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## Impact of social support on achievement motivation and emotional maturity of young adults

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### Abstract

Many aspects of life are on hold while people go to school, go to work, and prepare for a brighter future. Motivational and emotional aspects of an individual, especially in the case of young adults, are a determining factor in their success in life. This empirical study aims to examine how social support affects the level of achievement, motivation, and emotional maturity of young adults. Our study has a sample of 200 (males = 101, females = 99) high school and college students from different institutions in the Haryana and Delhi regions. Subjects were assessed using psychometric tools including the Achievement Motivation Test by VP Bhargava, the Emotional Maturity Scale by Dr. Yashvir Singh and Dr. Mahesh Bhargava, and the Multidimensional Scale for Perceived Social Support by Gregory Zimet. Correlational analysis was used to test the hypotheses. The following findings were obtained: (a) There was a significant negative correlation ( $r = -0.230, -0.042$ ) between achievement motivation and social support, but only in the male sample. (b) There was a moderate negative correlation of  $-0.418$  between emotional maturity and social support in the male sample, and the correlation was insignificant for the female population. (c) Dimensions of emotional maturity, including social maladjustment, personality disintegration, and lack of independence, have a moderate negative correlation with social support in males, while emotional instability and emotional regression have a significant negative correlation with social support. This brings light to the influential role of social support in a high achiever's motivation and emotional maturity.

**Keywords:** Achievement motivation, emotional maturity, social support, adult

### Introduction

Numerous aspects of life are put on hold as people attend classes, work, and get ready for a better future. Beyond schooling, many things in life get influenced and may affect the probability of a successful life.

The period of change between adolescence and adulthood is known as emerging adulthood (Arnett, 2015) [29]. This is a transitional period marked by strong identity explorations and growing autonomy development. Although the age range of 18 to 25 is often considered to be the beginning of emerging adulthood, there is no clear-cut end to the stage. Instead, the sensation of having achieved maturity is based on three subjective criteria: embracing accountability for one's actions, making decisions on one's own, and becoming financially independent (Arnett, 2015) [29]. Thus, those between the ages of 18 and 25 who have not yet taken on adult roles and responsibilities (such as getting married, starting a family, or maintaining a stable job) are referred to as emerging adults.

Some of the responsibilities involved in early adults' development are defined by Havighurst (1972) are- 1).

**Achieving autonomy:** Attempting to create oneself as a self-sufficient individual with a unique existence 2).

**Establishing identity:** More clearly defining one's choices, ideas, and likes, and 3).

**Developing emotional stability:** Becoming emotionally more steady, which is regarded as a sign of maturing.

The Periods of a Man's Life, written by Daniel Levinson in 1978, proposed a theory of adult development and was based on extensive interviews with 40 men between the ages of 35 and 45.

According to Levinson, young adults are inspired by how they see the future. The males interviewed had this "dream" idea of how their careers would develop and where they would be in midlife. This scene is known as "the dream. Motivational and emotional aspects of an individual, especially in the case of young adults, are a determining factor in their success in life. These two aspects get affected by various factors such as parental upbringing, peer influence, external support, and biological factors as well. More specifically, the motivation that is fueled by our need for achievement and how much we are driven to achieve a goal determines a major part of our goal attainment. The motivation related to performance on tasks where standards of excellence are in effect is more properly referred to as achievement motivation. Three general questions about motivation that kids can ask themselves serve as a structure for the discussion of motivation theories and research: "Can I do this task?" "Do I want to do this task and why?" and "What do I have to do to succeed on this task?" David McClelland was a forerunner in the field of workplace motivational thinking, creating achievement-based motivational theories and models. He also promoted advancements in employee assessment practices, endorsing competency-based assessments and tests as superior to conventional IQ and personality-based tests. His ideas, which closely resemble Frederick Herzberg's theory, have since been widely embraced by other organizations. David McClelland is most noted for describing three types of motivational needs, which he identified in his 1961 book, *The Achieving Society: the Achievement motivation, the Authority/power motivation and the Affiliation motivation*. All employees and managers have some of these needs, and the combination of these needs determines a person's or manager's ways and behavior in terms of both their motivation and the management and motivation of others.

