The Effects of Parents, Teachers, and Peers on Academic Motivation

Amanda R. Holden

Eastern Illinois University

This research is a product of the graduate program in School Psychology at Eastern Illinois University. Find out more about the program.

Recommended Citation
http://thekeep.eiu.edu/theses/1521
THESIS/FIELD EXPERIENCE PAPER
REPRODUCTION CERTIFICATE

TO: Graduate Degree Candidates (who have written formal theses)

SUBJECT: Permission to Reproduce Theses

The University Library is receiving a number of request from other institutions asking permission to reproduce dissertations for inclusion in their library holdings. Although no copyright laws are involved, we feel that professional courtesy demands that permission be obtained from the author before we allow these to be copied.

PLEASE SIGN ONE OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS:

Booth Library of Eastern Illinois University has my permission to lend my thesis to a reputable college or university for the purpose of copying it for inclusion in that institution's library or research holdings.

[Signature] 5/38/02
Author's Signature  Date

I respectfully request Booth Library of Eastern Illinois University NOT allow my thesis to be reproduced because:

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

[Signature] __________________________  __________________________
Author's Signature  Date
The Effects of Parents, Teachers, and Peers on Academic Motivation

(TITLE)

BY

Amanda R. Holden

THESIS

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

Specialist in School Psychology

IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL, EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
CHARLESTON, ILLINOIS

2002

YEAR

I HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THIS THESIS BE ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING THIS PART OF THE GRADUATE DEGREE CITED ABOVE

28 May 2002
DATE

THESIS DIRECTOR

May 28, 2002
DATE

DEPARTMENT/SCHOOL HEAD
The Effects of Parents, Teachers, and Peers on Academic Motivation

Amanda R. Holden

Eastern Illinois University
Abstract

The focus of this study was to assess the relationship between perceived support of parents, teachers, and peers and academic motivation. The second focus was to assess which variable was more predictive of academic motivation. The Children's Academic Intrinsic Motivation Inventory by Gottfried, 1986, the Peer Social Support, Peer Academic Support, Teacher Social Support, and Teacher Academic Support subscales of the Classroom Life Measure by Johnson, Johnson, Buckman, and Richards, 1985, and the Family Cohesion subscale of the Family Environment Scale by Moos and Moos, 1994 were administered to the students. A total of 72 students from 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade served as research participants and completed all questionnaires. A Pearsons R was conducted to identify the relationship between academic motivation and perceived support of parents, teachers, and peers. In order to determine if perceived peer, teacher, and parent support variables were independent of one another, a bi-variate correlation was calculated. Results identified that perceived peer support was correlated with academic motivation when perceived parent support was controlled for. However, perceived parent support was found not to be correlated with academic motivation. When perceived peer support was controlled perceived parent support was not significantly correlated with academic motivation.
# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Introduction</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Literature Review</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Teacher Support</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Peer Support</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Parent Support</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Purpose of Study</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. Methodology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Participants</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Materials</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Procedure</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. Results</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. Discussion</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII. Limitations and Future Direction</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII. References</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX. Appendices</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Informed Consent</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Debriefing Statement</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Effects of Parents, Teachers, and Peers on Academic Motivation

Many people think that motivation is what drives them and keeps them going against all odds. Motivation has been defined as a "state or condition [of a person] that causes that person to produce, maintain, or inhibit a motor response or action in response to that state or condition they are in" (Dworetzky, 1991, p. 290). Nichols & Utesch (1998) concluded that motivation helps us to succeed and to try our best. In general motivation may help us to succeed and go on. Yet, what affects motivation, are there any variables that can increase or decrease motivation?

