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RESEARCH ARTICLE

INFLUENCE OF MORAL INTELLIGENCE DIMENSIONS AND SELF-EFFICACY ON ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION OF SAUDI MIDDLE SCHOOLS' GIFTED STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Objective: To evaluate the influence of moral intelligence and self-efficacy on achievement motivation among Saudi Middle Schools' Gifted Students. **Methods:** This was a cross sectional study conducted among Saudi middle schools' gifted students in Makkah, Saudi Arabia. The study explored the moral intelligence, self-efficacy and achievement motivation of gifted students using validated and piloted self-administered questionnaires. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 122 out of 733 male gifted students in 89 schools in Makkah, Saudi Arabia. Data was analysed using SPSS. **Results:** The study included 46, 42, and 34 first, second and third level middle school students respectively. The results indicated that the respondents had moderate score in the self-control (4.225 ± 0.463), tolerance (3.899 ± 0.515), conscience (3.625 ± 0.453), respect (3.666 ± 0.535) and empathy (3.418 ± 0.484) dimensions, whereas fairness (2.665 ± 0.664) and kindness (2.570 ± 0.721) had low mean scores. The students demonstrated moderate levels of self-efficacy and achievement motivation. Regression analysis showed that overall score of moral intelligence (OR: 1.069; 95% CI: 1.039 – 1.100; P < 0.001), and self-efficacy (OR: 1.081; 95% CI: 1.044 – 1.120; P < 0.001) were significant predictors of achievement motivation among the students. There was no significant impact for interactions of moral intelligence dimensions and self-efficacy on achievement motivation. **Conclusion:** Saudi middle schools' gifted students demonstrated moderate level of self-efficacy; achievement motivation, and moral intelligence. Overall score of moral intelligence and self-efficacy are significant predictors of achievement motivation. Self-efficacy had no moderating influence on achievement motivation among Saudi middle schools' gifted students.

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INTRODUCTION

Giftedness is considered as a blessing bestowed upon a few individuals from Allah, the Almighty Creator. These individuals if recognized and nurtured attain unusual excellence and exhibit superiority in one or more aspect of life. People who are gifted are extremely endowed with talents and eventually become influential scientists, philosophers, inventors, reformers, and innovators that drive human civilization (Al-Surur, 2003). In addition, growth of gifted students is significantly influenced by achievement motivation. Scholars believe that gifted students with high motivation set sight on achievable goals and enjoy their positions. They also have high innovation power and take responsibility for their actions (Gottfried *et al.,* 2011; Al-Anizi, 2010). Gifted students' achievement motivation has been a subject of immense practical significance for teachers and of huge hypothetical interest for researchers (Tuckman, 1999). Research interest in achievement motivation is high due to it link with student's leadership skills and moral intelligence, particularly student's preference of what tasks and activities to do, and the intensity, persistence and performance in those activities (Zaccaro, Kemp and Bader, 2004). Depending on the level of motivation, some individuals approach particular activities with great focus and determination whereas others seek to avoid these activities. The response of gifted students to leadership challenges and moral intelligence is enhanced by achievement motivation. Therefore, achievement motivation affects the ways and manner in which gifted students learn or react to the challenges of learning something new (Goleman, 2003). Consequently, achievement motivation in relation to gifted students is defined as ability to pursuit excellence, plan for the future, resilience, efficiency, responsibility, self-confidence, tangible and intangible rewards, competence, independence and overcome difficulties (Lessani, 2010; Weiner, 1986).To evaluate the influence of moral intelligence dimensions and self-efficacy on achievement motivation of Saudi Middle Schools' Gifted Students

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design: This was a cross sectional study conducted among Saudi middle schools' gifted students in Makkah, Saudi Arabia. The study explored the moral intelligence, self-efficacy

and achievement motivation among gifted students using a self-administered questionnaire.

Research population: Data from Makkahs' Centre for Male Gifted Students revealed that there are 733 male gifted students in 89 schools in Makkah, Saudi Arabia, and this make the study population (MCMG, 2016). The age range of these students was between 13 and 15 years. The Stoker formula was used to determine the research sample size (122 male gifted students) (Stoker 1984). Simple random sampling technique was used to select study sample. This involves making a list of all Saudi middle schools' gifted students in Makkah and assigning sequential number to each student. A random number generator (RESEARCH RANDOMIZER) was used to select the sample.

