

## Achievement Motivation, Attitude towards Modernization and Academic Performance of Undergraduate Students

Fatema-Tu-Zohra Binte Zaman<sup>1</sup>  
Md. Saifur Rahman<sup>2</sup>

**Abstract:** *The present study aims to examine the relationships of achievement motivation, attitude towards modernization and academic performance among male and female undergraduate students. It was hypothesized that, achievement motivation and attitude towards modernization of male and female students will be significantly differing. It was also hypothesized that achievement motivation, attitude towards modernization and academic performance of students which will be positively correlated. Employing purposive sampling technique, 120 undergraduate students were drawn from two reputed Public Universities of Dhaka to serve as subjects in the present study. In order to measure the dependent variable original Bengali version of the "Achievement Motivation Scale" (Prayag Metha, 1969) and "Short form of the Modernity Scale" (Inkeles & Smith, 1976) was used which was suitable and applicable for use in Bangladesh. Academic performances were collected by using "Personal Information Form (PIF)". The statistical treatment of the data was done by t-test and Pearson product moment correlation. Analysis of the result revealed that achievement motivation did not differ according to gender. However, male students scored higher on modernization than female students. Analysis also reveals that achievement motivation, attitude towards modernization and academic performance are positively co-related.*

### Introduction:

In education, as in other realms of life, achievement motivation plays a crucial role in the performance of students. Everyone has a need to achieve and a fear of failure, but these needs vary from person to person and from situation to situation. Each student acts on the levels of motivation differently, but some students are predisposed to having little desire to accomplish certain tasks (Atkinson, 1999). Some individuals have a need to achieve. They want to be successful at whatever they attempt. They have a high attitude toward success and work hard to

<sup>1</sup> Assistant Professor. Dept. of Psychology, Jagannath University, Dhaka 1100:

<sup>2</sup> 8th Semester Graduate Student, Dept. of Psychology, Jagannath University, Dhaka-1100

ensure they are successful (Atkinson, 1974). Other individuals have a fear of failure. They will avoid failure at all costs. Usually the individual will not even attempt the task. It has been shown that all students are influenced by achievement motivation (Atkinson, 1999).

Motivation, as it relates to students, is very important. Students who have high motivation to achieve generally do well academically and vice versa. But motivation does not guarantee achievement. Similarly, achievement does not reflect motivation (Keefe and Jenkins, 1993). Achievement motivation means to accomplish something difficult and to master physical objects, human beings, or ideas most rapidly and independently (Murray, 1938). Cassidy and Lynn (1989) define achievement motivation in general as the personal striving of individuals to attain goals within their social environment.

Atkinson and Feather (1966) addressed that one's perception of probability for achievement came from two types of motives: to achieve success (a need to achieve), and to avoid failure (a fear of failure). The motive to achieve success is based on (1) the need to succeed, (2) the individual's perception of the probability of success, and (3) the individual's perception of the value of the outcome (Atkinson & Feather, 1966; Atkinson & Raynor, 1978). The motive to avoid failure is based on (1) the need to avoid failure, (2) the individual's perception of the probability of failure, and (3) the individual's perception of the effect of the failure. "The strength of motivation to perform some act is assumed to be a multiplicative function of the strength of the motive, the expectancy (subjective probability) that the act will have as a consequence the attainment of an incentive, and the value of the incentive:  $Motivation = f(Motive \times Expectancy \times Incentive)$ " (Atkinson & Feather, 1966, p. 13).

Achievement motivation is often correlated with actual achievement behaviour (Camara, 1986, cited from Tella, 2007). Individuals' actual achievement behaviour depends not only on their motivation to achieve but also on whether they expect to achieve and whether they fear failure. People are more likely to work hard when they perceive a reasonable chance to succeed than when they perceive a goal to be out of reach (Atkinson, 1964). Children's expectations of success can be measured by asking them to predict a certain grade, indicate how sure they are that they can solve a particular problem, and select the hardest task they think they can do from a collection of tasks varying by degree of difficulty

(Philips, 1987). Researchers (Carr et. al.1991) have found that children with high IQs and high expectations of success in school get higher grades than children with low IQs and low expectations.

