

A. Jayapaul Ph.D., Research Scholar, School of Education, Vels Institute of Science, Technology & Advanced Studies, Pallavaram, Chennai- 600 117.

Dr. K. Sheeba Associate Professor in Education, School of Education, Vels Institute of Science, Technology & Advanced Studies, Pallavaram, Chennai- 600 117.

Abstract

Developing an optimistic character is an important part of goal orientation. The goal of education should be to produce peaceful members of society by equipping students with the tools and information they need to make a positive impact. This highlights the vital need of college students to attain their goal by mastery and performance goal in their studies. Mastery and performance goals were the original two categories of goal orientation. The survey approach used in this study was administered to college students who were enrolled in both private and government-aided programs. A total of 200 college students participated in the study, with data being gathered from 100 male and 100 female students in the arts and science streams. For the survey, a random sample technique is employed. The researcher created a goal-orientation tool for the study. Result showed that there is significant difference in gender, type of institution, and in the stream of the study. Female students were found to have better mastery, performance and goal orientation than the male students. Private college students were found to have better Arts stream students were found to have better mastery, performance and goal orientation than in their counter parts. It is also reported that there is positive and significant correlation among the goal orientation and its dimensions.

INTRODUCTION

The majority of human conduct is driven by the pursuit of objectives and the satisfaction of needs. Goals can encompass a wide range of objectives, including both personal and professional aspirations, as well as those that are short-term or long-term in nature. They can also be either objective and physical or subjective and psychological. Goal orientation pertains to a student's motivations for engaging in certain accomplishment behaviors within a specific context.

The motivation behind these goals can vary depending on the individual, with some driven by a desire for personal growth and learning (mastery goal) and others driven by a desire to achieve higher levels of performance (performance goal). Although a blend of both factors is optimal for acquiring knowledge and attaining success, motivation stands out as the primary determinant of student learning. Goal orientation has a direct influence on motivation, which in turn has a direct influence on learning. The manner in which teachers present lessons can have an impact on student motivation, either by promoting or hindering learning.

As a central activity in motivating oneself, goal setting is central to goal orientation theory, a social-cognitive framework. Its use as a theoretical framework for investigating what drives students to succeed in school skyrocketed in the 1980s. In contrast to other theories, goal orientation theory sought to understand why kids worked so hard in school rather than how they perceived their own abilities and shortcomings. A person's goals are the outcomes they aspire to achieve. According to the theory, when students have numerous objectives, their motivation to study and the way they pursue them are affected by the type of goal and the level of commitment.

Mastery and performance goals (sometimes called learning and performance goals, ability-focused goals, task-involved goals, and ego-involved goals) were the original two categories of goal orientation. On the other hand, performance-avoidance goal orientation is a relatively new third dimension of goal orientation.

1. Mastery goals

Mastery objectives are goals that prioritize the acquisition of new abilities, the mastery of tasks, and the pursuit of better understanding and improved competency. It includes achieving success via diligent labor and exertion.

Setting mastery goals involves establishing criteria for success based on progress and acquisition of knowledge. This enhances their efficacy as the contentment is not contingent upon external signs but rather on your individual tenacity. Consequently, maintaining motivation becomes simpler and the likelihood of giving up in challenging situations or setbacks decreases.

2. Performance goals

Performance goals center on showcasing proficiency or capability and surpassing others. There is a significant focus on comparing oneself to others and seeking approval from others. Due to their inherent self-centeredness, performance goals are inherently superficial.

Engaging in competitive behavior or pursuing excellence within a group are a couple of instances of it. Furthermore, performance objectives have a tendency to degrade performance over an extended period of time. Due to their lack of motivation to learn, individuals are less inclined to undertake more difficult tasks and strive for exceptional performance. Failure to reach the initial objective often leads to de-motivation and discouragement, since it's rely on external validation and feedback to determine the self-esteem.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

More recent studies disagree with the mastery goal perspective. They indicate that in specific situations performance goals can also promote the development of competences (e.g., Harackiewicz and Sansone 1991) and call for a re-conceptualization of goal theory, which acknowledges the positive effects of performance goals. It has also been pointed out that the different goal orientations do not necessarily need to be treated as opposites. For example, Meece and Holt (1993) found that students could be high in mastery motivation and also high in performance orientation, while others could be low in both dimensions. Since at least the 1990s, there has been a sustained research focus on how multiple goals interact and jointly influence student learning and achievement (e.g., Wentzel 1991, 1993; Wolters et al., 1996).