Research instruments: The study instruments were adopted from previous studies.

Moral intelligence scale: Moral intelligence was evaluated using the scale developed by Al-Naser (2009) which was validated in Arab countries. Al-Naser employed the seven virtues determined by Borba to build these items on the scale. These qualities are empathy, conscience, self-control, respect, kindness, tolerance, and fairness.

Self-efficacy scale: Self-efficacy was assessed using the self-efficacy scale developed by Al-Rababeh (2013). It consists of 27 items which measure the student`s self-efficacy within the class, the extent to which tasks are performed, and the extent of the student`s readiness.

Achievement motivation scale: Achievement motivation is measured using the achievement motivation scale which was developed by Al-Ghamdi (2009). This scale comprised of 80 items that measure ten different dimensions. To ensure validity of the scales, they were delivered to 11 arbitrators who work as educators in different educational colleges in Arab universities and Arabic language teachers. The agreement of 80% was used as a standard upon which the items can be kept as they are or adjusted. The arbitrators were asked to give their suggestions and feedback regarding the items` formation of language; clarity, linguistic appropriateness, the need of amendment, meaning clarity, and the extent to which an item belongs to the dimension and the scale, any other suitable information or amendment. The validated scales were pre-tested among 30 randomly selected students from al-Yamama middle school in Makkah. This school was situated in the study area and has similar attributes with the schools that participated in the main study. These students were eventually excluded from the survey. Although, the moral intelligence, self-efficacy and achievement motivation scales has been validated and piloted (al-Naser, 2009, Al-Ghamdi, 2009, Al-Rababeh, 2013), the pre-test was conducted because of difference in setting and levels. The Cronbach`s alpha for the moral intelligence, self-efficacy and achievement motivation scales were 0.861, 0.899 and 0.823 respectively.

Data collection: Data were collected using a self administered questionnaire. The questionnaires were distributed to the study participants. A 5-point differential scale ("always," "often," "sometimes," "rarely," and "Never") was used to assess items in the moral intelligence, self-efficacy and achievement motivation domains. This scale was transform into scores with 5 and 1 point assigned to "always" and "never" respectively. The mean scores were categorized as follows: 1.00 – 2.00 (very low), 2.01 – 3.00 (low), 3.01 – 4.00 (moderate), and 4.01 – 5.00 (high); based on Kabilan (2014).

Data analysis: Data were analysed using SPSS. Categorical data were represented as frequency and percentages while continuous data were described using mean and standard deviation. Normality of the continuous data was tested using graphical methods (histograms, boxplots, Q-Q-plots), numerical methods (skewness and kurtosis indices), and formal normality tests (Shapiro-Wilk test, Kolmogorov-Smirnov). Spearman correlation was used to find out the correlations between the variables with ordinal nature. Linear regression analysis was used to predict the significant variables that influenced achievement motivation (the dependent variables).

RESULTS

The three levels of middle schools' gifted students: There were three levels of middle schools' gifted students involved in present study; first, second and third level middle schools. The highest number of students was observed in first levels middle schools students (37.7%). This was followed by second level (34.4%) and third level (27.9%) middle schools.

Academic achievement of gifted students: Four levels of academic achievement involved in the current study are B-, B+, A- and A+. The highest academic achievement was A+ which represents 60.7%, followed by A- (27.9%), B+ (9%) and B- (2.5%).

Moral intelligence dimensions: For moral intelligence dimensions, the highest mean was observed with self-control, followed by tolerance, conscience, respect, empathy, fairness and kindness. The results indicated that the respondents had moderate score in the self-control (4.225 ± 0.463), tolerance (3.899 ± 0.515), conscience (3.625 ± 0.453), respect (3.666 ± 0.535) and empathy (3.418 ± 0.484) dimensions whereas fairness (2.665 ± 0.664) and kindness (2.570 ± 0.721) had low mean scores. Table 1 shows the mean and standard deviation of the study respondents for the items in the moral intelligence scale.