Achievement motivation has long been associated with task difficulty preferences. In an early formulation of achievement motivation theory, Atkinson (1957) proposed that positively motivated subjects would prefer tasks of moderate difficulty, whereas negatively motivated subjects would prefer either very easy or very difficult tasks. In dealing with the probability of success, Atkinson and Feather (1966) found in a study, "The person more motivated to achieve should prefer a moderate risk. His level of aspiration will fall at the point where his positive motivation is strongest, at the point where the odds seem to be 50 - 50" (p. 18). A person with a fear of failure does not want to take any risk, but when forced will choose either a task so easy it cannot be failed, or a task so difficult it cannot be expected to be accomplished.

Ibanez et al. (2004) found positive relationship between students' academic competence and their achievement motivation. Kuo (2006) found that, compared to those with low achievement motivation, employees with high achievement motivation adopted career strategies more frequently. Miron and McClelland (1979) pointed out that achievement motivation training could significantly enhance the performance of small business corporations. Stewart and Roth (2007) conducted a meta-analysis study and found that entrepreneurs had higher levels of achievement motivation than managers. Tucker (1988) found that entrepreneurs tended to have higher levels of achievement motivation than public-sector employees. Xue et al. (2006) investigated the relationship between achievement motivation, achievement goal orientation, career belief, and career choice of college students. Findings revealed that achievement motivation had a significant influence on career belief and choice. "Academic intrinsic motivation has been shown to be positively and significantly related to students' achievement and perception of their academic competence, and inversely related to their academic anxiety" (Eskeles-Gottfried, Fleming, Gottfried, 1998, p. 1448). Many students feel that if they make the effort and work hard, they will be successful. Effort is the key to success (Leondari, Syngollitou, and Kiosseoglou, 1998).

Alderman (1999) adds to the achievement theories, "Ability and effort have typically been found to be the most frequent reasons for success and

failure in achievement contexts" (p. 25). "For students who believe success is unlikely, the main priority is to avoid failure that is linked or attributed to ability through the use of failure - avoiding strategies" (Alderman, 1999, p. 68). Jenkins (1997) includes, "Children are born motivated to learn. Children enter Kindergarten still possessing this enthusiasm for learning. Educators need not motivate children to learn; their responsibility is to eliminate the loss of enthusiasm" (p. 111). Most children begin school with enthusiasm for learning. School is firmly fixed in their positive system of values. However, they seem to lose enthusiasm when school experiences fail to connect with their lives (Keefe and Jenkins (1993), p. 154). According to Parker and Johnson (1981), an individuals' achievement motive may be seen as a personality trait. Zhang and Lan (2007) found no significant relationship between motivation to achieve success and overall instrumental work values. However, this study showed that students with higher levels of motivation to achieve success scored higher on overall instrumental work values. Specifically, this study found that motivation to achieve success had significantly positive effects on five factors under the dimension of instrumental work values: Personality and interests, Morality and norms, Compensation and prestige, Occupational perspective, and Benefits. Zhang (2010) also found a significantly positive relationship between motivation to achieve success and perspective and development for students.

Miner (1980) concluded that achievement motivation is a male theory, and that it does not explain female behavior very well. In contrast, Cooper (1983) found that the predicted relationships generally held for women as well as men (i.e., the relationships for women were somewhat attenuated, but still significant). The conclusion of Miner that achievement motivation is primarily a male theory may have been valid previously, but Cooper suggested that the importance of gender differences in achievement motivation may be decreasing with time. One explanation is that the relative importance of achievement motivation has been increasing for women. Veroff, Depner, Kukla, and Douvan (1980) found that levels of achievement motive significantly increased among American women between 1957 and 1976. Likewise, in a longitudinal study Jenkins (1987) found that achievement motive increased for women between 1967 and 1981. As women have become more achievement oriented, gender may have decreased in importance as a boundary variable in achievement motivation.

