

## Investigating the need for achievement among junior high school students

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### Abstract

Need for achievement is the encouragement, both within and outside the individual, to perform certain behaviors. This encouragement is needed by individuals to achieve academic achievement in school. The purpose of this study was to determine the percentage of motivation for achieving adolescents in Malang, Indonesia. The research method used is quantitative with a descriptive type of research. The population of this study was 7183 junior high school students. The study led 315 students and sampled using proportional stratified random sampling. The data collection technique uses an achievement motivation scale developed by the researcher himself based on theory and data analysis using frequency in descriptive statistics. The results showed that 69% of adolescents were motivated to perform at a moderate level, 21% at a high level, and 10% at a low level. This means that the level of motivation for achieving students at a moderate level needs to be improved through the support of parents and teachers, so that students can achieve the expected academic success.

**Keywords:** *need for achievement, motivation, junior high school, descriptive.*



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### Introduction

The need for achievement is individual satisfaction with school. Students are trained to think critically, have the learning skills, the reason to perform at school and are willing to do homework (Tasgin & Coskun, 2018; Bakac, 2018; Sivrikaya, 2019), and the need for achievement, also known as achievement motivation. This statement indicates that the need for achievement is defined as a motive that encourages an individual to perform at school, accomplish school tasks, think creatively and be skilled in learning. Motivation is a behavioral pattern determined and done by an individual based on his/her experience and is innate (Laming, 2004; Bedel, 2016). It may encourage individuals

to perform certain behavior according to their past experiences, which could affect their academic success and failure.

Achievement motivation can be classified into two types: intrinsic and extrinsic (Kalaivani & Rajeswari, 2016; Kirkagac & Oz, 2017; Malkoc & Mutlu, 2018). Intrinsic motivation refers to a motive that comes from enjoyment of a task rather than relying on the desire to gain other people's appreciation. In contrast, extrinsic motivation refers to an appreciation that individuals get from others when performing certain activities. Achievement motivation encompasses instinctive and behavioral responses obtained from learning outcomes and culture, individuals observation and perception, comparison to social behavior, and physiological dimension that causes an individual to perform a certain activity (Laming, 2004), implying more specific aspects that shape an individual achievement motivation, both intrinsically and extrinsically.

Achievement motivation consists of some components, including belief, goal, value, and intrinsic and extrinsic motivations (Rowell & Hong, 2013; Fatima & Sharif, 2018). In other words, it reflects one's belief in performing certain actions based on their goals and values. Therefore they are motivated to do a certain action because of their own purpose as well as a reward from other people. Motivation is an important issue, especially in education, because it can't be observed and evaluated directly (Bahrami, 2016; Taskesen, 2019). Achievement motivation is believed to be an important element that determines students' learning and education success. Previous studies reported that highly motivated students enjoy their learning and the time that they spend in school, and they use more effective learning strategies than unmotivated students, who find it difficult to learn and participate in class. (Titrek, 2018; Cetinkaya, 2019; ElAdl & Saad, 2019) This result shows that achievement motivation is important for students, especially teenagers.

Individuals in high school level or in adolescence period are considered to be lack of achievement motivation, probably because they are in the storm and drunk period (Gupta & Mili, 2016). This causes a teenager, both male and female, to experience a change in their development of interest and attention towards peer groups, engaging in recreational activities, such as movies, social media, and activities with the school or community. Besides that, another issue faced by students is the zonation program initiated by the government, the abolition of favorite schools and the use of the distance between students' houses and schools as the consideration of rejection and acceptance in the school entrance. The zonation program is an educational equity effort that is initiated by the government to help underprivileged students who have both high and low achievement to access equal education (Nurlailiyah, 2019). Consequently, student admission to the school is no longer determined by academic scores in their previous school; therefore, the students that are accepted into a school do not have equal academic achievement. This situation causes the student with high academic achievement to experience decreased learning motivation because the student tries to emulate their classmates who have low academic achievement. Accordingly, the goal of this research is to find the level of achievement motivation among junior high school students in Malang.

