

**Does Self- Concept and Motivation in High School Predict Future Success via  
Readiness in First Year Undergraduate Students?**

**A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the degree of Masters of School Psychology  
Mount Saint Vincent University**

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**Abstract:**

An important part of the daily routine for university students involves completing their coursework as they work towards their degree. Feelings of self-confidence and competence are essential for university students' growth and subjective well-being (Levesque, Stanek, Ryan, Zuehlke, 2004). Levesque et al. (2004) stated that "at every educational level, students who experience greater need satisfaction appear to be better adjusted in the classroom and in life, demonstrate greater internalization of school-related regulations, exhibit enhanced performance, and report more intrinsic motivation than those who find these needs dissatisfied in school"(p.68).

The primary goal of this thesis was to establish correlation links between self-concept, motivation and success in university. Further, an endeavor of this thesis was to determine if success in university could be predicted from self-concept and motivation in an undergraduate sample of Mount Saint Vincent University students. Several correlations were found and revealed some very interesting information regarding associations between motivation, self-concept and success. However, no statistically significant multiple regression analyses were discovered which suggests that in this sample success in university cannot be predicted from motivation or self- concept. Results are discussed in terms of the significant correlations and ideas for research and further exploration are addressed.

### Acknowledgements

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## **Does Self- Concept and Motivation in High School Predict Future Success via Readiness in First Year Undergraduate Students?**

### *Overview*

An important part of the daily routine for university students involves completing their coursework as they work towards their degree. Feelings of self-confidence and competence are essential for university students' growth and subjective well-being (Levesque, Stanek, Ryan, Zuehlke, 2004). Levesque et al. (2004) stated that "at every educational level, students who experience greater need satisfaction appear to be better adjusted in the classroom and in life, demonstrate greater internalization of school-related regulations, exhibit enhanced performance, and report more intrinsic motivation than those who find these needs dissatisfied in school"(p.68). The focus of this thesis is to explore if self-concept and motivation in high school can predict success via readiness in first year university students.

### *Self-Concept*

"Self-concept is the cognitive or thinking aspect of ones' self (related to ones' self image) and refers to the complex, organized, and dynamic system of learned beliefs, attitudes and opinions that each person holds to be true about his or her personal existence" (Purkey,1988, p.1). Purkey (1988) defined self-concept as being developed from self-confidence, self-efficacy and self-esteem. As defined by Yeung & Lee (2005) "*self-confidence* refers to beliefs in ones' personal worth and likelihood of succeeding, *self-efficacy* is a belief in ones' capacity to handle general and specific tasks and *self-esteem* refers to general feelings of self-worth

or self-value” (Yeung et al.,2005, p. 432). Purkey (2005) described the development as happening through living and experiencing and then reflecting on what one has done and on what others report. That is, self-concept is not innate, but is developed or constructed by the individual through interaction with the environment and reflecting on that interaction. Therefore ones’ self-concept has multi-components. And, one develops self- concepts in many areas of their life such as physical, social, educational and interpersonal. Marsh (1990) proposed that the self -concepts of young children are usually very positive and not highly correlated with external indicators (such as skills, accomplishments, academics) but with further life experience, older children will begin to recognize personal strength and weakness and can begin to make distinctions between skills and areas of needs, and self-concepts become more highly correlated with external indicators.

Self-concept as it pertains to the current thesis refers to ones’ academic and social self-concept. Academic self-concept is ones’ self-perceptions of academic strengths and weakness and social self-concept is ones’ perceptions of social functioning, such as relationships and popularity.

It has been proposed that students at every level of education who experience more satisfaction appear to be better able to adjust, they exhibit greater internalization of school related regulations, demonstrate superior performance and report higher levels of internalized motivation than those who find their needs disappointed in school (Levesque et al, 2004). This research implies that those students who are successful adjust better, perform better and, consequently, become personally motivated to strive for higher levels.



*Motivation*

Motivation is having the encouragement to do something and refers to the initiation, direction, intensity and persistence of behavior (Wikipedia, 2005). Motivation is a dynamic state that should not be confused with personality or emotion. Both long and short-term goals involve motivation. A motivated person can be striving for a long-term goal such as seeking a career or a short-term goal such as finishing paper for school. Motivation and/or motives can take the form of internal and external drives, goals and expectations (Robbins, Allen, Casillas, Peterson & Le, 2006). “People can be motivated because they value an activity or because there is strong external coercion. They can be urged into action by abiding interest or a bribe. One can behave from a sense of personal commitment to excel or from fear of being surveilled”(Diener, 2000, p.69). Beul and Alexander (2005) stated that individual’s beliefs and thought patterns influence ones’ motivation and behavior. Beul et al. also stated that students who possess more sophisticated belief profiles had higher levels of motivation and task performance (Beul et al., 2001).

Beliefs and thoughts help to drive motivation. Beul et al. (2001) state that beliefs do not only relate to achievement independently, but also interact as part of a belief system that can be indicative of a scholar’s motivations and performance (Beul et al , 2001). Walls & Little (2005) described three forms of beliefs that aid one in identifying, selecting and pursuing ones goals: “(a) Means –ends beliefs about the relevance of various means (e.g. effort, ability, teachers) for achieving the ends of a given goal” (Walls & Little, 2005, p.24); “(b) Agency beliefs about whether these means are personally accessible and usable in pursing a goal” (Walls & Little, 2005, p.24) and (c)

“Control- expectancy beliefs that reflect a general assessment of the attainability of the goal” (Walls & Little, 2005, p.24). Wells et al., (2005) indicated that among these three beliefs, agency beliefs, targeting effort and ability in achieving academic success are the strongest predictors of actual school performance. However, caution is given to the interpretation of motivation and how it applies to this study. Motivation as previously stated is the initiation, direction, intensity and persistence of behavior (Wikipedia, 2005). While motivation will be examined in this study, more complex motivational factors such as disabilities, learning problems, behavioral problems and family crisis will not be examined. Sattler (2001) suggested that individuals who may seem unmotivated to complete a task, often times, have far greater issues than motivation and the lack of motivation is only a product of a greater underlying issue. The results of this study are taken with caution when one is generalizing to all areas of motivation and should be only discussed in terms of the motivational factors examined in this thesis. . For the purpose of this thesis, degrees of internal beliefs (such as beliefs of competence, and purpose) and external forces (such as tokens, and recognition) and their effects on motivation for academics and social success/satisfaction will be examined.

### *Success*

Success is a very diverse and complicated topic given that it holds various meanings for different people. The meaning of success varies by one's age, culture and gender (Raskind, et al, 1999 & 2003). Success is the ability to meet or exceed both cultural and individual expectations in personal, education and career domains (Raskind, et al, 1999 & 2003, p. 36). Success can be defined in terms of education, life satisfaction, independence, interpersonal relationships and self-esteem or self-concept (Raskind, et al.,

1999 & 2003). One can achieve success in these areas by obtaining or surpassing goals set by either themselves or others. Frostig (2003) developed a broader definition of success. This definition was developed during a 20 -year study headed by Frostig, focusing on a developmental perspective of success. The multidimensional definition of success included eight domains: employment, education, independence, family relations, social relations, crime/substance abuse, life satisfaction and psychological health. Frostig (2003) emphasized that not every successful person possesses each of these attributes, and some characteristics may be present to a greater or lesser degree. Success was measured in terms of positive family and friend relationships, self-approval, job satisfaction, physical and mental health, financial comfort, spiritual commitment, and an overall sense of meaning in ones' life. Different individuals may place lesser or greater emphasis on these various components of success (Raskind, et al., 2003). Bandura (1997) reported that self-efficacy and self-concept had the most influential motivational effects through the development and process of setting goals. He believes that goals provide the basis of self-regulation of effort and exertion put towards a task. This basis provides a standard of judging the adequacy and effectiveness of goal relevant effort and strategy. For the purposes of this thesis, the definition of success is based on psychosocial factors that are linked with academic readiness which has been found to be predictive of university success and retention.

Readiness is defined by the ones' state of being ready or ones' state of preparedness, promptness, aptitude and willingness to do or complete as task. (Olson, 2006) Therefore, if one is "ready" to complete a task, success should be more likely. Researchers suggest that the best way to prevent poor performance in university is to

identify at risk students early and help them become “ready” for their educational development (Beck & Davidson, 2001). Those who do not possess the skills needed to be successful in university would be identified and aided in developing the necessary skills needed. Previously, research in predicting academic readiness for college has been predominantly GPA and standardized testing, which encompass solely grades and academics (Beck & Davidson, 2001). While these tests have proved somewhat useful, they do not address social factors such as motivation, discipline, commitment and one’s overall “readiness” for post-secondary education. As the above research has supported, one’s self- concept and motivation are theorized to have a significant connection to one’s ability to be successful. It is proposed by this thesis that those who are prepared for university and score high on the readiness scale have a higher likelihood to be successful. *The School Readiness Inventory* is the measure that will be used to assess success and it measures factors such as academic discipline, academic self-confidence, commitment to college, communication skills emotional control, general determination, goal striving, social activity, social connection and study skills.