1. **The Need for Achievement (n-ach):** Each person is 'achievement motivated' and craves achievement, achieving ambitious but attainable goals, and professional growth. A sense of success, as well as feedback on progress and achievements, are highly desired. Hence craves achievement, achieving ambitious but attainable goals, and professional growth. A sense of success, as well as feedback on progress and achievements, are highly desired.
2. The n-pow individual is "authority motivated," according to the second need for authority and power. This drive encourages the desire to be powerful, successful, and effective. They must take the initiative and see that their recommendations are carried out. There is also a need and desire to raise one's status and reputation.
3. **The need for affiliation:** The n-affiliate person is "affiliation motivated," needs to associate with people, and is driven by friendship. The affiliation driver creates motivation and requests respect and acceptance from other people. These individuals function well in teams.

In the same context, individuals who are motivated by achieving goals tend to have varied emotional stability and maturity. The emotional functioning of a young person is as turbulent as that of an adolescent. That being said, emotional maturity may be seen as an integral part of success since it is the emotions that need to be balanced to

make informed decisions about their lives. Numerous factors, including subjective elements from within the person and objective factors from beyond the person, such as the social environment, family environment, work environment, and larger communities, affect emotional maturity. Emotional maturity has been the subject of numerous studies, and it has been discovered to be a significant predictor of success in one's personal, academic, and professional endeavors. "Emotional maturity" is defined as "the degree to which a person has developed his capacity for wholehearted sorrow when an occasion arises and his capacity to show fear whenever there is an occasion to be nervous without feeling a need to use a phony mask of strength, such as being presumed by persons afraid to acknowledge that they are afraid" (Jersild, 1963) <sup>[30]</sup>. The traits of a high achiever contrast with the emotional and social needs of a young individual. The social environment comprises our family, relatives, friends, and neighborhood. No success is achieved singlehandedly, and we all require support from our environment. Social support is important in many individuals' lives, but at the same time, it may be possible that it is a hindrance in the case of high achievers. Social support is essential for preserving sound physical and mental health.

Overall, it appears that high-quality positive social support can reduce medical morbidity and mortality, help prevent the emergence of trauma-related psychopathology, and increase resiliency to stress. It can also help reduce the functional consequences of trauma-induced disorders like posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Social support has been described as "support accessible to an individual through social ties to other individuals, groups, and the larger community". a support system made up of loved ones, close friends, neighbors, and members of the community that can provide emotional, material, and practical assistance when needed ([www.cancer.gov](http://www.cancer.gov)). Theoretical models of social support outline the following two essential dimensions: (1) a structural dimension that accounts for the size of the network and the frequency of social interactions; and (2) a functional dimension that consists of components related to emotions (like receiving affection and sympathy) and practical help (such as financial gifts or assistance). The optimal level of social assistance may vary depending on the recipient's developmental stage, which should be emphasized. For instance, compared to late adolescence, early adolescence appears to be when parental assistance is most advantageous. The perception of social support has been proven to be correlated in older people with their level of social involvement, whereas in younger adults, it is correlated with instrumental support.

### **Social support and achievement motivation**

The most significant correlation was seen in reported social support overall, followed by perceived support from teachers, parents, and peers. According to research, this also shows that there is a strong positive relationship between academic achievement and sub-indicators of perceived social support. On the other hand, a weak correlation was suggested because the effect values were minor (WU, 2023) <sup>[27]</sup>. According to research, social support and academic motivation are also significantly correlated. (Ziapour, Ahmadi, 2023) <sup>[3]</sup>. According to the research, parental social support and accomplishment motivation are positively correlated (Paramita, 2022) <sup>[18]</sup>. According to the research,

social support was only a reliable indicator of students' commitment to and interest in their success when they actively pursued achievement and long-term goals (Hernandez, 2016) <sup>[8]</sup>. The increased social support provided by the surroundings demonstrates that the student's drive to learn is also increased (Nugrahani, 2022) <sup>[15]</sup>.

The feature of accomplishment motivation is one of several effects that change the order of learning from face-to-face to online, and this study explores how social support and interest in online learning affect student achievement motivation (Ahmad, 2022) <sup>[2]</sup>. Participation in sports and accomplishment motivation determine how supportive people feel, which in turn influences general self-efficacy (Li, Yang, 2022) <sup>[12]</sup>. Between achievement motivation and overall self-efficacy, perceived social support acts as a means of communication. In other words, achievement motivation may subsequently impact general self-efficacy through perceived social support. The athlete is more motivated to succeed when they have stronger social support. It is hoped that those who are close to athletes, such as their parents, coaches, and friends, will offer the support that will enable athletes to make progress in their accomplishments (Pambudi, 2022) <sup>[31]</sup>. By improving their adjustment and social support, this research is anticipated to help students become more motivated to achieve (Touw, 2021) <sup>[32]</sup>. The significant impact of the teacher's social support on achievement motivation was 58.8%, with additional factors outside the scope of this study accounting for the remaining 41.2% (Fanggidae, 2020) <sup>[5]</sup>.

