

Impact of Parental Expectations and Students' Academic Self-Concept on Their Academic Achievements

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to investigate the effect of parental expectations on students' academic achievement mediated by the students' academic self-concept. This study was guided by the pragmatist paradigm thus used mixed methods explanatory design having quantitative phase followed by the qualitative part. The sample for the quantitative phase was comprised of 400 male and female secondary school students randomly selected the public and private schools. Sample for the qualitative phase was comprised of 80 parents purposively selected for the study. The researchers adopted the academic self-concept scale for the collection of quantitative data. The researchers developed the second questionnaire to measure students' perceptions regarding parental academic expectations which consisted of 12 items. The students' summative evaluation scores were used to measure their academic achievement. Qualitative data regarding parental expectations were collected from parents through a semi-structured interview. The descriptive statistics and Hierarchical regression were used for quantitative data analysis. Whereas, qualitative data were analyzed by thematic analysis. Quantitative analysis revealed that parental expectations and students' academic self-concept statistically predicted students' academic achievement. Further, the secondary qualitative data validated the primary quantitative findings well that parents have high expectations regarding their children's academic achievement. Parents are expected to extend high expectations about the academic achievements of their children.

Keywords: *parental expectations, academic achievement, academic self-concept, secondary level, relationship*

Introduction

Parental academic and learning expectations are regarded as a key feature in their children's educational achievements (Alexander, Entwisle, Blyth, & McAdoo, 1988). Such expectations are significantly and positively correlated with youngsters' academic attainment at all ages and study levels (Castro, Lubker, Bryant, & Skinner, 2002). A positive relationship was identified between parental expectations and academic success among European American and African American high school students (Wang, & Sheikh-Khalil, 2014; Kuru Cetin, & Taskin, (2016). Parental high expectations lead and motivate their

children to achieve higher in academics. Students need the motivation to succeed academically and one of the sources of motivation is the expectations of their parents (Wibrowski, Matthews, & Kitsantas, 2016). Parental academic expectations are defined as their beliefs and demands about the future academic achievements of their children (Davis-Kean, 2005). Parental expectations work more if these are very realistic (Heatly, & Votruba-Drzal, 2017) and are clearly linked with successful completion of secondary education (Bayer, Grossman, & DuBois, 2015; Ayoub, Gosling, Potter, Shanahan, & Roberts, 2018; Murry, & Lippold, 2018). These expectations influence the child's effort and attitudes towards his/her

studies and ultimately impact academic achievements (Lazarides, Viljaranta, Aunola, Pesu, & Nurmi, 2016). Many investigators defined parental expectations as realistic opinions/views or logical decisions related to success that can be measured in the form of improvement in grades, reaching maximal school levels as well as class attendance (Glick & White, 2004; Goldenberg, Gallimore, Reese, & Garnier, 2001). Parental expectations are generally differentiated from aspirations, where the latter consider desires, goals and wishes that parents have for their children's achievements instead of realistic expectations (Samura, 2015). Parental aspirations and expectations are theoretically discrete phrases but maybe sometimes used interchangeably (Fan & Chen 2001; Juang & Silbereisen, 2002) as the first one refers the desire of parents while later refers the realistic beliefs of parents. The parental aspirations include their values based on social customs and standards as well as regarded by institutions as a collective victory of society (Carpenter, 2014). These values are measured through words like "want" and "hope" (Aldous, 2006). It was explored by Boocock (1972) that, the children perform better and achieve higher grades whose parents are conscious about their academic achievement as compared to those, whose parents don't take interest in their studies. Goldenberg et al., (2001) stated that high achievers were more likely to arrive from families having higher educational expectations. Such children are more helpful to others in their studies because their parents cooperate with them in every possible way and supervise them in their activities to make them able to get more success (Seginer & Vermulst, 2002). As parents help and support them, the

tasks become easy and interesting for them and this result in the ultimate achievement in learning activities and tasks. Parents, who have high academic expectations of their children, create possible opportunities and environments to make them learn more, this enforces them to participate whole-heartedly in these learning activities resulting in extraordinary achievement (Goldenberg et al., 2001). Students meet parental expectations and their own perceptions about their studies are shaped and guide them to successfully complete their academic targets (Gutierrez, 2019).