Self-efficacy levels for gifted students: There were 27 items in the self-efficacy scale. The results indicated that item 22 which says "*I think I am able to get good marks in tests and scholastic tasks*" had the highest mean score (4.60 ± 0.676). This was followed by Item 21 ("*I pay attention to the teacher when there are difficult topics in a lesson*") with a mean score (4.54 ± 0.605), and item 14 "*I have the ability to succeed in scholastic tasks that I concentrate on*" (4.47 ± 0.763). The lowest mean scores were observed in item 8 which says "*I believe levels of tests are beyond my abilities*" (1.97 ± 1.128) and item 6 "*I doubt my scholastic abilities*" (2.06 ± 1.187). Table 2 shows the mean scores and standard deviations for the items in the self-efficacy scale.

Achievement motivation levels for gifted students: There were 80 items about the achievement motivation. There were indications that the rank of achievement motivation is the item 1 which says "*I feel great desire to excel*" has been found to have the high level with mean score (M=4.79, SD=.562) above all the other items. Item 57 which says "*I feel satisfied when I do my work fast and well*" has the moderate level with mean score (M=4.68, SD=.633), where by items 35 which says "*I stop doing my work when facing difficulties*" respectively have the lower level with mean score (M=1.98, SD=1.036), as shown in Table 3.

Table 1: Mean scores for Moral Intelligence Dimensions

Dimensions	Mean	Std. Deviation
Empathy	3.418	0.484
Conscience	3.625	0.453
Self-control	4.225	0.463
Respect	3.666	0.535
Kindness	2.570	0.721
Tolerance	3.899	0.515
Fairness	2.665	0.664

Table 2: Respondents mean scores and standard deviations for the items in the self-efficacy scale

No.	Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	I find difficulties preparing my lessons	2.33	1.124
2	I can do the study plans I have already made	4.10	.847
3	I find a solution to every encountering scholastic problem	3.97	.833
4	When I am encountered by a scholastic topic, I deal with it properly	4.13	.833
5	I have the ability of being patient and responsible facing difficult scholastic topics	3.88	1.041
6	I doubt my scholastic abilities	2.06	1.187
7	I cannot pay suitable effort for the scholastic tasks	2.16	1.157
8	I believe levels of tests are beyond my abilities	1.97	1.128
9	I can control myself during tests	4.08	1.017
10	I face difficulty understanding some important topics during a lesson	2.62	1.138
11	I can write down the important notes during a lesson	3.71	1.182
12	I can explain some scholastic concepts to my colleagues	3.93	1.010
13	I discuss the opinions of the teacher if I saw them unconvincing	3.73	1.233
14	I have the ability to succeed in scholastic tasks that I concentrate on	4.47	.763
15	I believe I can understand any scholastic topic very well if I wanted that	4.28	.973
16	I keep studying even if the scholastic subject was difficult	4.39	.755
17	I understand delivered topics in the class nevertheless how difficult they are	4.28	.785
18	I can concentrate for a long period of time of a lesson	4.14	.826
19	I can concentrate for a long period of time of a lesson	4.16	.988
20	I participate in difficult discussions	3.90	1.007
21	I pay attention to the teacher when there are difficult topics in a lesson	4.54	.605
22	I think I am able to get good marks in tests and scholastic tasks	4.60	.676
23	I don`t give up easily when I encounter a scholastic problem	4.26	.916
24	When difficulties encounter me when learning a specific scholastic subject, I try again before asking others for help	4.06	.930
25	I trust my abilities in understanding most of scholastic curricula	4.44	.739
26	I think my performance will be good in curricula in spite of their levels of difficulties and their teachers	4.18	.900
27	I ask the teacher to re-explain concepts and topics that I did not understand properly	4.08	1.025
	Overall score of self-efficacy	102.43	9.58

Relationships between moral intelligence dimensions, self-efficacy and achievement motivation: For achievement motivation, significant positive moderate correlation found with self-efficacy, leadership skills, conscience, respect, tolerance and overall score of moral intelligence, while weak positive correlation with empathy and self-control. For self-efficacy, significant positive moderate correlation found with achievement motivation and leadership skills, while weak positive correlation with self-control, respect and overall score of moral intelligence, as shown in Table 4.