### Social support and Emotional maturity

Research has revealed that, from perceived stress to post-stress growth, social support is one of the most crucial variables for children who are left behind (Zhang, 2022) <sup>[28]</sup>. The findings of this study can be used as a foundation for delivering psychoeducation to strengthen family ties and promote emotional maturity to lessen anxiety during online education (Matulesy, 2021) <sup>[13]</sup>. According to the study, adolescents' emotional development and feelings of loneliness might be impacted by the presence or absence of their parents. Teenagers who live with their parents, however, showed less emotional development. The results of this study may be helpful in clinical situations to advise adolescents who are having issues with their biological or stepparents, feel isolated around their parents, or have emotional development that has been interrupted (Fatima, 2021) <sup>[6]</sup>. This study highlights the emotional issues that kids are having, which must be successfully addressed by using effective therapies and community support programs. For them to be supported, love, attention, and personal care are crucial components. Through appropriate medication, wholesome food, exercise, yoga, and meditation, the institutions can assist them in leading a normal life (Thomas, Sultana, 2021) <sup>[24]</sup>.

According to research, social support and emotional intelligence have a strong positive association. The study also identified a connection between low levels of emotional intelligence and poor mental health, as well as a substantial inverse relationship between the perceived social support received by elderly people and their mental health (Elsherif, 2021) <sup>[4]</sup>. If this anxiety isn't controlled, tension that subsequently worsens into more severe conditions like depression or suicidal thoughts may result. Therefore, students need to have social support from those in their

immediate environment as well as the capacity to regulate emotions and handle stress and be resilient when using distance learning (Pinki, Gobind & Sarita, 2022) <sup>[19]</sup>. The study looks into how family preferences, social support perceptions, and emotional maturity relate to female high school students. According to the findings, emotional maturity can be predicted by the family's emotional climate and perceived social support (Jafarihandi 2019) <sup>[9]</sup>.

### Objectives

1. To study the relationship between social support and achievement motivation among young adults.
2. To study the relationship between social support and emotional maturity among young adults.

### Hypothesis

1. There will be no relationship between social support and achievement motivation among young adults.
2. There will be no relationship between social support and emotional maturity among young adults.

### Method

**Participants:** In total 200 young adults (99 females and 101 male) with a mean age of 21.65 have participated in this study. These young adults were students studying in English-Medium colleges of the Hisar, Rohtak and Delhi NCR regions. Purposive sampling was used for selecting the sample for the study.

**Materials:** Three psychometric tools were used in this study  
**Achievement Motivation Test (ACMT):** Dr. V.P. Bhargava developed this test, it has 50 items with three choices, out of which one will be right. The scoring key is given for all the items and it is done by giving a score of 1 to the right answers. The reliability and validity coefficients were reported as 0.87 and 0.80. The external criterion used was the Sentence completion test by Dr. Bishwanath Mukherji.

**Emotional Maturity Scale (EMS):** Developed by Dr. Yashvir Singh and Dr. Mahesh Bhargava. It has 48 items divided into five categories- Emotional regression, Social maladjustment, and Emotional maturity, lack of independence and Personality disintegration Personality. There are 10 items in each of the parts except for Part 5 (Lack of independence) which has 8 items. There are five alternative responses - Very Much, Much, Undecided, Probably, and Never. The scoring is done by the 5-point Likert scaling method, where 5 is given to Very much and so on till 1 is given to Never a response. The reliability was obtained through test-retest and internal consistency methods. It was reported as 0.75 and 0.65 respectively. The validity was determined by the external criterion of Adjustment inventory by Sinha and Singh.

**Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS):** Developed by Gregory Zimet. It has 12 items divided among three subscales - Significant other, Family, and Friends. The Likert scale of 7-points is used with responses from Very strongly disagree to Very strongly agree. The scoring is done as 1 scored Very strongly disagree and 7 scored to very strongly agree. Then the sum of each subscale is divided by 4 and the total score is divided by 12 to get the raw score. It has demonstrated

strong validity, good internal and test-retest reliability, and a somewhat stable factorial structure.