When parents ponder importance on education and expect high performance in their child's learning attainment retain to be extra occupied in activities and tasks relevant to studies (Sy, Rowley, & Schulenberg, 2005). However, parental expectations may vary; where some parents believe that continuous effort can bring change in children's performance whereas, others think that ability cannot be changed with effort (Trautwein, Ludtke, Koller, & Baumert, 2006). However, higher parental expectations than children's actual abilities can degrade and demotivate them in case of failure to meet the expectations (Dandy & Nettelbeck, 2002). It was identified that excessive parental expectations may cause stress among students and that negatively impacts their academic achievements (Jones, 2015). Achievement can be defined in various ways according to what actually the researcher wants to use it for. It is the ability, talent, expertise, capability, proficiency and skills for particular class performance, specific subject performance, overall performance, grades, marks, GPA, percentage etc. "Academic achievement" is hypothesized as learning proficiency and expertise and is defined as person's

comprehensive performance in education (Dweck & Elliott, 1983) and to trust in own capabilities (Bandura, 1997). Academic self-concept may be defined as an individual's estimation of his/her educational areas and fields or talents. More positive self-beliefs are associated with academic achievements in schools (Chemers, Hu, & Garcia, (2001). In Australian student's academic self-concept has a strong positive relationship with their academic achievements (Bales, Pidgeon, Lo, Stapleton, & Magyar, 2015). Furthermore, positive self-concept predicts academic achievements in school students (Booth, Abercrombie, & Frey, 2017).

Academic self-concept (ASC) fluctuates as school children move towards higher grades and class levels and it usually apt to grow in the same path of their educational attainment (Liu & Wang, 2005; Jacobs, Lanza, Osgood, Eccles, & Wigfield, 2002). However, others concluded that spell the abbreviation first (ASC) inclines to move in the contrasting way as someone moves upward in grades/class level (Marsh, Ellis, & Craven, 2002; Marsh & Yeung, 1997).

Purpose of the Study

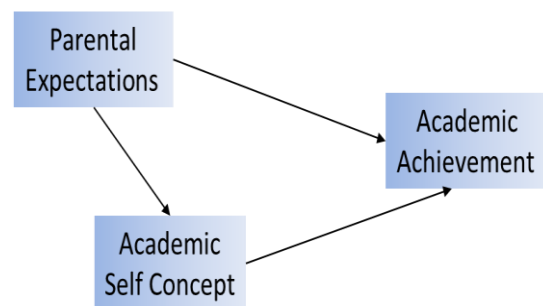
The intent of this study was to explore the students' perceptions regarding parental academic expectations validated by the parents' own stance. It further investigated the effect of parental academic expectations and students' academic self-concept (academic confidence and academic effort) on students' academic achievement. The Follow-up Explanatory Model has been used for this research because the secondary qualitative data regarding parental expectations was needed to validate/ explain the primary Quantitative

findings and the Quantitative data alone was unable to address the problem solely.

Research Questions

1. What are the students' perceptions regarding parental expectations for their academic achievement?
2. Is there any significant effect of parental expectations and students' self-concept on their academic achievement?
3. What do parents expect from students regarding their academic achievement?

Model



Methodology

This was an explanatory (Follow-up Explanations Model) mixed-methods research design. The sample for the study was selected by using the two-phase sampling. The sample for primary quantitative data collection included 400 male and female secondary school students from the public as well as private schools which were selected by random sampling. On the other hand, the sample for secondary qualitative data collection included 80 parents who were selected purposively. The primary quantitative data regarding parents' academic expectations were collected from students through the questionnaire developed by the researchers, having 12 items and the reliability of the questionnaire was .90. Whereas, the researchers adopted a self-concept scale by (Liu & Wang, 2005) which comprised of 20 items and the

reliability was calculated as .95 and was used to collect quantitative data regarding the self-concept. The students' summative evaluation scores were used to measure their academic achievement. On the other hand, the secondary qualitative data were collected from parents regarding parental expectations through a semi-structured interview. Both the primary quantitative as well as secondary qualitative data were collected by the researchers. The researchers have fulfilled all required ethical guidelines during the data collections in both phases of the research.

The permission was taken from the school management regarding the data collection. No participant was forced to participate in the study rather volunteers were preferred, and in the qualitative data collection the researchers didn't include any personal question(s) which may hurt anyone intentionally

Analysis and Results

The collected primary quantitative data were analyzed through descriptive statistics percentage for the investigation of 1st research questions, hierarchical regression for 2nd research question.

Table No 1

Students' Perceptions regarding Parental Expectations for Academic Achievement

Sr.	Statement	Grade A	Grade B	Grade C	Grade D	Grade F
1	What grade your parents thought you can get on your final report card last year?	70.8%	26.5%	2.8%	0%	0%
2	What grade your parents expected you will get on your final report card last year?	77.3%	13.8%	9%	0%	0%
3	What grade your parents wanted you to get on your final report card last year?	84.3%	15.8%	0%	0%	0%
4	What grade you actually got on your final report card last year?	27.3%	21%	22.8%	14.2%	14.8%
5	What grade your parents think you can get on your final report card this year?	66%	23.8%	6%	4.3%	0%
6	What grade your parents expect you to get on your final report card this year?	61.5%	25.8%	12.8%	0%	0%
7	What grade your parents want you to get on your final report card this year?	65.8%	21%	13.3%	0%	0%
		vocational education	Doctorate	post-graduation	graduation	Less than graduation
8	Which highest level of education your parents think you can complete?	17%	28.5%	39.5%	7.8%	7.2%
9	Which highest level of education your parents want you to complete?	24%	24.8%	32.3%	11%	8%

