

A Study on the Influence of Hope and Self-Esteem on Academic Performance among School Students

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Abstract

This article aims to explore the influence of hope and self-esteem on academic performance among school students. When academic performance is set as a goal in students, hope and self-esteem can serve as a motivating factor to achieve that goal. To explore such factors, the study has used Trait Hope Scale by Snyder and Multi-Dimensional Self-Esteem Questionnaire by Karunanidhi. Data were collected from 60 school students comprising of 31 girls and 29 boys. Correlation has been analyzed between hope and academic performance, self-esteem and academic performance, hope and self-esteem and t-test has been used to highlight the difference in gender in all the three variables. The study result show significant difference in correlation between hope and academic performance while test results showed no significant difference among self-esteem and academic performance, and hope and self-esteem. Likewise, there is significant difference in gender in hope and academic performance while self-esteem showed insignificance.

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a transitional stage of physical and mental human development generally occurring between childhood and adulthood. According to Erik Erikson's stages of human development, adolescent is a person between the ages of 13 and 19. Historically, puberty has been heavily associated with teenagers and the onset of adolescent development. However, the start of puberty has had somewhat of an increase in pre-adolescence (particularly females, as seen with early and precocious puberty), and adolescence has had an occasional extension beyond the teenage years (typically males) compared to previous generations. These changes have made it more difficult to rigidly define the time frame in which adolescence occurs. Adolescence is characterized by a number of cognitive, emotional, physical and attitude changes, which can be a cause of conflict on one hand and positive personality development on the other.

Hope: Hope is considered to be a relatively enduring cognitive-behavioral set of beliefs about the self and the future. These beliefs tend to be self serving and biased toward a positive self-image¹. A person with a higher sense of hope will demonstrate a greater sense of determination to meet his/her personal goals (the agency dimension) and evidence a sense of being able to meet his/her personal goals successfully (the pathways component). Snyder and colleagues have conceptualized that the agency component as the "will to survive" under adverse conditions and the pathways component represents the "means for successful coping and adjustment".

Self-esteem

Self-esteem is "the disposition to experience oneself as being competent to cope with the basic challenges of life and of being worthy of happiness"^{1b}. High self-esteem

makes the adolescence more strong and is regarded as an important aspect of one's social and cognitive developmentⁱⁱⁱ, with the early adolescent years being somewhat volatile and yielding substantial shifts from one year to the next^{iv}.

Hope and Academic Performance

Hope tends to influence the academic performance as what individual hope to be makes them to work more and increase academic performance. Even talented people tend to lose due to lack of hope which is evident from the statement, even talented young people may fail to achieve at levels that are consistent with their academic potentials, they may lower their academic expectations^v, and they may either not go to school or, if they do, drop out prior to graduating^{vi}. These students come to be what Hanson has called "lost talent," and they are at a distinct disadvantage in today's difficult job market. Therefore, it is important to understand the factors that keep students on track and in pursuit of their educational goals.

Self-esteem and Academic Performance

Self-esteem plays a role in academic performance as high self-esteem make the adolescence strong to face the barriers and attain high academic performance. Studies have found that self-esteem to be positively correlated with academic achievement and negatively correlated with counterproductive behavior, like aggression and delinquency^{vii}.

Need For the Study

The attitudes of adolescents towards education are greatly influenced by their vocational interests. If they are aspire/hope to occupations which require education beyond high school, they will regard education as a stepping stone. Self-esteem which is regarded as the evaluation of self is well need to achieve that aspiration. Hope and self-esteem have to play an integral part in academic performance to achieve that aspiration. This made the researcher to focus on the influence of hope and self-esteem on academic performance. The research can help in establishing the strategies of hope and self-esteem in Indian schools for improving the academic performance of the students.

Objective

The present study aims at finding the influence of hope and self esteem on academic performance among school students.

Hypothesis

The study has following hypothesis,

1. There is a significant relationship between hope and academic performance.
2. There is a significant relationship between self-esteem and academic performance.
3. There will be no significant relationship between hope and self-esteem.
4. There will be gender difference in hope, self-esteem and academic performance.