Modernization refers to the mechanisms of inclusion, value pluralism, differentiation and status upgrading (i.e. welfare development) (Zapf 1991). Modernism is the movement to establish democratic institutions within the Islamic religious Diaspora, whereby some European ideas will be incorporated but Arabic socialism soundly rejected (Elger 2001). A more dynamic definition is given by Johannes Berger, 1996: "Modernization is the internal achievement of a society; the particular processes of modernization support each other in combination; the leading nations do not impede the followers; the processes of modernization are converging in a common goal". Modernization as a term in sociology is used to denote complex process of social change from traditional way of living and thinking. Modernization is historically inescapable and even irretrievable process of social change, which has been in a very wide sense, going on ever since man come out of his ice age and discovered the fire. Modernization, to be precise, refers to the deeper change in man's thinking and feeling, a change in his whole attitude to life's problems, the society and the universe. According to Inkeles et al. (1976) the modern man is distinguished by his rational belief, scientific outlook, readiness to master the environment and investigate into the mysteries of nature, willing participation in social, political activities and tolerance of views of others than his own. Modern man is almost diametrically opposed to the traditional man.

Professor Ashok K. Kalia ( March 2012) conducted a study with 200 adolescents with an aim to examine empirically whether or not gender and academic achievement are capable of explaining variance of adolescence in attitude towards modernization. Analysis of results revealed that female adolescence is significantly higher on politics and general modernization in comparison to male adolescences. High achieving adolescence have more positive attitude towards modernization in comparison to low achieving adolescences.

A study of attitudes of B.Ed. trainees towards Modernization conducted by Chaudhari (April 2012) showed that the average score of attitudes of male trainees was 99.22 and female trainees was 91.35 toward modernization. The t-value was 13.11 which was signification at 0.01 levels so it was concluded that the attitudes of male B.Ed. trainees was higher than those of female B.Ed. trainees. The result also showed that the average score of attitudes of rural and urban B.Ed. trainees was 87.44 and 111 respectively. The t-value was found 30.21 which was significant at 0.01 level so it was concluded that the attitudes of urban B.Ed. trainees was found higher than those of rural B.Ed. trainees.

## 2.0 Rationale of the study

With the development of scientific management and the growth of new social values, changes have taken place in the attitude towards modernization. Due to modern industrial development achievement motivation has become a controversial factor in youths for success. Both achievement motivation and attitude towards modernization creates direct or indirect effect on youth's academic performance. An attitude may comprise characteristics of strength, magnitude or intensity, importance, salience or centrality complexity, flexibility etc. Attitude formation and motives for change in attitude are directly influenced through questioning, personal experience and positive or negative reinforcement, the modernization lead to attitude change.

Modernization attitude is a psychological term of behavior. Modernization attitude of university students are generally positive or negative views of a person, place, thing or event - this is often referred to as the attitude object. Many literatures indicate that achievement motivation and attitude towards modernization have significant effect on academic performance on youths. Most of the studies so far, have been conducted in the western country. No such study was conducted in our country regarding this issue. So, the present study would like to investigate in our country. The result of the study may be of help to the researcher, teachers and especially for youths to bring about positive changes in achievement motivation, attitude towards modernization and academic performances.

## 3.0 Objectives of the study

The present study was therefore undertaken with the following objectives

- ◆ To see whether there is any difference in achievement motivation and attitude towards modernization among male and female students.
- ◆ To investigate the relationship between achievement motivation and attitude towards modernization.
- ◆ To investigate the relationship between achievement motivation and academic performance.
- ◆ To investigate the relationship between attitude towards modernization and academic performance.

