



A Study of Research Attitude, Achievement Motivation and Self Concept of Social Science Research Scholars

Dr. Mohd. Abid Siddiqui

Assistant Professor Dept. of Education, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh

Ms. Taiba Ahmad

M.Ed Scholar, Dept. of Education, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh

ABSTRACT

Increased enrolment in the field of Higher education has led to increase in the number of researchers in all fields including social sciences. It has also deteriorated the quality of researches. Quality of the research varies from institution to institution and in the same institution between departments to department. It is also related to the quality of Guidance as well as the research attitude of the researchers. Research attitude in turn depends upon a number of variables like self concept; achievement motivation e.t.c. Personality factors basically determine the total behaviour pattern of any individual in achieving their life goals. Thus, in this study an attempt has been made to analyse the research attitude of social science research scholars in relation to their achievement motivation and self concept. Data was collected by using standardised tools and analysed by appropriate statistical techniques. Comparative analysis based on gender has also been made. Suggestive measures have also been put forward by the authors of this paper.

KEYWORDS

Researches lead to the generation of new knowledge. It is therefore essential that quality of research should be given utmost priority. Quality depends upon a number of variables related to institution, guide and researcher itself. Environmental factors of the institution help in developing positive attitude of research among researchers. An attitude is a psychological construct or latent variable, inferred from observable responses to stimuli, which is assumed to mediate consistency and co variation among those variables (Green, 1954). Researchers (Swindoll, 2012; Abraham, 2003) claim that attitude is more important than experience and academic preparation. Attitude is a way of thinking and inclining towards optimism and pessimism which exerts a strong influence on the way a person responds to a particular situation or thing (Gross, 2001). It influences the success or overall performance (Bajah, 1999). Shetty (2010) analysed research scenario in ten state universities of India during 2000 to 2006 and found that low quality of researches were being carried out in these universities. Malhotra (2008) pointed out that presently the researchers are provided with basic theoretical knowledge of research process at the masters' level and later they get in touch of the supervisors who without putting the researchers to learn the research process help them in selecting problems and conducting research. The privatization of education right from the elementary level to university level has also contributed to dilution of quality in researches due to mass production of research degrees (Singh, 2008). Papanastasiou (2005) had identified five factors of students' attitude towards research after carrying out factor analysis which were usefulness of research, research anxiety, positive feelings about research, life relevancy of research to the students' daily lives and Difficulties in research. Li. K. Y. L. (2012) found a positive co-relation between the variables—attitude towards research methods and statistics, self-efficacy, effort and academic achievement. The negative attitudes towards research have found to serve as obstacles to learning (Wise, 1985; Waters, martelli, Zakrajsek and Popovich, 1988) as well as associated with poor performance in different programmes at higher education level. Ma in 1995 found that negative attitude towards a course for example, statistics, mathematics or foreign language have been found to have a significant negative effect on students learning. Butt and Shams (2013) found that student teachers have a negative attitude towards research. Sridevi (2010) found that there is

no significant difference in attitude with respect to gender or marital status or with respect to the stream to which the student belong. There are three main goals of the higher education system- multiplications of skills and knowledge, producing excellence in research and related areas, and making impact on or influencing several systems. Multiplication of such knowledge and skills is possible only through quality research. Knowledge gained by research is of the highest order. It is not based upon assumptions, beliefs and untested generalizations. To seek such knowledge, a researcher must develop the right attitude, accurate observation and integrity. Willingness to spend long hours to collect and study all forms of evidences before arriving at conclusions, and originality and objectivity in thinking are equally essential.

Review of various studies in this area, few of them presented above, reveals that research attitude is influenced by a number of factors and there is a need to study these factors and their influence on the research attitude on Social Science Researchers. Keeping this aspect in mind, the investigator made a humble attempt to study the Research Attitude of social science research scholars in relation to their Achievement Motivation and Self-concept.

Objectives of the study:

- To compare the research attitude, achievement motivation and self concept of male and female sample.
- To determine the influence of high and low achievement motivation on the research attitude of total, male and female samples.
- To determine the influence of high, and low self concept on the research attitude of total, male and female samples.

Hypotheses of the study:

The following hypotheses were framed for empirical verifications

- There would be no significant difference between male and female samples on the measure of research attitude, achievement motivation and self concept.
- There would be no significant difference between high and low achievement motivation scholars on the measure of research attitude of the total, male and female samples.

- There would be no significant difference between high and low self concept scholars on the measure of research attitude of total, male and female samples.

METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN OF STUDY:

A random sample of 101 research scholars comprising 47 males and 54 female social science research scholars was selected from 10 different departments of Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh. The following standardised tools were used to collect the data.

Attitude Scale Towards Research by Sood & Sharma (2012)

Deo-Mohan Achievement Motivation Scale by Deo and Mohan (1985).

