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The Relationship Between Self-Esteem and Academic Motivation Among Male Secondary Education Students

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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELF-ESTEEM
AND ACADEMIC MOTIVATION
AMONG MALE SECONDARY EDUCATION STUDENTS

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between self-esteem and academic motivation among male adolescents. Sixty-five male students from a St. Louis area college preparatory school volunteered to participate in this study. These students completed a test consisting of Russell Ivan's (1969) Academic Motivation Scale and Morris Rosenberg's (1965) Self-Esteem Scale. A Pearson-Product Moment correlation analysis was performed to determine the correlation between the two scales. The results suggest that self-esteem is not correlated with academic motivation among adolescent males.

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AND ACADEMIC MOTIVATION
AMONG MALE ADOLESCENTS

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Chapter I

Introduction

What motivates a student to excel? There are many factors that attribute to the success of a student. One of those factors is self-esteem. Self-esteem describes how individual's perceive themselves (Steinberg, 1989). The extent to which a person esteems oneself will have an influence on his or her motivation. Students encounter this in their academics. The level of their self-esteem will influence their academic motivation. Academic motivation can be defined as "the impetus to do well relative to some standard of excellence" (Reeve, 1992, p.290). Adolescence is a developmental task. Erikson's eight stages of development and the psychosocial approach offer two perspectives on adolescent development. By understanding the developmental tasks of the individual, it is easier to perceive how his or her self-esteem will have an influence on academic motivation.

Erikson's eight stages (Steinberg, 1989) of development describe the life cycle and the crises associated with each stage. Erikson believed that there are different developmental stages and that each stage has a theme, or crisis. These stages are infancy, early childhood, play age, school age, adolescence, young adult, adulthood, and maturity age. Each crisis has its tasks that the individual must learn. According to Erikson (Steinberg), each crisis is dependent on the previous crisis. If the individual does not successfully complete the previous crisis, the individual will struggle with the challenges of subsequent stages.

The developmental task for adolescence is identity versus identity diffusion. Steinberg (1989) said that "...without a healthy sense of trust,

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autonomy, initiative, and industry, it is difficult to establish a coherent sense of identity" (p. 250). According to Erikson's stages of development, an individual's identity is made of different "patches of fabric that have not yet been sewn together" (Steinberg, p.251). These "patches of fabric" make up an individual's identity, inclusive of: sex, age, race, nationality, religion, family status, legal status, and name (Rosenberg, 1979). Within adolescence, the individual begins to integrate his or her conception of identity.

Another theory explaining developmental processes is the psychosocial approach (Newman & Newman, 1995). This approach has eleven stages, which is different from Erikson's eight stages. These stages are prenatal, infancy, toddlerhood, early school age, early adolescence, later adolescence, early adulthood, middle adulthood, later adulthood, and very old age. The psychosocial theory is different from Erikson's approach in that it has divided adolescence into two stages, early adolescence (twelve to eighteen) and later adolescence (eighteen to twenty-two). The tasks of early adolescence are physical maturation, formal operations, emotional development, membership in a peer group, and sexual relationships (Newman & Newman). The task of later adolescence are autonomy from parents, gender identity, internalized morality, and a career choice.

It is important to know the tasks of adolescent development. As in every stage of development, adolescence is filled with changes. Individuals encounter significant identity and maturational issues. As adolescent's integrate their "patches" of identity, they change their perception of themselves. In maturation, adolescents are able to think abstractly and there is a "...emergence of

psychological and interpersonal descriptors" (Steinberg, 1989, pg. 242). This change allows adolescents to see themselves differently. The growth and maturation of an identity allows the individual to become more aware of how he or she perceives himself or herself.

Self-esteem begins to develop in childhood. There is a differentiation between baseline (global) and barometric self-esteem. Baseline self-esteem is a long term, lifetime, and global self-image. Barometric self-esteem is a rapid changing, day to day affect of self. An adolescents baseline self-esteem does not change, but remains stable (Steinberg, 1989). However, they will experience some rapid changes in their day to day feelings about themselves. If there is any change at all there is an increase in self-esteem during adolescence, rather than a decrease. So, in this sense, the adolescent's image of himself or herself does not change. It is in the adolescent stage of development, however, that the individual becomes more aware of his or her self-image. During childhood, a sense of self develops from the attitudes and beliefs of family, peers, teachers, and other people the adolescent encounters. It is in adolescence that individuals integrate these attitudes and beliefs of others with their own beliefs and take personal ownership of their beliefs.

Integration and internalization of an individual's identity is their self-esteem. Steinberg (1989) defines self-esteem as the affect that an individual has towards him or herself. It is the development of physical attributes, abilities, preferences, and the evaluation of these aspects. Discussions of self-esteem are generally rated as positive or negative (high or low). A person with "high self-

esteem" is one that has self-respect and a sense of self-worth. High self-esteem is positive and pleasurable. An individual with "low self-esteem" lacks self-respect and feels inadequate. Low self-esteem is negative and miserable. In addition, self-esteem can be divided into two types: earned self-esteem and global self-esteem (Shokraii, N, 1997). Earned self-esteem is self-esteem that people gain from their accomplishments. Global self-esteem is pride in oneself. According to Rosenberg (1979), self-esteem is "a major determinant of human thought and behavior" and that "a prime motive in human striving, then, is the drive to protect and enhance one's self-esteem" (p. 57). It is easy to say, therefore, that self-esteem is an important element in determining an individual's approach to their life experiences.

Morris Rosenberg (1979) has said that self-esteem is one of the most powerful motives in the human experience. Motivation is a "...need or desire that serves to energize behavior and direct it toward a goal" (Myers, 1989, p.349). There are extrinsic and intrinsic motivators. Intrinsic motivation is "behavior done solely for the interest and enjoyment inherent in performing a given activity" (Reeve, 1992, p.141). Achievement motivation is "the desire for significant accomplishment" (Myers, p.371). Achievement motivation involves mastering skills or ideas, controlling things or people, or attaining a high standard.