#### 4.0 Limitations of the study

This study had a number of limitations just like any other study. One of the most major limitations was that the information was collected only from Dhaka city because collecting information from all corners of Bangladesh is difficult. Also when some participants came to know that they will not be benefited from this research directly, they showed unwillingness to participate and didn't cooperate properly. As a result, information collection faced serious problems. The samples were not perfect representative of youths and also small in number. Some limitations like economical, time, resource, logistic support and manpower hindered the study in different ways.

If the above limitations turned into positive sides, it will be easier for future researchers to conduct this type of research. Again the study recommends further research on larger sample from different socio-economic backgrounds and different areas of Bangladesh, that is, proper representative sample and with better methodological sophistication and analysis. Further, researcher should incorporate more associated variables with insecurity.

#### 5.0 Hypotheses

In the light of the above literature and the objective, the following hypotheses were formulated to test in the present study.

- i. Achievement motivation of male students will be higher than female.
- ii. Attitude towards modernization of male students will be higher than female.
- iii. Achievement motivation would be positively co-related with attitude towards modernization.
- iv. Achievement motivation would be positively co-related with academic performance.
- v. Attitude towards modernization would be positively co-related with academic performance.

## **6.0 Method**

### **6.1 Sample**

This research was conducted on a sample of 120 male and female (60 each), 21 through 25 aged Undergraduate students recruited from two reputed Public Universities of the capital city, Dhaka. The education level of the participants was between 2nd years Honors to 4th year. While the schools were selected purposively the respondents within each school were selected conveniently. All respondents were matched in terms of socioeconomic status and faculty. It is to be noted that all participants willingly took part in the present study.

### **6.2 Measuring Instruments**

The present investigation was conducted to find out the relations among achievement motivation, attitude toward modernization and academic performance in youths of Bangladesh. Total numbers of 120 respondents were taken from the capital of Bangladesh. For data collection in the present study the following instruments were used:

- ◆ Demographic and Personal Information Form.
- ◆ Achievement Motivation Questionnaire.
- ◆ Short form of the Modernity Questionnaire.

### **6.3 Demographic and Personal Information Form (PIF)**

The first instrument being used for primary data collection was demographic information about the respondents. This PIF involved the respondents' few personal information about their academic and self history. These are respondents' age, gender, socio economic status, department, university, present year/semester, merit, result of previous class. It is to be noted that after the personal information fill up phase instructions of the scales used were given to the participants verbally and in writing. There was no fixed time mentioned to complete both the questionnaires but average completion time of the questionnaire was 45 to 60 minutes.



## 6.4 The self report instruments used in the study are described below.

### 6.4.1 Achievement Motivation Questionnaire:

The Bengali version of the Achievement Motivation Scale was used which was originally developed by Indian social- psychologist Prayag Metha in 1969. Achievement Motivation Scale is a self report measuring instrument contains 22 items. Each item has 6 alternative answers in which participants were asked to select any one of them according to their own view. The split-half reliability co-efficient of the scale found by Prayag Metha was 0.67. The scale has high extensive evidence of validity. To measure the level of youth's achievement motivation the self report instrument contains 22 items with six alternative answers. Among the 6 alternative answers only 2 of them indicate or related to achievement motivation which is unknown to participants. If participants selected any one of those 2 will get 1 and get 0 if they selected another 4 of them.

The following figure represents the answer sheet which indicates achievement motivation.

Table-1: Scoring system of achievement motivation

Items No.	Achievement Motivation Indicate	Items No.	Achievement Motivation Indicate
01	খ উ	12	ক ঘ
02	গ চ	13	খ উ
03	ক ঘ	14	গ চ
04	ক উ	15	খ উ
05	গ চ	16	ক ঘ
06	ক ঘ	17	খ উ
07	খ উ	18	গ উ
08	গ চ	19	ক ঘ
09	ক ঘ	20	খ উ
10	খ উ	21	গ চ
11	ক চ	22	ক ঘ

The total score is obtained by summing responses of the items giving each question equal weight. High score indicate high level of achievement motivation where's poor score indicate low level of achievement motivation. The scoring system of the Short form of the Modernity Scale is quite different from another instrument. As the instrument contains 16 items and each item has various alternative answer. The scoring system for each item were given below.