The relationship between goal orientation and academic performance has been studied extensively (for examples of review studies and meta-analyses, see Cellar et al., 2011; DeShon & Gillespie, 2005; Huang, 2012; Payne, Youngcourt, & Beaubien, 2007). Traditionally, researchers found a strong positive relationship between mastery goal orientation and academic outcomes, while performance goal orientation was often found to be weakly negatively to non-significantly related to academic outcomes (for meta-analysis, see Huang, 2012). The distinction between approach and avoidance within the performance goal orientation clarified these findings, namely, that the performance avoidance goal orientation was negatively related to learning outcomes, whereas the performance approach goal orientation was positively related to learning outcomes (Cellar et al., 2011; Chen, 2015; Diseth, 2011; Elliot & Church, 1997; Elliot & McGregor, 2001; Huang, 2012). Since Elliot and McGregor (2001) introduced their 2 x 2 framework with mastery also subdivided into approach and avoidance, the positive relationship between mastery goal orientation and academic achievement seemed to disappear. Most researchers failed to find a significant relationship between mastery approach and academic achievement (Abd-El-Fattah & Patrick, 2011; Cury, Elliot, Da Fonseca, & Moller, 2006; Elliot & McGregor, 2001; Elliot & Murayama, 2008; Eum & Rice, 2011) and between mastery avoidance and academic achievement (Cury et al., 2006; Elliot & McGregor, 2001; Elliot & Murayama, 2008; King & McInerney, 2014).

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Min Luo, Yiru Feng, Xiang Yao, and Jianxun Liu's (2023) study explores how college students' mastery goal orientation (MGO) varies over their first two years of college. A two-year study of 370 college freshman was examined using latent class growth analysis. The findings show three MGO trajectory patterns: high-stable, medium-decreasing, and low-decreasing. Students with more proactive personalities and academic self-efficacy are more likely to exhibit stable MGOs and higher initial levels of MGO. This shows that the magnitude of alterations in MGO varies between students during their college years. Both theoretical and practical contributions are considered.

Research has shown the importance of goal orientation in predicting academic performance for children, adolescents, and college students in traditional educational settings. Studies on this relationship within adult distance education, however, are lacking. To fill this gap, the study conducted by Joyce Neroni et al., (2018), is to investigate the relationship between goal orientation and academic performance in adult distance learners. A sample of $N = 1128$ distance university students (age 18-75 years) filled out an online questionnaire. Their exam grades were collected from the files of the Open University of the Netherlands (OUNL). A mixed model regression showed performance approach goal orientation to be a positive predictor of academic performance, whereas performance avoidance and work avoidance were negative predictors of academic performance. Non-significant results were found for mastery approach as well as for mastery avoidance. Implications of these results are discussed.

NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Developing an optimistic character is an important part of goal orientation. The goal of education should be to produce peaceful members of society by equipping students with the tools and information they need to make a positive impact. This highlights the vital need of college students to attain their goal by mastery and performance goal in their studies. They will have a tough time examining the most discriminating brains. The real goal is for college students to use strategies that increase the amount and quality of knowledge and learn through regular analysis. A person's goal orientation their driving force behind studying is a strong predictor of their academic success (Dweck, 1986).