Extrinsic motivation revolves around the concepts of rewards, punishers, and incentives. A reward is a positive reinforcer that an individual receives after a behavior a particular behavior and is used to increase the chances of that behavior reoccurring. A punisher is the opposite of a reward. Punisher's seek to

decrease the chances of a behavior reoccurring. An incentive is an "environmental object that attracts or repels the individual to engage or not engage in a sequence of behaviors" (Reeve, 1992). Rewards, punishers, and incentives are external reinforcers, which either increases or decreases the occurrence of a particular behavior. For example, external motivations in academic settings include grades (a reward) and detention (a punishment).

Intrinsic motivation comes from within the individual. If one were to ask someone how they feel when they are doing what they enjoy, they will tell you:

> Their minds and bodies are completely involved in what they are doing, that their concentration is very deep, that they know what they want to do, that they know how well they are doing, that they are not worried about failing, that time is passing very quickly, and that they have lost the ordinary sense of self-consciousness and gnawing worry that characterize so much of daily life (Csikszenthmihialyi, 1975, p.88).

The reward that comes with intrinsic motivation is the activity itself

Achievement motivation is an important concept in academics, which uses both intrinsic and extrinsic motivators. Research has shown, however, that intrinsic motivation more likely leads to achievement. (Harter, 1981; Kernis et al., 1989; Kernis et al, 1992; Myers, 1989; Reeve, 1992; Steinberg, 1989; Waschull et al., 1996; and Vallerand et al., 1992). External motivators eventually lose their appeal; whereas an individual who is motivated internally continues the task or behavior because the task or behavior is the reward itself.

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between self-esteem and academic motivation. The stages of adolescence, the self-esteem of the individual, and the motivation of the individual contribute to a student's

academic success. By understanding these theoretical models of development, it is easier to understand an adolescent's personal affect and motivation within academics. Despite the physical and emotional changes of adolescents, their baseline self-esteem will not change tremendously. If they revere themselves highly, what does this say about their motivation? This study is not concerned with whether students have a high self-esteem because they are academically motivated or vice versa. Rather, this study is designed to investigate the relationship between male student's self-esteem and academic motivation. The hypothesis, therefore, is that there is a relationship between self-esteem and academic motivation among male adolescents.

Chapter II

Literature Review

<u>Self-Esteem</u>

Self-esteem is how the individual feels about himself or herself. Social identity, social class, family, and gender have an affect on a person's self-esteem. Generally, individuals with high self-esteem are confident in themselves, willing to accept failures, have fewer physical illnesses, and are motivated. Individuals with low self-esteem view themselves negatively, they are vulnerable to depression, and less motivated than individuals with high self-esteem. Although baseline self-esteem remains relatively stable over a lifetime, there are times, especially in early adolescence, that barometric self-esteem can be volatile or unstable (Steinberg, 1989). Self-esteem does not reflect competence (Hattie, 1992). Self-esteem can influence on an individual's reaction to failure. Some researchers believe that false self-esteem is detrimental (Hwang, 1995). An individual's self-perception is an integral part of their behavior, attitude, and motivation.

Social identity affects a person's self-esteem. One factor in a person's self-concept is one's identification with a social group. Social identity theory states that people have the tendency to group together. "People are motivated to maintain or enhance their self-image" (Sears, D., Peplau, L., and Taylor, S., 1991, p. 305). A person's self-esteem is stronger when he or she feels a part of a group. Furthermore, they believe that social comparisons affect self-esteem (Sears et al.). "We enhance our self-esteem by evaluating groups to which

we belong (in-groups) more favorably than other groups (out-groups)" (Sears et al., p. 306). The groups that people belong to and identify with facilitate the growth in self-esteem.

Another factor in self-esteem is social class. According to Steinberg (1989), middle-class adolescents have higher self-esteem than their classmates in high or low socioeconomic groups. Students of lower socioeconomic groups tend to have more self-image problems. In addition, ethnic minorities have lower self-esteem in the areas where they are in the minority (Steinberg).

An important social system that affects self-esteem is the family. The relationship an individual has with other members of his family shapes how a person feels about himself or herself. Individuals with strong familial ties with his or her parents and siblings are going to have a stronger self-image than individuals with weak familial ties. Parents who have low self-esteem have an incredible influence on their child. Parents who a have low self-esteem "...do not have any sense of their ability to be an important influencing factor" (Becvar & Becvar, 1996, p.218). Becvar and Becvar said that Virginia Satir believed parents have power over their child's sense of self-worth. The relationships each individual have with their siblings also affects self-esteem. Siblings who are close will teach one another social skills.

Research varies about the relationship between gender and self-esteem. In cases where students have taken the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, boys have slightly higher self-esteem than girls (Shaalvik, 1990). Steinberg (1989) cited several studies (Rosenberg & Simmons, 1972; Simmons, Brown Bush, And

Blyth, 1978; and Simmons and Rosenberg, 1975) that early adolescent girls generally have lower self-esteem. Young adolescent females struggle with their self-esteem and often say negative things about themselves and worry about how others perceive them (Steinberg). Other studies have shown that: there is no gender difference in self-esteem or that females score higher than males in self-esteem (Steinberg). Since there are so many contradictory studies of gender differences in self-esteem, it is impossible to conclude that there are any significant differences between male and females.

In addition to the factors that influence self-esteem, there are different types of self-esteem. Rosenberg (Steinberg, 1989) differentiated between barometric and baseline self-esteem. Barometric self-esteem is the "…extent to which our feelings about ourselves shift and fluctuate rapidly, moment to moment" (Steinberg, 1989, p.244). Baseline self-esteem, also called global self-esteem, is a more general, stable self-esteem. Tafordi and Swann (1995) break down global self-esteem into two dimensions, self-competence and self-liking. Self-competence describes power and efficacy. Self-liking is the sense of self-worth.

