

**THE MEDIATION EFFECT OF LEARNING GOAL ORIENTATION
ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION
AND SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING READINESS- A STUDY AMONG
THE FEMALE MANAGEMENT STUDENTS IN COIMBATORE**

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ABSTRACT

Self-directed Learning Readiness is the capability of learners to take initiative for their own learning and assume full responsibility for planning, implementing and evaluation of such learning efforts. Though this has been a research area of interest for several decades its importance is increasingly felt today. Thanks to the pandemic and the growing need for lifelong learners, online education has become a norm not only in educational institutions but also in organizations. In online education the accountability for learning and its effectiveness rests largely on the individuals and it requires the learners to be self-directed in order for effective transfer of knowledge to happen. Grounded on this premise, the present study has attempted to understand the factors that influence Self-directed learning readiness among students. Data collected from 204 Female Management Students revealed that Achievement Motivation and Learning Goal Orientation of the students predicted their Self-directed learning readiness. The results also showed that learning goal orientation partially mediates the relationship between Achievement Motivation and Self-directed learning Readiness.

KEYWORDS: *Self-Directed Learning Readiness, Achievement Motivation, Learning Goal Orientation.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Learning has amused humanity since ages (Alanoglu et al., 2022) since it holds the key to improving ones' existing knowledge and behaviour. In today's era where the information is freely available through multiple sources the learning process has become complex. This has resulted in the learner assuming maximum responsibility of his/her learning. In addition to this the recent pandemic and changing nature of work has resulted in isolating the learner from others. In this scenario the individual's motivation to learn along with their self-learning readiness determine the effectiveness of learning. Prior to this self-directed learning readiness was considered to be essential only in case of distance learners. But now almost every individual whether employee or student is engaged in some form of online or distance learning. For these reasons it becomes all the more important to understand the factors that influence self-directed learning readiness among individuals now more than ever.

Self-directed learning requires individuals to have the aptitude and attitude for learning. Especially when it comes to students taking up online /distance education courses they need

to be organized and motivated enough to complete the courses successfully. According to Saeid & Eslaminejad (2016) in the self-directed learning process individuals are required to assume full responsibility of their learnings. It is imperative for them to assess their needs, appraise several resources, set goals, identifying appropriate resources and self-evaluate the learning outcomes. Nadi et al. (2011) also find that motivation is required to begin and continuously work to achieve the goals related to self-directed learning. While motivation is the drive one has to achieve their targets, Achievement motivation drives an individual to exhibit behaviour that results in superior performance. It is a psychological drive which makes individuals compare their performances with those of others or against certain set standards. According to Christenson et al. (1992) it includes four elements. Viz. mastery of needs, work orientation, competition and personal unconcern. According to Singh (2011), achievement motivation is a subjective internal drive that enables individuals to perceive work that they regard as valuable, engage in competition with others while achieve their targets. Individuals high on achievement motivation tend to take up tasks that are challenging and strive for success. They derive satisfaction from working towards their goal and achieving a level of success. This characteristic could enable individuals to set meaningful goals in self-directed learning and persistently work towards them. Since in the process of self-directed learning the control shifts towards the learner it becomes essential for the individual to set targets, work persistently, evaluate their own performances and achieve their goals.

Learning Goal Orientation has been examined in this study since it has exhibited strong and consistent relationships with motivation to learn and the efforts individuals exert in the process (Fisher & Ford, 1998). Individuals with learning goal orientation are inclined towards enhancing their abilities through learning. They are always on the lookout for chances to learn new things (Yi & Hwang, 2003). Dweck & Leggett (1988) also opine that learning Goal oriented individuals react to challenges in a positive way and are intrinsically motivated by them. These qualities will make self-directed learning process easier and most importantly, individuals with achievement motivation and learning goal orientation will take up the challenges in a positive manner and be resolute in achieving the set goals.