Review of Literature

Ciarrochi, Heaven and Davies conducted a longitudinal study on the impact of hope, self-esteem, and attributional style on adolescents' school grades and emotional well-being and examined the distinctiveness of three "positive thinking" variables in predicting future high school grades, teacher-rated adjustment, and students' reports of their affective states. Seven hundred eighty-four high school students (382 males and 394 females; 8 did not indicate their gender) took part in the study. The study was conducted

in two time intervals. Time 1 has measured the verbal and numerical ability, positive thinking, and indices of emotional well-being (positive affect, sadness, fear, and hostility), and Time 2 has measured hope, self-esteem, and emotional well-being. Multi-level random coefficient modeling was used in this study and it has revealed that each positive thinking variable was distinctive in some contexts. The authors conclude that hope as a predictor of positive affect and the best predictor of grades, negative attributional style was the best predictor of increases in hostility and fear, and low self-esteem was the best predictor of increases in sadness.^{viii}

Day, Hanson, Maltby, Proctor and Wood (2010) conducted a 3-year longitudinal study to explore whether the two-dimensional model of trait hope predicted degree scores after considering intelligence, personality, and previous academic achievement. A sample of 129 respondents (52 males, 77 females) completed measures of trait hope, general intelligence, the five factor model of personality, divergent thinking, as well as objective measures of their academic performance before university ('A' level grades) and final degree scores. The authors conclude that hope uniquely predicts objective academic achievement above intelligence, personality, and previous academic achievement^{ix}.

Maruyama, Rubin and Kingsbury has used causal modeling techniques to examine the relationships among social class, ability, educational achievement, and self-esteem for 4 samples of children born in the years 1961-1964. 715 predominately white, urban Ss were involved. Self-esteem was measured through the Self-Esteem Inventory, ability through the WISC, and achievement through the Stanford Achievement Test and Wide Range Achievement Test. Measures were collected when the Ss were between the ages of 4 and 15 years. The authors concluded that social class and ability were found to be strongly interrelated and to cause both achievement and self-esteem. Achievement was highly stable across the age range 9-25 and results have indicated that the achievement and self-esteem are not causally related^x.

Bowles (1999) has measured self-esteem after the semester for which he obtained the school grades. The path analysis has indicated that there was no direct causal path from self-esteem to achievement. The author concluded that the academic achievement results in high self-esteem but not vice versa^{xi}.

Einar M. Skaalvik studied gender differences in different dimensions of academic self-concept were examined. General academic self-esteem and expectations of being able to master particular math and verbal problems were measured in 231 sixth-grade Norwegian students. The girls had a substantially higher level of achievement and higher success expectations than their male classmates in Norwegian and English tasks, whereas there were no gender differences in achievement or success expectations in mathematics or in general academic self-esteem. A path analysis revealed that the differences in success expectations in English and Norwegian were no larger than could be explained by differences in achievement, and support for a direct effect of sex stereotypes on success expectations was not found.

METHODOLOGY

Research Method

The researcher has used descriptive method to serve the research purpose. The methodology adopted enables the investigator to look at the amorphous data in a meaningful way.

Sampling: The sampling was done among school students from Matriculation Hr School in Chennai.

Sample Size:

The total sample size = 60
 Boys = 29
 Girls = 31

Sampling Technique: Sampling method adopted by the researcher was convenient sampling method.

Data Collection: The data is collected through primary data collection method through survey questionnaires.

Other Criteria

T-test and Pearson product moment correlation are used to analyze the data

Tools

Trait Hope Scale (Snyder et al., 1991) is a 12-item self-report questionnaire intended to measure the level of hope in the context of a goal setting framework. Two subscales were measured, i.e., pathways and agencies. The total level of hope can be measured by the sum of both subscales. The multi-dimensional self-esteem questionnaire (Karunanidhi, 1995) questionnaire consisted of 83 items in the form of statements. It has both positive and negative items. Categories are well mixed to reduce the halo effect and the logical error, and double – barreled statements are avoided. There are 6 dimensions involved competency, global self-esteem, moral and self-control, social-esteem, family, body and physical appearance.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table I show the correlation coefficient of Hope, Self-esteem and Academic Performance

N	Variables	R
60	Hope and Academic Performance	0.532**
60	Self-esteem and Academic Performance	0.140 ^{NS}
60	Hope and Self-esteem	0.247 ^{NS}

**- Significant at 0.01 level.

^{NS}- Not significant

Hypothesis I

There is a significant relationship between hope and academic performance.