A growing body of research has begun looking into this area and has been able to identify some variables that promote motivation. One study concluded that motivation is directly linked to "overall belongingness" and that by feeling one belongs to something or someone, this will increase their motivation (Connell & Wellborn, 1991). Another researcher showed that without outside support, there is little or no reason for people to go or continue on, thus they need outside support to maintain a willingness to strive and do better to keep on trying even in the presence of failure (Ford, 1982). These conclusions by Ford (1982) and Connell & Wellborn (1991) claim that people need outside support to feel complete. If they feel complete, then motivation brought on by this support will, in turn, keep them going and wanting to do their best.

There has been a lot of research done on motivation with children and adults. For example, Abraham Maslow has done research in this area and is best known for Maslow’s Hierarchy of Motives. Maslow (1970) stated that certain basic motives must be met (such as hunger, air, sleep, safety, and security) before one can go on to higher motives or even higher levels of functioning. These higher motives include
belongingness, self-esteem, and self-actualization (Maslow, 1970). Maslow (1970) stated that if the motive of belongingness was not fulfilled, then we would not be able to worry about other things or achieve our full potential. For instance, if students do not feel they belong, then they would not be able to focus on areas of achievement, such as schoolwork. A way to help children feel as if they belong is to support them (Connell & Wellborn, 1991). If parents, teachers, and peers all supported the child, then that child would be able to feel as if he or she belongs. According to Maslow (1970) if the children feel they belong, and this motivation of belongingness has been met, then they could focus on other issues, such as schoolwork.

A growing body of research has looked at teachers and their impact on motivation. Wentzel & Wigfield (1998) concluded that when teachers interact in a positive and supportive way with their students in the day-to-day classroom setting, this has a positive impact on academic motivation. Support can be given to a child by making positive remarks or doing anything that would result in the child feeling that the teacher supports him or her. An example would be to say “Johnny you are working very well on your math assignment;” this is a direct comment that allows Johnny to know that the teacher cares about what he is doing and views it positively. A study by Felner, Aber, Primavera, and Cauce (1985) found that the children’s perceptions of the teacher’s support were positively related to motivation. If the children thought they were cared about and supported, then this helped them to feel a part of something, thus giving them a reason to try.

Other research has found that the way peers act towards another student has an impact on academic motivation in the middle school. The more positive the interaction is
with a peer, the more likely it is that academic motivation will increase or at least stay the same (Wentzel, 1997). The more negative the interaction with a peer is, the greater the likelihood that this academic motivation will decrease (Wentzel, 1997). This interaction is even more powerful if it takes place after scores on assignments and tests have been given back (Wentzel, 1997). When students take into account how their peers feel about them, and if they believe their peers see them in a positive light, and they feel supported, then they appear more likely to have a need to succeed. Thus, this need to succeed is shown as academic motivation, a drive to go forward and do one’s best in schoolwork.

Research has also indicated a link between parental support and academic motivation. Cauce, Felner, & Primavera (1982) found that adolescents’ perceptions of how their parents support and care for them was positively related to motivation. If students believed that their parents were concerned about them and their academic performance, then children were more likely to have a higher motivation for school success because of this concern or support. Wentzel’s (1991) study concluded that the children’s perceived support from their parents has a powerful effect on the student’s overall emotional well-being at school. It is thought that if parents spend time asking questions about their children’s day at school, then children will believe that their parents support them and are concerned about their academic progress (Wentzel, 1991). Thus, children who feel supported by their parents will have increased motivation to succeed.

All of the studies cited looked at the effects of an outside influence on motivation and concluded that outside support does in fact affect motivation of middle school children. Some researchers even concluded that without this support, academic failure would be imminent. Wentzel’s (1989) study pointed out a concern that young adolescents
who do not have positive support and strong relationships with parents, teachers, and peers will suffer in their academics. She concluded, that without support they will have decreased motivation, and with less motivation, they will not perform well in academics (Wentzel, 1989). In another study to confirm her previous work, Wentzel (1998) again found that supportive relationships with parents, teachers, and peers were indeed related to school motivation. Wentzel (1998) studied 167 sixth-grade students in a middle school, where she collected the data in late spring. She administered questionnaires, related to perceived support of peers, teachers, and parents, during regular classroom time and used multiple regression to analyze the results. The results concluded that supportive parents, teachers, and peers were related to several aspects of school motivation (Wentzel, 1998). She then took this study a step further and looked at students’ level of motivation compared to their academic performance. Wentzel (1998) concluded that high academic motivation is predictive of higher academic performance.

