



# A CORRELATIONAL STUDY BETWEEN ALTRUISM AND ACHIEVEMENT - MOTIVATION AMONG YOUNG ADULTS

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## Abstract

Human beings varies from individual to individual and from group to group. Primarily, man is a social animal; and is being interacted to and dependent on others. They are insufficient and inadequate in themselves and hence need help from time to time. But to a great extent, man is selfish by nature. Machiavelli, an Italian political thinker, says that man is evil by nature and manipulates others in his self-interest, which can be further verified by Darwinian concept of "survival of the fittest". However, Plato was the first thinker who believed that selfish nature of man can be modified by proper education, adequate training and socialization. Early socialization can be seen in peer groups, family and educational environments.

For, the present research paper, the investigator selected the population of young adults whose prosocial behavior is assessed with respect to their success in their educational area. Specifically, prosocial behavior is defined as voluntary behaviors that is carried out to benefit another without anticipation of external rewards. This is called as Altruism. An exploratory correlational research was done to find the level of pro-social behavior in the form of **Altruism** among Young Adults and how that altruism level motivates them to achieve something in their lives, a variable which is called as **Achievement - Motivation**. It was founded that the correlation of the overall altruism and achievement - motivation among 84 samples of young adults was significant.

**Keywords:** Altruism, Achievement – Motivation, Age, Gender, Psychology, Behavior.

## Introduction

The prosocial behavior is defined as voluntary behaviors that is carried out to benefit another without anticipation of external rewards and is performed under two circumstances:

- The behavior is done for its own end.
- The behavior is done as an act of restitution.

The first behavior is called '**altruism**' and the second behavior is called '**restitution**'.

Research into prosocial behavior concentrates on 2 core areas:

1. **Helping behavior**, where the person intentionally and voluntarily helps someone else but may be expecting something in return; and
2. **Altruistic behavior**, where the person helps others but nothing is expected in return.

## **Altruism**

The term Altruism was first published by **Auguste Comte** (Encyclopedia Britannica, 1967). The term comes from the Latin word "*alter*", meaning "*other*", and generally directs an orientation towards others rather towards self. Altruism can also be understood as a voluntary costly behavior motivated by the desire to help another individual.

Altruism is considered central to human morality. Philosophers over the years have understood and explained various issues pertaining to human morality as a product of a person being either selfish or altruistic. The social philosopher pondering over questions relating to an individual's capacity to achieve certain levels of ethics and morals, often explores human mutability and immutability as far as selfish or altruistic impulses are concerned.

The Bhagwat Gita, an esteemed Hindu Scripture, advocates that service towards others is a form of devotion when conceived in the right spirit, thereby equating altruism with prayer and spirituality.

Various researchers argued that altruistic tendencies are biological (**Eisenberg et al., 1999**) which means the root of altruism lies in its genes. Others contended and explained that social learning theory explains that children learn to be altruistic through social interactions, subsuming role modeling of ideal behaviors, and role playing and instructions for stimulating children's helping attitudes (**Konecni and Ebbesen, 1975**); and parenting style and social context (**Eisenberg and Fabes, 1998**).

The reason for this extraordinary behavior can be compassion (**Marsh, 2014**). Another explanation can be need to be socially good and desirable (**Sherif & Sherif, 1935**). Often we help others without any self-interest because we have not made any plan before help, but something tells us that we ought to help others in need. So, norms are social expectations and prescribe proper behavior they ought of our lives. Researchers studying helping behavior have identified that social norms seem to motivate altruism.

## **Levels of Altruism**

**Zwick & Fletcher** (2014) created a compatible and conceptual outline of multiple types of altruism and is grounded in a progressively expanding sense of "self". The hierarchical level of altruism starts from "Self – Interest".

**Self – Interest:** It considers living systems that "act on its own behalf". This level explains that the foundation of action for others is ultimately the action for oneself.

**Kin Altruism:** It indicates the first appearance of altruism in its hierarchy. It can be regarded as the extension of self because individual action is done for the welfare of others. This is possible because the other is not wholly other, but similar in some degree to self, especially when the other is related to self in origin, i.e., a blood relative.

**Interaction Based Altruism/Reciprocal Altruism:** After altruism towards kin, the human behavior goes to altruism towards agents in direction interaction with the individual, i.e., to ‘reciprocity’. This level of altruism is based on the principles of exchange of advantages; and it appears from the direct interactions with the individuals.

