
How Social Relationships Play A Role In Academic Motivation

This literature review depicts various research evidences that portray how social relationships play a role in academic motivation. Academic motivation is the desire to remain persistent while learning. This motivation can be hindered due to various social relationships that a person engages in. Social relationships fall under family, friendships, and intimate relationships. A student is less motivated in their academics if they have a lack of family support, engage in risky behaviors due to sorting into peer groups, and if their teachers do not exhibit self-efficacy in their teachings. These three points are supported through various peer-reviewed research journals as stated in the work below.

As we get older school becomes more of a chore rather than a fun, daily task. Academic motivation is a student's eagerness to maintain persistent while learning. But the debate is, whether every student is ALWAYS motivated? If not, what are the reasons as to why a student isn't always motivated in a school setting? After an immense amount of research, it is depicted that the following effects a student's academic motivation: lack of family support, a teacher's self-efficacy, and lastly the way they sort into peer groups. When it comes to a teacher's self-efficacy, this is defined by the teacher's confidence in their ability of their teachings. If a teacher doesn't have open arms in a classroom, or provide a warm environment, the student tends to feel less motivated. On the other hand, a child spends most of their time with their parents and at home during their childhood years. During this time, it is crucial for a parent to instill the importance of academics. Some parents believe strongly in getting an education due to their upbringing or culture. Unfortunately, some parents weren't raised this way and therefore, do not raise their own children like this. Also, if a child is brought up in a broken home such as, divorced, widowed, or abusive parents then their performance at school is hindered. Lastly, transitioning from middle to high school is the years of finding yourselves. As young teenagers, they experiment new things, try to meet new people, and sometimes pretend to be someone they are not. Sorting into peer groups effects one's academic motivation due to the fact that these groups may not be the best influence. For example, one may feel a sense of belonging in their school because they are hanging out with the "cool" kids, and these are their "friends." However, these friends may engage in drugs, illegal activities, and etc. These actions can further lead to a student's mental, and physical health which will then decrease their participation in school.

It seems as if in this day in age that a parent would push their children to excel in their schoolwork. Until adolescence, children spend a lot of their time with their parents and at home. With that being said, they are the number one influence on their children's perspective on education. According to a study conducted in 1994, "parents who are actively involved in their children's education have children who are more motivated in school and achieve at higher levels". There are various things that can play a role in children's at home life such as – their parental beliefs, cultural factors, and parental involvement. In order for a parent to instill good morals on their child, they would have had to been raised like this. A parent who values academic motivation would often ask their child how they are doing in school, what their grades are like, and reward or punish them for certain grades. These same parents would express their expectations to their children from a young age. Next, is cultural factors and how this affects a

family. Living in the United States we come across a diverse amount of cultures. In a research study done by Dornbusch in 1987, it was found that in Asian students they achieved higher due to authoritarian parenting styles, but in Caucasian students they were lower. It was also found that Asian immigrants, as well as Asian Americans, generally spent more time on their homework and studying voluntarily. On the flip side, Caucasian parents spent more time involved with their students. Caucasian parents would volunteer in school activities, sports, and attend parent meetings due to the fact that their English was much stronger. Another aspect of culture in the United States, is the high levels of immigrated citizens and their children that were born in this country or brought here at a young age. Many immigrants come here searching for freedom and start from the very bottom. These parents make a lot of sacrifices for their children, and for that the children feel as if they should repay them back by doing well in school. With that being said, if student doesn't have a background or family support to guide them through their academics than they are likely to not prosper in their academics.