Predictors of achievement motivation: Regression analysis showed that overall score of moral intelligence (OR: 1.069; 95% CI: 1.039 – 1.100; $P < 0.001$) and self-efficacy (OR: 1.081; 95% CI: 1.044 – 1.120; $P < 0.001$) were independent significant predictors of achievement motivation among Saudi middle school's gifted students. The results showed no significant impact for the interaction of self-efficacy with overall score of moral intelligence on the achievement motivation total score.

DISCUSSION

This study observed that self-control was the dimension with the highest mean score among gifted students in Makkah. In addition, middle school gifted students in Makkah had moderate mean score in some moral intelligence dimensions. This observation is in line with the result of Ibrahim and Hassan (2011) in which fifth secondary class students demonstrated moderate level of moral intelligence. The present study is consistent with Al-Shammari (2007) in which participants were described to have medium level of moral intelligence with no gender or specialization variations. Theoretically, moral intelligence directs gifted students to other forms of intelligence to do something worthwhile. Without moral intelligence, gifted students would be able to do things and experience events, but they would lack meaning. They wouldn't know why they do what they do or even what difference the existence of gifted students makes in the great cosmic scheme of things as mentioned by Ackerman *et al*. (2002). Bandura (2006), Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2007) supported this study by stating that self-efficacy is focused on individual's self-belief in their abilities to accomplish a task in particular situation. It is based on individual's self-perception of capability and not on real competence. Cakiroglu *et al*. (2005) in their study which also shared some similarities with this study found that high self-efficacy is a significant predictor of student's achievement and student learning. The findings of this study were supported by Heslin and Klehe (2006) who postulated that strong sense of self-efficacy is associated with increased individual performance. For self-efficacy, the findings of this study indicated that, high self-efficacy means that gifted students have good positive sense of self competence. In this study, the findings showed that if Saudi gifted students have competence due to their high self- efficacy which should influence their achievement motivation and leadership skills. Previous research mentioned earlier also