## **Method**

This descriptive quantitative study involved 315 junior high school students in Malang, recruited from a population of 7183 students using a proportional stratified random sampling technique. Data were collected using an achievement motivation scale developed by the researcher based on the expert's theory and previous research results. It consisted of 3 indicators: (1) understanding the need for achievement within oneself, (2) Engaging oneself in academic situations in school, and (3) Understanding external situations that affect the need for achievement. The validity and reliability test results of the scale showed a Cronbach's Alpha score of 0.823 and a KMO (Kaiser Mayer Olkin) score of 0.686, and showed 16 valid items with 3 indicators. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to determine the mean, maximum, minimum, and

standard deviation to picture junior high school students' level of motivation. The categorization was made following Jaya (2019).

**Result**

As presented in Table 1.1, the descriptive analysis result showed a mean score of 11.47 with the maximum and minimum scores of 17 and 5, respectively (SD= 2.28).

**Table 1.1 Descriptive Statistics of Achievement Motivation Variable**

	Descriptive Statistics						
	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean		Std. Deviation
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic
MB	315	12	5	17	11.47	128	2.280
Valid N (listwise)	315						

**Table 1.2 The percentage of Achievement Motivation**

No.	Range	Total	Percentage (%)	Level
1	$X > 13.75$	65	21%	High
2	$9.19 \leq X < 13.75$	216	69%	Average
3	$X < 9.19$	34	10%	Low

Table 1.2 shows that most junior high school students in Malang tend to have an average level of achievement motivation (69%), while 21% of students have a high achievement motivation, and 10% of students have a low achievement motivation.

**Table 1.3 Descriptive Statistics of Achievement Motivation for each Indicator**

		Statistics		
		Indicator 1	Indicator 2	Indicator 3
N	Valid	315	315	315
	Missing	0	0	0
Mean		14.71	16.30	8.90
Std. Deviation		2.504	1.913	1.391
Range		15	11	7
Minimum		5	9	5
Maximum		20	20	12

**Table 1.4 Achievement Motivation Percentage for each Indicator**

No	Indicator	High $M + 1SD < X$	Average $M - 1SD < X < 17,214$	Low $X < M - 1SD$
1	Indicator 1 Understand the need for achievement	$14,71 + 2,504 < X$	$12,206 < X < 17,214$	$X < 14,71 - 2,504$
		41	240	34
		13%	76%	11%
2	Indicator 2 Engage in academic situation in school	$16,30 + 1,913 < X$	$14,387 < X < 18,213$	$X < 16,30 - 1,913$
		43	253	19
		14%	80%	6%
3	Indicator 3 Understand external situations that affect the need for achievement	$8,9 + 1,391 < X$	$7,509 < X < 10,291$	$X < 8,9 - 1,391$
		37	264	14
		12%	84%	4%

Looking closely at the low category, indicator 3 (i.e., understanding external situations affecting the need for achievement) was lower than indicators 1 and 2 (11% and 6%, respectively).

This indicates that the students with low motivation could understand their need for achievement within themselves and engage themselves in the academic situation in school.

Regarding those in the average category, indicator 1 exhibited a lower score (76%) than indicators 2 and 3 (80% and 84%, respectively). This proves that the students with an average need for achievement were able to engage in the academic situation in school and understand external situations affecting the need for achievement. Meanwhile, in the high category, indicator 3 (12%) has a lower percentage compared to indicators 1 (13%) and 2 (14%). In other words, students with a high need for achievement are able to understand their need for achievement within themselves and engage themselves in the academic situation in school.

## **Discussion**

This research aims to understand the level of the need for achievement among junior high school students in Malang. The need for achievement, also well known as achievement motivation, is one of the non-cognitive characteristics that help adolescents achieve their desired academic achievement, enhance their persistence in learning, improve their performance, and enhance the effort they need to pursue an achievement (Kalaivani & Rajeswari, 2016; Sivrikaya, 2019; Karaman & Smith, 2019). Achievement motivation is an interesting characteristic required by students or teenagers in their academic life because it encourages and drives individuals to perform a certain behavior (Sarouni et al., 2016; Han & Lu, 2017; Sumarno et al., 2017; Taskesen, 2019). Motivation is believed to encourage individuals to perform certain behavior to achieve their goals. It could be categorized into two types: intrinsic and extrinsic.