There are still several areas that need to be researched related to motivation. Researchers need to look at how and why parents, teachers, and peers affect motivation. Are these variables independent or dependent of each other? Is one of the variables more predictive than the other? Wentzel (1998) found that these three sources of support played independent roles and did not interact with one another. Yet, she remarked that hers was only one study and there needs to be more research conducted before this claim can be made (Wentzel, 1998). Does this same effect occur in the younger grades? Is this support that promotes motivation only found in middle school children or is it also in the younger elementary children?
Various studies have focused on what motivation does. What helps motivation to exist is a question that has been asked in recent years. It has been addressed at the middle school age level and shown that parents, teachers, and peers do help in increasing motivation, but little is known about younger children. Children at a young age are just entering school and have many new challenges to face, such as new friends, a new building, a new teacher, and a whole structured system that they have never been exposed to before. There has been increasing evidence that a child’s overall adjustment at school is dependant on the child’s willingness to want to participate, which, according to Hinshaw (1992), can be directly linked to motivation. So if a child has not adjusted, then he/she may not be motivated to work at school. Children who do not get their basic foundations of math and reading will struggle later in school. Therefore, it would be beneficial to make sure that children are motivated so that they can perform well at school.

This study investigated possible factors affecting academic motivation in the elementary grades. Previous studies have shown academic motivation to be dependent on the support of parents, teachers, and peers in the middle school grades. This support helps children feel as if they belong. As noted earlier, Connell & Wellborn (1991) found that if children feel they belong or have a sense of belongingness, then this increases their motivation. The present study investigated if the perceived support of parents, teachers, and peers has the same effect on elementary school students. Also, the present study investigated which of the three variables—perceived parent, teacher, or peer support—is the most predictive of academic motivation. The purpose of this study, therefore, is to
see if motivation in elementary students is dependent on support from peers, teachers, and parents and, if so, which one is the most predictive.

It is hypothesized that elementary children do need outside support to show higher academic motivation. Kathryn R. Wentzel (1998 & 1991) concluded that support from parents, teachers, and peers is important in young adolescents’ lives because it increases their motivation, and this same effect is expected in elementary school children. This hypothesis is further supported by Connell & Wellborn (1991) who found that belongingness and its connection to motivation occurs in both adolescents and elementary children. Not only is belongingness, in general, important for motivation, but parental support specifically may play the most important role. Georgiou (1999) reported that children’s actual school achievement was directly related to parental interest-developing behaviors. Examples of parental interest-developing behaviors would be sending your child to lessons for a talent they have or want to develop, and encouraging your child to take up a new hobby, or to read. Stevenson and Baker (1987) and Song and Hattie (1984) also reported significant correlations between parental involvement and the child’s actual achievement in school. Thus, the time that parents spend with their children and being involved in their children’s lives would help to increase academic motivation. Attachment theorists argue through theory and research that children who are securely attached are more sociable, less hostile, more adaptive, and are open to exploring new activities and/or experiences (Doyle et. al., 2000). A child’s school self-concept is primarily determined by successful experiences in the school, but also by attachment security because it promotes openness and adaptiveness in new situations.
Thus, parents who foster secure attachments are also likely to support the child's academic efforts (Doyle et. al., 2000).