Table 3: Scores of Achievement Motivation's Outcomes

No.	Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	I feel great desire to excel	4.79	.562
2	I reject giving up easily	4.40	1.010
3	I bear responsibility of my deeds	4.34	.756
4	Rewards encourage me to do my best	3.92	1.147
5	My family gave me enough amount of independency since childhood	3.85	1.081
6	Planning for future does not attract my attention	2.66	1.389
7	I am slow when doing my work	2.34	1.155
8	I tend to do what others do	2.87	1.113
9	I enjoy being with individuals who have the same abilities of mine	4.14	1.086
10	I imagine myself prominent a lot	3.31	1.293
11	If I start a work I should finish it	4.44	.728
12	I feel responsible towards others	3.70	1.067
13	My enthusiasm decreases towards work of no financial value	2.53	1.100
14	I decide doing the work without others` interference	3.46	1.107
15	It is better to do a work that is not difficult	3.29	1.175
16	I care for present leaving future to circumstances	2.89	1.228
17	I care about doing work fast nevertheless how good it is done	2.23	1.218
18	It is better to change my mind if it does not go well with others` opinions	2.98	1.223
19	I seek to excel continuously	4.51	.795
20	I fight to get my aim	4.60	.638
21	I care for my work result not only the work itself	4.10	.885
22	I feel pride for what I do at school and in house	4.23	1.011
23	I feel happy when doing something free of surveillance	3.75	1.210
24	I feel upset when my work is compared to others`	3.07	1.347
25	It is hard to me to overcome obstacles threaten my work	2.71	1.040
26	It is not important to set goals	2.10	1.146
27	Works compile because of my delay	2.70	1.198
28	It is hard to feel failure	3.20	1.264
29	I think of the future which prevent me enjoying the present	2.81	1.152
30	I only feel comfort when I finish all my work	4.39	.877
31	I care a lot to do the work best	4.46	.740
32	I admit failure as I admit success	3.48	1.344
33	I feel less active and enthusiast when doing difficult work	2.66	1.148
34	I hate the work when it is full of competition	2.19	1.235
35	I stop doing my work when facing difficulties	1.98	1.036
36	I hesitate a lot before I make decisions	2.95	1.075
37	Fame is my basic aim of any work I do	2.23	1.119
38	I do what I want to do neglecting others` desires	2.85	1.050
39	Successful persons are the makers of life	4.18	1.021
40	Setting goals facilitates doing things	4.28	.973
41	I use all my time in useful things	3.57	1.020
42	I reject competing others	2.13	1.120
43	I feel desperate and frustrated when I face obstacles	2.61	1.131
44	If I fail in my work then it is because of the others	2.03	1.098
45	Excellence is for few people	2.87	1.240
46	I do my work on time with no delay	3.82	.945
47	I don`t change my mind even if it contradicts majority thoughts	3.64	.988
48	Encouragement from others make me more willing doing my work	4.20	.950
49	I feel languish when doing my work away from competition	3.29	1.072
50	I solve my problems asking no help from others	3.36	.963
51	Retreatment and giving up make me avoid suffering	2.43	1.253
52	Bearing responsibility annoys me	2.62	1.138
53	I do my best to get my work done in spite of the financial reward	3.79	1.077
54	I feel I do work imposed by my parents	3.44	1.460
55	There is no work without difficulties	3.93	1.066
56	Well-planning is the base of success	4.44	.910
57	I feel satisfied when I do my work fast and well	4.68	.633
58	I feel I am able to do unique work	4.51	.795
59	Competition enhance my energy to get my aims	4.17	1.034
60	Success and failure are linked to coincidence	2.02	1.117
61	I have no patience to finish work that takes long time	2.61	1.229
62	The result of my work is not important to me, what matters is to work only	2.21	1.112
63	I do my work the same way with or without encouragement	3.55	1.143
64	I believe in the saying "what is not going to kill me, will only strengthen me"	3.40	1.183
65	Achievement entails setting determined goals	4.07	1.030
66	I like to make what I do well	4.50	.774
67	I prefer doing hard work	3.57	1.003
68	My enthusiasm increases as I compete with others	4.15	1.010
69	I ask for help when facing difficulties	3.33	1.094
70	Excel does not mean much to me	1.99	1.276
71	I spend a lot of my time in funny and entertaining things	2.98	.983
72	Others should bear responsibility with my in regard to my work	2.11	1.035
73	I do my best to get over all difficulties to get to my goals	4.20	.869
74	I set goals for everything I want to achieve in future	4.03	1.012
75	I do my work fast	3.62	.973
76	I trust my skills and abilities	4.42	.822
77	I like competition and do my best to win	4.34	.898
78	Facing difficulties enhance my will to succeed	4.16	.903
79	What others say about my work does not matter	3.43	1.192
80	My family ties me giving a lot of directions and orders regarding my work	3.47	1.228
	Overall score of achievement motivation	272.72	18.339

Table 4: Correlations of Study's Outcomes

Variables	Spearman correlation	Self-efficacy	Achievement motivation
Self-efficacy	correlation coefficient	1.000	.412**
	p value	.	<0.001
Achievement motivation	correlation coefficient	.412**	1.000
	p value	<0.001	.
Empathy	correlation coefficient	.129	.194*
	p value	.158	.034
Conscience	correlation coefficient	.045	.300**
	p value	.619	.001
Self-control	correlation coefficient	.223*	.219*
	p value	.014	.016
Respect	correlation coefficient	.212*	.353**
	p value	.019	<0.001
Kindness	correlation coefficient	-.004	.167
	p value	.962	.069
Tolerance	correlation coefficient	.156	.303**
	p value	.087	.001
Fairness	correlation coefficient	.003	.178
	p value	.970	.052
Overall score of moral intelligence	correlation coefficient	.202*	.494**
	p value	.026	<0.001

indicates similar or almost similar result that high self-efficacy was associated with good positive sense of self competence.