Table I shows the correlation coefficient for the relationship between hope and academic performance as 0.532** which is found to be significant at 0.01 level. Hope increases the expectation for the achievement of goals and makes significant influence in the academic performance. Hope in a uniquely way influence the students' grade expectancies, which in turn, influence the academic performance. Liz Day, et al., says that “hope uniquely predicts objective academic achievement above intelligence, personality, and previous academic achievement”^{xii}.

Hope is the actual predictor of anything like life events, school performance, etc. Ciarrochi, Heaven and Davies concluded their longitudinal study on the impact of hope,

self-esteem and attributional style on adolescents' school grades and emotional well-being^{xiii} that hope was a predictor of positive affect and the best predictor of grades^{xiv}. In this similar line, the present study has shown positive correlation between hope and academic performance.

Hypothesis II

There is a significant relationship between self-esteem and academic performance.

Table I shows the correlation coefficient for the relationship between self-esteem and academic performance as 0.140 which is found to be insignificant. Self esteem was found to exert no significant causal influence on academic performance. Similar result was found on Ciarrochi, Heaven and Davies's study. They stated that there is no significant relationship existed between self esteem and achievement in the analyzed data, which was longitudinal, thereby allowing better specification of interrelations between self esteem and achievement. Hence their study concluded that self-esteem and achievement were not causally related to each other^{xv}.

Self-esteem increases the self worth of a person only after his/her academic performance is known^{xvi}. Self-esteem acts as the result for academic performance but not as cause for good academic performance. Bowles, who has measured self-esteem after the semester for which they have obtained the school grades through path way analysis, concludes that self-esteem is a result, not a cause for performing well in school^{xvii}. Poor academic performance might decrease self-esteem, at the same time high academic performance might increase self-esteem but not the opposite. Students with high self-esteem generally have done somewhat better in school and on school performance tests than students with low self-esteem, but self-esteem does not play a role for good school performance. The study but Skaalvik and Hagtvet has revealed that performing well in the first year of schooling leads to higher self-esteem in the following year, but high self-esteem did not lead to performing well in school^{xviii}.

Hypothesis III

There will be no significant relationship between hope and self-esteem.

Table I shows the correlation coefficient for the relationship between Hope and Self-esteem as 0.247 which is found to be insignificant. Hope is the future prediction or expectation of a person whereas self-esteem is known as the self evaluation of one's self worth. Hope increases the self-esteem but it does not mean that hope alone is the increasing factor of self-esteem as it has many global factors like internal locus of control, sense of competence, etc. So there is no such compulsory need for the significance in relationship between hope and self-esteem.

Hypothesis IV

There will be gender difference in hope, self-esteem and academic performance.

Table II shows the gender difference in Hope, Self-esteem and Academic Performance

Variables	Gender	N	Mean	SD	't' Value
	Boys	29	45.5172	10.29084	

Hope	Girls	31	51.1613	7.21155	2.473**
Self-esteem	Boys	29	218.7931	21.19700	.282 ^{NS}
	Girls	31	220.2581	19.00345	
Academic Performance	Boys	29	50.3955	16.85678	3.358**
	Girls	31	64.8603	16.49731	

** - Significant at 0.01 level

^{NS} - Not significant

The graphical representation shows the mean and SD value of hope, self-esteem and academic performance of boys and girls.