The present study looked at children from third, fourth, and fifth grade to see if their academic motivation was predicted by perceived support from parents, teachers, and peers. Because of previous research findings, it was predicted that: (1) outside support from parents, teachers, and peers would be related to levels of academic motivation in elementary school children; and (2) perceived support from parents would be the most predictive of academic motivation.
Method

Participants

A total of 72 students from 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade (38 girls and 34 boys, 8 to 11 years old) served as research participants. Students were attending small Midwestern schools consisting of 82% white, 14% African American, 3% Hispanic, .9% Asian Pacific Islander, and .1% Native American children. The sample was made up of 29 3rd graders, 25 4th graders, and 18 5th graders. Written parental consent was obtained before any questionnaires were administered (see Appendix A).

Materials

Each child’s level of academic motivation was assessed by using the general academic motivation subscale of the Children’s Academic Intrinsic Motivation Inventory (CAIMI) (Gottfried, 1986). The entire inventory consists of five subscales that measure motivation in five areas. The areas are reading, math, social studies, science, and general academic motivation. Responses to the questions are scored on a five-point Likert scale. A sample question is “I keep working on a problem until I understand it” (Gottfried, 1986). A sample question scored in reverse is “I am not curious about learning new things in reading, math, social studies, and science” (Gottfried, 1986). For each student, a total score for the 18 items on the general scale of the CAIMI was calculated. The reliability of the CAIMI for internal consistency and test-retest reliability has been established. Internal consistency for the general scale was .80 for a first study and .83 for a second study was reported in the manual (Gottfried, 1986). Test-retest reliability over a 2 month period ranged from .66 to .76 in the first study and .69 to .75 in the second study (Gottfried, 1986).
To assess the child's level of perceived support from peers, the Peer Social Support and Academic Support subscales from the Classroom Life Measure was used (Johnson, Johnson, Buckman, & Richards, 1985). The Peer Social Support subscale consists of four questions and asks about social support from peers. A sample question is “My classmates care about my feelings.” The Academic Support subscale consists of four items that assess perceived peer concerns for learning; a sample question is “My classmates care about how much I learn.” Items on both of these subscales are scored on a five-point Likert scale where a “1” equals “never” and “5” equals “always.” Then the scores on both subscales are totaled and averaged together to derive a score for peer support. The higher the score, the more that the student feels that their classmates support him or her. The questions for academic support and personal support were identified theoretically and by a factor analyses. Peer academic support has a reliability of .67 and peer personal support has a reliability of .78 (Johnson, et al., 1985).

Perceived support of teachers was assessed through the Teacher Social Support and the Academic Support Subscales from the Classroom Life Measure (Johnson et al., 1985). The Teacher Social Support scale assesses children’s feelings about how they think the teacher feels about them. Four questions make up this subscale; a sample question is “My teacher really cares about me” (Johnson et al., 1985). The Academic Support Subscale is a four-question survey that gets at how the student thinks the teacher feels about the child’s academic success. A sample question is “My teachers like to help me learn” (Johnson et al., 1985). Items on these two questionnaires were scored on a five point Likert scale where 1 equals “never” and 5 equals “always.” Scores from these two scales were averaged to form the score for teacher support. The higher the score, the
more the students feel that the teacher supports them. The questions for academic support and personal support were identified theoretically and by a factor analyses. Teacher academic support has a reliability of .78 and teacher personal support has a reliability of .80 (Johnson, et. al., 1985).

To assess perceived parental support, the Family Cohesion subscale of the Family Environment Scale was used (Moos & Moos, 1994). The Family Cohesion subscale measures the degree of commitment, help, and support that family members provide to each other (Moos & Moos, 1994). This scale consists of 10 items that are responded to as either “true” or “false;” a sample question is “Family members really help and support each other” (Moos, 1994). This questionnaire measures the child’s perceptions of how much parents support him or her. Responses were scored by giving “1” point to those questions that were answered “true.” Zero points were recorded for responding “false.” The higher a students score, the more support they feel they are getting from their parents. The internal consistency for the cohesion subscale is .78 and the test-retest reliability for the cohesion subscale is .86 (Moos & Moos, 1984).