This study concluded that gifted students possess moderate achievement motivation. This implies that the students have moderate self motivation to have good achievement. This could be explained by their level of moral intelligence as indicated by Najafian (2011) who stated that increase in moral intelligence results in a corresponding increase in achievement motivation among gifted students. Actually, students have impact on creating students' high moral intelligence and desirable achievement motivation. The findings of this study are supported by Atkinson *et al.* (1966) and Bleeker (2002) who explained that the fuel that drives people to accomplish tasks or behave in a certain manner towards achieving a goal is known as achievement motivation. It varies among individuals depending on the motivating factors. The authors also explained that there are two kinds of motivator: namely intrinsic and extrinsic motivators. Foundation (1999) corroborate this study where it is written that achievement motivation of students is directly proportional to achieving academic and social success. Based on the understanding of hierarchal model of achievement motivation theory, the results of this study can be attributed to the achievement motive approach and the achievement goal approach as mentioned by Atkinson *et al.* (1966). Based on this model, these two motives dictate and direct human behaviour towards good and bad actions. Achievement goals are seen as cognitive representations that direct people to a desirable end. Gifted students as confident, fast learners and intelligent students are likely to be motivated more by the need for success than the fear of failure. They have an advanced understanding of concepts, characteristics that are less likely to be associated with people motivated by the fear of failure (Neumeister and Finch, 2006). In the current situation, gifted students of Middle school displayed the zeal to learn challenging concepts and succeed academically (Fletcher and Speirs Neumeister, 2012) and at the same time embrace moving from primary to Middle level with excitement. This study also discovered significant positive moderate correlation between achievement motivation and self-efficacy, conscience, respect, tolerance and overall score of moral intelligence. There are weak positive correlation between achievement motivation and empathy, and self-control among Saudi middle schools' gifted students. Hoseinpoor and Ranjdoost (2013) supported this study. They revealed that there is a positive and significant correlation between moral intelligence and students' achievement. Moreover there is a positive and significant relationship between moral intelligence (honesty, forgiveness and compassion) and students' achievement. Najafian *et al.* (2014) coincided with this study in a correlational study involving Iranian professors which found that there is a correlation between moral intelligence and achievement motivation. Theoretically, the findings of this study are related to relationship theory which is also referred to as transformational theory. The main focus in relationship theory is the connection or relationship between leaders and followers. Gifted students also showed a sense of belonging to one another by having relationships between moral intelligence dimensions, leadership skills, achievement motivation and self-efficacy among themselves. According to the theory, transformational leaders are those who are able to motivate people and inspire action by motivating them to see the higher good of performing a task. Gifted students motivate themselves and other people to see the higher good of performing a task. Leaders in this theory are focused on teamwork and collective success but they push each member to strive to achieve maximum potentials. Leaders who fall under this category are said to be highly ethical and of moral standards (Northouse, 2007).

The results of this study showed that self-efficacy and overall score of moral intelligence were significant predictors of achievement motivation among Saudi middle schools' gifted students. In addition, self-efficacy has no moderating influence on achievement motivation. This is consistent with Najafian *et al*., (2014) who evaluated the association between moral intelligence and achievement motivation among university professors in Iran. Outcome of the research showed that a good number of professors possess high moral intelligence and achievement motivation; and these parameters are significantly correlated. The findings of this study are in consonant with Yazici *et al*. (2011) which revealed that academic performance is influenced by age, sex and self-efficacy. From the theoretical point of view, the findings of this study are in line with the implicit and self-attributed motives Theory. According to Schuler (2004), the concepts of achievement motivation usually refer to as an interaction between situational variables and the individual's motives. There are two motives directly associated with the forecast of actions namely: implicit and explicit. Implicit motives are those that cause impulsive action, also known as task performances (McClelland *et al*., 1989). The

findings of this study indicated that self-efficacy has no moderating influence on achievement motivation among Saudi middle schools' gifted students. There is no established description as to whether achievement motivation in gifted students is as a result of having implicit goals or explicit motives. Usually, gifted students demonstrate a strong desire to accomplish tasks effectively and this could be due to implicit or explicit motivation and in some circumstances a combination of both (Schultheiss and Brunstein, 2001).

Conclusion

Saudi middle schools' gifted students had moderate level of self-efficacy; achievement motivation, and moral intelligence. The students were found to possess moderate level of self-control, tolerance, conscience, respect and empathy while the level of fairness and kindness was low. There was a positive correlation between achievement motivation and self-efficacy, moral intelligence dimensions and overall score of moral intelligence. Significant predictors of achievement motivation were self-efficacy, and overall score of moral intelligence. Self-efficacy had no moderating influence on achievement motivation among Saudi middle schools' gifted students.

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