Focusing on learning and mastery of tasks and subjects is what mastery goals are all about for students. According to Barron and Harackiewicz (2000), students that take a goal-oriented mastery-approach are actively working to improve their competence. Several adaptive learning outcomes, including effort, perseverance, enhanced self-efficacy, and curiosity, have been associated with students who pursue mastery-approach objectives (Anderman et al., 2002; Leonardi & Gialamas, 2002; Pintrich, 2000). In addition, students who aspired to mastery goals exhibited characteristics such as a belief system, enjoyment, curiosity, and a desire to improve themselves. When one aspires to mastery, learning becomes an end in and of itself (Nicholls, 1984). Knowledge acquisition and processing are both enhanced by a focus on mastery. The results show that mastery goals boost retention in the long run (Elliot & McGregor, 1999).

Objectives for performance lead students to evaluate themselves in relation to their classmates. In order to show how well they do compared to their classmates, students who set performance goals complete projects (Barron & Harackiewicz, 2000). In addition, pupils who are performance-oriented worry about their grades or try to hide their shortcomings (Pintrich, 2000). Setting performance goals in a classroom that values exceptional grades, aptitude, and outperforming classmates was done by Ames (1992). Hence the researcher felt that it is important to analysis the goal orientation of the college students in the view of mastery and performance goal orientation.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Is there is any significant difference between the male and female college students in goal orientation and its dimensions namely mastery and performance goal orientation?
2. Is there is any significant difference between the Government Aided and Private college students in goal orientation and its dimensions namely mastery and performance goal orientation?
3. Is there is any significant difference between the Arts and Science Stream college students in goal orientation and its dimensions namely mastery and performance goal orientation?
4. Is there is significant correlation among the mastery goal orientation, performance goal orientation and goal orientation?

METHODOLOGY

The survey method approach used in this study was administered to college students who were enrolled in both private and government-aided programs. A total of 200 college students participated in this study, with data being gathered from 100 male and 100 female students in the arts and science streams. For the survey, a random sample technique is employed. The researcher created a goal-orientation tool

for the study. The tool consist of forty two statements and the scoring is five point scale from strongly agree is 5 to strongly disagree is 1.

FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. *Is there is any significant difference between the male and female college students in goal orientation and its dimensions namely mastery and performance goal orientation?*

Variables	Male (100)		Female (100)		t Value	Significant Level
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Mastery Goal Orientation	54.37	7.45	74.51	13.28	13.223	P<0.001 S
Performance Goal Orientation	64.42	9.56	83.62	8.16	6.620	P<0.001 S
Goal Orientation	111.23	11.85	161.42	22.53	18.94	P<0.001 S

It is inferred from the table that female college students have better mastery goal orientation (74.51), performance goal orientation (83.62) and overall goal orientation (161.42) than the counter parts. Moreover, there is positive significant difference between female and male college students at 1% level. Hence it is concluded that there is a significant difference between male and female college students.

2. *Is there is any significant difference between the Government Aided and Private college students in goal orientation and its dimensions namely mastery and performance goal orientation?*

Variables	Government Aided College (82)		Private College (118)		t Value	Significant Level
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Mastery Goal Orientation	59.15	11.98	68.11	15.39	4.416	P<0.005 S
Performance Goal Orientation	28.52	9.52	84.34	8.03	6.644	P<0.001 S
Goal Orientation	115.63	14.26	173.56	24.52	10.281	P<0.001 S

It is observed that private college students have better mastery goal orientation (68.11), performance goal orientation (84.34) and goal orientation (173.56) than the government aided college students (59.15, 28.52 and 115.63). It is also evident that there is positive significant difference between the government aided and private college students at 1% level. Hence, is is conclude that there is a significant difference between government aided and private college students

3. *Is there is any significant difference between the Arts and Science Stream college students in goal orientation and its dimensions namely mastery and performance goal orientation?*

Variables	Arts Stream (132)		Science Stream (68)		t Value	Significant Level
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Mastery Goal Orientation	66.30	14.98	60.82	13.65	2.853	P<0.005 S
Performance Goal Orientation	66.90	9.28	62.14	7.65	2.955	P<0.005 S
Goal Orientation	150.47	26.87	115.63	16.87	9.491	P<0.001 S

It is observed from the above table that arts stream students have better mastery goal orientation (66.30), performance goal orientation (66.90) and goal orientation (150.47) than the science stream college students. It is evident that the mastery and performance goal orientation are significant at 5% level, whereas goal orientation is significant at 1% level. Hence, it is concluded that there is a significant difference between arts and science stream college students.