Procedure

All questionnaires were administered to groups of students, during the school day. The questionnaires were read aloud to the students to control for reading ability. The scales also were administered in a counterbalanced order. To control for fatigue, the questionnaires that measured perceived support were given on a different day than the academic motivation questionnaire. The study was conducted in the middle of the school year to allow the children time to settle into school and develop a sense of how their parents, teachers, and peers feel about them.
The students were instructed that they would be filling out questionnaires that have no impact on their grades and will never be seen by any one other than the researcher who does not know their names. It was also explained that they were not to put their names on these forms, only their initials, sex, age, and grade level. They were also told that they could stop their participation at any time and would be given a debriefing statement at the end of the study (see Appendix B).
Results

Table 1 presents the mean scores for the students' ratings of academic motivation and perceived peer, teacher, and parent support. Inspection of these scores indicated that the scores from the CAIMI and the peer support, teacher support, and parent support scales were consistent across grade levels. Overall, levels of academic motivation for this sample was relatively high, as was perceived teacher support. Perceived peer support was average, while perceived parent support was slightly above average.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>3rd Grade (n = 29)</th>
<th>4th Grade (n = 25)</th>
<th>5th Grade (n = 18)</th>
<th>Overall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Motivation*</td>
<td>3.99</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>3.39</td>
<td>3.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Peer Support*</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>3.27</td>
<td>3.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Teacher Support*</td>
<td>4.94</td>
<td>4.36</td>
<td>4.05</td>
<td>4.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Parent Support**</td>
<td>6.10</td>
<td>7.12</td>
<td>7.05</td>
<td>6.69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Scores can range from 1 to 5

**Scores can range from 0 to 9

The relationship between the measures of academic motivation and perceived peer, teacher, and parent support were examined for the total sample of 72 children (see
The raw scores for each of the measures of perceived support were correlated with the raw scores for achievement motivation as measured by the CAIMI. Results presented in Table 2 indicated that perceived peer support, $r = .41, p = .0001$, and parent support, $r = .24, p = .04$, correlated significantly with total raw scores on the CAIMI. Perceived teacher support, however, did not, $r = .21, p = .07$. Thus, only perceived peer and parent supports were predictive of student academic motivation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perceived Peer Support</th>
<th>$r$</th>
<th>$p$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Parent Support</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>.043</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Teacher Support</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.071</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In order to determine if perceived peer, teacher, and parent support variables were independent of one another, bi-variate correlations were calculated. The correlation between perceived parent support and perceived peer support was $r = .36, p = -.002$; the correlation for perceived peer support and perceived teacher support was $r = .33, p = .004$. The correlation between perceived parent and perceived teacher support was $r = .208, p = .079$. Thus, all three variables were found to be highly related to each other.

Because the various measures of perceived support were not found to be independent of one another, a multiple regression could not be conducted. Instead, partial correlations were conducted to determine which variable was most predictive of academic motivation while controlling for the other variable (see Table 3). As a result of this analysis, when perceived parent support was controlled for, the significant relationship between perceived peer support and achievement motivation was maintained,
When controlling for perceived peer support, however, a significant relationship between perceived parent support and achievement motivation was no longer found, $r = .11, p = .337$.

Table 3
Partial Correlations Between Perceived Peer Support and Perceived Parent Support and the CAIMI (N = 72).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>$r$</th>
<th>$p$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Peer Support</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controlling for Family Support</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Parent Support</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.337</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controlling for Peer Support</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Discussion

The primary goal of this research was to 1) assess the relationship that perceived parent, teacher, and peer support had on academic motivation, and 2) assess which variable was most predictive. The hypotheses that outside support from parents, teachers, and peers were all related to academic motivation and that perceived support from parents would be most predictive of academic motivation were not supported. Perceived parent support was only significantly correlated with academic motivation because of the relationship between perceived parent support and perceived peer support. When perceived peer support was controlled for, perceived parent support was no longer significantly correlated with academic motivation. Although ratings for perceived teacher support were higher than those for both peer and parent support, perceived teacher support was not statistically related to ratings of academic motivation for the sample of third, fourth, and fifth grade students. The main finding was that perceived peer support predicted academic motivation, when perceived parent support was controlled for.