2. Review of Literature

Cazan & Schiopca (2013) in their study among the undergraduate students of Romania found positive significant relationship between learners' personality traits and self-directed learning readiness. The study also found that self-directed learning was a good predictor of academic achievement. The study was based on Long (2000) model which shows that self-directed learning contains three dimensions namely, Motivation, metacognition and self-regulation. The study (Cazan & Schiopca, 2013) also opined that further research in the area must explore the relationship between achievement motivation, independence, self-efficacy and self-directed learning. In line with this study is as study by Saeid & Eslaminejad (2017) which was conducted among the 322 bachelor students of Payamnoor University, Iran. The study found that the students' Achievement Motivations and academic self-efficacy were significant predictors of their Self-directed learning readiness. In fact, the problem-solving skills under Achievement motivation had a strong relationship with Self-directed learning readiness. This is to say that individuals with achievement motivation have good problem-solving skills. This positive attitude towards problems / challenges enhances their self-directed learning readiness. Similar results have also been reported by studies by Noohi et al. (2012), Manavipoor et al. (2012) and Karimi et al. (2013). From the above discussions the present study proposes

H1: Achievement Motivation will be positively associated to self-directed learning Readiness

Goal orientation theory has become an important perspective in the field of achievement motivation, and particularly in academic motivation. Goal orientations explain the motivation in individuals (Kaplan & Maehr, 2006). According to Ford (1992) the goals pursued by an individual is naturally associated with their motivations. They are a set of behavioral intentions that determine how students' approach and engage in learning activities (Mccollum and Kajs, 2007). According to Wolters (1998) students with learning goal orientation use more intrinsic motivational strategies. Bipp et al., 2006 also in their study show that Achievement Motivation as a personality trait is associated to goal orientation. From the above discussions the present study proposes

H2: Achievement Motivation will be positively associated with Learning goal orientation

Learning Goal Orientation is the desire to enhance one's competence through learning new skills (). High learning goal orientation in individuals helps them to focus on learning, seek challenges and persevere in face of hurdles (Dweck and Leggett 1988). A study by Hematian et al (2016) which finds that goal setting effectively predicts self-directed learning readiness among students. The study considers that goal setting is fundamental in motivating people to learn. Taylor (1995) also found that self-directed learners to be more goal oriented. Baghurst et al (2015) also opine that when learners set challenging but achievable goals for themselves their motivation increases through increase in concentration, effort, and sustainability. Hence when learners set challenging goals for themselves and oriented towards them, their motivation to achieve is also high. This helps them to engage in self-regulated behaviour (Vandewalle, 2001) and persevere in the face of challenges and constantly stride towards their set targets. Based on the above discussions the present study proposes

H3: Learning goal orientation will be positively associated with self-directed learning Readiness

The Self-determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) states that all individuals have three basic psychological needs such as – Need for Competence, Autonomy and relatedness. The satisfaction of these needs promotes autonomous motivation and superior performance. That is to say that the need for autonomy and achievement ensures individuals are more self-directed to learn since it is a way through which they can gain competence and also exhibit superior performance. Again, according to the Goal Setting theory (Locke and Latham 1990) goals affect the behaviour of individuals by providing the much-needed attention; the strategies and the persistence to achieve the goals. Likewise, the Learning Goal Orientation in individuals with achievement motivation helps them to persist despite the challenges in the process and effectively pursue self-directed learning. Hence the present study forms the following hypothesis.

H4: Learning goal orientation will partially mediate the direct relationship between Achievement Motivation and Self-directed Learning Readiness

3. Research Methodology

A Descriptive research design has been employed by the present study. The population for the study included the female management students in the Business schools in Coimbatore. The study was conducted among 204 Management students in Coimbatore. Census Sampling Method was used. The scales to assess Achievement motivation, learning goal orientation and Self-directed learning were adopted from studies by Elias et al (2010); Vandewalle (1997)

and Kirwan et al. (2010) respectively. The reliability scores for all constructs were found to be more than 0.8

4. Analysis & Discussion

4.1. Percentage Analysis

TABLE 1: DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

Demographic profile	Description	Percentage
Age	20 – 30 years	91.3
	26-30 years	7.7
	Above 30 years	1
Under graduation	BSc	19.2
	BBM/ BCom	45.2
	BA	14.4
	Engineering	10.6
	Others	10.6
Year of passing Undergraduate degree	2021	65.4
	Before 2019	34.6
Residence	Urban	54.8
	Rural	45.2
First generation graduate	Yes	24
	No	76

From Table 1 it can be seen that most of the respondents (91.3%) belong to the age group of 20-30. Majority (45.2%) have completed Bachelor of Business management or Bachelor of Commerce in under graduation. The majority (65.4%) of them have obtained their ungraduated degree in the year 2021, during the pandemic. Many of the respondents, i.e., 57 (54.8%) of them reside in Urban regions and only 24 % of the respondents are First generation graduates.