For question 1 → "yes" for 1 and "No" for 0

- For question 2 → respectively 0, 1, 2.  
 For question 3 → respectively 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.  
 For question 4 → respectively 1, 0.  
 For question 5 → respectively 1, 2, 3, 4.  
 For question 6 → respectively 4, 3, 2, 1.  
 For question 7 → respectively 2, 1, 0.  
 For question 8 → respectively 1, 0.  
 For question 9 → respectively 5, 4, 3, 2, 1.  
 For question 10 → respectively 1, 2, 3, 4.  
 For question 11 → "yes" for 1 and "No" for 0  
 For question 12 → total number of organization indicate the score, but less then 7  
 For question 13 → total number of problem - 1, but less then 5  
 For question 14 → both answer for 2, one answer for 1, no correct answer for 0.  
 For question 15 → "yes" for 1 and "No" for 0  
 For question 16 → respectively 2, 1, 0.

#### **6.4.2 Short form of the Modernity Questionnaire:**

To measure the youth's Attitude toward Modernization the bangle version (Niharronjon Sorcar, 1993) of the short form of the overall modernity scale was used. This self report instrument was originally developed by Inkeles & Smith in 1976. The measuring instrument contains 16 items. Each item has two or more several alternative answers, in which a participant can give one answer according to their own view. Each item is an adjective or short phrase that is descriptive of the modernization attitude such as public opinions, crowd behavior, women's right, to accept the change easily, political functions, family planning, information, religious activities, to give opinion and the use of mass media etc The reliability of the scale found 0.95 and correlation co-coefficient of all the items varied from 0.08 to 0.42. This was widely popular for its extensive evidence of validity.

The modernization attitude score is obtained by summing responses of the items giving each question equal weight. High score indicate high level of modernization attitude where poor score is indicating low level of modernization attitude.

## 6.5 Procedure

After taking permission from the authority to conduct this research two standardized self report questionnaires and one personal information form (which was attached to the first page) were used. Before administering the test necessary rapport was established with the respondents. Respondents completed the Bengali version of the questionnaires in a relaxed setting. All the subjects were treated individually for each condition by the investigators. The respondents were informed that their responses were confidential and that they could not be personally identified in later publications. Finally respondents were encouraged to ask any questions they might have, and they were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time. It took one hour on an average to complete the task. It is also necessary to mention that academic performance was calculated from students' previous semester result. After the performance all the respondents were thanked by the investigators for their cooperation and participation in the study.

## 7.0 Result

The present study utilized the data gathered by the survey instruments to prove all the hypotheses. The data obtained from the returned surveys were analyzed and responses to the research question were made using descriptive and the inferential statistics, including item means, standard deviations, t-test and Pearson product moment correlation. The obtained results are presented in table 2 and 3. All-statistical analyses were carried out using the statistical program SPSS version 11.5 for windows with the significance level.

Table-2: Achievement motivation, attitude towards modernization and academic performance of male and female students

Variables	Gender	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	Sig. level
Achievement Motivation	Male	8.2333	2.39609	.573	0.05
	Female	7.9833	2.38279		
Attitude towards Modernization	Male	31.5667	3.46590	2.480*	0.05
	Female	29.5833	5.13312		

The result presented in Table-2 indicates that there is no significant difference in achievement motivation among male and female students. [ $t = 0.573$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ]. The findings further indicate that although the male students obtained higher scores (Mean = 8.2333, Std. Deviation = 2.39609, Std. Error Mean = .30933) on achievement motivation than the female students (Mean = 7.9833, Std. Deviation = 2.38279, Std. Error Mean = .30762), the difference is not significant. The result did not confirm the 1st hypothesis.