**Group Altruism:** Group altruism can be observed at multiple levels ranging from small groups, organizations, communities, nations, etc. Direct biological support happens in small groups. It generally requires – and is, in turn, fed by – between group competition. It also doesn’t succumb to the assumption that there exists a preordained harmony between interests at different levels.

**Human Species Altruism:** Species altruism is grounded on universal ethics that the human other should be regarded as same as the self or you shall love your neighbor as yourselves.

**Sentience Altruism:** It is the sentient beings that are mostly felt to be similar to the self. The Buddha said that the human life is suffering, and the most concentrated kind of suffering is the pain. Henceforth, empathy and compassion are naturally directed towards the other sentient beings who can experience that pain. Sentience altruism is supported by the commonality of genotype, for example, humans share 96% of their genotypes with apes (Mikkelsen et al., 2005).

**Life Altruism:** The life altruism contends that the largest form of altruism reveals in respect of devotion for life. Life, being the result of the interaction between the macrocosm of cosmic energies and the microcosm of the inert matter, mediates this interaction and plays the central role in the universe.

**Being Altruism:** This level of altruism exists at the highest level of hierarchy of altruism. According to the Confucian philosopher Wang Yangming, instead of “no self”, (the focus of Buddhist thought) the ideal moral attitude is “pan self”. This can be expressed through the idea that for the perfect moral person, all things, living or non – living, are one body.

### Approaches to Altruism

Researchers have conceptualized altruism through various approaches. These approaches can be divided into two parts – Pseudo Altruistic Approach and Altruistic Approach (Feigin et al., 2014). Since 1960s, interaction between both the kinds of approaches of altruism has been done, which have been systematically reviewed by Feigin et al. in 2014.

**The Pseudo Altruistic Approach:** this approach argues that apparent altruistic behavior is ultimately motivated by ego and the attainment of internal rewards whether directly or indirectly. Altruism is hence redefined to fit the argument that all human action is self – serving. There exist various approaches under this approach which are:

- Social learning perspective
- Normative approach
- Stage theoretic approach
- Arousal reduction and negative state relief models
- Cost – reward model
- Decision model of bystander intervention
- Reciprocal altruism approach

**The Altruistic Approach:** This approach involves the theories of ‘true’ altruism which is the generosity to the person in distress, without expecting any rewards in return. Self-rewards, praise or return help may be appeared as the byproduct of the helping behavior but motivation to help is only directed towards the end goal of welfare of the victim. Among several approaches of true altruism, some are noted below:

- Kin selection approach
- Autonomous altruism
- Just world hypothesis

- Empathy – altruism approach

## Motivation

Motivation, on the other hand, comes from the Latin word *movere*, which means “to move”. Motivation is what “moves” people to do the things they do. This notion helps in explaining why individuals with the same ability or intelligence perform differently on the same tasks. The study of motivation helps us understand not only why we do the things we do, but also why our behaviors can change when our focus shifts or gets redirected.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, “motives” were merely seen as justifications for volitional decisions (Ach, 1905; James, 1890). It was not until 1936, with the publication of P.T. Young’s *Motivation and Behavior*, that the word “motivation” was first used in a book title. Thereafter, it was no longer assumed that it was volition that controlled access to and execution of an action, but it was the needs and tendencies that determined the behavior in accordance with their strength.

McClelland, student of the learning theorist Hull, played a decisive role in the further enunciation of what was still a rather global definition of “need” within the personality theory approach to motivation research. McClelland et al. (1953) summarized motivation as:

“A motive is the redintegration by a cue of a change in an affective situation”.

The system of striving motivation can thus be seen in a form of a hierarchical structure (Harter, 1978) comprising various subcomponents, like, enjoyment in the activity, happiness on achieving a goal, pride in the competence demonstrated by a performance outcome, etc., which basically allows all the affective, cognitive, and social aspects of abilities to be combined in novel and more complex supervisory systems.

Thus, this allows individuals to respond flexibly to a multitude of situations and differing varieties of incentive patterns, for e.g., high activity incentive/low self- evaluation incentive, or vice versa.

Sometimes people are driven to do something because of an external reward of some sort that is separate from the person, which is called extrinsic motivation. In contrast, intrinsic motivation is the type of motivation in which a person performs an action because the act itself is fun, rewarding, challenging or satisfying in some internal manner.