Baseline self-esteem is the better indicator of self-perception. However, some individuals have more volatile barometric self-esteem. Volatile barometric self-esteem is most common among young adolescents (Simmons, Rosenberg, & Rosenberg, 1973). Steinberg (1989) suggests that because of the egocentrism associated with young adolescents, they are more aware of others' reactions to

their behavior. In addition, adolescents learn "game playing", leaving the adolescent in an ambiguous state not knowing how they are perceived by others.

The heightened barometric self-esteem often seen in early adolescence is independent of the self-esteem level. Barometric self-esteem is an attribute of the stage of development and found in individuals with both high and low self-esteem. Kernis, M., Grannemann, B., and Barclay, L. (1992) suggests barometric self-esteem has been associated with "enhanced sensitivity to evaluative events, increased concern about one's self-view, and an over-reliance on social sources of evaluation" (p. 623). He also believes that there is a difference between unstable high self-esteem and unstable low self-esteem. Individual's with high self-esteem are "particularly concerned with achieving and maintaining a secure, positive self-view - whereas unstable, low self-esteem individuals are particularly concerned with avoiding a continuous negative self-view" (Kernis, p.624). This strength of the developmental stage of early adolescence lessens as the individual moves into late adolescence.

Individual's barometric or baseline self-esteem is not necessarily affected by abilities. Self-esteem is independent of knowledge and capabilities. An individual can know they are incapable of a task and it may not necessarily affect their self-esteem. "Self-esteem relates to the conviction that aspects of my behavior or self that I desire to be esteemed are worthwhile" (Hattie, 1992). So, lack of capability or knowledge can affect self-esteem only if the individual perceives those tasks to be worthwhile.

An individual can be reactive to failure depending on his or her level of self-esteem. Kernis, Frankel, and Brockner (1989) researched self-esteem and reactions to failure. In their literature review, they cited that numerous studies Brockner, 1979a; Brockner, Derr, and Laning, 1987; Brockner et al., 1983; Campbell and Fairey, 1985;Shrauger and Rosenberg, 1970) that failure is going to have a greater impact in individuals with low self-esteem (Kernis et al.). They suggest individuals with low self-esteem believe negative feedback only reiterates the self-belief that they are worthless. Individuals with low self-esteem take criticism and failure personally. Tafarodi (1997) states that those with low self-esteem "...interpret failure as an indication that sustained effort is futile, a tendency stemming from general lack of confidence in their own abilities" (p. 627). Individuals with low self-esteem fail because they believe that they are failures. It is this self-defeating behavior that perpetuates itself and leads to a lack of motivation. This reaction to failure is defined as overgeneralization (Kernis et al.). Overgeneralization is the degree that the individual interprets a bad outcome is because of their inadequacy (Carver, Gannellen, & Behar-Mitrani, 1985). Since the tendency for those individuals with low self-esteem is to overgeneralize, they will most likely not be as motivated as those individuals with high self-esteem. They will continue to engage in self-defeating behaviors because it reiterates their "loser" belief system.

Self-defeating behaviors allow the individual with low self-esteem to continue their belief that they are worthless. Thompson, Davidson, and Barber (1995) studied the tendency of some students to purposely underachieve. Self-

worth theory states that certain situations allow for students to gain by not trying. Individuals with low self-esteem will be self-worth protective. They deliberately withhold effort, in order to preserve the fact that they are not worthy. Students "sometimes underachieve and at other times perform well when working on academic tasks that do not vary in terms of their level of objective difficulty " (Thompson, Davidson, and Barber had 1995, p. 598). There are three assumptions of self-worth theory. The first was that self-worth protective students demonstrate different levels of performance in low-ability situations in which poor performance is likely to be attributed. The second assumption is that self-worth protective students, in situations where there is a highly intellectual evaluative threat, discount personal responsibility for behavior. Finally, the tendency of the self-worth students to perform well in low-level evaluation and to perform poorly in high-level evaluation is equal in both male and females. A student's self-esteem relates to his self-worth. Those students who are protective of their self-worth are more likely to have a low self-esteem. These individuals will protect themselves from the threat of failure by withdrawing. A self-worth protective student will deliberately withhold effort when there is a threat to their self-esteem.

Some theorists believe that too much emphasis is placed on an individual's self-esteem. As a society, the western culture places a great deal of worth on a person's self-esteem. Some researchers suggest that self-esteem conveys counterproductive messages. Hwang (1995) believes that though many children may have low self-esteem, praising them for every accomplishment is

not a helpful strategy. Hwang believes that the trend of trying to enhance self-

esteem in the classroom leads to false self-esteem. According to Hwang:

> False self-esteem leads to narcissistic self-intoxication. The intent of promoting positive self-concept was to create self-esteem in American youth, and the result was the creation of self-indulgence. Many American adolescents are suffering from cases of "narcissism." Self-esteem cannot be manufactured externally; it must develop from within. To possess self-esteem, one must possess self-worth (1995, p.11).

Hwang believes this trend of encouraging false self-esteem does not

encourage an individual to excel, but to accept mediocrity. Hwang's argument of

the false-esteem is a legitimate argument. False self-esteem is detrimental to the

individual. However, a person can learn to develop a positive attitude towards his

own self-worth. The purpose of this thesis is to look at the individual's self-

esteem and not whether false self-esteem is a problem in the educational system.

It is important to bring up the concept of false self-esteem because it allows an

understanding of self-esteem in the American society. Self-esteem is being

confident in oneself. A person of high self-esteem believes that they are worthy,

regardless of whether they are successful or unsuccessful in a task. High self-

esteem individuals believe in excelling and are motivated to achieve. A person of

high self-esteem does not *need* praise or exhortation.

Self-esteem is the person's self-perception. There are many aspects that

affect self-esteem. Self-esteem reflects a person's perception of self and does not

reflect competence. How a person perceives himself or herself does have an

influence on their reaction to failure (Kernis et al., 1992). Self-esteem reflects the

personal image of self. Self-esteem is being confident in oneself, believing in one's worth, and being motivated.