10	Which highest level of education your parents expect you to complete?	25%	21.5%	34%	10%	9.5%
		A lot better than other students	A little better than other students	About the same as other students	A little worse than other students	A lot worse than other students
11	How good your parents expected your academic achievement last year as compared to other children in your class	33%	36.5%	30.5%	0%	0%
12	How well do your parents expect your academic achievement this year as compared to other children in your class?	30%	36.5%	33.5%	0%	0%

The table reveals the results about students' perceptions regarding parental expectations for their academic achievement that 70.8% parents thought that their children have the ability to get A-grade whereas 26.5% thought B and only 2.8% thought for a grade. Those parents who expected-A grade from their children last year were 77.3% whereas 13.8% expected B grade and only 9% of them expected C grade. Those parents who demanded their children to get A grade last year were 84.3% whereas 15.8% wanted B grade and none of them demanded less than A and B grades. However, the results show that only 27.3% children could attain A grade, 21% got B grade, 22.8% achieved c grade, 14.2% had D grade and 14.8% attained F grade. It is further exhibited by the results that 66% parents thought that their children can get A grade this year, whereas 23.8% thought B grade, 6% thought C grade and only 4.3% were at D grade. Those parents who were expecting their children to get A grade this year were 61.5% whereas 25.8% were expecting B grade and only 12.8% of parents' expectations were for C grade. The parents' demands are still high for the current academic year too that 65.8% of

them are demanding A grade from their children whereas 21% are at B grade and only 13.3% parents are demanding for C grade.

The results show that 17% parents think that their children can attain vocational education whereas 28.5% thinks for Doctorate level, 39.5% thinks for post-graduation, 7.8% thinks at graduation level and only 7.2% parents' thinking is at less than graduation. Those parents who demanded their children to get vocational education are 25% whereas 21.5% were at Doctorate level, 34% at post-graduation level, 10% at graduation level and only 8% parents demand was still less than graduation. The parents' expectations are high regarding the completion of their children's degree that 25% of them expected for vocational education, 21.5% for Doctorate level, 34% for post-graduation, 10% for graduation whereas only 9.5% for less than graduation degree. Those parents who think that their children's academic achievement is a lot better than other students were 30% whereas 36.5% parents consider it a little better than other students and 33% parents consider it at the same level as other students did. On the other hand, 33%

parents expected that their children will achieve a lot better academically than other students, whereas 36.5% expected their children to do a little better as

compared to other students and 30% parents expected at the same level as other students may achieve academically.

Table No 2

Effect of Parental Expectations and Academic Self-Concept on Students Academic Achievement

Variables	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	df	F	Sig
Parental Expectations	.757 ^a	.572	.571	2	.90563	.000
Academic Self-Concept	.779 ^b	.606	.604	2	.87007	.000

The above-stated table shows the results of hierarchical regression to predict the effect of parental expectations, academic self-concept on students' academic achievement. The variance of parental

expectations and academic self-concept are 57% and 60% respectively. The F value for parental expectations is .90563 and for academic self-concept is .87007 whereas $p < .01$, with $df = 2$.

Table No 3

Coefficient of Parental Expectations, Academic Self-Concept on Students Academic Achievement

Variables	B	Std. Error	β	T	Sig.
Parental Expectations	-3.343	.302	.757	-11.079	.000
Academic Self-Concept	-2.398	.332	.960	-7.225	.000

Hierarchical regression result showed the effect of parental expectations and students' academic self-concepts on students' academic achievements. The results shows that $\beta = .757$, $t = -11.079$ ($p < 0.01$) for parental expectations and $\beta = .960$, $t = -7.225$ ($p < 0.01$) for academic self-concept expectations. It is revealed that parental expectations and students' academic self-concepts statistically predicted the students' academic achievement as $p < 0.01$. So, the H_0 : "There is no significant effect of parental expectations and students' academic self-concept on students' academic achievement" is rejected.

Thematic Analysis

Question 1: What were your expectations from your child regarding the academic achievement last year?

Success was the major theme emerged from the data. I asked this question from the participants in order to explore what do they think about their children's ability to do in academics as well as their expectations and demands? Most of the parents expressed that they expected their children to be successful individuals of society. When I dig more for the term success, most of them further responded that they expected their children's success in term of future employment and successful adjustment in society. However, few of them considered the completion of education as a success.

High was the most dominant sub-theme that emerged from the data that almost all the parents expected that their children must show high achievement in their academics by all means. They expressed that their children have the ability to achieve a high position in academics.

Expected Grade was another sub-theme that almost all the parents responded that they expected A, B and C grades from the children regarding their academic achievement and none of them expected less than these like D, E and F.