Motivation is an important factor in everyday life. Everyone’s basic behaviors and feelings are affected by affected by their inner drive to succeed over life’s challenges while we set goals for ourselves. Right from the basic needs of hunger, thirst, shelter, love of others etc. to the most extreme needs of self – esteem and self – actualization (Maslow’s **Need Hierarchy Theory**, 1943), the challenges one overcome to fulfil these needs promote one’s feelings of competence and self – worth after achieving their goals. It provides means to compete with others in order to better oneself and to seek out new information to learn and absorb.

## McClelland’s Achievement – Motivation Theory

The achievement – motivation theory was developed by **David C. McClelland**, who was an American psychologist. McClelland and his associates began a study of three needs that motivates human behavior that is power, affiliation and achievement in the early 1950s. These are:

1. **Need for Achievement (n Ach):** This need is satisfied not by the manifestation of success, which confer status, but with the process of carrying work to its successful completion. This is a drive to excel, to achieve with respect to a set of standards and to strive to succeed.
2. **Need for Power (n Pow):** this need is concerned with making an impact on others, the desire to influence others, and the desire to make difference in people’s lives. People with a high need for power are the ones who like to be in control of people and events.
3. **Need for Affiliation (n Aff):** this need is defined as a desire to establish and maintain friendly and warm relations with other people. This need is similar to Maslow’s Social Needs.



## **Altruism and Achievement – Motivation**

For the present research investigator selected the psychological variables – altruism and achievement – motivation among young adults. Adolescent is the period in which the foundation of future life, major life roles, relationship and working towards long term productive goals are established. Adolescence as a formative stage plays a significant role in one's life (**Berzonsky**, 2011).

The characteristics developed during the adolescent stage is likely to be fixed in the future. School as a miniature society in which a child faces variety of experiences. In this context there is enormous opportunities to help others and to get help from others. So education also paves way for altruism. prosocial is behavior that is aimed at benefiting another person.

A mounting number of papers on adolescents have recognized that altruistic behavior may serve to enrich students' school achievement; and reduce school dropouts, physical violence, bullying and mental health problems (**Kokko et al.**, 2006; **Raskauskas et al.**, 2010; **Haroz et al.**, 2013).

Moreover, individuals who display altruistic behaviors, not only reduce the extent of peer rejection and increase quality of peer relationships (**Carlo et al.**, 2010; **Wang et al.**, 2015), but they also cause pro – social values and attitudes to accumulate in the observers, and motivate the observers to perform altruistic behaviors (**Hardy and Van Vugt**, 2006; **Fehrler and Przepiorka**, 2013; **Luengo Kanacri et al.**, 2017), which further on fosters positive school climates and reduce or completely prevent school violence.

Thus, the current study will examine the underlying mechanism of altruistic behavior in relation to individual achievement – motivation within a school context.

### **Review of Literature**

**McClelland, 1967**, have shown that people with high achievement motivation like to assume personal responsibility for solving problem. The reason for this is that by assuming individual responsibility they get a sense of achievement satisfaction from completing a task.

**Clary & Miller, 1987**, examined the influence of situation and socialization on sustained altruism. They predicted that people with a socialization history of exposure to nurturing parents who were autonomous altruistic would uphold a greater degree of sustained altruism than those with a history of less nurturing parent who modeled altruism at a lesser level.

**Kapila, 1987**, studied the relation between altruism, personality, achievement – motivation and adjustment of doctors. It was found that Doctors on the whole have high altruism. The male doctors had higher altruism than females. Moreover, Doctors, as a whole, were found to have high achievement – motivation. Negligible difference was found between male and female achievement – motivation.

**Ma, 1992**, studied the relationship between altruistic orientation towards human relationships and moral judgements among Chinese people. He found that the relationship between moral judgement and altruistic orientation is significantly present but it is mediated by closeness of a relationship.

**Ahuja, 2002**, administered an experiment on the effect of Self – Learning Modules and Traditional Teaching on achievement in environmental education in relation to altruism and emotional intelligence. It was found that students with high altruism performed significantly better on achievement in environmental education than those with low altruism.

**Duffy & Raque – Bogdan, 2010**, explored the relation between service motivation, or the desire to serve others through one's future career, and vocational outcomes across two studies. It was found that students who feel a stronger desire to use their future career to serve others will be more optimistic regarding their career future.

**Dreber, Essen & Ranehill, 2012**, explored on the preferred gender difference for altruism, risk and competition among adolescents in Sweden. It was found that the boys were less altruistic and more risk taking than girls.