Self-efficacy is an individual's belief in their capability to produce an outcome. An individual's drive, and energy to complete a task effects their general end product. If a person, or a teacher, is confident in their knowledge or what they are teaching to others, then this is shown through their work. According to a study done by Tschannen in 2001, "Students' performance reflects their teachers' worth." A teacher's personality is contagious to their students, if they promote a level of learning and praise achievements, students will feel more motivated. In a study conducted, researchers investigated the impact self-efficacy has in the educational setting. Tayyaba Shahzadi et. Al (2011) explored impacts of gender, age, race, and professional qualification. The studies found that female teachers showed more self-efficacy than male teachers and shaped wished results. The studies also showed that teachers in remote areas weren't as liked or praised as teachers in urban areas. However, age and race didn't show any effect on the teacher's self-efficacy. Another aspect of the teacher's effect on academic motivation, is their ability to provide a warm and welcoming classroom. If students feel as if they are in an unsafe, uncomfortable, or even boring classroom they feel less motivated to learn. Most students learn best by hands on or real-life experience. If a teacher is involved with their students and tries to take learning to that "next level," than they will be more engaged. Think about it, would you really enjoy reading textbook and taking notes or would you rather have open discussion, and relate content to connections to reality?

Social relationships don't only involve family, and romantic relationships, but friendships as well. Teenagers spend more time with friends rather than their family as they get older. This age is also where they are in the stage of finding out who they are as a person. Through this journey they tend to make rash decisions, and experiment. Students then start to sort themselves into peer groups. They hang out with those who may make them feel as if they are "belonged." Most of the time they feel this sense of belonging due to the risky behaviors they are peer pressured into. For example, if a teenager wants to fit in they are going to do anything that their peer will say in order to hear that they are "cool." Sorting into these peer groups can lead them into a dark place, such as taking drugs, illegal drinking, or skipping school. All of these activities can affect a student's mental and physical health which will furthermore affect their performance in school. Research was conducted in a study done by Manyu Li, Irene Hanson Frieze, Timothy J. Nokes-Malach, and Jeewon Cheong. The results showed that "Male college students who have good social relations, our data suggested that they may develop higher academic motivation through healthy attachment to university, but they may develop lower academic motivations through more frequent alcohol use. However, for women, no negative mediating process through alcohol use was identified, which is consistent with previous

studies". Going into a university, this is the critical stage for a student to gain independency, meet others (due to the fact that they are usually away from home), and critical thinking. These are important skills that they will be using for the rest of their lives. In order to learn these skills, students do need to be motivated to do so. Many students try to get themselves out there by socializing. Unfortunately, to most college students the most common form of socializing is by going to bars and clubs which then leads to an atmosphere of drinking. Students then feel more belonged and gain an attachment to their school due to these experiences. However, feeling belonged doesn't always mean you're inclined to do your work.

In the United States of America, we are granted with one of the greatest privileges – free education from primary to high school. Many young citizens of our country do not realize that students our age do not get the opportunity to attend school or even learn the basics such as reading or writing their own names. As stated before, academic motivation is the ability to maintain persistence and eagerness while learning. This academic motivation may fluctuate throughout our journey of elementary, middle, and high school. As researched, there are three main factors that hinder this motivation: a teacher's self-efficacy, parental guidance, and the role of peers. According to the sources cited, academic motivation is all about your social relationships around you. The first relationship discussed was, the relationship of parents to children. It was discovered that it's not as simple as a parent getting mad at their child for getting bad grades, but rather much more. A parent cannot instill high academic expectations if they themselves do not believe in this. Their culture must also play a role in motivation. Some cultures highly praise education and hold it to a certain standard; whereas, in other cultures education is overlooked. Another factor may be, whether a home is broken, and parents are divorced, or one may have passed away. The next point discussed was, a teacher's self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is a person's confidence in their work and behavior. It was shown before that if a teacher cannot deliver a teacher confidently, then a student may shy away from their work and feel as if it isn't important. A teacher should also foster a safe, and welcoming environment. This makes students feel loved, and comfortable in their place of learning. If they are in this safe zone, it will cause a great mindset. And lastly, a student's peer group and choice of friends play a huge role on their academic motivation. Going into any school, whether it be middle, high school, or college is always intimidating. We tend to try to find our "tribe," and who we gravitate can affect us in the long run. Not all friendships in college are bad ones, in fact most of the people you meet in college are the ones who end up in your life for eternity. However, making the right decisions in people and actions are just as important. Motivating yourself and motivating others can go a long way in your life, your academics, and your overall well-being.