4.2. Descriptive Statistics

TABLE 2: DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Variables	MEAN
Achievement Motivation	3.99
Learning Goal Orientation	4.20
Self- directed Learning Readiness	4.06

From the results displayed in Table 2, it can be seen that the respondents have high Learning Goal Orientation and Self-directed learning readiness.

4.3. Correlation Analysis

TABLE 3: ASSOCIATION BETWEEN ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION, LEARNING GOAL ORIENTATION AND SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING READINESS

VARIABLES	Self- directed Learning Readiness (Pearson Correlation Co -efficient)
Achievement Motivation	.681**
Learning Goal Orientation	.731**

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

From Table 3 it is seen that both Achievement Motivation (R=0.681, p<0.000) and Learning Goal Orientation (R=0.731, p<0.000) are significantly associated with Self- directed Learning Readiness of the respondents. This means that when the students possess achievement motivation and learning goal orientation, they will be proactive in learning. They have an inert drive to achieve their set goals and excel in their performance. They are more independent and self-regulated. This in turn enhances their self- directed learning readiness.

4.4. Regression Analysis

TABLE 4: INFLUENCE OF ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION AND LEARNING GOAL ORIENTATION ON SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING READINESS

	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Durbin-Watson	F	Sig.
	.777	.604	.596	1.971	76.981	.000

TABLE 5: REGRESSION ANALYSIS – COEFFICIENTS

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Beta		
(Constant)	.589		1.999	.048
Achievement Motivation	.401	.351	4.210	.000
Learning Goal Orientation	.444	.499	5.978	.000

Table 4 and 5 display the results of regression analysis. From the results it is evident that both Achievement motivation and learning goal orientation significantly predict variance in the self-directed learning readiness of the respondents by 59.6%. Hence H1 and H2 are accepted. When the students have learning goal orientation, they are bound to indulge in productive behaviour that will help them attain their goals. This along with achievement motivation helps them to work with determination in the face of challenges in order to exhibit exemplary performance. When students possess these attributes, they tend to be more autonomous when it comes to learning, which is a primary feature of self -directed learning readiness. Previous research has shown that in self -directed learning process, the responsibility shifts from external source (eg: instructor) to the learner. This requires the learner to self-regulated, independent and motivated. Achievement motivation and learning goal orientation aid in the enhancement of these attributes which in turn increases the learners’ self-directed learning readiness. **Hence H1, H2 and H3 are accepted**

4.5. Mediation Analysis

Using the Andrew Hayes Process Macro, the mediation effect of Learning Goal Orientation on the direct relationship between Achievement Motivation and Self-directed Learning Readiness was tested. The results are as shown below.

Direct effect of X on Y

Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
.4013	.0953	4.2105	.0001	.2122	.5903

Indirect effect (s) of X on Y:

	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
AVLGO	.3765	.0924	.2057	.5620

Total effect of X on Y

Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
.7777	.0828	9.3914	.0000	.6135	.9420

OUTCOME VARIABLE:

AVLGO

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.6608	.4367	.2827	79.0822	1.0000	102.0000	.0000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	.8166	.3840	2.1266	.0359	.0549	1.5783
AVGAM	.8470	.0952	8.8928	.0000	.6581	1.0359

OUTCOME VARIABLE:

ASDL

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.7771	.6039	.1595	76.9805	2.0000	101.0000	.0000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	.5892	.2947	1.9994	.0482	.0046	1.1739
AVGAM	.4013	.0953	4.2105	.0001	.2122	.5903
AVLGO	.4445	.0744	5.9775	.0000	.2970	.5920

From the above results it is evident that the ($p < 0.001$) is significant for both direct and indirect effects and 0 does not fall between the Upper and lower Confidence intervals. Hence Learning Goal Orientation partially mediates the relationship between Achievement Motivation and Self-directed learning readiness. Hence H4 is accepted.