The result also indicates that there is significant difference in attitude toward modernization among male and female students. [ $t = 2.48$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ]. The findings further indicate that the male students obtained higher scores (Mean = 31.5667, Std. Deviation = 3.46590, Std. Error Mean = .44745) on attitude towards modernization (Mean = 29.5833, Std. Deviation = 5.13312, Std. Error Mean = .44745) than the female and the difference is significant. The result confirmed the 2nd hypothesis.

Table-3: Correlation co-efficient of Achievement motivation, Attitude towards modernization and Academic performance

Correlation	r	significant level
Achievement motivation and Attitude towards modernization	.046	0.05
Achievement motivation and Academic performance	.102	0.05
Attitude towards modernization and Academic performance	.362	0.05

Result of Table-3 correlation indicate that achievement motivation and attitude towards modernization are positively correlated ( $r = .046$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). The result therefore confirmed the 3rd hypothesis. Result also indicate that achievement motivation and academic performance are positively correlated ( $r = .102$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). The result confirms the 4th hypothesis. Result also indicate that attitude towards modernization and academic performance are positively correlated ( $r = .362$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). The result therefore confirms the 5th hypothesis.

## 8.0 Discussion

The present study was designed to explore the relationships of achievement motivation, attitude towards modernization and academic performance of university students.

No significant difference was found in achievement motivation among male and female students. In 1983 Cooper suggested that the importance of gender differences in achievement motivation may be decreasing with time. As women have become more achievement oriented, gender may have decreased in importance as a boundary variable in achievement motivation. Therefore, Cooper's study supports the findings of the present study and is unresponsive of the 1st hypothesis. Cooper's study also revealed that there is significant difference in attitude towards modernization among male and female students. It also indicates that the male students obtained higher scores on attitude towards modernization than the female and the difference is significant. The result supports the 2nd hypotheses. Similar findings were also found by Wilen Shy and While Inglehard in 1990. Girls of Bangladesh, in general, live in strict restriction. Our socio-culture system is quite different from the culture of advanced world. The activity of a girl is restricted and over protected, whereas boys don't have such restrictions. This is the basic for girls to have less than boys in attitude towards modernization. The results presented in Table-3 indicate that Achievement motivation and attitude towards modernization are positively correlated. The present is a modern age. In this modern age people of all sectors always have a target to achieve more than what they have. This achievement motivation works as a catalyst in modernization. This is because if one lags behind in the race towards modernization, he/ she will also lag behind in the race towards achieving their goal. The above are facts that are supportive of the 3rd hypotheses. Further the results in table 3 reveals that achievement motivation and academic performance are positively correlated. In 1993, Keefe and Jenkins found that students who have high motivation to achieve generally do well academically. Students with low motivation do not do well academically. Their findings are supportive of the 4th hypothesis. Table-3 finally reveals that attitude towards modernization is positively correlated with academic performance and confirms the 5th hypothesis. Modernization has far reaching effects on education system and the academic performance of students. For example, earlier a student had to go through a heap of books to find out a piece of information. Nowadays they can simply search the net. This is less time consuming

and very interesting for the students. When students find learning interesting their academic performance automatically increases.

## **9.0 Conclusion**

Everyone has a need to achieve and a fear of failure. However, these needs vary from person to person and from situation to situation. Career development is becoming more and more important in youths, both male and female. In this study, there are three important factors related to career development which is important and challenging for youths. So there is a need to observe the relationships between achievement motivation, attitude towards modernization and academic performance among the university youths. Modernization brings about changes, both positive and negative, in social norms and way of life. The present study was undertaken so that youths could accept the positive changes and use their achievement motivation along with it to do better in their academics. Because, future career and socio-economic position of a student directly depends on his/ her academic results. Successful youths will be responsible to build a better future in our country. Because, "Today's youth are tomorrow's future."

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