<u>Motivation</u>

Motivation is the driving force to participate in an activity. Although achievement is different from motivation in some of the literature, achievement will be used in discussions of motivation because motivation leads to achievement. There are two types of motivation: intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation includes motivation to know, motivation towards accomplishments, and motivation to experience (Vallerand et al., 1992). An important part of intrinsic motivation is the autotelic experience, or the flow experience (Ames et al., 1989). Murray's (1938) need for achievement is an aspect of motivation. Finally, a student's goals contribute to motivation in school.

Academic motivation and academic achievement are two different concepts. However, since motivation leads to achievement, this thesis will use concepts of academic achievement in reference to motivation. In addition, academic motivation can be measured by:

> The ability of the learner to persist with the task
> assigned, the amount of time spent by the student on
> tackling the task, the innate curiosity to learn, the efficacy
> related to an activity, the desire to select an activity, and a
> combination of all these variables (Dev, 1997, p.567).

The ability, effort, and difficulty level of a task affects the success or failure of a task, and the motivation of a student. The student's motivation leads to the achievement of the task.

Motivation as it relates to education is fairly recent. Motivation was often ignored and thought of as instinctual. It wasn't until the late 1950's, when Henry Harlow began studying rats, when motivation became a subject of study (Ames et

al., 1989). Harlow found that rats in his study explored and experimented with new challenges, which showed that exploration of novelty and curiosity are motivational forces. This led to defining extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. Extrinsic and intrinsic motivation are both prevalent in everyone's lives.

Extrinsic motivation is engaging in a behavior to receive a benefit outside the activity itself. The reason most individuals engage in an activity is because of extrinsic motivating factors. There are three types of extrinsic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1991). External regulation is behavior uses rewards and constraints (Vallerand et al., 1992). Introjected regulation is the internalization of the reasons for the individual's motivation. Third, identification is the realization that the behavior is important. Ames et al. (1989) believe the best way to recognize extrinsic motivation is to ask: "Would you engage in this activity if there was no reward or punishment?" If there is no reward or punishment for the activity and the individual is externally motivated, there would be no desire to participate in the activity.

Answering yes to the question would mean that the person is intrinsically motivated. Intrinsic motivation is participation in an activity merely for curiosity, the feeling of efficacy, or just a willingness to contribute (Dev, 1997). The individual is motivated by the activity itself. Intrinsic motivation is an autotelic experience, "having a goal within itself" (Ames et al., p.56). Intrinsically motivated individuals participate in the activity because "they feel that the activity is worth doing for its own sake even if nothing else were to come of it; in other words, the activity has become autotelic" (Ames et al., p. 56).

There are three types of intrinsic motivation: Intrinsic motivation to know, intrinsic motivation toward an accomplishment, and intrinsic motivation to experience stimulation. Intrinsic motivation to know is engaging in an activity for the experience of learning (Vallerand et al., 1992). Motivation toward accomplishments is accomplishing or creating something for the mere pleasure of engaging in the activity. Finally, intrinsic motivation to experience stimulation is engaging in an activity because of the arousing state that the individual receives by participating in the activity.

Ames et al. (1989) describes the autotelic experience as the "flow experience". Flow is the feeling associated with an activity that is intrinsically motivating. Participation in leisure activities is a flow experience. Flow is important because the experience is positive and can provide the motive for growth.

The flow experience is met when challenges and skills are equal (Ames et al. 1989). The ratio between challenges and skills has eight parts. These eight parts are arousal, flow, control, boredom, relaxation, apathy, worry, and anxiety (Figure 1). Arousal includes situations where skills are average, but challenges are above average. In flow, skills and challenges are equal. Control is high skills and moderate challenges. Arousal, flow, and control are enjoyable experiences. Boredom is low challenge and high skill. Relaxation is low challenge and average skills. Apathy is below average challenge and skills. Worry is average challenge and low skill. Anxiety is high challenge and low skill. Flow experience is the balance between challenges and skills.

Figure 1: Ames Flow Chart
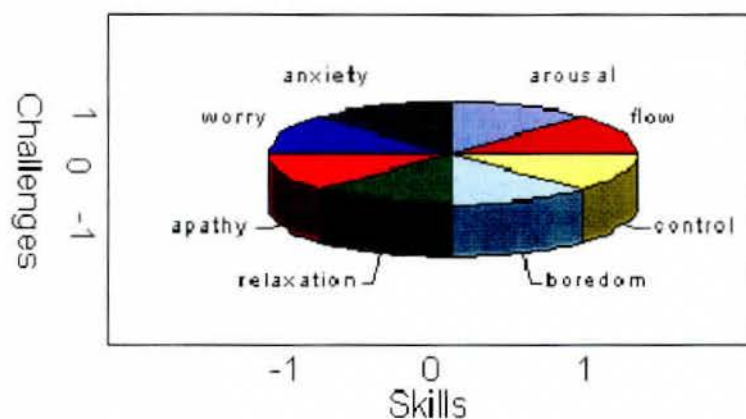
(Ames et al., 1989)

In addition to extrinsic and intrinsic motivation, an important

factor in motivation is the need for achievement. The need for achievement

(nAch) is the human need "to overcome obstacles and attain a high standard"

(Reeve, 1992, p.286). There are several parts to the need for achievement theory

(Smith, C., Atkinson, J., Mcllelland, D. & Veroff, J., 1992). The first is

preference for intermediate difficulty, in which the individual with high need for

achievement will be attracted to moderately difficult activities. The second is

persistence, where the individuals with high need for achievement are more

persistent than individuals with low need for achievement. Third, individuals

with high need for achievement have more personal responsibility toward their

goals. Fourth, individuals with a greater need for achievement tend to be future-

time oriented. Fifth, they are also more motivated in their work and are often

engaged in occupations of entrepreneurial orientation. Sixth, Students who are

high in need for achievement perform best when they are involved in tasks that

challenge them. Research also indicates that high need for achievement students

are at their best when they are in classes that were at their same ability level, but not in classes where the abilities of the class were higher or lower than their own. Finally, individuals with high need for achievement typically have a high self-concept and are accepted by others.

