relationship between variables (Mamin et al., 2020).

The variables used in this research were used by multiple authors in different

time and geographical contexts. Several studies (Chouinard, 2017; Mega, 2014; Regueiro, 2016; Singh, 2020) have used academic goals, self-efficacy, internal locus of control, and positive classroom relationship as independent variables, and achievement motivation as the dependent variable. Prior research has shown that academic goals, self-efficacy, internal locus of control, and positive classroom relationships are top-rated factors affecting students' achievement motivation.

To measure the reliability of the variables, Cronbach's Alpha was used in this research. Pearson Correlation was used to determine if there is a linear relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The multiple regression analysis was done to assess the strength of the relationship between the independent and the dependent variable as well as. The aim of multiple regression was to assess the importance of each independent variable to the

Table 2.
Measurable Factors of the Variables

Variables	Relevant Source of literature	Measurable factors
Academic Goals	(Regueiro et al., 2016)	Study goals to safeguard the ego, acquire social recognition, avoid punishment, and seek self-aggrandizement. Study goals to have a better future Study goals to eliminate feelings of inadequacy and incompetence.
Self-efficacy	(Bandura, 1977); (Neumann et al., 1988); (Pintrich, 2004); (Yusuf, 2011)	Confidence in student's intelligence, & personality,
Internal Locus of Control	(Pascarella et al., 1996); (Singh et al., 2020)	Internal scale on what level students believe they have control over their lives.
Positive Classroom Relationship	(Chouinard et al., 2017); (Mohamad et al., 2013)	How students perceive teacher's support, Bond between student and teacher, Student's understanding, awareness, and cognition control, Student's skill to understand the important concept from what they're learning Student's collaboration, communication, and discussion with peers.

relationship by statistically eliminating the prediction to get the most effective independent variable (academic goals or self-efficacy or internal locus of control or positive classroom relationship) that affects students' achievement motivation.

DATA ANALYSIS

This section presents the results of the data analysis.

Table 3 presents descriptive statistics of the variables under study, which shows the responses of various students towards achievement motivation. The higher mean scores for all the constructs

indicate that respondents show more agreement levels with the items in the questionnaire. The standard deviations for all the variables are less than the mean, showing less variation in the responses. All the variables except the Internal Locus of Control are negatively skewed, indicating that most of the responses are on the right side of the mean. However, as the scores are less than 0.5, the distribution is well around the mean. The negative kurtosis indicates that the distribution of the response scores is more flattened than the normal distribution. Almost all the values are close to and above 0.7, which justifies the study's reliability (Nunnally, 1978).

Since the skewness and kurtosis values of the data distribution are less than 1 and follow normality (Muthén & Muthén, 2017), Pearson's correlation was used.

In Table 4, the correlations between academic goals, self-efficacy, internal locus of control, and classroom relationship with students' achievement motivation were observed to be significantly positive. The result revealed that students' motivation to perform well in school increased

when they set targets, there was an increase in students' goal-setting habits, felt confident in themselves, had control over their lives, and had good relationships with their teachers and peers, they are more likely to do well in school and vice versa.

The VIF of all the variables in Table 5 is less than 10, confirming no multicollinearity issue. In addition, the regression coefficients of the predictor variables share positive relationships

Table 3
Descriptive Statistics of Study Variable

Variables	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis	Cronbach α
Academic Goals	8	28	18.88	4.57	-0.15	-0.32	0.72
Self-Efficacy	2	10	6.59	1.93	-0.20	-0.04	0.74
Internal Locus of Control	17	35	26.23	4.15	0.08	-0.46	0.67
Positive Classroom Relationship	16	45	31.71	5.62	-0.05	0.34	0.78
Student Achievement Motivation	9	30	20.84	4.78	-0.05	-0.39	0.79

Note. Calculations based on the Survey, 2022

Table 4
Correlation coefficients of the Variables

Variables	Academic Goals	Self-Efficacy	Internal Locus of Control	Positive Classroom Relationship	Student Achievement Motivation
Academic Goals	1				
Self-Efficacy	.225*	1			
Internal Locus of Control	.275**	.423**	1		
Positive Classroom Relationship	.178*	.357**	.468**	1	
Student Achievement Motivation	.169*	.368**	.471**	.632**	1

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

Note. Calculations based on the Survey, 2022

Table 5
Multiple Regression Analysis of the Variables

Independent variables	B	Std. Error	Std. Beta	t	P-value	VIF
(Constant)	-0.314	2.662		-0.118	0.906	
Academic Goals	0.003	0.082	0.003	0.039	0.969	1.1
Self-Efficacy	0.267	0.21	0.107	1.269	0.207	1.285
Internal Locus of Control	0.217	0.104	0.188	2.081	0.04	1.462
Positive Classroom Relationship	0.431	0.073	0.506	5.862	<.001	1.335

Dependent Variable. Student Achievement Motivation, N=104

$R^2= 44.8\%$, Adjusted $R^2= 42.6\%$, $F(4,99)=20.105$, $P<0.05$

Note. Calculations based on the Survey, 2022

with student motivation achievement, as observed in Pearson Correlation. Of the four independent variables, positive classroom relationships and internal locus of control are observed to significantly impact at a 5% significance level supporting H_3 and H_4 . At the same time, H_1 and H_2 get rejected. This result indicates that student achievement motivation gets enhanced due to enhancement in positive classroom relationship and internal locus of control. However, the observed 42.6% adjusted R_2 signifies that all of observed variables contributed to explaining the variance in the dependent variable.