#### *Past findings on Predictors of Success*

Robbins (2006) cited the U.S department of Education (2000) as being in a general agreement that alternative predictors of academic achievement and post secondary persistence be more widely researched. The hypothesis of the following work is that a positive self- concept of one’s academic and social abilities and one’s level of motivation (internal and external) in high school will be positively correlated with academic success and social satisfaction during university.

Robbins (2006) suggested that not only do high school grades predict success in university but they relate to the self-concept and motivation of those students headed to university. Those students, who have been successful both academically and socially in high school, have a higher self- concept and level of motivation (Robbins, 2006).

Therefore, might self-concept and motivation be predictors of university success?

Researchers have stated that, “Students’ beliefs are influential factors in their thinking, behavior and motivation” (Beuel, & Alexander, 2005, p. 697, Bandura, 1997).

In a study by McInerney, Roche, McInerney, Marsh, (1997) it was reported that self-concept is a high predictor of academic achievement. Those individuals with higher self-concept are more likely to have better scholarly success. Self- Concept was also noted as a significant predictor of occupation. Those with higher self-concept had a higher expectation for career development after school (McInerney, Roche, McInerney, Marsh, 1997). Bandura (1993) states that self-efficacy is the persons’ belief that he/she are capable (or not) to perform that task and is correlated with achievement-related behaviors, including cognitive processing, achievement, performance, motivation, self-worth and choice of activities. Therefore those who do believe they can perform successfully are more likely to be successful in learning, academics and have a higher self-esteem. Seifert (2004) reported that “students who perceive themselves as capable are more likely to be self-regulating, strategic and Meta cognitive than students who do not feel efficacious” (Seifert, 2004, p. 325). “Students who are not confident or perceive themselves as incapable may avoid tasks that are seen as challenging or difficult” (Seifert, 2004, p. 325).

Further, researchers have shown that students’ academic self- concepts influence

their learning and their achievement in various ways. Miller and Byrnes (2001) found that both academic goals and self-regulatory competencies in decision making were strong predictors of achievement behavior. Adolescents were more likely to report engaging in scholarly behavior if they placed importance on academic goals and were competent in decisional processes. (Miller & Byrnes., 2001)

Beul et al. (2005) further proposed that students' beliefs in their own competency and the values for achievement are based on their perceptions of the difficulty related to the task at hand. Confidence and positive belief of ones' ability to complete a task or solve a problem contributes to a more calm and thoughtful approach (Martin., Hu., Garcia, 2001). Suggesting that students' who feel that the task at hand is difficult but obtainable are more likely to feel more competent in themselves compared to those who view the task at hand as extremely difficult and not obtainable. Paulson & Feldman (1999) found that "students beliefs about the simplicity of knowledge is negatively related to their self-efficacy and intrinsic motivation, as well Self-efficacy influences task choice, effort, persistence, and achievement" (Paulson and Feldman 1999, p.12). Compared with students who doubt their learning capabilities, those who have a sense of efficacy for particular tasks participate more readily, work harder, persist longer when they encounter difficulties, and achieve at a higher level (Schunk & Zimmerman 1997, pg. 36).

The majority of previous researchers in the area of university success, have focused on high school grades, and standardized testing as predictors for academic success and persistence (Guay, F., Boivin, M., & Marsh, H. 2003); (Yeung et al.,2005). High school grades have proven to be useful and quite reliable as predictors for university

success. However, what it is about high school grades that predict success? Is it that those who do well in high school will undoubtedly do well in university, or are there other influences?

The purpose of the research completed by Sarver (2000), was to investigate the link between self-determination, motivation and academic success for university students. The results suggested that there was a positive and significant correlation between a students' level of self-determination and their grades. Those students who had more determination were more likely to be achieving higher grades compared to those who did not have high self-determination. Self-determination has been defined as "a combination of skills knowledge and beliefs that enable a person to engage in goal-directed, self-regulated, autonomous behavior. An understanding of ones' strength's and limitations together with a belief in ones' self as capable and effective are essential to self-determination. When acting on the basis of these skills and attributes, individuals have greater ability to take control of their lives and assume the role of successful adults in society." (Field, Martin, Miller, Ward, & Wehmeyer, 1998, p.2).

#### *Current Study - Rationale and Implications*

This thesis investigated social self-concept and motivation in high school as predictors for success via readiness in university. As sited earlier in this thesis, a little more than half of all individuals who register for university finish the degree in the allotted time frame (Johnson, 1994). Drop out rates of first and second year students averaging about 33%, and of those who complete a four year degree 54% will take six yrs to do so; and 34% will take four years to complete a two year program (Habley &

McLanahan, 2004). The information gathered from this research could be used to help develop interventions to aid in transitions and ensure success for university, and to increase the likelihood of academic and social success for students. This information may also help to screen students who are more likely to have difficulty in university and help them to decide whether university or another post-secondary school would be more appropriate for them. Results from this study could be further used to help to develop interventions to help students develop skills and attributes needed to be successful in university. With respect to younger children, this study could help to provide parents, teachers and school psychologists with some prediction with respect to how to prepare their kids so that they could succeed. As it is previously stated in this work, early intervention is key, and the earlier high-risk students can be predicted, the longer educators and caregivers have to intervene. If this study identifies self-concept and motivational traits that can predict readiness in students; parents and teachers can help to foster and teach some of these skills or qualities needed to help to increase the individuals' likelihood of readiness and further increase their chances for success. The results of this study could also be used as overall evidence to support other theories of the importance of self-concept and motivation; further evidence to support the importance of instilling positive self-concepts and helping to develop intrinsic motivation in our children.



## Method

For the purposes of this investigation, high school academic and social self-concept, as well as academic motivation was self reported “retrospectively” using the Inventory of School Motivation (ISM) (See Appendix D, Maehr, & Braskamp). University readiness and predicted success was also being self-reported “retrospectively” using the School Readiness Inventory. (SRI) (See Appendix E, Le et al, 2005).

### *Participants*

Male and female introductory psychology students and developmental psychology students from Mount Saint Vincent University were encouraged to participate. In all, a total of seventy-one participants completed forms, however only 60 forms were completed in full and could be used for data analyses.

### *Measures*

Two psychological inventories were used to access the three global variables of interest. To measure motivation and social self-concept (the independent variables in this thesis), *The Inventory of School Motivation* was used. This scale is used to define scales that are relevant to examining motivation (McInerney et al. 1997, Maehr, & Braskam, 1999). This scale can be administered in whole or in sub-scaled sections. For the purpose of this thesis, the detailed section related to one's cultural background was omitted. Research using the ISM obtains a set of motivation items defining prominent motivational and self-concept scales relevant across a wide range of groups (an ETIC scale). There are eight motivation scales: *Task*, looking at the interest in a task and the desire to do better; *Effort*, measuring the willingness to put effort into school work;

*Competition*, measuring the competitiveness of learning. *Social power* measuring the motivation of being of social power; *Affiliation*, interest in belonging to a group; *Social connection*, a social concern for others and a willingness to help them with their school work; *Praise*, the motivation of seeking praise and social approval; and *Token*, the motivation of seeking awards for school work. This scale measures the degree of motivation a student possesses as well as what it is that motivates them specifically. This instrument also measures self-concept, by measuring four of the factors that help to form the sense of self (Purkey, 1988). The four sense-of-self scales include: sense of *Purpose*, valuing school for the future and future goals; *Self-reliance*, confidence in one's abilities; *Negative self-esteem*, negative feelings of oneself, and *Positive self-esteem*, positive feelings of one's academic abilities all of which the research suggests form one's self concept (reliance, self-esteem and purpose). The (ISM), (see McInerney & Sinclair, 1991, 1992; McInerney, Roche, McInerney & Marsh, 1997 and McInerney & Yeung, 2000) consists of twelve scales relating to motivational goals and sense of self values and concepts influencing learning. Each scale of this measure has a somewhat different reliability; ranging from moderate to high, (alpha ranging from 0.66 to 0.92) respectively. The lowest at 0.66 being the Task and Negative Self-Esteem scale. The highest reliability at 0.92 is the University intention scale. Given these alpha coefficients, the measure is considered psychometrically sound. The second scale of this study, *The School Readiness Inventory* is a measure of psychosocial factors that are linked with academic success and retention and will form the dependent variable for this thesis. This scale is made up of 108 items that form 10 scales. These scales measure factors such as: *Academic discipline*, measuring the amount of effort one puts into his or her school work; *Academic self-*

*confidence*, measuring one's confidence in his or her academic ability, and *commitment to college*, measuring one's commitment to staying in college and getting a degree; *Communication skills*, measures how much one is attentive to others and how well he or she resolves conflicts; *Emotional control*, measures one's response to strong feelings and how they handle those feelings, *General determination*, the overall extent that one follows through on commitments and obligations; *Goal striving*, the strength of one's effort to achieve a goal, *Social activity*, measuring how comfortable one is in meeting and interacting with new people, *Social connection*, measuring feelings of connection and involvement to the school, and *Study skills*, measuring one's ability to assess, organize and complete academic problems. This scale again supports a moderate to a high level of internal reliability (alpha range 0.80 to 0.87 with a median of 0.84).