Another factor in academic motivation is the individual's social goals. Urdan and Maehr (1995) have said that "students may perceive a broad variety of reasons for trying to succeed academically...A student may believe that the purpose of doing well in school is to demonstrate how smart one is...or to learn new and interesting information" (p. 697). According to Urdan and Maehr, social welfare goals, social solidarity goals, or social approval goals motivate students. These reasons to succeed are because the student wants to become a productive member of society (social welfare goal), to bring honor to the family (social solidarity goal), or to gain approval of peers or teachers (social approval goal).

A student's motivation towards academic achievement is influenced, in part, by these social goals. These extrinsic goals are present because the individual is a member of an educational environment. Societal relationships influence the individual both positively and negatively. Social goals can be aids to help the student become motivated on his or her own. In addition, social goals help individuals uncover meaning in their activities. Urdan and Maehr (1995) found that adolescent peers could influence an individual's academic motivation. Kinderman (1993) found that, even if the membership of a peer group over a school year changed, the motivational level of that group did not change. Other

research has shown that peers influence students with high need for achievement only if their need for affiliation is higher than their need for achievement (Urdan & Maehr). The influence can be toward academic achievement or failure, towards motivation for academic achievement or lack of motivation for achievement.

In academics, a student's motivation will lead to achievement. If the students are motivated, they can be successful academically. Individuals are motivated intrinsically and extrinsically. An autotelic experience shows the flow of motivation and the level of intrinsic motivation is the balance between challenges and skills. Motivation is also based on the student's need for achievement and social goals.

Self-Esteem and Motivation

How does self-esteem relate to motivation? Waschull and Kernis (1996) studied self-esteem as a predictor of intrinsic motivation. Their literature review and their study define the relationship between these two variables. Other researchers cited studies that found a relationship between self-esteem and motivation. Diane Tice (1991) studied self-handicapping motives and how it relates to self-esteem.

Although Waschull and Kernis' (1996) study involved children, it provides good insight as to the relationship between self-esteem and intrinsic motivation. Their study involved 171 male and female fifth grade children from four elementary schools. They predicted that unstable self-esteem would relate to lower levels of intrinsic motivation and associate with low perceived scholastic

competence (Waschull et al., 1996). In other words, they believed that "unstable self-esteem will be related to lower intrinsic motivation because it is associated with heightened ego-involvement" (Waschull et al., 1996, p.6). Conversely, students with high self-esteem will be more intrinsically motivated.

Waschull and Kernis (1996) found in their literature review a number of studies that suggest that there is a correlation between self-esteem and motivation. They found in several studies that an individual's perception of self often undermines intrinsic motivation (Grolnik & Ryan, 1987; Plant & Ryan, 1985; Ryan, 1982). Waschull and Kernis also cited another study by Kernis, stating that unstable self-esteem was related to lower barometric self-esteem (the day to day affect of self). In addition, Waschull and Kernis found research (Deci et al., 1981; Ryan & Grolnik, 1986) showing that classrooms that support intrinsic motivation (through autonomy) correlate positively to baseline self-esteem.

Waschull and Kernis' (1996) study involved two parts. Part one consisted of a packet of questionnaires given to the students to assess the level of self-esteem, intrinsic versus extrinsic motivation, and reasons for becoming angry. The participants completed Harter's (1985) Perceived Competence Scale for Children (a self-worth index), Harter's (1981) Intrinsic vs. Extrinsic Orientation in the Classroom Scale, an anger scale consisting of questions from Boldizar, Perry, and Perry (1989), and other questions written for the study. Part two of Waschull and Kernis' study consisted of visits by the experimenter twice daily to assess global self-esteem and social acceptance. They found that unstable self-

esteem was significantly correlated with the challenge level of a task (r=-.34) and low task involvement out of curiosity or interest (r=-.27).

Other research has also found correlations between self-esteem and motivation. Tang and Sarsfield-Baldwin (1990) found in Baumeister and Tice (1985) that the level of self-esteem correlated with intrinsic motivation depending upon the failure or success of a task. They proposed that "individuals with high self-esteem increased their intrinsic motivation on a task after 'success', whereas those with low self-esteem reduced their intrinsic motivation on the same task after success" (Tang et al., 1990, p.569).

Diane Tice (1991) did a study on self-handicapping motives and self-esteem. She conducted four studies attempting to find a difference between self-enhancement and self-protection as handicapping motivations. Self-handicapping is a "strategic ploy used to manipulate the attributional ambiguity of an evaluation" (Tice, 1991, p.20). Self-handicapping is a self-defeating behavior aimed at placing:

> Barriers in the way of their own success, thereby jeopardizing performance. If they fail, the failure can be blamed on the handicap and not on lack of ability, whereas if they succeed despite the handicap, they receive additional credit for overcoming the obstacle (Tice, 1991, 20).

She found high self-esteem individuals self-handicapped to enhance success. Low self-esteem individuals handicapped to protect failure, which would threaten self-esteem.

Victor Gecas (Howard and Callero, 1991) believes that self-esteem is a basis for motivation. He believes that to develop an adequate theory on

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motivation, self-esteem is necessary because the self is a social person and needs social interaction. The type of motivation that Gecas is referring to is extrinsic motivation. Since an individual is a member of society, his or her concept of self will affect his or her motivation. If the individual has a high self-esteem, he or she will be more motivated because of the external rewards or punishments from that person's society.

A person's self-esteem is their belief of their own self-worth. If a person has a high self-esteem, will he or she be more motivated? If a person values him or herself, then their feeling of self-worth will be a motivating factor. In academics, motivation is both intrinsic and extrinsic. Most of the research shows that if a person esteems himself or herself highly, he or she will have more motivation to perform. Students who have high self-esteem will also have more intrinsic motivation.