**Research Design and procedure:** The design for data collection was a hybrid of two modalities for the easier availability of the sample. The data was collected in two modes - Online and Offline. The online mode was done with Google Forms through modalities such as WhatsApp, Instagram, and Telegram. The offline mode was taken through hard copies of the standardized questionnaires handed out to the participants. It took over 35 days for receiving 200 responses from young adults.

**Statistical analysis:** To test the hypotheses of the study, data analysis was carried out using SPSS version 20. To seek whether the variable social support has any relationship with achievement motivation and/ or emotional maturity we will be using correlational analysis.

### Results and Interpretation

■ In Table 1, the standard deviation and mean of ACMT was found to be 12.88 and 7.399, and of EMS it was 101.79 and 24.805. In MSPSS, it was 5.36 and 1.005 and the five dimensions have a mean score in the range of 17-23. In Table 3 of the Female sample, the mean

and SD were found to be 16.32 and 6.690 for ACMT, 109.09 and 20.465 for EMS; 5.25 and 0.984 for MSPSS. The five dimensions of EMS have a mean score in the range of 18-24.

- We hypothesized that Social support, motivation for achievement, and emotional maturity wouldn't be connected. Through the correlational analysis, we could say that both null hypotheses were rejected with significant relationships between social support, achievement motivation and emotional maturity.
- To measure the direct relationship between social support and achievement motivation, a Pearson correlation coefficient was produced. The two factors did not correlate favorably with one another,  $r(m = 101, f = 99) = -.230, -.042$ . Evident from Table 2, only the male sample's correlation coefficient was significant at 0.05 level. There was a negative correlation between social support and emotional maturity,  $r(101, 99) = -.418, -.286$ . Both the correlation coefficients were significant at 0.01 level of probability.
- We also found significant positive correlations among the dimensions of the Emotional Maturity scale with a correlation coefficient in the range of .71 - .87 collectively in the males and females. (Table 2 & 4)

**Table 1:** Male Descriptive Statistics of Achievement Motivation, dimensions of Emotional Maturity and Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS)

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Achievement Motivation	12.88	7.399	101
Emotional Maturity	101.79	24.805	101
Emotional Unstability	23.11	6.259	101
Emotional regression	21.75	6.812	101
Social maladjustment	21.83	6.570	101
Personality disintegration	18.04	5.683	101
lack of independence	17.06	5.321	101
Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS)	5.36	1.004	101

**Table 2:** (Male) Intercorrelation Matrixes (N=101) Correlation between Achievement motivations, Emotional maturity and Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS)

Sr. No.	Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	Achievement motivation	1	.104	-.216*	-.022	.265**	.196*	.232*	-.230*
2	Emotional maturity		1	.713**	.876**	.808**	.838**	.808**	-.418**
3	Emotional instability			1	.733**	.322**	.446**	.337**	-.222*
4	Emotional regression				1	.523**	.622**	.631**	-.239*
5	Social maladjustment					1	.717**	.717**	-.370**
6	Personal disintegration						1	.633**	-.466**
7	Lack of Independence.							1	-.425**
8	Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS)								1

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

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

**Table 3:** Female Descriptive Statistics of Achievement Motivation, dimensions of Emotional Maturity and Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS)

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Achievement Motivation	16.32	6.690	99
Emotional Maturity	109.09	20.465	99
Emotional Unstability	23.87	5.501	99
Emotional regression	23.26	5.669	99
Social maladjustment	23.88	5.738	99
Personality disintegration	19.55	4.849	99
lack of independence	18.51	4.574	99
Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS)	5.25	.984	99

**Table 4:** (Female) Intero relation Matrixes (N=99) Correlation between Achievement motivations, Emotional maturity and Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS)

Sr. No.	Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	Achievement motivation	1	.158	.066	.029	.260**	.140	.116	-.042
2	Emotional maturity		1	.839**	.805**	.748**	.773**	.708**	-.286**
3	Emotional instability			1	.777**	.459**	.604**	.378**	-.274**
4	Emotional regression				1	.346**	.556**	.411**	-.310**
5	Social maladjustment					1	.467**	.627**	-.228*
6	Personal disintegration						1	.391**	-.142
7	Lack of independence							1	-.144
8	MSPSS								1