### *Procedure*

This investigation used a quantitative approach. Once participants read the information letter (See Appendix A) and signed the consent form (see appendix B), they were asked to complete three inventories measuring self-concept, motivation and success (see Appendices C & D). In all, the scales took approximately 30 minutes to complete. Participants were asked to complete the self-concept and motivational scales retrospectively, answering these scales by reflecting on how they felt in their final year of high school. Guay., Marsh., & Boivin,(2003) suggested that children's competence change's with age, and such increases in reliability with age. While often one's self-concept is lower as a young adult when compared to their self-concept as a child. Suggesting that the participants' perceptions of their performance in high school are more likely to be accurate when answered retrospectively rather than at a younger age. They

have a time lapse to mature even greater, and accurately view their abilities and self concept at that time. Social success will be based over the past months they have spent in the attendance of university. Data will be collected and responses will be analyzed to determine the correlation between the variables.

### *Statistical Analyses*

The results of this study are presented in various sections. First, all assumptions related to correlation design were checked and the data was be inspected for outliers. Second, sets of t-tests were performed to explore the sex differences on all variables. Next, simple correlations were performed to examine the intercorrelations between all variables. Finally, multiple regression analyses were employed to examine if success in university can be predicted from motivation and self-concept.

## Results

The primary focus of this study was to examine the relationships between self-concept and motivation in the prediction of success in undergraduate university students. The results will be presented as follows. First, preliminary analyses were explored, followed by intercorrelations between self-concept, motivation and success. Finally, regression analyses were completed to examine the relations and interactions between motivation and self-concept as predictors of success in undergraduate students.

### *Preliminary Analyses*

*Data Screening.* All the data were examined for outliers, accuracy, linearity and homogeneity of variance. Since no assumptions were violated, there was no need to transform the data.

*T-Tests.* T-tests were conducted to analyze the equality of means between male and female participants (see Table 1 for means and standard deviations). This preliminary analyses was performed to determine any sex differences with respect to the variables under consideration. Equal variances not assumed, significant findings included sex differences for Task ( $t(1,57)=-2.30, p<.05$ ) Effort ( $t(1,57)=-3.28, p<.05$ ), Social Power ( $t(1,57)=-4.24, p<.05$ ), Affiliation ( $t(1,57)=-4.52, p<.05$ ), Social connection ( $t(1,57)=-3.45, p<.05$ ), Motivation ( $t(1,57)=-3.96, p<.05$ ), and Communication ( $t(1,57)=2.83, p<.05$ ). From Table 1, it is evident that males were higher on each of the significant variables with the exception of Communication.

*Pearson Correlations.* Pearson correlations were conducted to determine the extent of inter-correlations. Specific analyses included investigation of the subscales of Motivation (see table 2), Self concept (see table 3), and Success (see table 4).

Table 1 – Means and Standard Deviations for Males and Females Separately (note: from Overall Academic Success to Emotional Control the data are presented in percentiles)

Variables	Females	Males
Task	4.21 (.69)	4.66 (.42)
Effort	3.75 (.60)	4.43 (.46)
Competition	2.77 (.82)	3.42 (.62)
Socpower	2.45 (.82)	3.55 (.38)
Affiliation	3.00 (.85)	3.88 (.38)
Socconcern	3.61 (.62)	4.23 (.39)
Praise	3.50 (.74)	3.97 (.88)
Token	2.88 (.65)	3.33 (.64)
Purpose	4.12 (.64)	4.36 (.54)
Self Reliance	3.67 (.50)	4.06 (.66)
Negself	2.40 (.60)	1.95 (.64)
Possself	3.71 (.63)	4.00 (.86)
OverallAcademicSuccess	46.40 (25.18)	43.67 (35.27)
Commitment	43.32 (29.04)	39.33 (40.15)
Goal striving	48.70 (27.04)	47.67 (34.79)
Academic Discipline	52.28 (27.64)	54.67 (37.03)
General Determination	59.02 (27.07)	50.83 (22.21)
Study skills	57.74 (26.27)	54.00 (32.83)
Communication	57.47 (26.00)	36.83 (15.61)
Social Activity	45.74 (29.73)	41.00 (40.329)

Social Connection	43.77 (31.56)	44.83 (41.00_
Social Self Confidence	48.00 (30.15)	48.50 (41.52)
Emotional Control	52.72 (27.55)	44.00 (26.25)

Table 2 Correlations between Subscales of Motivation

	Task	Effort	Competition	Socpower	Affiliation	Socconcern	Praise
Task							
Effort	.46**						
Competition	.05	.16					
Socpower	.31*	.22	.61**				
Affiliation	.06	.04	.34**	.32*			
Socconcern	.42**	.25	.23	.40**	.49**		
Praise	.29*	.11	.52	.50**	.44**	.34**	
Token	.13	-.04	.60**	.50**	.28*	.26*	.56**

\*p<.05 \*\*p<.001



Table 3 Correlations between subscales of Self- Concept

	Purpose	Self Reliance	Negself
Self reliance	.44**		
Negself	-.39**	-.64**	
Possself	.36*	.77**	-.71**

\*p<.05    \*\*p<.001

Table 4 Correlations between subscales of Success

	OAS	Commit	Goalstri	AD	GD	Studskil	Comm	SA	SC	SSC
Commit	.51**									
Goalstri	.56**	.60**								
AD	.83**	.57**	.66**							
GD	.46**	.46**	.66**	.74**						
Studskil	.43**	.17	.47**	.52**	.46**					
Comm	.11	.16	.34**	.22	.41**	.33**				
SA	.20	.37**	.46**	.21	.13	.26**	.39**			
SC	.16	.47**	.40**	.15	.14	.10	.42**	.68**		
SSC	.72**	.43**	.52**	.53**	.24	.41**	.24	.53**	.27**	
EC	.10	.22	.39**	.18	.16	.20	.29*	.40**	.32*	.23

\*p&lt;.05 \*\*p&lt;.001

Correlations were also conducted to examine the correlations between Motivation and Self Concept (see Table 5), Motivation and Success (see Table 6), and Self-Concept and Success (see Table 7). In all, five correlations between self-concept and motivation were revealed. Sense of purpose was significantly correlated with task ( $r=.46$ ,  $p<.001$ ) and Effort ( $r=.65$ ,  $p<.001$ ). Self-reliance and positive self-esteem ( $r=.64$ ,  $p<.001$ ;  $r=.54$ ,  $p<.001$ , respectively) were statistically significantly correlated with effort. And, a statistically significant negative correlations was discovered between negative self-esteem and effort ( $r=-.44$ ,  $p<.001$ ). Overall, two correlations were found. Social Connection was significantly correlated with both task ( $r=.29$ ,  $p<.05$ ) and token ( $r=.28$ ,  $p<.05$ ). A correlation was found between Social connection and Purpose ( $r=.30$ ,  $p<.05$ ), suggesting that the higher ones sense of social connection, the higher their sense of purpose.

*Multiple Regression.* Multiple regression analyses were used to predict success in university from motivation and self-concept. In all, eleven analyses were completed and the results were not significant. Therefore, success in university cannot be predicted from motivation and self-concept in this sample of students.

Table 5 Correlations between Motivation and Self Concept

	Task	Effort	Competition	Socpower	Affiliation	Socconcern	Praise	Token
Purpose	.46**	.65**	.05	.12	-.02	.19	.125	-.10
Selfreliance	.17	.64**	.25	.23	-.13	.17	-.09	-.13
Negself	-.13	-.44**	-.08	-.11	.02	-.09	.14	.12
Possself	.02	.54**	.26*	.09	.01	.07	-.13	-.04

\*p<.05    \*\*p<.001

Table 6 – Correlations between Motivation and Success

	Task	Effort	Competition	Socpower	Affiliation	Socconcern	Praise	Token
OAS	-.01	-.15	.09	.02	-.12	.06	-.03	.19
Commit	.24	.06	.01	.20	-.12	.11	.151	.13
Goalstri	.14	-.22	-.00	.14	.02	.06	.05	.18
AD	-.05	-.22	.11	.08	-.13.	.07	.01	.11
GD	-.05	-.20	.04	.08	-.05	-.06	.02	.03
Studskil	-.15	-.21	.18	.15	-.13	-.08	.02	.18
Comm	-.03	-.22	.06	.13	.08	.06	.11	.18
SA	.13	-.04	-.11	-.01	-.01	.09	.09	.15
SC	.29*	.16	.06	.18	-.04	.19	.14	.28*
SSC	.06	-.07	.06	.01	-.02	.05	-.012	.25
EmoControl	.00	-.20	-.02	-.10	.04	.09	-.05	.16

\*p<.05    \*\*p<.001

Table 7 Correlations between Self-Concept and Success

	Purpose	Self -Reliance	Neg Self	Pos Self
OAS	-.108	.09	-.06	.12
Commit	..056	.22	-.09	.10
Goalstri	-.19	-.06	-.07	-.00
AD	-.25	.11	-.08	.11
GD	-.18	.09	-.19	.18
Studskil	-.14	-.02	-.05	.12
Comm	-.05	-.09	-.03	-.04
SA	.14	-.07	.18	-.12
SC	.30*	.11	-.03	.04
SSC	.07	-.00	-.03	.08
EmoControl	.00	-.00	-.10	.02

\*p<.05 \*\*p<.001

## Discussion

The primary goal of this thesis was to establish correlational links between self-concept, motivation and success in university. Further, an endeavor of this thesis was to determine if success in university could be predicted from self-concept and motivation in an undergraduate sample of Mount Saint Vincent University students. Several correlations were found and revealed some very interesting information regarding associations between motivation, self-concept and success.