Discussion: The first finding revealed that when students set their academic goals, it doesn't impact their achievement motivation. This result vastly differed from [Hulleman \(2010\)](#), who saw academic goals being positively related to education outcomes and achievement motivation. [Regueiro \(2016\)](#) also discovered that having academic goals helps students learn more, stay motivated, and not give up easily. Further, [Valle \(2015\)](#)

presented a study conclusion where the motivational orientation helped individuals maintain a sense of personal efficacy, which allowed individuals to have a cognitive commitment to set goals even if they experienced failure. Their commitment is a catalyst to set and act on their academic goals and achieve better overall. Hence, this paper's finding contradicts what other researchers have found. It denotes that students from Kathmandu Valley have different ways of thinking and learning regarding their academic goals and have different ideas about what causes their successes and failures ([Inglés et al., 2015](#)). Similarly, the second finding showed that how confident a student felt did not have a big impact on how much they wanted to do well in school, i.e., achievement motivation. This finding goes against what [Landine \(1998\)](#) and [Yusuf \(2011\)](#) said in their study, which is having self-efficacy positively impacts achievement motivation. The results were puzzling since they statistically linked self-efficacy with students' CGPA, where good CGPA was constructed as a mediation to show

that these students are more likely to exhibit high students' achievement motivation with better study habits.

The third observation revealed that if students believe that they have control over their success, then it impacts their motivation to achieve. This result means that students in Kathmandu Valley believed that their success is accountable for the consequences of their behaviours and decisions (Fini & Yousefzadeh, 2011; Strain, 1993). Because of this, students feel more inspired to achieve more in their education (Karaman & Watson, 2017). Similarly, the last observation showed that when students have a good relationship with their teachers and classmates, they tend to feel more motivated to do well in college. This result shows that if students in Kathmandu Valley have a positive rapport with their teachers and peers, they are more motivated to do well in college, and have better academic outcomes. This finding is similar to the longitudinal study of Chouinard et al. (2017) found an association between teacher relationships with students' achievement motivation.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

A positive relationship exists between the variables (i.e., academic goals, self-efficacy, internal locus of control, and positive classroom relationship) and student achievement motivation. It means that if—students have a goal, believe in their ability, take responsibility for their actions, and have a healthy relationship with their teachers and classmates. They

are more inclined to be enthusiastic about learning and achieve academic success. Similarly, multiple regression analysis found that academic goals and self-efficacy did not have a big impact on students' achievement motivation; hence, it rejected the predictions of H_1 & H_2 . It was also found if students have control over their own success and have good relationships with teachers and peers, they are more likely to be motivated to do well in college; this finding accepted H_3 & H_4 . In conclusion, having a good relationship with teachers and classmates encourage students the most to strive for better academic performance.

It is important for educators to create and keep a friendly and engaging atmosphere for teaching pedagogy that encompasses classroom management and lesson preparation. They should use methods to teach and test students that focus on individual learning needs and holistic development of students (Chouinard et al., 2017). Likewise, teachers should encourage open discussions and trial-and-error experiments while creating a friendly environment for their students (American Psychological Association, 2021; Ibbrahim & Zaatari, 2019). These steps will ensure equal power between students and teachers. It can also help establish a well-defined rule that is obeyed by all to enhance the collaboration between teachers and students.

According to a study by Boulton (2011), peer relationships can help students feel less stressed and increase students' desire to attend college. It would be best

if colleges and teachers encouraged collaboration through interactive group assignments, events, and celebrations. The adoption of this idea will enable students to experience joy, enthusiasm, and progress in their education, as opposed to solely focusing on completing college requirements and achieving good or passing grades.

In the coming years, researchers may consider investigating different geographical parts of Nepal with distinct cultural groups. Similarly, an increase in the sample size can yield a greater understanding regarding variations in character, study patterns, and techniques. Adding more variables to the study can also be helpful. Likewise, there is also room for a prolonged,

experimental study using interventions to generalise the conclusion of the study. The researchers also may consider gathering the student's grades (CGPA) to see if there's a connection between wanting to learn and doing well in college.

Further studies need to figure out how to change students' behaviour in a lasting way, including looking at how people think about their own thinking (called metacognition) and the intervention methods to help them achieve and excel. Hence, the insights offered by these studies can enlighten us on the combined effects of factors such as academic goals, self-efficacy, internal locus of control, and positive classroom relationships in fostering achievement motivation and academic excellence.

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