Chapter III

Method

Participants

A group of 65 males from a private secondary education school in the St. Louis area participated in the study. The participants included 19 freshman, 25 sophomores, 21 juniors, and 25 seniors. The 25 sophomore students were not included in the study because due to clerical errors, which resulted in inconclusive data. The academic vice-president of the school randomly chose one class. She chose one teacher for each class grade and gave the test to the instructor for distribution to the students. The vice-president did not receive any permission slips from the parents of the students who participated. Table 2 shows the distribution of the classes.

Table 1: Distribution of Class Level

HSLEVEL	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Freshman	19	29.2	29.2	29.2
Junior	21	32.3	32.3	61.5
Senior	25	38.5	38.5	100.0
Total	65	100.0	100.0	
Total	65	100.0		

Procedure

The participants were given a survey. There were two parts to the survey and a demographics section for the students to complete. Demographics included age, approximate Grade Point Average (GPA), and grade level. Each classroom instructor, who read the directions in Appendix A, distributed the survey. The instructor informed the students to fill out the demographic section, waited for the students to finish, and then instructed them to proceed to part one

of the test. The students were told to check either yes or no for each question or statement. They were not to discuss the questions with anyone and to answer the questions as it best pertained to them. They were to then continue to part two. In Part two, the students were to answer the questions or statements on a four-point Likert Scale.

Instrument

The instrument used included two parts. The two parts measured academic motivation and self-esteem (Appendix B). There are five reasons why the two particular tests were used. First, both tests are easy to administer. The participant simply had to mark the appropriate answer. Second, both tests are time efficient. Third, both tests are easy to score. Fourth, both tests were designed for junior high and high school students. Finally, both tests are chosen for economical reasons. Russell's Ivan's (1969) Academic Motivation Scale was found in a journal article and Morris Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale was found in his book: Society and The Adolescent Self-Image (1965).

Part one of the instrument is the Academic Motivation Scale by Russell Ivan (1969). Ivan developed this test to measure motivation toward school achievement. He asked twenty-four teachers to write items, to which the student would respond yes or no, that the teachers thought would measure the student's motivation towards academics. Once the test was developed, he administered the fifty-item test in an urban high school in Kentucky. Twenty of the items were then eliminated to come to the Academic Motivation Scale. The thirty items remaining in Ivan's Academic Motivation Scale are answered yes or

no. The scores ranged from between 0 and 30. A point was awarded when "yes" was answered for items: 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 10, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, 20, 22, 23, 26, 27, 28, and 30. A point was also added for answering "no" on items: 1, 4, 6, 9, 11, 15, 16, 19, 21, 24, 25, and 29. There is no reliability or validity research on Ivan's scale, mostly because it is not a commercial test.

Part two is Morris Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale (1965). This test was developed by Rosenberg to test adolescent self-esteem. The Sale uses a Likert-type scale, allowing for scores ranging between 10 and 40. Four points were awarded for answering "strongly agree" on items: 1, 3, 4, 7, 8, and 10 (one point was awarded for answering strongly disagree on these items). Four points were awarded for answering "strongly disagree" on items: 2, 5, 6, and 9.

There have been reliability tests done on Rosenberg's test. Studies by Dobson et al. (1979) and Fleming and Courtney (1984) looked at the internal consistency of the measures. Dobson et al. (1979) obtained a .77 Cronbach alpha, and Fleming and Courtney (1984) reported a .88 (Robinson et. al, 1991). Studies by Silber and Tippett (1965) and, again, by Fleming and Courtney (1984) tested test-retest reliability. Silber and Tippet (1965) found a test-retest correlation of .85 for 28 subjects after a two-week interval and Fleming and Courtney (1984) found a .82 for 259 male and female subjects after a one-week interval (Robinson et al., 1991).

There have also been tests of validity done on the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale. Lorr and Wunderlich (1986) found a .65 correlation between Rosenberg's scale and confidence and .39 between Rosenberg's scale and

popularity. Reynolds (1988) found a .38 correlation between Rosenberg's scale and overall academic self-concept. The Rosenberg scale also correlated .72 with the Lerner Self-esteem scale, .24 with the "beeper" self-reports of self-esteem, and .27 with peer ratings for an adolescent sample (Savin-Williams & Jaquish, 1981). Fleming and Courtney (1984) correlated Rosenberg's measure and concepts of low self-regard. They found negative correlation's with -.64 with anxiety, -.54 with depression, and -.43 with anomie.

There were two instruments in the study. The design was a two variable, one group correlational design. The two instruments were correlated together by using a Pearson-Product Moment Correlation. Sixty-five students completed Russell Ivan's Academic Motivation Scale and Morris Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale.

Chapter IV
Results

The null hypothesis states there is no correlation between self-esteem and academic motivation. Table 3 shows the mean, the standard deviation, and the standard error mean (SEM). The scores of the Self-esteem scale (ESTEEM) had a mean of 29.7846, a standard deviation of 5.0821, and a standard error of .6304. The results of Ivan's Academic Motivation Scale (MOTIVE) had a mean of 29.7846, a standard deviation of 4.0547, and a standard error mean of .5029. The age of the students (AGE) had a mean of 16.4769, a standard deviation of 1.3003, and a standard error of .1613. Finally, The students Grade Point Average (GPA) had a mean of 3.3138, and standard deviation of .5049, and a standard error of 6.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
ESTEEM	29.7846	5.0821	.6304
MOTIVE	18.4769	4.0547	.5029
AGE	16.4769	1.3003	.1613
GPA	3.3138	.5049	6.3E-02
HSLEVEL		1.2400	.1538

A Pearson Product Moment Correlation (Pearson r) test was executed using the SPSS for Windows, Release 7.0. Table 4 shows the results of the Pearson r correlation. The results show a .198 correlation, with a .115 two-tale significance. The Pearson r square is .04 for a one-tailed test and .01 for a two-tailed test. These results show that there is no difference between self-esteem (ESTEEM) and academic motivation (MOTIVE) (α=. 05).