### *Sex Differences*

There were many significant sex differences discovered. Males scored significantly higher than females in the areas of task, effort, social power, affiliation, and social connection, however, females scoring significantly higher than males in the area of communication. Winter, (1988) suggested the way in which the desire for power and social connection is aroused is not different between men and women. However, Winter (1988) found that men are more likely to desire and be motivated to hold positions of power because of societies' pressure for men to not be in submissive roles, especially to women. More often than females, males hold more powerful positions in society, either within their career, social group, or education (Carli, Lafleur, Loeber, Christopher, 1995).

Again, not surprisingly women scored significantly higher than men within the communication category. Females often are better communicators than males and often spend more time than males communicating with one another and others ( Carli, 2001).

Overall, this study had more females than males. This may suggest that those males completing this study belonged to a largely female populated university and more than likely possessed different traits and qualities than other men who attend a university

with a larger male population or a population approximately evenly split. If there had been more males within the study the chances that the significant findings would be different is unlikely (given that it falls within expected trends). However, the subscales that did not show statistically significant sex differences may have been. If this study was completed at another university where there was a higher population of men or if the current sample consisted of more men, the variation in responses could more likely occur. Because this group of men is more likely to have similar traits and qualities, all of them attend a mainly female university; all within a 3-year age range and attend intro and developmental psychology. Based on the low numbers of males and the high amount of similar traits, it would not be surprising that a larger group of diverse males may yield different result.

However what is surprising from these results, are the female responses. One would think that women who attend a feminist university, populated by mainly females would have higher levels of task, effort and determination. Why in 2007 are females still scoring lower than males in these areas? One would think that with the increase to women in the work force and the feminist movement would have increased women's levels of effort, determination, and affiliation. Winter (1988) suggested that it's possible that women often under report their levels of effort and determination to avoid being classified as overbearing or in need for control, suggesting that women often underestimate to continue to fit in these stereotypical roles. Is this true? Is that what was happening, or is do women really have lower levels of the traits? These are very good questions for future research.



*Motivation*

Within the subscales of Motivation many significant correlations were found. Task was found to have significant relationships with effort, social power, social connection and praise. This suggests that those who have a higher level of motivation to complete a task will have higher levels of effort, social connection and desire for social power, and praise. Not surprisingly, when someone has a desire and the motivation to complete a task, they are more likely to put higher levels of effort into their work. He or she is very likely to be motivated to do well or complete a task for many reasons including praise, social power and concern (McInerney & Sinclair, 1991). For example, students attending university who enjoy the task and have a desire to complete it are more likely to put effort into their work. Furthermore, those same students may be motivated and have a desire to complete that same task for the recognition from peers or parents (e.g., maybe a monetary gift for the completion of a course or degree).

Other significant relations were found with the competition subscale. Competition was found to be significantly correlated with affiliation and token. Those individuals who enjoy or seek competition often enjoy winning, therefore it's not surprising that those individuals desire higher levels of affiliation and token. It may stand to reason that individuals who enjoy competition would enjoy being affiliated with those individuals who are the "top" or the "best" or are "cool". Affiliation could be associated with grades or be a direct representation of social status (Divido, Ellyson, & Keating, 1988). Tokens, prizes and rewards are something one would expect to find intriguing if they were competitive.

Social power was found to have significant statistical relations with affiliation, social connection, praise and token. Of course those people who view social power as important are going to be concerned about their social group, how others perceive them, or others reaction to their work through praise or token. One cannot achieve social power at the expense of not being socially concerned. One achieves social power by the approval of others (Winter,1988) and the current sample supports this past research.

### *Self-Concept*

Significant correlations were found between all subscales. Positive correlations were found between purpose, self -reliance and positive self-esteem. These correlations are not surprising given that individuals develop self- worth and self-esteem through “doing and experiencing on their own” (Cushman,1990, pg. 602). This evidence supports such a statement. Individuals in this study who had higher levels of purpose and self-reliance had higher self-esteem. Individuals, who have a purpose, or those who have faith and trust in their own abilities, feel better about themselves and their capabilities. Significant negative correlations were found with negative self- esteem and purpose, self-reliance, and positive self-esteem. The exact opposite would then apply. Those individuals with no or a low sense of purpose, and who have little confidence in their abilities will have lower positive self-esteem and higher levels of negative thoughts of themselves. If one does not know what they want or feels they are incapable of relying on themselves to succeed, they are more likely to have negative thoughts of themselves. Within this sample then, it seems that MSVU students who have higher negative self-esteem feel less purpose in their lives, less reliant on themselves, and have lower self-esteem.

*Success*

There were many significant correlations between the subscales of success. To start, overall academic success was correlated with all subscales except communication and social activity. It would be expected that individuals who exceed academically are more likely to have higher goals, good self-discipline, commitment, determination and confidence. Intuitively, people who exceed academically do so because they have many positive factors directing their life. The fact that academic success was not significantly correlated with communication and social activity is interesting, but is explainable. While it's important in life to have social connections, those connections and excessive communication and activity can be detrimental to achieving academically. Perhaps this type of activity would put students' potential for success at-risk and the individuals who want overall success engage less in communication and social activities.

There were statistically significant relations between commitment and goal striving, academic discipline, general determination, social activity, social connection and social self-confidence. Those who have high levels of commitment to college are more likely to have higher levels of the aforementioned variables. If one is committed to university, they would naturally have good academic discipline, determination, and confidence in themselves. These traits would help them to succeed and remain connected to the learning environment. If those same individuals are committed to university, they are most likely committed to staying and forming relationships, which may aid in explanation of the finding that commitment is significantly correlated to social activity and social connection. In addition, there were significant positive correlations between

goal striving and all other subscales. Those individuals who strive to meet their goals have higher levels of traits that make up success. If one works to achieve a goal, it would be important that possess traits that lead to success, both academically and socially.

As would be expected, academic discipline had significant correlations with general determination and study skills. Those who had high academic discipline also had high general determination and study skills. What was most surprising was the positive correlation between academic discipline and social self- confidence. Is this because those who have high academic discipline excel more academically, which in turn gives them more confidence, both academically and socially? Maybe these individuals develop more confidence in all areas of their lives when they excel at school. Furthermore, significant positive correlations with general determination and social skills and communication was discovered. An explanation for this could be that those who are determined communicate better with others, which helps them be more successful in relationships.

There were some interesting correlations with the study skills subscale. Positive correlations between communication, social activity, social self- confidence and the study skills subscales were found. Those who study effectively regularly use different methods to understand information, which would include communicating with others, social gatherings or group projects, and because of these interactions they develop a strong sense of social self- confidence. Not surprisingly communication was also positively correlated with social activity, social confidence, and emotional control. Those who communicate often do so during activities. Those who communicate well often have more successful interactions and would subsequently have more social self -confidence. Emotional control was positively related to communication. Communicating with

someone who is in emotional distress can be difficult. However, those who communicate well are more capable of controlling their emotions when communicating with others (Trommsdorff, Ulconstan, & Helga, 1992).

Similarly, social activity had significant correlations with social connection, social self-confidence and emotional control. Intuitively, individuals who are socially active have many friends and get along easily with others. Those who get along well with others are in-tune with others, and others perceptions of them. These same individuals also need to have the confidence to interact and enter new or unfamiliar groups of people. Like previously stated, those who are successful at interacting with others and do it often are usually able to control their emotions appropriately and handle upsets and disagreements within what would be considered normal limits of emotion. Similar to the above, the social connection subscale was positively correlated to social self-confidence and emotional control, and discussion of this finding can be centered around the same reason.

### *Motivation and Self-Concept*

Interesting correlations were found between self-concept subscales and motivation subscales. A significant positive correlation was found between one's motivation to complete a task and a sense of purpose. People who want to complete something have a sense of purpose. They are aware of the task at hand and often know what they need to do, which would give them a sense of purpose during the completion. Verschueren, Marcoen & Schoefs (1996), found that when five year olds completed a given task successfully, they exhibited higher levels of self-esteem and future aspirations

and/or goals. This past finding can be used to support the current findings with an older population of students.