4. *Is there is significant correlation among the mastery goal orientation, performance goal orientation and goal orientation?*

Variables	Mastery Goal Orientation	Performance Goal Orientation	Goal Orientation
Mastery Goal Orientation	1	0.714**	0.815**
Performance Goal Orientation	-	1	0.823**
Goal Orientation	-	-	1

It is evident from the table that there is positive and significant relationship among the dimensions namely mastery and performance goal orientation and goal orientation. It is also proved that there is strong relationship at 1% level.

CONCLUSION

Researchers and teachers have to start by knowing what drives college students to engage in such activities in the first place if they are to grasp their academic behaviors that subsequently influence their accomplishment. Mastery goals, performance-oriented goals, or both together inspire many students in their courses. The crucial question for college teachers is what objectives coincide with learning the course content as well as with good scores. The results of this study imply that the attainment of good marks that is goal orientation for the college students is correlated with the performance goal and mastering goal orientation.

REFERENCES

- Abd-El-Fattah, S. M., & Patrick, R. R. (2011). The relationship among achievement motivationorientations, achievement goals, and academic achievement and interest: A multiple mediation analysis. *Australian Journal of Educational and Developmental Psychology*, Vol.11, pp. 91–110.
- Cellar, D. F., Stuhlmacher, A. F., Young, S. K., Fisher, D. M., Adair, C. K., Haynes, S., Riester, D. (2011). Trait goal orientation, self-regulation, and performance: A meta-analysis. *Journal ofBusiness and Psychology*, Vol 26, pp. 467–483. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10869-010-9201-6>
- Chen, W. W. (2015). The relations between perceived parenting styles and academic achievement in Hong Kong: The mediating role of students' goal orientations. *Learning and Individual Differences*, Vol. 37, pp. 48–54. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lindif.2014.11.021>
- Cury, F., Elliot, A. J., Da Fonseca, D., & Moller, A. C. (2006). The social-cognitive model of achievement motivation and the 2 x 2 achievement goal framework. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 90, pp. 666–679. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.90.4.666>
- DeShon, R. P., & Gillespie, J. Z. (2005). A motivated action theory account of goal orientation. *The Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol. 90, pp. 1096–1127. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.90.6.1096>
- Diseth, Å. (2011). Self-efficacy, goal orientations and learning strategies as mediators between preceding and subsequent academic achievement. *Learning and Individual Differences*, Vol. 21,pp. 191–195. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lindif.2011.01.003>
- Elliot, A. J., Murayama, K., & Pekrun, R. (2011). A 3 x 2 achievement goal model. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, Vol. 103, pp. 632–648. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0023952>

- Elliot, A. J., & McGregor, H. A. (2001). A 2×2 achievement goal framework. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 80, pp. 501–519. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.80.3.501>
- Eum, K., & Rice, K. G. (2011). Test anxiety, perfectionism, goal orientation, and academic performance. *Anxiety, Stress, and Coping*, Vol. 24, pp. 167–178. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10615806.2010.488723>
- Huang, C. (2012). Discriminant and criterion-related validity of achievement goals in predicting academic achievement: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, Vol. 104, pp. 48–73. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0026223>
- Joyce Neroni1, Celeste Meijjs, Ruslan Leontjevas, Paul A. Kirschner, and Renate H. M. de Groot (2018). Goal Orientation and Academic Performance in Adult Distance Education. *International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning*. Vol. 19(2). Pp. 192–208.
- Min Luo, Yiru Feng, Xiang Yao, Jianxun Liu (2023). Changes in mastery goal orientation in college students: Trajectories and predictors. [Learning and Individual Differences Volume 106](#), ISSN: 102326
- Payne, S. C., Youngcourt, S. S., & Beaubien, J. M. (2007). A meta-analytic examination of the goal orientation nomological net. *The Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol. 92, pp. 128–150.