This study was able to conclude that the more a student felt supported by his or her peers, the more likely it was that the student had a high level of academic motivation. The relationship children have with peers is important because of the many influences peers can have. Forman and Gavin (1989) claim that a peer group is essential for cognitive and emotional growth. Students who are able to identify with peer groups are more inclined to ask other people for support, accept support from others, and talk about their problems (Pomboen et. al., 1990). In a study looking at an alternative education
program for 6 through 12 graders, Nichols and Utesch (1998) found that the peer group had a bigger impact on the dropout rate than the alternative education system. The influence of peers on academic motivation was also demonstrated by Juvonen & Wentzel (1996) who found that communication of educational goals, values, and expectations with peers influenced educational goals, values, and expectations held by students.

The link between the support a student feels from his or her classmates and the impact it has on the level of academic motivation was found in the present study. However, little is known about why peers have the impact that they do. Connell and Wellborn (1991) proposed a theoretical framework that includes three self-system processes believed to be important for learning. The three self-system processes are: 1) relatedness, feeling related to others in the school setting, 2) competence, having competence with the ability to interact effectively in school activities and, 3) autonomy, perceiving oneself as having choice in the initiation, maintenance, and regulation of school activities (Connell & Wellborn, 1991). According to this model, students will develop perceptions on these three self-system processes as they engage in social interactions (Connell & Wellborn, 1991). Social interactions are thought to guide a student's feelings about competence, relatedness, and autonomy and impact a student's adjustment in the school setting (Connell & Wellborn, 1991). Peers could indirectly affect academic motivation, therefore by, affecting how students feel about their self-system processes.

The finding that perceived parental support correlated with perceived peer support is not surprising. Research has indicated that the relationship children have with their parents will impact their relationships with friends and peers. Lieberman, Doyle, and
Markiewicz (1999) stated that children who are securely attached to their parents are thought to have a positive view of themselves and positive expectations of others and see their peers as being more responsive to their needs. This would suggest that secure children are more "likely to elicit positive responses from peers by behaving in a synchronous and cooperative manner" (Cohn et. al., 1991 pg. 204). A study examining children longitudinally from infancy to middle childhood found that children securely attached from infancy were more likely to be seen as popular with peers and to have more friends than insecure children (Elicker et. al., 1992). A child's development and lifestyle are also important. When a child's life situation with parents improves, the child will tend to have fewer behavior problems and better peer support than when the life situation is poor (Sroufe, 2000). These studies clearly showed that the relationships children have with their parents may directly affect the relationships they have with peers. Thus, this may be the reason that a relationship was found between perceived parent and perceived peer support.

Contrary to expected predictions, perceived teacher support was not correlated with academic motivation. This may be because of the overall high ratings of perceived teacher support reported across all grade levels. Follow-up studies using various measures of perceived teacher support and larger samples of teachers and elementary school children need to be conducted to evaluate the relationship between perceived teacher support and academic motivation.

There are several differences between this study and earlier studies that looked at the same variables. One is that this study used children in primary grades, while earlier studies assessed students at the middle school years. Also the study conducted by
Wentzel (1997) correlated predictor variables with the School Motivation Scale by Ford and Tisak, while this study used the CAIMI by Gottfried. Age or grade differences and/or different motivation scales may be the explanation for lack of support for the present study. For instance, with age or grade level, the importance of perceived peer, teacher, or parent support may have a different influence on academic motivation. Future research should explore this possibility.

Results of this study are based on correlational data, limiting the ability to draw conclusions on the relationships found. Other limitations of the study include the setting in which the questionnaires were given. Even though students were informed and reminded that no one would know how they answered, some students still voiced concerns of teachers being “mad” if they saw what was said since they were filling them out in the classroom. Another concern in this study is the small sample size. Several parents would not allow their child to participate in a project where they had to answer questions about family, thus, limiting the subject pool.