Effort was found to have significant relations with all variables of self- concept. Positive correlations were found between purpose, self-reliance and positive self-esteem. Intuitively, this makes sense. Those who have a sense of purpose and understand their role in a task, those who have the confidence to rely on themselves for a task and those who have positive self-esteem are going to put more effort into a task. If someone feels good about themselves, they are more likely to feel as if they can achieve the task at hand and challenge themselves by putting the effort into a task, while the opposite can be said about those individuals who have higher levels of negative self-esteem. While negative self-esteem had a significant relationship with effort, it was in the negative direction. Those with negative self- thoughts engage in portray less effort. Not surprisingly those who think negative thoughts about themselves and their abilities are less likely to put effort into a task. They may feel the effort isn't worth it or that it's not important because they feel they could not complete the job even with their best effort. Verschueren, Marcoen and Schoefs (1996) found that children who did not complete a task successfully appeared to have a lower self-esteem, fewer aspirations and goals for following tasks.

Another correlation was found between competition and positive self-esteem. When an individual feels good about themselves and their abilities, it would be natural to have a sense that one could be better than others. Often times those who compete believe to degree that they have an opportunity of "winning" or "beating" their opponent or goal. Competition takes a degree of risk, as the individual competing takes the risk of losing.

People with negative self-esteem are less likely to take risks in which they can fail compared to those with higher levels of positive self-esteem, which would explain why those who enjoy competition have higher levels of self-esteem. Children who have previously failed are less likely than those who have previously succeeded to try the same task again (Verschuere et al., 1996).

### *Motivation and Success*

Only two correlations were found within these analyses. Correlations were between social connection, and the variables task and token. This relationship may occur because those individuals who have a higher sense of social connection are more likely to be concerned about social approval as well as other things, such as how well they can complete a task. Those individuals who have high levels of social connection seek social approval, which can be shown by receiving or earning a reward. Martell and Smith (1970) suggested that those people who have a need for a high level of social approval, have lower levels of intrinsic incentives and higher levels of external motivation and incentives. This past finding fits quite nicely with the current set of results.

### *Self-concept and Success*

One significant correlation was found within this analysis. A positive correlation was found between social connection and purpose. If someone has a solid sense of social connection then they are more likely to feel better about themselves and who they are as a person. Because of this, this same person is more likely to have a well-developed or stronger sense of purpose. Their sense of purpose could pertain to all areas of their life, one's sense of who they are, what they offer to relationships, their understanding of their strengths and what goals they want to achieve in life. Waters, Noyes, Vaughn &

Ricks,(1985) found that people who are socially competent regardless of gender and age, are more likely to have a higher sense of self esteem and goals for the future.

Specifically, the authors say that “good things go together” (Waters, et al.1985, p 521).

This suggests that positive traits and qualities, often accompany other positives in ones’ lives.

### *Multiple Regressions*

In total eleven multiple regressions were completed to determine if success in Mount Saint Vincent University students could be predicted by self-concept and motivation. No statistically significant results were discovered. While one needs to be cautious to not “explain away” non-statistically significant findings (because the findings may represent what is actually occurring in the sample of interest), many issues could have contributed to the non-significance.

As an example, perhaps different psychological scales to measure the variables of interest would have yielded significant multiple regressions. While every effort was made to ensure that the scales that were used were psychometrically valid and reliable, researchers are well aware of the problems associated with using measures within specified samples such as with student samples at MSVU. In a similar vein, it is also possible that the sample of subjects used may have contributed to the insignificant outcomes. This study measured mainly Caucasian, English speaking females who attend university. Perhaps the sample population was not diverse enough. Future researchers need to extend the sample to include males and individuals representing diverse socioeconomic standings.



Additionally, if the current thesis were to have measured high school students, rather than university students recalling emotions and motivation in high school, the results may have been more significant. While university students are more mature and presumably better able to understand their own emotions compared to high school students, their strengths and weaknesses in the past may have been easily under or over reported due to generalizations and comparisons to stress and skills in their current learning environment. In addition, issues surrounding retrospective studies may have contributed to the nonsignificant multiple regressions. Retrospective studies help researchers gain immeasurable amounts of information, however, the information gathered is only as good as participants' memories.

In all though, it's very possible that given all of these changes to the research or with no changes at all, the results of this study may be valid for the sample studied. The potential is certainly there that self-concept and motivation in high school students cannot predict readiness and future success in university. It is feasible that motivation and self-concept, together or alone, cannot predict readiness for university, and maybe other factors such as grades and other environmental factors are better predictors for readiness and success. Future researchers need to broaden the spectrum of predictor variables to include others that may represent links to success in university.

#### *Implications for practice*

While there was no evidence to support the major hypothesis of this research, some very interesting relationships were found between self-concept, motivation and success. School Psychologists spend vast amounts of time helping students to develop educational motivation and positive self- concept. Strong correlations between positive

self-esteem and social confidence, and a student's degree of effort and purpose were found. This information is very telling. It supports academic reasons to intervene with children and youth who seem to have low self-concepts and motivation. If students can meet with professionals and work on activities that will help enhance their self-concept, this research suggests that is highly likely that with increased positive self-concept, a positive increase in a student's effort and desire to work at a task.

Another interesting implication of this research is the support it gives to the importance of social skills assessment and training. Youth's ability to make social connections has a far greater impact on their ability to feel positive about themselves and to be more motivated. Social connection was one of the most common subscales to have significant relations with others. As well, it was social connection that displayed a trend in the regression analysis, suggesting a higher focus should be placed on those students who struggle socially and have difficulty making social connections. While self-concept, motivation and social connections may not be directly related to one's social success in university, social connection has proven to have other great effects on a high school student's life. Students with a higher sense of social connection have higher levels of effort, desire to complete a task, confidence, commitment and goal striving. Regardless if these things help a student become successful in university; it's fair to say that students who possess the previous traits are likely to fare better on their education journey. If helping to foster social connection and social skills can also help students develop other positive qualities, it should be an important part of any psychologist's assessment.

*Limitations and Future Direction*

As previously stated this research was conducted with mainly Caucasian, English speaking females, who are attending university. While the results of this research are very interesting there are generalization limitations. As the result of the participant sample, it is only possible to apply these results to Caucasian, English speaking, middle class individuals attending a predominately female academic institution. This research cannot be generalized to individuals with learning disabilities, or individuals of other ethnicities. While it's possible that further research into these other groups would yield similar results, caution is warranted, as it is difficult to predict the results of another sample.

In the future a longitudinal study following kids from high school, into university may give an enhanced view of what is happening and whether self-concept and motivation can truly predict readiness and success in university. As well, longitudinal investigation may provide some indications of causal relations between the variables. Further research into one's degree of social connection would be interesting, as, it appears to have many correlations to success, motivation and self-concept. Researching social connection in-depth may discover the specifics of social connection and how it interacts in more detail with students' lives. If future research could include individuals of other ethnicities and a more equivalent number of males and females, it would make this type research easier to generalize and provide a broader scope for practice and research.

*Conclusion*

This thesis project has uncovered some interesting correlations between, self-concept, motivation and readiness/success. The correlations shed new light in these areas,

as well support previous research. This research can also be used and applied by school psychologists when completing assessments with children and youth. While the major multiple regression hypothesis was unsupported, this study has opened up many opportunities for more questions and further research. This opportunity should be considered a high-note, and the path to success that may be uncovered by future researchers and school psychologists has been made much clearer by the current findings.

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*(Appendix A)*

### **Information Letter**

#### **Dear Student(s):**

My name is Sarah Martin and I am in my final year of the Masters in School Psychology, here at Mount Saint Vincent University. I am currently undergoing my thesis research studying self-concept and motivation as predictors for readiness and success in first year university students.

#### **What is the purpose of this study?**

This study is designed to further our understanding of self -concept and motivation in high school and how these variables could be used to predict whether a student may or may not be successful in university.

#### **What would I have to do?**

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to complete two questionnaires. The first of which will ask you questions about yourself and yourself and school work, this will take approximately 20 to 30 minutes to complete. The second questionnaire will ask you questions regarding your schoolwork and studying style, this too will take approximately 30mins to complete.

#### **What will happen to my information?**

Once your confidential questionnaires are completed, the information will be scored by myself and the ACT Company. This information will be interpreted and written in a thesis form that will be available to read at the Curriculum Resource Center as well as the University Library.



*(Appendix B)*

### **An Invitation to Participate**

#### **Date**

Dear Student,

My name is Sarah Martin and am in my final year of graduate studies for the Master's in School Psychology program here at Mount Saint Vincent , I am gathering information on student's self concept, and motivation and impact it has on predicting success in first year university students. This research is being conducted under the supervision of Dr. Daniel Lagace-Seguin.