Table 3: Correlation of self-esteem and academic Motivation

		ESTEEM	MOTIVE
Pearson Correlation	ESTEEM	1.000	.198
	MOTIVE	.198	1.000
Sig. (2-tailed)	ESTEEM	.	.115
	MOTIVE	.115	.

$\alpha = .05$, df = 63, CV = 1.676 (1 tailed), 2.009 (2 tailed)

The Pearson r was done with other variables as well. The results found no significance. The correlation between motivation and grade-point-average (GPA) was .107. The correlation between motivation and high school level (HSLEVEL) was .041. The correlation between motivation and age (AGE) was .087. The correlation between self-esteem and age was .065. The correlation between self-esteem and grade-point-average was -.064, and the correlation between self-esteem and high school level was .092. At a level of significance of .05, there was no significant correlation among any of the factors. There is a 95% probability that there is no relationship among self-esteem and academic motivation among the adolescent males in this study. Therefore, the null hypothesis is not rejected.

Chapter V

Discussion

The statistical results indicated that there was no correlation between self-esteem and academic motivation among adolescent males. More specifically, the motivation of an individual is not related to how that individual feels about himself or herself. The results of this study do not reflect the findings of previous studies, and there are possible factors contributing to this. In addition, there were limitations to the study. Because of the factors contributing to the results and the limitations to the study, there is a need for further research.

The Pearson Product Moment Correlation (Pearson r) found no significant relationship between self-esteem and academic motivation. The Pearson r correlation was .198 for a one-tailed test and .115 for a two- tailed test. Since these results do not exceed the critical value of 1.676 (one-tailed significance) and 2.009 (two-tailed significance) (α=.05), we accept the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between self-esteem and academic motivation.

These results are contrary to previous research involving the relationship between self-esteem and academic motivation. Research has shown that individuals with higher self-esteem are typically more academically motivated than those individuals with lower self-esteem. Students with low self-esteem are not motivated because of their fear of failure. Kernis et al. (1989) cited several studies (Brockner, 1979a; Brockner, Derr, and Laning, 1987; Brockner et al., 1983; Campbell and Fairey, 1985;Shrauger and Rosenberg, 1970)

that showed individuals with low self-esteem are more prone to be reactive to failure. Other research indicates a student who is self-worth protective is less motivated and will purposely underachieve (Thompson et al., 1995).

The results also differed from the research found in Tice (1991), Tang and Sarsfield-Baldwin (1990), Waschull and Kernis (1996), and Gecas (1991). Tice's study sought to find a difference between self-esteem and self-handicapping motives. She found a correlation between self-esteem and self-handicapping. Tang and Sarsfield-Baldwin (1990) found that low self-esteem individuals had low task liking (intrinsic motivation) and that high self-esteem had a harder work ethic (high intrinsic motivation). Waschull and Kernis found relationships in unstable self-esteem and intrinsic motivation. Finally, Gecas believed that self-concept is the basis for extrinsic motivation.

There are a number of assumptions that can be derived from the results. First, there is conflicting evidence as to whether there is a difference in gender in regards to self-esteem. Some researchers believe that there is a difference in gender with regards to self-esteem (Shaalvik, 1990; Steinberg, 1989; Rosenberg et al., 1972, Brown et al., 1978; and Simmons et al., 1975). Other researchers show that there are no differences in self-esteem between males and females. Despite this conflict, it is of value to have research on single-sex groups because it allows further evidence of gender differences in self-esteem. It is valuable to have some research findings that, in males, examines the correlation in how they feel about themselves and their motivation toward their academics.

These results also allow a resolution about the nature of self-esteem and academic motivation. Despite the research that seems to indicate that there is a relationship, the results found in this study suggest the contrary. This may be because there really is not a relationship between these two traits. The education of students in the United States has been under criticism. They believe that the students in our society are below average academically. One suggestion that educators use to resolve this criticism involves self-esteem among adolescents. Maybe self-esteem is not as important in education and the motivation of the student as some researchers have found. The results certainly warrant further research as to the importance of self-esteem in the motivation of the individual.

There are possible contributing factors as to why no relationship was found between the two variables. Both tests have good face validity. Validity and reliability studies for Morris Rosenberg's (1965) Self-Esteem Scale typically show moderate to high reliability scores. Convergent validity measures usually ranged from .24 to .65 (Lorr et al., 1986; Reynolds, 1988; and Savin-Williams et al., 1981). Discriminant measures ranged from -.43 to -.64 (Fleming et al, 1984). There are no studies indicating the reliability and validity of Ivan's scale. Both tests were chosen because of the ease of administration, scoring, and for economical reasons. It was for these reasons that these scales were used together to correlate self-esteem and academic motivation. A possible factor may be that the benefits that the test offered was not sufficient and other scales could have more reliably and validly address the two constructs.

Another factor for the lack of correlation in the results may be to due social desirability. One of the critiques of Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Measure is that the test does not have any way of accounting for individual's who answer in a socially desirable manner. Rosenberg's and Ivan's scales are easy to manipulate. The individual can easily understand what the tests are testing for and can direct their answers in the manner that they choose. The students may have tested good or bad intentionally. Although most students probably answered the test honestly, there were a number of students who did not take the test seriously. It appeared that some students purposely answered the question so that they would receive a low score. In addition, it seemed that some students just randomly checked off answers without looking at the questions. A couple of students took the liberty to write in answers that were not an option. These students received negative scores, which do not reflect their true scores. Future researchers need a method to control for these problems.

Finally, a factor that may have contributed to the lack of correlation between self-esteem and academic motivation is the sample. There may be cultural bias in the study and the students of a prominent St. Louis college preparatory school may not represent the general male adolescent population. Since the school has a high reputation for academic excellence, these students may be highly motivated and their self-esteem is independent of their motivation. If the students are highly extrinsically motivated, and self-esteem may not have as much of a factor in academic motivation. Another possibility may be that teachers, peers, and family motivate these students and this external motivation

may even affect their self-esteem negatively. Finally, the sample was too small to generalize about the larger population and caution should be used in generalizing the results of this test to the overall adolescent male population.