Intrinsically motivated individuals tend to perform an activity based on enjoyment and satisfaction, while externally motivated individuals will likely perform an activity based on rewards and external stimuli they receive when accomplishing their tasks (Adegboyega, 2018; Yilmaz & Kaygin, 2018). In this case, the reward could be in the form of a compliment from other people (e.g., teacher, friend, parent) when they perform and accomplish their academic tasks. The research result showed that most junior high school students in Malang have an average achievement motivation (69%), while the rest, 21%, have a high achievement motivation and 10% of students have a low achievement motivation. Students with average achievement motivation can be shown through their ability to engage in academic situations in their school and understand the situation outside themselves, which affects their need for achievement. Their willingness to engage in academic situations in their school shows that their actions are solely driven by internal stimuli, which affect their behavior. This is definitely related to intrinsic motivation.

Each teenager possesses high intrinsic motivation within themselves. Teenagers who don't work also have an intrinsic motivation to improve themselves (Srivrikaya, 2019; Damrongpanit, 2019). This means that each individual or teenager certainly has intrinsic motivation in the form of pleasure and satisfaction when they accomplish their academic tasks at school. Teenagers also have extrinsic motivation, shown through their understanding of external situations affecting their need for achievement. In this regard, while intrinsic motivation plays an important role in enhancing one's creativity, extrinsic motivation is also important considering that the tasks given by the teacher are not always interesting and enjoyable (Titrek, 2018). In other words, teenagers need external stimuli, and one of them is from the teacher who supports them to engage in academic activity in school.

The family also plays an important role in strengthening teenagers' achievement motivation. In this regard, parents need to provide a teenager with learning facilities, guidance, and direction to encourage them to achieve their goals (Kurniawati, 2018). During adolescence, students need guidance and direction from their parents as the closest society in their lives to improve their achievement motivation. Parents' guidance and direction could be done through learning assistance and positive affirmation to foster students' learning enthusiasm (Rumbewas., 2018). This action encourages the student to improve their need for achievement. Students' average achievement motivation in this study appears to be attributed to students' low academic interest, lack of teachers'

support by giving interesting and enjoyable tasks for the student, lack of parental guidance, limited learning facilities, and positive affirmation.

In this study, 21% of students exhibited high achievement motivation, while 10% exhibited low achievement motivation. This is caused by the ability of the students to understand their need for achievement within themselves and their willingness to engage in academic situations in their school without considering the external stimuli that affect them. Students' achievement motivation may also be affected by differences in their cognitive and motivation types (Yaman, 2015; Ayundawati, 2016). This means that the students who understand their own need for achievement within themselves will be able to improve their cognitive ability and motivation to eventually increase their achievement. Students with a strong belief in achieving their goal, such as understanding their need for achievement, will likely achieve high scores because they tend to work harder to learn. These students tend to develop a hope of success within themselves and hence willing to engage in academic situations in their school without expecting external stimulus.

Students with high achievement motivations will likely design plans and tasks for themselves to achieve their goals (Yan, 2016; Zhou & Bao, 2018). These plans and tasks are arranged because the students consider themselves valuable, and the students don't find themselves disinterested because of the tasks. Students with higher achievement motivation tend to possess more energy to drive their behaviors and achieve goals (Muhammad, 2016). In contrast, those with lower achievement motivation tend to view academic activities at school as less interesting (Gupta & Mili, 2016). In the same vein, this study also found that students with lower achievement motivation are less able to understand their internal needs for achievement and are less engaged in the academic situation at school than those with higher achievement motivation. This condition appears to be accounted for by the zonation program, among other factors.