Participation in this study requires completing questionnaires, this study is voluntary and you do not have to reveal your identity. You may discontinue participation at anytime without penalty. Please do not put your name or identity anywhere on the questionnaires. Your responses to the questionnaires will kept completely confidential and will be locked away in a secure location so that only I have access to them. When the results of the study are reported your identity will not be reported in anyway. The questionnaires will take approximately 40-60 minutes to complete.

This study has been reviewed and granted approval by the university ethics board. If you have any questions and/or concerns regarding this research, please contact me at [REDACTED] or my thesis advisor, Dr. Daniel Lagace-Seguin at 457-6460. If you want to speak with someone not directly involved in this study, or if you have any questions about how this study has been conducted, you may contact the Chair of the University Research Ethics Board (UREB), care of MSVU at (902) 457-6350.

Please tear away and keep the information letter for your own reference.

Thank-you for your Participation,

Sincerely,

---

Sarah Martin, BA

Graduate Student in School Psychology

Mount Saint Vincent University

---

Dr. Daniel Lagace-Seguin

Thesis Supervisor

Mount Saint Vincent University

If you are interested in participating in this study please fill out the following:

By signing this consent form, you are indicating that you fully understand the above information and agree with out reservation to participate in this study.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Please place a check here is you would like to be contacted with the results of the study \_\_\_\_\_

Please give your current phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Researcher's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*Instrument : The School Motivation Inventory (Appendix C)*

**PLEASE FILL IN THE FOLLOWING NECESSARY DETAILS.  
ALL INFORMATION SUPPLIED WILL BE STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL.**

**1. What is your sex? (Please circle answer)**

- 1 FEMALE
- 2 MALE

**2. What is your age?**

YEARS: \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Grade level at school: (please circle answer)**

- 1 GRADE 6
- 2 GRADE 7
- 3 GRADE 8
- 4 GRADE 9
- 5 GRADE 10
- 6 GRADE 11
- 7 GRADE 12

**4. Where do you live: (please circle all that apply)**

- 1 INNER CITY
- 2 SUBURB
- 3 SMALL TOWN
- 4 FARM
- 5 RESERVATION

***Please turn to the back page.***

**Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this questionnaire!**

**Please feel free to expand upon any question in the survey or provide any additional information or comments you believe to be pertinent. *Please use the space below.***

*Social and Economic Sciences Research Center, Washington State University, Pullman, WA  
99164-1801*

*Instrument : The School Motivation Inventory (Appendix D)*

# The Inventory of School Motivation

## Student Survey

**THE INVENTORY OF SCHOOL MOTIVATION QUESTIONNAIRE**

© Dennis M McInerney

**University of Western Sydney, Australia**

**Section 1: In this survey we are interested in finding out about how students like to work at school.**

**We will tell you what some students think and we want you to tell us how much you yourself agree with this. You can say that you STRONGLY DISAGREE (1) with the statement, DISAGREE (2) with the statement, are NOT SURE (3), AGREE (4) with the statement or STRONGLY AGREE (5) with the statement. The numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 each stand for a level of disagreement or agreement.**

**TO INDICATE YOUR LEVEL OF AGREEMENT, YOU WILL CIRCLE THE APPROPRIATE ANSWER.**

**Let's give an example –**

<b>How students like to work at school</b> <i>Circle your response for each one.</i>		<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Not sure</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
<b>Ex . 1</b>	I enjoy doing history at school	1	2	3	4	5

If you **Strongly agree** with this then you would circle **5**.

If you **Strongly disagree** with this then you would circle **1**.

**Let's give another example -**

**Example 2.**

<b>How students like to work at school</b> <i>Circle your response for each one.</i>		<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Not sure</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
<b>Ex . 2</b>	I enjoy going on a field trip	1	2	3	4	5

If you **strongly agree** with this then you would circle 5 as shown below.

<b>How students like to work at school</b> <i>Circle your response for each one.</i>		<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Not sure</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
---	--	--------------------------	-----------------	-----------------	--------------	-----------------------

<b>Ex</b> <b>. 2</b>	I enjoy going on a field trip	1	2	3	4	5
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If you are **not sure** then you would circle 3 as shown below.

	<b>How students like to work at school</b> <i>Circle your response for each one.</i>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Not sure</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
<b>Ex</b> <b>. 2</b>	I enjoy going on a field trip	1	2	3	4	5

And if you **strongly disagree** then you would circle 1 as shown below.

	<b>How students like to work at school</b> <i>Circle your response for each one.</i>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Not sure</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
<b>Ex</b> <b>. 2</b>	I enjoy going on a field trip	1	2	3	4	5

**MAKE SURE THAT YOU CIRCLE THE ANSWER THAT SHOWS HOW MUCH YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH THE STATEMENT.**

**Your turn to practice:**

**Example 3.**

	<b>Interest in working at school</b> <i>Circle your response for each one.</i>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Not sure</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
<b>Ex</b> <b>. 3</b>	I enjoy seeing films at school	1	2	3	4	5

**Put a circle around the answer which shows how much you enjoy seeing films at school. Try not to use the NOT SURE number 3 unless you really cannot make up your mind.**

**REMEMBER THIS IS NOT A TEST. THERE ARE NO RIGHT OR WRONG ANSWERS. WE ARE JUST INTERESTED IN FINDING OUT HOW YOU LIKE TO WORK AT SCHOOL.**

**IT MAY SEEM THAT I AM ASKING THE SAME QUESTIONS OVER AND OVER, BUT THIS IS IMPORTANT TO VALIDATE THE STUDY.**

**THE SCHOOL WILL RECEIVE A TYPED SUMMARY OF THESE RESPONSES, BUT YOU NEED NOT WORRY AS YOUR INDIVIDUAL ANSWERS WILL NOT BE SEEN BY ANYONE AT THIS SCHOOL. PLEASE BE TRUTHFUL ABOUT YOUR FEELINGS.**

**A. Now, on with the questions. I will read each one and give you time to circle your answer. We need to go quickly as there are quite a few questions. If you change your mind please cross out your answer and circle a new one.**

**ARE THERE ANY QUESTIONS BEFORE WE BEGIN?**

Interest in working at school <i>Circle your response for each one.</i>		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly agree
1.	I want to do well at school to show that I can do it	1	2	3	4	5
2.	I work best in class when I can get some kind of reward	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Motivation is important to do well at school	1	2	3	4	5
4.	I like being given the chance to do something again to make it better	1	2	3	4	5
5.	I often try new things on my own	1	2	3	4	5
6.	Winning is important to me	1	2	3	4	5
7.	I work hard in school for rewards from the teacher	1	2	3	4	5
8.	It is very important for students to help each other at school	1	2	3	4	5
9.	I try harder with interesting schoolwork	1	2	3	4	5
10.	I don't mind working a long time at schoolwork that I find interesting	1	2	3	4	5
11.	Having other people tell me that I did well is important to me	1	2	3	4	5
12.	I try hard to make sure that I am good at my schoolwork	1	2	3	4	5

13.	When I am motivated, I do better at school	1	2	3	4	5
14.	I work hard at school for presents from my parents	1	2	3	4	5
15.	I am always getting into trouble at school	1	2	3	4	5
16.	I try to do well at school to please my parents	1	2	3	4	5
17.	Praise from my teachers for my good schoolwork is important to me	1	2	3	4	5

*Continue on the next page.*

<b>(Cont)</b> <b>Interest in working at school</b> <i>Circle your response for each one.</i>		<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Not sure</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
18.	I often make mistakes at school	1	2	3	4	5
19.	Students who are motivated do well at school	1	2	3	4	5
20.	Getting a reward for my good schoolwork is important to me	1	2	3	4	5
21.	I like to help other students do well at school	1	2	3	4	5
22.	I am motivated at school	1	2	3	4	5
23.	Praise from my friends for good schoolwork is important to me	1	2	3	4	5
24.	Getting merit certificates helps me work harder at school	1	2	3	4	5
25.	I always choose easy work for myself to do at school	1	2	3	4	5
26.	I usually do the wrong things at school	1	2	3	4	5
27.	I am most motivated when I see my work improving	1	2	3	4	5
28.	I like to be encouraged for my schoolwork	1	2	3	4	5
29.	I care about other people at school	1	2	3	4	5
30.	When I get good grades I work harder at school	1	2	3	4	5
31.	I can do things as well as most people at school	1	2	3	4	5



<b>32.</b> I am most motivated when I am good at something	1	2	3	4	5
<b>33.</b> I like to see that I am improving in my schoolwork	1	2	3	4	5
<b>34.</b> I need to know that I am getting somewhere with my schoolwork	1	2	3	4	5
<b>35.</b> I am most motivated when I work with others	1	2	3	4	5
<b>36.</b> I do my best work at school when I am working with others	1	2	3	4	5
<b>37.</b> I am most motivated when I am solving problems	1	2	3	4	5