Completion also emerged as sub-theme. Some of the parents responded that they expected their children to complete the program of studies in 1st attempt without taking any compartment.

Question 2: Did your child achieved academically up to your expectations?

Actual Grade was the theme emerged from the data. Almost all the parents exhibited that the children could achieve higher grades like A, B and C if they had excelled their efforts and capabilities appropriately in this regard. However, they didn't take the academic achievement serious to the due extent. None of the parents expected D, E or F grade for the children which shows their high expectations upon children regarding their academic achievement. But on the other hand, a few of children attained A and B grades whereas most of the children achieved C, D, E and some F grade too. This shows a huge gap between parental expectations and children's actual academic achievement level.

Low Grade some of the parents responded that their children did not meet their expectations. They attained the low grades in their academics in spite of parental high expectations regarding their academic achievement.

Poor was another sub-theme came from the data. Few of parents said that the children's academic performance was poor. They could perform better however they exhibited negligence in the study which resulted in their poor performance.

Question 3: What are your expectations from your child regarding the education this year?

High grades were the dominant theme that the majority of the parents responded that they expect higher grades from the children this year. They explained that the children must attain A, B and C grade in the current academic year as the grades below these have no distinctive worth either in case of admission seeking or the job seeking. Only those individuals get success who have higher academic grades whereas those with the lower grades mostly suffer while failing to meet the merit.

Education Level was another theme emerged from the data. Most of the parents said that they want their children to get Doctoral level education, whereas some of them responded that they expect their child to get vocational education. On the other hand, only a few participants expected the students to get education up to post-graduation and below.

Question 4: What do you think that either parental expectations affect students' academic achievement or not?

The motivation was the most dominant theme emerged from the data in this regard that the most of the parents said that parental expectations are good for the children's academics as they keep on motivating them to strive for the better/high grades. The students are kept on track by parental expression regarding academic achievement.

Stress was another theme that some of the participants expressed that parental expectations prove to be the source of stress for the children in case the children do not have the ability to meet the expectations or they continuously failed to

achieve the set academic achievement target by their parents.

Question 5: How do you see your child's academic achievement as compared to other fellows?

A little better was the most dominant theme concerned with this question that most of the participants responded that their children showed a little better academically than their other class fellows whereas they should have achieved more.

A lot better was the second dominant emerged theme that some of the parents said that their children did well and achieved a lot better in the academics as per parental expectations.

Same was the third theme that emerged from the data that few of the participants responded that their children showed the average level of academic achievement as their other fellows showed.

RQ 3: What do parents expect from students regarding their academic achievement?

The results revealed that the parents have the higher expectations from their children regarding the academic achievement that majority of them expected A, B and C grade and none of them expected D, E or F grade. They also expected the successful completion of the study program without any compartment. However, the students showed lower academic achievement as compared to parental expectations. Most of the parents think that parental expectations prove to be the motivation source for the students due to which they remain on track. However, some of them declared parental expectation as a source of stress for students. The majority of them further told that they expect their children to be educated at Doctorate, post-graduate level or having vocational education. They consider that their children's academic

achievement is better than their other class fellows.

Discussion and Conclusion

On the basis of results, it is concluded that a significantly high positive correlation between parental expectations and students' academic achievement was found. On the other hand, a significant weak positive correlation is found between academic self-concept and students' academic achievement. This result is consistent with a number of studies of (Froiland & Davison, 2014; Froiland, Peterson, & Davison, 2013; Cornelius & Froiland, 2012; Powell, Son, File, & Froiland, 2012; Wood, Kurtz-Costes, & Copping, 2011; Rockwell, 2011; Pringle, Lyons, & Booker, 2010). It is further revealed that the secondary qualitative data has validated the primary Quantitative findings well that the parents have high expectations for their children's academic achievement as most of them had expected and demanded the A, B and C grade. They thought that their children have the ability to achieve the high grades in academics, however, they didn't pay the due attention towards their studies and therefore, they showed low performance. Majority of parents considered parental expectations as a source of motivation to keep the children on track towards the achievement of better grades and high academic performance.

The findings of the study have reinforced earlier findings of the parental expectations about academic self-concept and academic achievements of the students and added the profile of Pakistani students in the existing literature. Educational institutions particularly schools are expected to educate parents by letting them know the impact of their expectations. The parents should be guided how to extend expectations and help their kids to develop

better self-concept by projecting their successes and giving them reasonable challenges and support to overcome their deficiencies

Recommendations

On the basis of conclusion, it is recommended:

1. The parents should have high expectations regarding their children's academic achievement.
2. The parental expectations must be conveyed to the children by parents so they may be aware of them and strive to fulfil them with hard work.
3. The awareness session must be set up to aware the parents with the importance of appropriate expectations and their effective communication with the children.

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