

Personal, Family and School Factors As Correlates of Achievement Motivation among Form Two Students in Nairobi County, Kenya

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Abstract

Poor achievement motivation among learners at secondary school level may explain the dismal performance of many candidates in national examinations. Poor performance leads to loss of rewarding opportunities for the individual learner as s/he misses a chance to study further and in the long run, the society will not have adequate skilled human resources. This study aimed to investigate the relationship between personal, family, and school factors as correlates of achievement motivation. The findings would be used to address low achievement motivation in our schools. The psychological theories and models used in this study were: Atkinson's Theory of Achievement Motivation, Social Cognitive Theory, Family Systems theories and Creemers and Kyriakides Dynamic Model of School Effectiveness. The study adopted an ex-post-facto design and was carried out in 20 public and 20 private secondary schools in Nairobi County. This County was selected due to its diversity with regard to school and contextual scope. Purposive sampling was used to select schools that had single gender characteristics in both public and private categories, while 20 schools from each of these categories were picked using stratified random sampling. Proportionate stratified random sampling was applied to select male and female students from each class while individual respondents were picked through simple random sampling. A total of 600 subjects participated in the study. The researcher used three instruments: Sandven's SP Profile, a projectometric test to measure achievement motivation; Hollingshead's Schema: index of Social position, to collect personal information and index the subjects' social-economic position and an Educational and Occupational Aspiration Questionnaire, which provided the subjects' demographic and bio-data information. Data collection involved self-reporting. Reliability of the instruments was established through the test-retest technique, while validity of the SP profile and the questionnaires, content and face validity was established through expert judgement and peer review of the research instruments. A pilot study was conducted on 40 form two students selected from a mixed day public secondary school in Nairobi County. The raw data were coded and keyed in on excel spreadsheet format, for easier importation to the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) module. Descriptive statistics were used to interrogate the characteristics of the participants and summarize the data collected while inferential statistical methods were used to test hypotheses. The results revealed a significant relationship between achievement motivation and school category (public and private). Further, no significant relationship was found between achievement motivation and: career aspirations; social economic status; ordinal position; family type; parental education; parental occupation and school type (day and boarding). Whilst these findings can be generalized to students in other cosmopolitan cities in Kenya, this must be done with caution in non-cosmopolitan environments. Further research is recommended in all areas covered in this study, in order to make the findings more conclusive.

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