*Continue on the next page.*

<b>(Cont)</b> <b>Interest in working at school</b> <i>Circle your response for each one.</i>	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Not sure</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
<b>38.</b> I think I'm as good as everybody else at school	1	2	3	4	5
<b>39.</b> I try to work with friends as much as possible at school	1	2	3	4	5
<b>40.</b> I feel motivated at school a lot of the time	1	2	3	4	5
<b>41.</b> At school I work best when I am praised	1	2	3	4	5
<b>42.</b> I am most motivated when I am becoming better at my work	1	2	3	4	5
<b>43.</b> Coming first is very important to me	1	2	3	4	5
<b>44.</b> Getting good grades is everything for me at school	1	2	3	4	5
<b>45.</b> I'm not good at anything at school	1	2	3	4	5
<b>46.</b> I enjoy helping others with their schoolwork even if I don't do well myself	1	2	3	4	5
<b>47.</b> I feel motivated most of the time at school	1	2	3	4	5
<b>48.</b> I try hard to do well at school so I can get a good job when I leave	1	2	3	4	5

<b>49.</b>	I want to do better than my friends in class	1	2	3	4	5
<b>50.</b>	I am most motivated when I am confident that I can do my schoolwork	1	2	3	4	5
<b>51.</b>	I work hard at school so that I will be put in charge of a group	1	2	3	4	5
<b>52.</b>	I only like to do things at school that I feel confident at	1	2	3	4	5
<b>53.</b>	I like to compete with others at school	1	2	3	4	5
<b>54.</b>	It is good for me to plan ahead so I can do well at school	1	2	3	4	5
<b>55.</b>	I am most motivated when I am in a group	1	2	3	4	5
<b>56.</b>	When I am improving in my schoolwork I try even harder	1	2	3	4	5

*Continue on the next page.*

<b>(Cont)</b> <b>Interest in working at school</b> <i>Circle your response for each one.</i>		<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Not sure</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
<b>57.</b>	Grades are the best way to know that you've done well at school	1	2	3	4	5
<b>58.</b>	I am most motivated when I receive rewards	1	2	3	4	5
<b>59.</b>	I am bright enough to complete high school	1	2	3	4	5
<b>60.</b>	I prefer to work alone at school	1	2	3	4	5
<b>61.</b>	I don't worry about other students, I just do my own work	1	2	3	4	5
<b>62.</b>	I am most motivated when I receive good grades	1	2	3	4	5
<b>63.</b>	Most of the time I feel that I can do my schoolwork	1	2	3	4	5
<b>64.</b>	I am motivated to study at my school	1	2	3	4	5
<b>65.</b>	I want to feel important in front of my school friends	1	2	3	4	5
<b>66.</b>	I don't need anyone to tell me to work hard at school	1	2	3	4	5

67.	I am most motivated when I work with friends at school	1	2	3	4	5
68.	The harder the problem the harder I try	1	2	3	4	5
69.	I am often motivated in my schoolwork	1	2	3	4	5
70.	How I get on with other students is more important to me than schoolwork	1	2	3	4	5
71.	At school I like being in charge of a group	1	2	3	4	5
72.	I am most motivated when I am noticed by others	1	2	3	4	5
73.	I want to be praised for my good schoolwork	1	2	3	4	5
74.	I like to feel in charge of my own work	1	2	3	4	5
75.	I am very confident at school	1	2	3	4	5
76.	I work harder if I'm trying to be better than others	1	2	3	4	5

*Continue on the next page.*

<b>(Cont)</b> <b>Interest in working at school</b> <i>Circle your response for each one.</i>		<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Not sure</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
77.	I wish I had more confidence in my schoolwork	1	2	3	4	5
78.	I am most motivated when I am competing with others	1	2	3	4	5
79.	I try hard at school because I am interested in my work	1	2	3	4	5
80.	I think that I can do quite well at school	1	2	3	4	5
81.	I often worry that I am not very good at school	1	2	3	4	5
82.	It is very important for me to be a group leader	1	2	3	4	5
83.	I am most motivated when I am in charge of a group	1	2	3	4	5
84.	I work hard at school so that I can	1	2	3	4	5

complete high school						
85.	It makes me unhappy if my friends aren't doing well at school	1	2	3	4	5
86.	Other students have to help me a lot with my work	1	2	3	4	5
87.	It is good to plan ahead to complete my schooling	1	2	3	4	5
88.	I work hard at school because I want the class to notice me	1	2	3	4	5
89.	I want to do well at school to be better than my classmates	1	2	3	4	5
90.	I am most motivated when I am praised	1	2	3	4	5
91.	I am only happy when I am one of the best in class	1	2	3	4	5
92.	I like my teacher to show my work to the rest of the class	1	2	3	4	5
93.	I like trying to be better than someone else at schoolwork	1	2	3	4	5
94.	I want to do well at school so that I can have a good future	1	2	3	4	5
95.	I am most motivated when I am doing better than others	1	2	3	4	5

*Continue on the next page.*

<b>(Cont)</b> <b>Interest in working at school</b> <i>Circle your response for each one.</i>		<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Not sure</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
<b>96.</b>	I work hard because I want the teacher to think I'm important	1	2	3	4	5
<b>97.</b>	I prefer to work with other people at school rather than alone	1	2	3	4	5
<b>98.</b>	I am most motivated when I become a leader	1	2	3	4	5
<b>99.</b>	I aim my schooling towards getting a good job	1	2	3	4	5
<b>100.</b>	I work hard to try to understand new things at school	1	2	3	4	5
<b>101.</b>	I am most motivated when I am helping others	1	2	3	4	5
<b>102.</b>	I succeed at whatever I do at school	1	2	3	4	5
<b>103.</b>	I am always trying to do better in my schoolwork	1	2	3	4	5
<b>104.</b>	Having people notice my good schoolwork is really important to me	1	2	3	4	5
<b>105.</b>	I do better work when I work by myself at school	1	2	3	4	5
<b>106.</b>	No one pays much attention to me at school	1	2	3	4	5
<b>107.</b>	Praise for good work is not enough, I like a reward	1	2	3	4	5
<b>108.</b>	I am most motivated when I am showing concern for others	1	2	3	4	5
<b>109.</b>	I often think that there are things I can't do at school	1	2	3	4	5
<b>110.</b>	In general, I am pleased with myself at school	1	2	3	4	5
<b>111.</b>	If I'm working alone, difficult schoolwork doesn't bother me	1	2	3	4	5
<b>112.</b>	If I got rewards at school I would work harder	1	2	3	4	5
<b>113.</b>	I often try to be the leader of a group	1	2	3	4	5
<b>114.</b>	Praise from my parents for good schoolwork is important to me	1	2	3	4	5

*Continue on the next page.*

Section 2: In this next part of the survey we are interested in finding out what your parents, **teachers and your friends tell you about school and its importance for you. If you live with someone whom you consider to be your mother or father (e.g., grandparents, auntie and uncle) answer the questions as if the person is your parent. If you don't have a mother or father or someone acting as a mother or father, leave those questions blank.**

**B. Again we will tell you what some students think and we want you to tell us how much you agree with what they say. Circle the answer that you agree with.**

<b>Importance of school</b> <i>Circle your response for each one.</i>		<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Not sure</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
<b>1.</b>	My father thinks that I am bright enough to go on to college or university	1	2	3	4	5
<b>2.</b>	My mother thinks that I am bright enough to go on to college or university	1	2	3	4	5
<b>3.</b>	Most students in my class will go on to college or university	1	2	3	4	5
<b>4.</b>	Some of my friends tell me I should quit school when I can	1	2	3	4	5
<b>5.</b>	My mother doesn't mind if I quit school when I want to	1	2	3	4	5
<b>6.</b>	My father doesn't mind if I quit school when I want to	1	2	3	4	5
<b>7.</b>	Subjects at school interest me	1	2	3	4	5
<b>8.</b>	Most of my friends want to do well at school	1	2	3	4	5
<b>9.</b>	I like studying	1	2	3	4	5
<b>10.</b>	If I decided to go on to college or university, my father would encourage me	1	2	3	4	5
<b>11.</b>	If I decided to go on to college or university, my mother would encourage me	1	2	3	4	5
<b>12.</b>	When teachers show interest in me, I try harder at school	1	2	3	4	5
<b>13.</b>	If I do well at school, I am picked on for being a "goodie goodie"	1	2	3	4	5
<b>14.</b>	Some of my friends tell me to quit school and to get a job	1	2	3	4	5
<b>15.</b>	Education is important for me to get a	1	2	3	4	5

job
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<b>(Cont)</b> <b>Importance of school</b> <i>Circle your response for each one.</i>		<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Not sure</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
<b>16.</b>	My father would be upset if I left school before I completed high school	1	2	3	4	5
<b>17.</b>	My mother would be upset if I left school before I completed high school	1	2	3	4	5
<b>18.</b>	People who have a good schooling get more out of life than ones who don't	1	2	3	4	5
<b>19.</b>	If I do well at school I am more likely to get a good job	1	2	3	4	5
<b>20.</b>	My father doesn't pay any attention when I bring home report cards	1	2	3	4	5
<b>21.</b>	My mother doesn't pay any attention when I bring home report cards	1	2	3	4	5
<b>22.</b>	Teachers are positive to me at school	1	2	3	4	5
<b>23.</b>	Some of my friends leave school early and go on welfare	1	2	3	4	5
<b>24.</b>	Some of my friends want to quit school as soon as they can	1	2	3	4	5
<b>25.</b>	My father thinks that I should leave school and get a job	1	2	3	4	5
<b>26.</b>	My mother thinks that I should leave school and get a job	1	2	3	4	5
<b>27.</b>	Some of my friends want to go on to college or university	1	2	3	4	5
<b>28.</b>	I get encouragement from some of my teachers to do well at school	1	2	3	4	5
<b>29.</b>	If I work hard at school I will probably do better than my parents	1	2	3	4	5
<b>30.</b>	If I decided to go on to college or university, teachers at this school would encourage me	1	2	3	4	5
<b>31.</b>	My mother doesn't care if I get a job or not when I leave school	1	2	3	4	5
<b>32.</b>	My father doesn't care if I get a job or not when I leave school	1	2	3	4	5
<b>33.</b>	Some of my teachers tell me I am bright enough to go on to college or university	1	2	3	4	5