**Sharma, 2015**, studied the significance of altruism in relation to achievement – motivation, locus of control and social reinforcement. It was found that subjects with low achievement – motivation and external locus of control were more altruistic than those with high achievement – motivation and internal locus of control respectively. It was also found that the subjects in ‘social reinforcement condition’ obtained highest scores in altruism while those in social hindrance condition were the poorest in this regard.

**Sarathragavan, 2015**, studied the Need Achievement and its dimensions, Need Altruism, and Social Intelligence and its dimensions on professional course students; and the relationship between the three variables. It was found that the overall need achievement and its dimensions of professional course students is ‘above average’. More than 65% of students possess ‘high and extremely high’ altruistic behavior. The relationship between ‘need achievement’ and ‘need altruism’ of the professional course students is ‘high’ and the relationship between ‘need altruism’ and ‘social intelligence’ of the professional course students is also high. The professional course students differ in overall altruism with respect to the variables like ‘types of professional course’, ‘locality of the college’ and ‘religion’; and they don’t differ in ‘overall altruism with respect to the parental income.

**Yadav, 2014**, developed a study to find the level of altruism in senior secondary students. It was found that there is no significant difference in altruism value of government school and private school boys; both are highly altruistic. Also, both government and private school girls were found to be highly altruistic. It was also found that both government school and private school students are highly altruistic.

### **Objectives**

The present paper has various objectives. These are:

- To assess the level of altruism in young adults.
- To assess the level of achievement – motivation in young adults.
- To explore the relationship/correlation between altruism and achievement – motivation in young adults.

### **Hypotheses**

The hypothesis is a tentative outcome of the study. The hypothesis for the present paper is:

**H<sub>0</sub>** – There exists no relationship between altruism and achievement – motivation.

### **Methodology**

The present study is an exploratory research. It dealt with two different aspects of assessments in psychology, namely, altruism and achievement – motivation. The data is collected from the population of 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> class students of different schools and institutions. The variables working in the study are:

**Independent Variable:** Altruism

**Dependent Variable:** Achievement – Motivation

Primary data has been collected from the students. The design of the study is correlational in which achievement – motivation would serve as the dependent variable and altruism as independent variable.

**Sampling Method:** Initially, a total 96 students aging 16 years to 18 years, studying in class 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> were selected using stratified random sampling from different schools and institutions.

### **Tools Used:**

1. **Altruism Scale by S.N. Rai and S. Singh** – this test assesses the level of altruism of the subjects. A total of 30 items/statements are present in the test, with a set of 3 responses which denotes altruistic, neutral and egoistic. The reliability of the test is 0.84 and validity is 0.63. The scores can be obtained in the range of 0 – 60.

2. **Achievement – Motivation Scale by Pratibha Deo and Asha Mohan** – this test assesses the level of achievement – motivation of the students. A total of 50 items are present. It is a Likert Scale with 5 options as answer, i.e., Always, Frequently, Sometimes, Rarely and Never. The test consists of 37 positive items and 13 negative ones. The test – retest reliability of the tool is 0.69 with 4 – week difference. The validity of the scale is significantly high.

On the basis of the demographic data and scores on each test, a total of 84 students were finalized for the final data analysis, which gave:

$$N = 84$$

The sample of 84 students consisted of 36 females and 48 males. Out of these 84, 11 belonged to Lal Bahadur Shastri Higher Secondary School, 11 students belonged to Awasthi tuitions, 19 students belonged to Colonel's Academy of Radiant Education and the rest, 43 belonged to the Krishi Vidyalaya (Bilaspur, C.G.).

**Procedure:** data collection was done in a group setting. Initially, the students were briefed about the research and the tests. Before the test was carried out, some pre – arrangements were made. Suitable environment was provided to the subjects. The material required was kept ready. A good rapport was established with the subject, prior to the test so that the subject could feel comfortable and at ease. Once the instructions were given, the subjects were asked to proceed with the test and it was made sure that they provided responses carefully. It was made sure that they gave their consent prior to the administration of the test. After the actual administration, the subjects were thanked.

**Statistical Analysis:** this study is a correlational study, therefore, Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was computed between the variables with the help of SPSS. No other statistical analysis was used. This helped in reaching at suitable conclusions.

### Result and Data Analysis

The aim of the data analysis is to organize, classify and summarize the collected data so that it could be comprehended and interpreted to provide answers to the questions that motivated the course of research.