4.6. Regression for Sub-groups

Regression for Sub-groups was carried out to see how the students who had passed Under graduation during pandemic differed from others in their self-directed learning readiness.

TABLE 6: INFLUENCE OF ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION AND LEARNING GOAL ORIENTATION ON SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING READINESS FOR STUDENTS WHO PASSED THEIR UG DURING PANDEMIC AND OTHERS.

	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	F	Sig.
Students who have passed UG during Pandemic	0.744	0.553	0.539	40.24	0.000
Others	0.826	0.682	0.662	35.35	0.000

TABLE 7: REGRESSION ANALYSIS – COEFFICIENTS

	Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
Students who	(Constant)	0.755	0.393		1.920	0.059

have passed UG during Pandemic	Achievement Motivation	0.387	0.134	0.322	2.900	0.050
	Learning Goal Orientation	0.419	0.095	0.490	4.417	0.000
Others	(Constant)	-0.131	0.524		-0.249	0.805
	Achievement Motivation	0.413	0.128	0.385	3.225	0.003
	Learning Goal Orientation	0.591	0.130	0.544	4.558	0.000

From the results displayed in Table 6 & 7, it can be inferred that for the students who have passed under graduation during Pandemic the adjusted R square value is 0.539 whereas for others, it is 0.662. This analysis was carried out to see how the students who had undergone full online education differed from others who had attended physical classes. For the former group of students, the achievement motivation and learning goal orientation predicted variance in their self-directed learning readiness by 53.9% which is less than those who attended physical sessions (66.2%). The reason could be that when students attend only online sessions, their chance to interact with their peers is less. They might not be able to evaluate their performance in comparison to that of their peers which is at the core of achievement motivation. This inability is likely to reduce their goal orientation and hence might result in less self-directed learning readiness.

TABLE 8: INFLUENCE OF ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION AND LEARNING GOAL ORIENTATION ON SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING READINESS FOR FIRST GENERATION GRADUATES AND OTHERS

	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	F	Sig.
First Generation Graduates	0.887	0.787	0.767	40.599	0.000
Others	0.695	0.483	0.470	0.397	0.000

TABLE 9: REGRESSION ANALYSIS – COEFFICIENTS

	Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
First Generation Graduates	(Constant)	-0.061	0.510		-0.119	0.906
	Achievement Motivation	0.521	0.222	0.400	2.346	0.028
	Learning Goal Orientation	0.473	0.152	0.530	3.108	0.005
Others	(Constant)	1.026	0.376		2.728	0.008

	Achievement Motivation	0.353	0.106	0.335	3.334	0.001
	Learning Goal Orientation	0.393	0.088	0.447	4.450	0.000

From the results displayed in Table 8 & 9 it can be seen that the achievement motivation and learning goal orientation of first-generation graduates predicts variance in their self-directed learning readiness by 76.7% whereas for others the adjusted R square is only 47%. The reason for this difference could be because the First-generation graduates would naturally be motivated to achieve their goals and make use of opportunity that was not available to anyone else in their families.

5. CONCLUSION

In an era where online/distance learning has become the new normal and educational institutions are moving towards a blended learning pedagogy, it is imperative to ascertain the self-directed learning readiness of the learners. By exploring the factors that augment the self-directed learning readiness of the students we can make sure of attaining the learning objectives. The present study finds that achievement motivation and learning goal orientation positively influence the self-directed learning readiness among the students. The study also confirms that Learning Goal Orientation partially mediates the relationship between Achievement Motivation and Self-directed learning readiness. Another interesting finding of the study is that hybrid classrooms, where students would get opportunity to interact with faculty as well as peers would benefit students more than complete online or complete physical sessions. While hybrid classes help students to assess themselves in comparison to their peers it also facilitates self-paced autonomous learning that is absent in physical classes. The present study also finds that first generation graduates' achievement motivation and learning goal orientation better predicted their self-directed learning readiness in comparison to other students. Future studies can focus on unearthing the various barriers that have an impact on the self-directed learning readiness of students.

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