Self-Concept Scale by Rani (1979) Reliability of the scale by split-half method, following Spearman Brown Prophecy formula was found to be 0.87.

Statistical techniques used:

The main statistical technique used for the data analysis was 't' test for knowing the significance between the means of different comparative groups. The data was analyzed with the help of computer by using SPSS to get accurate results and also to save time.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

Table -1

Comparison of Mean Scores of Male and Female Research scholars on the measure of Research Attitude, Achievement Motivation and Self Concept

Variables	Group	N	Mean	S.D	t	Remark
Research Attitude	Male	47	154.26	17.198	0.728	Insignificant
	Female	54	156.63	15.575		
Achievement Motivation	Male	47	125.91	19.049	4.432*	*Significant at 0.01 level
	Female	54	141.76	16.882		
Self-concept	Male	47	160.55	14.291	3.850*	*Significant at 0.01 level
	Female	54	172.69	17.373		

Above Table-1 shows no significant difference between the male and female sample on the measure of research attitude however significant difference was seen between males and females on the measure of achievement motivation and self concept. Female researchers were found to have higher achievement motivation and self concept as compared to their male counterparts. The findings are in line with the study conducted by Harikrishnan in 1992 who concluded that girls have a higher level of achievement motivation. Aggarwal (1994) in his research also revealed that girls had more positive self concept than boys. Thus Ho1 is accepted for research attitude but rejected for rest two variables.

Table- 2

Comparison of mean scores of Research Attitude in relation to achievement motivation for total, male and female sample

Sample	Groups	N	Mean	SD	t value	Remark
Total Sample	High Achievement Motivation	33	160.00	14.532	2.142*	*Significant at 0.05 level
	Low Achievement Motivation	33	151.00	19.268		
Male Sample	High Achievement Motivation	10	160.60	9.216	2.290*	*Significant at 0.05 level
	Low Achievement Motivation	23	146.17	18.843		

Female Sample	High Achievement Motivation	23	159.74	16.499	0.381	Insignificant
	Low Achievement Motivation	10	162.10	15.989		

Perusal of the table- 2 reveals that there exists a significant difference between the high Achievement Motivation and low Achievement Motivation groups in regard to the Research Attitude for total sample. The calculated t value 2.142 is significant at 0.05 level of confidence. It can further be concluded based on the mean scores that high Achievement Motivation group had better attitude towards research as compared to their counterpart low Achievement Motivation group. The finding is in line with study conducted by Wang and Guo (2011) who found that higher motivation leads to a better attitude towards research. In case of male sample the difference was significant showing the same trend as in case of total sample. However in case of female sample the difference between the two compared groups was found to be insignificant. Hence H0:2 is accepted partially.

Table -3

Comparison of mean scores of Research Attitude in relation to Self concept for total, male and female sample

Sample	Groups	N	Mean	SD	t value	Remark
Total Sample	High Self Concept	33	163.88	13.301	3.443*	* Significant at 0.01 level
	Low Self Concept	33	150.76	17.389		
Male Sample	High Self Concept	9	158.00	6.557	1.007	Insignificant
	Low Self Concept	26	151.73	18.127		
Female Sample	High Self Concept	24	166.08	14.581	3.007*	* Significant at 0.01 level
	Low Self Concept	7	147.14	14.971		

From table- 3 it is clear that the independent variable self concept has its significant influence on the research attitude of total sample and female sample i.e. students with high self concept have better attitude towards research and low self concept leads to poor research attitude. While for male sample the research attitude for students with high and low self concept is approximately same as the t value (1.007) is insignificant. Thus Ho: 3 is accepted partially.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS:

In the present study two independent variables i.e. achievement motivation and self concept were analyzed to see their influence on the research attitude on the total, male and female samples. It was seen that to some extent both the variables influence the research attitude of social science research scholars. There is no significant difference between male and female sample on the measure of research attitude, however, there is a significant difference between male and female samples on the measure of achievement motivation and self concept.

- A positive attitude towards research is an important factor which influences the achievement motivation and adjustment in scholars. Attitudes change in slow and steady manner and the most important thing is creation of research environment in all departments. Cooperative efforts on the part of Chairmen, Deans and University administra-

tion may be helpful in creating such positive research environment.

- The present study indicates that achievement motivation and self concept play an important role in affecting the research attitude of scholars. Thus, efforts must be made to increase the level of motivation and develop better self concept among researchers.
- Orientation programmes must be held for researchers at master level acquainting them with desirable traits required, essential qualifications and the responsibilities associated with research work. This may help the students to decide whether or not research work is fit for them and would also lead to better adjustment after they enter in research programme.
- Regular seminars and conferences must be held and the research scholars must be made to engage in presentations, paper writings and discussions in order that they realize their abilities and develop a more positive self concept as well as higher level of motivation to achieve.
- Professional development programmes like research writing skills, use of SPSS, knowledge about plagiarism, Reviewing the researches should be compulsory for research scholars.

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