In this research, the following statistical techniques have been used for the data analysis:

1. **Descriptive Analysis** – the mean and standard deviation.
2. **Correlation Analysis** – Pearson Product Moment Correlation (r) Analysis

### **Descriptive Analysis:**

**Table 1. Descriptive Analysis of Altruism of the Samples**

S. No.	Particulars	Values
1.	N	84
2.	Mean	36.38
3.	SD	6.398

As per the observations from Table 1, with respect to the objective: assessing the level of altruism of the subjects – the descriptive analysis of the subjects with respect to their age is described. The total number of observations including males and females is 84.

The mean, a measure of central tendency which gives the average value of all the values, for the age of all the subjects came as 36.38.

As per the standard of variation, i.e., the standard deviation of the variable age, the value is 6.398, which shows that the data values tend to be farther away from the mean of the set in Normal Probability Curve.

**Table 2. Descriptive Analysis of Achievement – Motivation of the Samples**

S. No.	Particulars	Values
1.	N	84
2.	Mean	130.67
3.	SD	19.485

As per the observations from Table 2, with respect to the objective: assessing the level of achievement – motivation of the subjects – the descriptive analysis of the subjects with respect to their age is described. The total number of observations including males and females is 84.

The mean, a measure of central tendency which gives the average value of all the values, for the age of all the subjects came as 130.67.

As per the standard of variation, i.e., the standard deviation of the variable age, the value is 19.485, which shows that the data values tend to be close to the mean of the set in Normal Probability Curve.

### Correlational Analysis:

**Table 3. Correlational Analysis between Altruism and Achievement – Motivation**

S. No.	Particulars	Score AS	Score AMS
1.	Score AS	1	0.312**
2.	Score AMS	0.312**	1

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

Sig (2 – tailed); p - value – 0.004

**H<sub>01</sub>** – There exists no significant relationship between altruism and achievement – motivation among young adults.

Table 3 describes the tabular view of the findings of correlational significance between altruism and achievement – motivation among young adult samples.

Using the SPSS, the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and p – value were found, which came to be 0.312 and 0.004 respectively. The p – value was found to be smaller than the significance level ( $\alpha$ ) of 0.05, which indicates that the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence, there exists a significant relationship between altruism and achievement – motivation. The nature of the correlation is positive but it is weak.

This analysis gives a scattered plot with a non – linear trend as the correlation is significant but it is not (+1, -1), and it is also farther away from (+1, -1), which denotes that it is a weak correlation. The graphical representation through scatter diagram is given in Figure 1 (Appendix).

### Discussion

According to the results of this study, it can be concluded that, with respect to table 3, achievement – motivation is positively correlated to altruism. It was assumed that the students will show high altruism with high achievement – motivation. Even though the level of achievement – motivation is below average, the altruism level peaked to Average or Moderate level, showing altruism’s weak dependence on success of any student. **Kapila (1987)** founded that Doctors on the whole have high altruism and high achievement – motivation. **Ahuja (2002)** disclosed that students with high altruism performed significantly better on achievement in environmental education than those with low altruism. **Duffy & Raque – Bogdan (2010)** found that students who feel a stronger desire to use their future career to serve others will be more optimistic regarding their career future. **Dreber, Essen & Ranehill (2012)** explored on the preferred gender difference



for altruism, risk and competition among adolescents in Sweden; and founded that the boys were less altruistic and more risk taking than girls.

**Sharma (2015)** found that subjects with low achievement – motivation and external locus of control were more altruistic than those with high achievement – motivation and internal locus of control respectively.

**Sarathragavan (2015)** found that the overall need achievement and its dimensions of professional course students is 'above average'. More than 65% of students possess 'high and extremely high' altruistic behavior. The relationship between 'need achievement' and 'need altruism' of the professional course students is 'high'.

However, the relationship between altruism and achievement - motivation also depends on the personality factors, family typology, parenting styles, birth order, social environment and various other factors, which were not covered in this study. The reason behind this lack of efficiency in research findings could be less count of sample and the kinds of tool used.

## **Conclusion**

The present study was an exploratory study and its main focus was to find the nature of relationship between altruism and achievement – motivation among young adults. The level of overall altruism of the students was found to be Average/Moderate and the level of overall Achievement – Motivation came as Below Average Achievement – Motivation. Moreover, it was founded through correlational research design that there exists a significant relationship between altruism and achievement – motivation with the Pearson Product Coefficient as 0.312 at 0.01 level, which indicated positive correlation. It was observed that this relationship was weak in nature which gave a non – linear scattered diagram. It showed that, in today's fast paced world, where people help only to get something in return, these students showed a little hope of showing altruism with respect to their achievement – motivation.

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