A final limitation in the study was the distribution to the test. The researcher was not present to administer the test. This prevented any control over the administration of the test. The vice president of the institution gave the instructors the tests, which then administered the tests to the students. The researcher was not able to reiterate the importance of honest answers, the importance of answering the test according to how they felt about the questions, and the importance of not thinking too long about the questions.

There is a need for further research. Because of the many limitations of this study, it is difficult to say the true relationship between self-esteem and academic motivation. Larger sample sizes are needed. In addition, testing with different scales could explore would further the reliability and validity of the scales. Another factor that needs to be researched further should explore comparisons with the different genders, economic, and social groups. There are many issues that can contribute to the exploration of the relationship between self-esteem and academic motivation.

The results found no relationship between self-esteem and academic motivation in adolescent males. The Pearson-Product Moment correlation found no relationship. These results suggest that the results show a valid description of the relationship between these two variables, or that there are a number of errors and limitations that contribute to the lack of relationship.

There are many factors involved that may have contributed to these results. In addition, there are a number of limitations in this study. Further research is needed because of these results, factors, and limitations. By furthering the research, a more accurate assessment of the true relationship between self-esteem and academic motivation can be made.

Appendix A

Directions for the distribution of the scale

Directions for administering the test:

Distribute the test to the students, 1 test per student. Student may use pen or pencil.

Read the directions to the students as follows:

"Please fill out the top portion marked demographics as appropriate. If you do not know your exact grade point average, please give your best estimate.

For part 1, check either yes or no for each question or statement. Do not discuss the questions with anyone, and answer them as it best pertains to you. There are no right or wrong answers to the questions, so don't spend a lot of time thinking about the questions. If there is a question which seems similar to a previous question, don't worry about how you answered it previously and just answer in the way that seems to best suit you. When you are finished with part 1, you may continue with part 2. You will answer the questions by marking the appropriate strength of how you feel about that particular statement. Again, do not spend a lot of time thinking about it, for there are no right or wrong answers. Do not mark in the sections labeled "score." When you are finished, you may turn them in."

Appendix B

Self-Esteem and Motivation Scales

Demographics:

Age: _____   Approximate G.P.A: _____

Grade:
☐ Freshman   ☐ Sophomore   ☐ Junior   ☐ Senior

Part 1

Yes	No	Item
☐	☐	1. Students should set their goals only as high as they can easily reach?
☐	☐	2. Does it bother you if another student makes better grades than you do?
☐	☐	3. Would you rather be leader in a small school than to be just another student in a large school?
☐	☐	4. Does failure discourage you from trying as hard the next time?
☐	☐	5. You should select your friends from among those whose goals are generally as high as your own.
☐	☐	6. Would you like to take a school subject in which no tests were to be given?
☐	☐	7. Do you often compare your work with the work of others?
☐	☐	8. Are you usually on time with written assignments?
☐	☐	9. Do you believe, "Win or lose, who cares?"
☐	☐	10. Do you try to make better grades than other students in your classes?
☐	☐	11. Rewards should be given regardless of effort or

achievement?

☐ ☐ 12. Would you, or do you, enjoy being one of the class leaders?

☐ ☐ 13. The person who makes the highest grade on a test is to receive an award. Would you stay home from a social event or an athletic contest to study?

☐ ☐ 14. Do you stick to an assignment until it is completed even though it is dull and boring to you?

☐ ☐ 15. If you lost several times consecutively, would you quit trying?

☐ ☐ 16. Would you prefer to enroll in a course in which no grades are to be given?

☐ ☐ 17. Would you ever enter a contest with other students knowing you had a very slight chance of winning?

☐ ☐ 18. Do you think that school letters should be given for high grades as well as football and basketball?

☐ ☐ 19. If you had to choose between taking part in a contest or being one of the judges, would you choose to be a judge?

☐ ☐ 20. Do you think that you enjoy trying to do well in your school subjects more than others in your classes do?

☐ ☐ 21. Would you prefer to sit in the back of a classroom?

☐ ☐ 22. Rewards earned are worth more than those which come without effort.

☐ ☐ 23. The more people who seek the same goal the harder you try for it.

☐ ☐ 24. What parents expect of their children is more important than what the child wants for himself

☐ ☐ 25. Your friend stopped running when it became evident that he was losing the race. Would you have stopped

running in this situation?

☐　☐　26. Do you tell your parents about your successes?

☐　☐　27. Do you tell your parents about your failures?

☐　☐　28. When someone is being praised, do you wish you were?

☐　☐　29. When someone else is praised, does it cause you to give less effort?

☐　☐　30. Is there someone you enjoy beating in a contest or in school grades?

Score: _____

Part 2

1. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself
☐ Strongly agree　☐ Agree　☐ Disagree　☐ Strongly disagree

2. At times I think I am no good at all
☐ Strongly agree　☐ Agree　☐ Disagree　☐ Strongly disagree

3. I feel that I have a number of good qualities
☐ Strongly agree　☐ Agree　☐ Disagree　☐ Strongly disagree

4. I am able to do things as well as most other people
☐ Strongly agree　☐ Agree　☐ Disagree　☐ Strongly disagree

5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.
☐ Strongly agree　☐ Agree　☐ Disagree　☐ Strongly disagree

6. I certainly feel useless at times
☐ Strongly agree　☐ Agree　☐ Disagree　☐ Strongly disagree

7.   I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.

☐ Strongly agree   ☐ Agree   ☐ Disagree   ☐ Strongly disagree

8.   I feel that I could have more respect for myself

☐ Strongly agree   ☐ Agree   ☐ Disagree   ☐ Strongly disagree

9.   All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.

☐ Strongly agree   ☐ Agree   ☐ Disagree   ☐ Strongly disagree

10.   I take a positive attitude toward myself.

☐ Strongly agree   ☐ Agree   ☐ Disagree   ☐ Strongly disagree

Score: _____

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