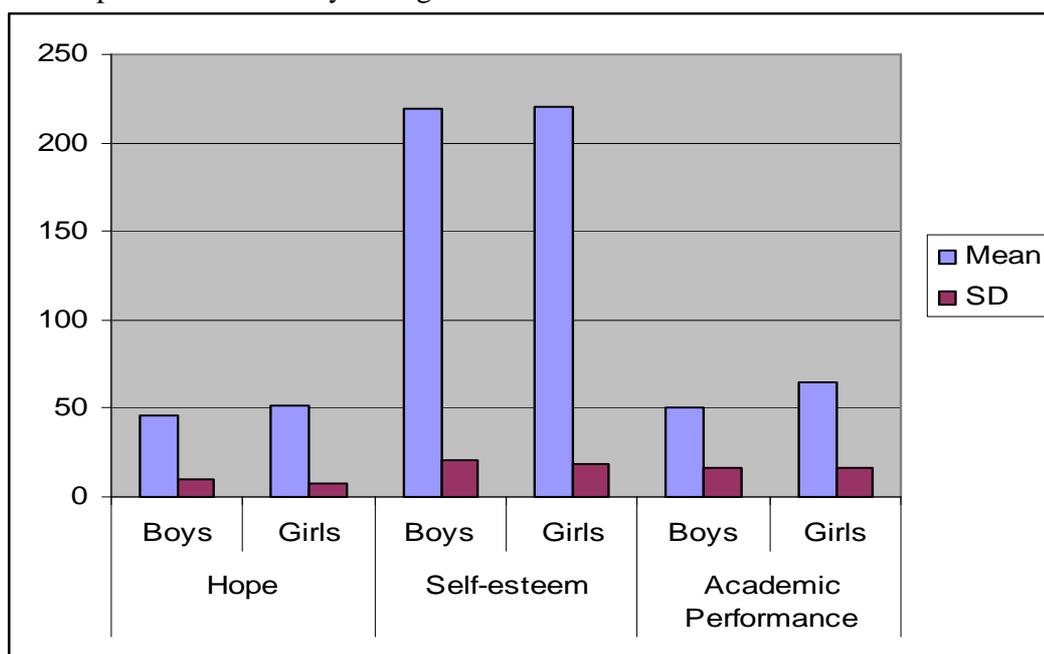


Table II shows the significant difference between boys and girls in hope. In this modern trend girls have created more opportunities for themselves as a result many adolescent girls come out with increased hope to achieve in life. This also resulted in competition for carrier between genders. In adolescence both boys as well as girls have more hope on the future but when compared, girls have more hope.

Table II shows there is no significant difference between boys and girls in self-esteem. This result is consistent with the results obtained by Coopersmith, who found no difference in the means of Self-Esteem Inventory (SEI) between males and females^{xix} and Skaalvik and Simon, who found no significant difference in gender between males and females in self-esteem^{xx}. Crams has provided evidence for gender differences only in domain specific areas of self-esteem and concluded that the differences between boys and girls are not significant enough for practical importance^{xxi}.

Self-esteem is just the overall concept of one's self resulting from previous success or failure. Both boys and girls moreover have same amount of self-esteem and there is no significant difference as all of them have the overall concept of self-esteem. The presence of moreover same amount in self-esteem among boys and girls are confirmed by the mean score in the gender difference table.

Table II shows the significant difference between boys and girls in academic performance. Investigating academic performance at pre-collegiate level, Lao has found

that girl students have obtained higher CGPA compared to boys^{xxii}. Examining sex-related difference in classroom grades, Kimball finds that in contrast to standardized measures of mathematics achievement tests like SAT-M3, girl students outperform boys in math classes^{xxiii}. Wilberg and Lynn arrive at a similar conclusion for history classes vs. history tests. The authors explain this pattern by stating that girls tend to work more conscientiously and have a stronger work ethic than males. They also tend to have better language abilities including essay writing skills, vocabulary and word fluency which contribute to better course work^{xxiv}.

In adolescence, social and familial expectations increases on both boys as well as girls and they are in position to fulfill that. This expectation will be around their academic performance. As a result girls are more likely to have more academic locus of control than boys and prefer academic performance as a stepping stone for future and tries to fulfill that expectation. On the other hand boys fail to fulfill that expectation as they regard success in sports and social life as important as academic work as a stepping stone to future success. Boys regard academic performance is one way for their success in future whereas girls regard academic performance than boys. This result in the increased academic performance among girls than boys. On the other hand, many of adolescent boys tend to engage in more extracurricular activities like playing, attending to parties, drinking etc. whereas girls in spite of their wider opportunity, they prefer studies which can only lead them to occupations with greater security which they actually long for their future and this lead them to posses high academic performance than boys.

CONCLUSION

This study has explored the influence of hope and self-esteem on academic performance among school students. It has revealed that hope is significantly correlated with academic performance and the correlation of self-esteem and academic performance and also correlation between hope and self-esteem seems to be insignificant. Hope actually predicts the future academic performance but self-esteem does not increased academic performance as self-esteem is the result of such academic performance and not the cause. The study also reveals that there is significant difference between genders in hope and academic performance but not with self-esteem. Both boys as well as girls have high hope but comparatively girls have high hope than boys. Girls have more academic performance than boys as boys tend to vary their ways of interest and the attitude about future goals. Self-esteem in regard to gender difference is that both boys and girls have same amount of overall concept of self-esteem.

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