Several questions have arisen after conducting this study. The relationship found between parents and peers needs to be closely examined to identify further how the interaction between parents and peers affects academic motivation. The impact that peers have on each other needs to be investigated further. Future research should consider analyzing data by dividing the sample into low and high perceived support from parents, teachers, and peers and compare those to academic motivation.
References


Appendix A

Informed Consent

**Purpose:** The purpose of this research project is to determine if academic motivation is correlated with the support a child feels he/she is getting from his/her parents, teachers, and peers. As a participant in this study your child will be asked to fill out questionnaires that will address these issues.

**Procedure:** Your child’s feelings on support from teachers and peers will be assessed by using the Peer and Teacher Social Support and Academic Support subscales of the Classroom Life Measure. The feelings of parental support will be assessed by using the Family Cohesion subscale of the Family Environment Scale. Academic motivation will be assessed using the Children’s Academic Intrinsic Motivation Inventory. These questionnaires will be filled out in two sessions during the regular school hours.

**Right to Privacy:** All information that is collected may be used for research purposes. However, it is important to note that your child’s name will not be used in any manner and that individual scores are not being looked at. You may at any time request a copy of the results found during this study.

**Participant’s Rights:** Your child’s involvement in this project is voluntary. You have the right to withdraw from this project at any time. If you have any questions or concerns, or would like more information about our research please contact me, Amanda Holden, B.A. at 217-328-7338 or Linda Leal, PhD, at 217-581-2158.

Parent Permission Slip

Project Title: The Effects of Parents, Teachers, and Peers on Academic Motivation

Investigator: Amanda Holden

[Signature]

I, [Child’s Name], hereby certify that I have been informed by Amanda Holden about the research on THE EFFECTS OF PARENTS, TEACHERS, AND PEERS ON ACADEMIC MOTIVATION. I have been told about the procedures and understand that any records that can identify my child will be kept confidential.

I understand that I have the right to ask questions at any time and that I should contact Amanda Holden or Linda Leal for answers about the research.

I understand that my child’s participation is voluntary and that I may refuse to allow my child to participate or withdraw my child from taking part in this study at any time without penalty or prejudice.

I freely consent for my child to participate in this research project.

Child’s Name [__________________________]

Parents Signature [__________________________]    Date [_______]
Appendix B

Debriefing Form

Project Title: The Effects of Parents, Teachers, and Peers on Academic Motivation

Investigator: Amanda Holden

The effect that parents, teachers, and peers have on a child’s academic motivation has been an issue in the past couple of years. In a study by Katherine Wentzel it was found that when Jr. High students feel that their parents, teachers, and peers are supporting them then this support they are feeling will help them to have academic motivation. The purpose of this study was to find out if they same effect occurs in younger children.

For the purpose of this study we had your child fill out questionnaires in their classroom with other students participating in this study. The questionnaires were read aloud to the children on two separate days. To measure your child’s level of academic motivation the Children’s Academic intrinsic Motivation Inventory developed by Gottfried in 1986 was used. To assess the level of support your child felt from his or her peers the Peer Social Support and Academic Support subscales from the Classroom Life Measure were used. To assess the level of support your child felt from his or her teacher the Teacher Social Support and the Academic Support Subscales from the Classroom Life Measure were used. Johnson, Johnson, Buckman, and Richards created the Classroom Life Measure Scales. To assess the parental support the Family Cohesion subscale of the Family Environment Scale created by Moos and Moos in 1981 was used. These scales were looked at as group scores. No individual scores were used when analyzing the results.

Please do not comment about this study with friends or classmates until testing of all participants is completed.

I would like to thank you for your participation in this study and if you have any further questions please feel free to contact me at (217) 328-7338.