<b>(Cont)</b> <b>Importance of school</b> <i>Circle your response for each one.</i>		<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Not sure</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
<b>34.</b>	I think that it is really important to do well at school	1	2	3	4	5
<b>35.</b>	Most students in my class will complete high school	1	2	3	4	5
<b>36.</b>	If my friends stay in school longer, I will stay in school longer	1	2	3	4	5
<b>37.</b>	I don't care if I get a job or not when I leave school	1	2	3	4	5
<b>38.</b>	I like working at school	1	2	3	4	5
<b>39.</b>	Doing well at school is really important to my future	1	2	3	4	5
<b>40.</b>	Some of my friends help me with my school work	1	2	3	4	5
<b>41.</b>	It's important for me to do well at school	1	2	3	4	5
<b>42.</b>	My friends help me with my schoolwork	1	2	3	4	5
<b>43.</b>	My mother helps me with my schoolwork	1	2	3	4	5
<b>44.</b>	My father helps me with my schoolwork	1	2	3	4	5
<b>45.</b>	My teachers help me with my schoolwork	1	2	3	4	5
<b>46.</b>	It's important to me to have my mother's help with schoolwork	1	2	3	4	5
<b>47.</b>	It's important to me to have my father's help with schoolwork	1	2	3	4	5
<b>48.</b>	It's important to me to have my friend's help with schoolwork	1	2	3	4	5
<b>49.</b>	It's important to me to have my teacher's help with schoolwork	1	2	3	4	5
<b>50.</b>	Schooling will help me get a better job than my parents	1	2	3	4	5
<b>51.</b>	It's important for my father to be proud of my schoolwork	1	2	3	4	5

*Continue on the next page.*



<b>(Cont)</b> <b>Importance of school</b> <i>Circle your response for each one.</i>		<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Not sure</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
<b>52.</b>	It's important for my mother to be proud of my schoolwork	1	2	3	4	5
<b>53.</b>	It's important for my teachers to be proud of my schoolwork	1	2	3	4	5
<b>54.</b>	It's important for my friends to be proud of my schoolwork	1	2	3	4	5
<b>55.</b>	Working with my friends at school improves my schoolwork	1	2	3	4	5
<b>56.</b>	My friends help me to work hard at school	1	2	3	4	5
<b>57.</b>	My father helps me to work hard at school	1	2	3	4	5
<b>58.</b>	My mother helps me to work hard at school	1	2	3	4	5
<b>59.</b>	My teachers help me to work hard at school	1	2	3	4	5
<b>60.</b>	School students should complete high school	1	2	3	4	5
<b>61.</b>	I intend to complete high school	1	2	3	4	5
<b>62.</b>	I intend to go on to college or university	1	2	3	4	5
<b>63.</b>	Most people who are important to me think that I should go to college or university	1	2	3	4	5
<b>64.</b>	I'm the kind of person who would go to college or university	1	2	3	4	5
<b>65.</b>	I'm the kind of person who would complete college or university	1	2	3	4	5
<b>66.</b>	Many of the subjects I learn at school will help me after I leave school	1	2	3	4	5
<b>67.</b>	I personally feel that I should complete college or university	1	2	3	4	5
<b>68.</b>	If my friends go on to college or university, I'm also likely to go on	1	2	3	4	5
<b>69.</b>	What I learn at school will be useful after I leave school	1	2	3	4	5

*Continue on the next page.*

**Section 3: In the next part of the survey we want you to think about a time when you felt really successful at school. Circle the answer you agree with.**

**C. DID YOU FEEL SUCCESSFUL BECAUSE YOU:**

<b>Feel successful</b> <i>Circle your response for each one.</i>		<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Not sure</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
<b>1.</b>	Knew that you had done something well	1	2	3	4	5
<b>2.</b>	Tried hard to do better at your work	1	2	3	4	5
<b>3.</b>	Didn't put yourself above the group	1	2	3	4	5
<b>4.</b>	Didn't show up your friends by doing better than they	1	2	3	4	5
<b>5.</b>	Worked on something interesting	1	2	3	4	5
<b>6.</b>	Were able to solve a problem or understand something for the first time	1	2	3	4	5
<b>7.</b>	Received good grades for a test or schoolwork	1	2	3	4	5
<b>8.</b>	Received a prize or certificate for your work	1	2	3	4	5
<b>9.</b>	Were told by your teacher that you did good work	1	2	3	4	5
<b>10.</b>	Had your good work noticed by the rest of the class	1	2	3	4	5
<b>11.</b>	Set out to beat someone in a test and did	1	2	3	4	5

*Continue on the next page.*

**C. DID YOU FEEL SUCCESSFUL BECAUSE YOU: (Cont)**

<b>(Cont)</b> <b>Feel successful</b> <i>Circle your response for each one.</i>		<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Not sure</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
<b>12.</b>	Set out to do better than other students in classwork and did	1	2	3	4	5
<b>13.</b>	Helped other students in the class with their schoolwork	1	2	3	4	5
<b>14.</b>	Put your friends before your schoolwork	1	2	3	4	5
<b>15.</b>	Had people take notice of what you told them to do	1	2	3	4	5
<b>16.</b>	Were put in charge of a group	1	2	3	4	5
<b>17.</b>	Worked something out for yourself	1	2	3	4	5
<b>18.</b>	Worked well by yourself	1	2	3	4	5
<b>19.</b>	Were confident about your schoolwork	1	2	3	4	5
<b>20.</b>	Planned your schoolwork ahead	1	2	3	4	5
<b>21.</b>	Monitored how well you were doing at school	1	2	3	4	5

*Continue on the next page.*

**Section 4: In the next section we want you to think about other people who are successful at school.**

**What do you think makes them feel successful? Circle your answer.**

**D. PEOPLE YOU CONSIDER TO BE SUCCESSFUL AT SCHOOL:**

<b>Consideration of successful</b> <i>Circle your response for each one.</i>		<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Not sure</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
<b>1.</b>	Like to beat others in tests and assignments	1	2	3	4	5
<b>2.</b>	Always like to be better than others at classwork	1	2	3	4	5
<b>3.</b>	Like to solve problems and understand things	1	2	3	4	5
<b>4.</b>	Find work at school interesting	1	2	3	4	5
<b>5.</b>	Like to get prizes and certificates	1	2	3	4	5
<b>6.</b>	Work to get good grades	1	2	3	4	5
<b>7.</b>	Are always trying to do better at their work	1	2	3	4	5
<b>8.</b>	Worry whether they have done really well	1	2	3	4	5
<b>9.</b>	Like to tell others what to do	1	2	3	4	5
<b>10.</b>	Like to be in charge of the group	1	2	3	4	5
<b>11.</b>	Like to help others with their schoolwork	1	2	3	4	5

*Continue on the next page.*

**D. PEOPLE YOU CONSIDER TO BE SUCCESSFUL AT SCHOOL: (Cont)**

<b>(Cont)</b> <b>Consideration of successful</b> <i>Circle your response for each one.</i>		<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Not sure</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>
<b>12.</b>	Put themselves out for their friends at school	1	2	3	4	5
<b>13.</b>	Never put themselves above their friends	1	2	3	4	5
<b>14.</b>	Try not to show up their friends by being better than they	1	2	3	4	5
<b>15.</b>	Work things out for themselves	1	2	3	4	5
<b>16.</b>	Are able to work well by themselves	1	2	3	4	5
<b>17.</b>	Are confident about their schoolwork	1	2	3	4	5
<b>18.</b>	Like to be praised by the teacher	1	2	3	4	5
<b>19.</b>	Work harder when they are being noticed by others in the class	1	2	3	4	5
<b>20.</b>	Plan ahead to do well at school	1	2	3	4	5
<b>21.</b>	Monitor how they are doing at school	1	2	3	4	5

*Continue on the next page.*

*Instrument : The School Readiness Inventory (Appendix E)*

*Protected instrument – not permitted to copy.*