The factors accounting for students' low achievement motivation vary. In addition to teachers' poor ability, limited media, unclear instruction, curriculum, poor teaching methods, and evaluation procedures (Sarangi, 2015), the country's education system, including its zonation policy, is also responsible for students' achievement motivation. Andina's (2017) study showed that since the zonation policy obliges the school to accept students with diverse ability level, students with higher achievement motivation needs to learn together with those with learning difficulty. This atmosphere will likely affect highly motivated students' achievement. Students with learning difficulties will likely need more attention from the teacher, and it is not uncommon to find students with learning difficulties having disruptive behavior in class. Based on the discussion above, it can be concluded that the few students who have high achievement motivation (21%) compared to the students who have average achievement motivation (69%) and low achievement motivation (10%) are caused by the implementation of the zonation program in the school admission system, which initially aims to realize equality in student academic ability.

The situations discussed previously can be solved to improve students' achievement motivation by enhancing students' belief to have maximum achievement motivation. Several strategies exist to improve students' achievement motivation, such as increasing their belief, helping them understand the value of education and the task they work on, developing their goals and learning mastery, and helping them build networks with their peer groups and school staff. These strategies can be used by the teacher (counselor and teacher) or school staff to help the students increase their achievement motivation in school. Sitota (2018) further explained that counselors can provide assertive training for students to increase their achievement motivation, considering that students' assertive ability is able to increase their achievement motivation in school. Tanadi (2020) states that counselors need to help students develop their positive self-concept. A positive self-concept can help the students increase their achievement motivation because the students will have a positive view of themselves and resolve their academic problem.

Parents also play an important role in improving students' achievement motivation through parenting style at home. Mihret (2019); Smith & Karaman (2019) stated that individuals' willingness to spend time with their family and parenting style, which reflect unconditional love and affection

and do not limit their teenagers, do not provide achievement motivation for their teenagers to enhance their academic achievement. This condition is caused by parents not providing control and limits on the actions taken by their teenagers. Therefore, they behave of their own will, and parents do not involve their children in discussing the academic problems at school. Therefore, teenagers do not spend enough time with their families. Hence, parents' control over their teenagers' behavior and willingness to involve their teenagers in discussing the existing academic problems at school is required to increase achievement motivation in school, as well as become an extrinsic motivation for the students. An intrinsically and extrinsically motivated individual will likely be able to accomplish their task.

Support from parents, including trust, attention, and willingness to listen to their teenagers, is required to understand the existing academic situations (Yuliya, 2019). Hold an important role in increasing teenagers' achievement motivation at the average and low levels. Parents' support has been reported to affect adolescents' psychological well-being (Mahardika, 2018). This means that support provided by parents plays an important role in developing teenagers learning motivation and enthusiasm. Therefore, they are able to enhance their internal motivation and eventually, they are able to pursue their desired achievement.

Motivation exists as an important element required by individuals and students to help them to pursue their academic achievement. Nevertheless, this research has not emphasized the differences in achievement motivation between male and female junior high school students in Malang. Bedel (2016) stated the need to elaborate on the gender differences in achievement motivation and also consider the cultural differences and instruments. The differences in achievement motivation need to consider gender differences to understand motivation differences between male and female students and need to consider cultural differences to understand how cultural background will affect the level of achievement motivation in students both male and female students. The research recommendation in the future is the need to consider the gender influences in students' achievement motivation and the cultural influences in the improvement of achievement motivation. The counselors, teachers, and school staff could use this study as the basis for developing an intervention program to increase students' achievement motivation, especially for junior high school students. Finally, parents need to pay attention to the students' achievement motivation which influences the improvement of academic achievement, through involving their teenagers in discussing the existing academic problem they experience in school, academic assistance, guidance, and positive affirmation.

## **Conclusion**

The result of the research shows that 21% of the students were categorized as having high achievement motivation, 10% having low achievement motivation, and the rest, 69% having an average achievement motivation level. The need for achievement, which is also known as achievement motivation, is influenced by intrinsic and extrinsic situations that encourage the students to pursue an optimal achievement. Intrinsic situations can be shown through enjoyment and satisfaction in academic activity, whereas extrinsic situations can be obtained from parents' guidance and direction, learning assistance, accessibility of learning facility, positive affirmation, such as compliments for the students' achievement and rewards.

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