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

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

## Discussion

- Our study aimed at addressing the impact of overall social support on the Achievement motivation and emotional maturity of young adults ages 18-25 years. Young adults have a lot to deal with - new roles, responsibilities and complex social interactions - which influences their success-making and goal attainment. Very often, their motivation and emotional maturity are impacted due to which they are unable to lead a balanced and successful life in their adulthood.
- From the statistical results, we can observe that the Achievement motivation and emotional maturity of the male population are convincingly more influenced by its social environmental support than that of the female population. Their motivation and emotional maturity is often stable when social support is least provided.
- The literature collected in this study is in contrast to the results that have been obtained. Specifically in the male population, most of the research dedicated to social support and achievement motivation suggests that social support predicts a positive increase in student achievement motivation and that parental support brings better goal attainment (Paramita, 2022; Hernandez, 2016) <sup>[18, 8]</sup>. But the results of this study determined that social support is not well-received by the individual and that they feel less motivated if provided social support by their family or friends. Achievement motivation is often understood as the reason behind having the lone-ranger personality; which means they would rather be successful if they are working alone on their goals. This is usually in the case of high-achievers who are motivated by achieving those challenges which can be attained. This would also mean they are perceiving the overall social support as something that is slowing them down or anchoring them.
- While on the other hand, we could infer that women don't get affected by social support in their Achievement motivation and emotional maturity. Their motivation to attain goals doesn't get bothered by how much or less environmental support is given to them. It could be possible that women are more oriented towards social affiliation and they feel that togetherness will make their goal attainment easier. This could be supported by a study by Jafarahandi (2019) <sup>[9]</sup>, where high school female students reported that their family support and environment predicted their level of emotional maturity and motivation. This could also mean that the women are not essentially high achievers or people with high achievement motivation. They might be balanced individuals who see social support as a part of their goal attainment. They feel that social support from family and friends will not affect their need for achievement or their motivation to achieve goals.
- Also, to be noted that the dimensions of emotional maturity, specifically Social maladjustment, and Lack of Independence, Personality disintegration were found to be moderately negative correlating with social support in the male population. The dimensions of social maladjustment refer to adjusting well to the social demands of the environment. This could be pointed out that the males are rather well-adjusted in their social environment if they do not perceive social support and are only given a sense of autonomy. Personality disintegration refers to the ability to have a unified personality with diverse traits, and in this case, the men feel that they have it all integrated when seen as an individual with no need for support. Lack of Independence is the ability to rely on oneself and to have self-control, and that means the males might find social support a hindrance to their ability of independence. The results elucidate that the men in the sample feel more maladjusted, disintegrated with their personalities and have less control over one's decisions when provided adequate social support. Likewise in a study by Fatima (2021) <sup>[6]</sup>, the men reported being more self-reliant and in control of themselves when working on their goals as an individual. We could infer that the men have an ingrained condition of refusing their overall social help from friends, family and others when it comes to the social desirability and social representation that they are strong enough as an individual. With this self-image, the perceived social support would be harming their emotional maturity altogether, specifically in these three dimensions.
- In the female population, the dimensions of Emotional instability and Emotional regression were found to be mildly negative correlating with social support. The emotional instability dimension refers to the ability to maintain a balanced emotional expression and response to what the external situation demands. The emotional regression dimension refers to the ability of an individual to progress into their environment with their emotional expressions and grow into an adjusted person. This result could indicate that women tend to feel emotionally balanced and progressive in their lives when there is the least social support from the environment, or when they are provided moderate social support.
- We can also observe that the difference in correlation among female and male populations in the variables

Achievement motivation and emotional maturity indicates a broader picture of what our social roles may give rise to our emotional and motivational processes. It shows the distinction between the two genders on how they perceive social support that would either bring better success or stop them from achieving their higher self.

### Limitation

While our study yielded significant results, there are limitations. Increasing the sample size beyond 200 could enhance study power and effect size, improving generalizability. The reliable questionnaire method employed provides a broad view of variable relationships but lacks granularity. Additionally, the lengthy questionnaire led to acquiescence and social desirability biases, impacting data authenticity.

### Future Implications and Conclusion

This study aims to examine the relationship between the overall social support and the achievement motivation and emotional maturity of young adults. All adolescents will grow up into a person who pre-occupies different professions and sometimes most of them may turn into powerful authorities. It's difficult to succeed in their life goals without emotional maturity. It also helps in understanding the restrictive factors of emotional maturity and motivation in emerging adulthood. In this study, we could see that social support is not just a protective factor but a restrictive factor where the sample would not be able to succeed in their goal attainment. Individual differences in achievement motivation and emotional maturity can bring light to the different social and emotional needs of men and women.

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