

A comparative analysis of Vocational Interests and Achievement Motivation in Govt. Central High School Aizawl

Lianhlupuii Hnamte*

Lynda Zohmingliani**

Abstract:

The study looks at how vocational interest and achievement motivation relate to each other in high school students. A sample of 200 students (100 male and 100 female) in Class 9 and 10 from Govt. Central High School, Aizawl was chosen. Data were collected using a Vocational Interest Inventory and an Achievement Motivation Scale. The results show that there is a weak positive link between vocational interest and achievement motivation, with a correlation of 0.044. This study suggests that schools should provide career guidance so that student's motivations match their vocational interests and help them find the right career path based on their vocational interest. The study also highlights the importance of considering students vocational interest when developing their career goals and providing support to help them achieve those goals.

Introduction

Vocational interest refers to activities that a person enjoys and excels at, particularly in a job context. This interest motivates individuals to prepare for their studies and future careers. However, enjoyment of work alone is not the key to success; achievement motivation is also essential, as it instils the determination not to give up.

Achievement motivation is the internal force that leads a person toward success. It is the determination that motivates him or her to persevere, even during challenging moments. This drive strengthens an individual and enables them to reach their goals.

Thus, education helps students get ready for life and their future careers. Two psychological constructs – vocational interests (what kind of work they enjoy doing) and achievement motivation (how much they want to achieve) plays a crucial role at the high school level.

- **Vocational Interest** refers to a student's inclination towards particular professional tasks. According to Holland's RIASEC theory, these interests can be categorized into Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, and Conventional domains.
- **Achievement Motivation** is the internal drive that pushes an individual to stay committed even at the time of difficulty, and achieve high standards of performance.

While this study focused on a single school, the findings are still relevant for all high school students. The level of competition in the job market makes it challenging to secure a decent employment opportunity. Numerous students select their subjects without taking into account their abilities and preferences. This has led to various issues in their professional lives.

Thus, it is crucial to assist children in recognizing their career interests and motivation

* Research Scholar, Department of Education, Mizoram University

** Professor, Department of Education, Mizoram University

for achievement. To enable children to achieve their optimal potential, schools must focus on these two aspects. The outcomes will aid teachers and parents in learning how to mentor and support children.

While many students acquire high achievement motivation, they often need a clear vocational direction. This study explores how these two variables interact within the context of Government Central High School situated in College veng, Aizawl.

Keywords: *Vocational Interests, Achievement Motivation, Deo-Mohan n-Ach Scale, Gender differences, Government Central High School, Holland's theory.*

Rationale of the study

This study addresses the crucial need to move from a strictly academic focus to a comprehensive understanding of achievement motivation and vocational interest among high school students in accordance with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. A contextualized application of Holland's RIASEC Model to a local demographic frequently disregarded in Western-centric research is necessary since, Mizo students usually have a strong internal drive to succeed, there is still a significant gap between their general ambition and specific career direction. By examining students in the formative stages of Classes 9 and 10, this research provides a vital rationale for institutionalizing personalized career guidance, ensuring that students' aspirations are systematically channelled into professional paths that match their inherent interest profiles.

Review of related study

Chan and Rounds (1999) study, "The Relation between Vocational Interests and the Motivation to Lead," uses multidimensional scaling to explore the relationship of vocational interests based on Holland's hexagonal model and a new individual differences construct called the motivation to lead (MTL). This study has theoretical implications for job versus role interests in work settings. In this way, the research suggests that a complex job/role interest framework exists when it comes to vocational interests and the motivation to lead, as identified through multidimensional scaling.

Leuty, Hansen, and Speaks (2015) presented an innovative study titled "Vocational and Leisure Interests: A Profile-Level Approach to Examining Interests," the research work helps on the psychology of interests to look at interests in a holistic manner instead of a segmented approach. Vocational and leisure interests also do not operate in the cognitive domain alone, as the authors identify and interpret them through analysis and discussion.

The paper titled "Investigating Measures of Achievement Motivation(s)" by Ziegler et al. (2010), looks into the difference between implicit and explicit achievement motivation. It tests the predictive validity of both these constructs in different contexts and checks if some explicit measures form a common construct, as empirical evidence supports this idea. There are three implicit and three explicit achievement motivation measures included in this study along with an intelligence test and a Big 5 questionnaire from a sample size of 150 respondents. The classification of explicit measures is based on either Murray's or McClelland's theory. The findings provide evidence for a common construct among explicit measures but not among implicit measures; however, the presumed predictions did not hold true across all tests and vanished when intelligence was controlled.

Moore, Grabsch, and Rotter's (2010) study, "Using Achievement Motivation Theory to Explain Student Participation in a Residential Leadership Learning Community," delves into the intricacies of student motivation within a voluntary, residential leadership learning community using McClelland's Achievement Motivation Theory (McClelland, 1958, 1961). The research, pub-

lished in the Journal of Leadership Education, investigates the primary motives of 89 incoming freshmen who participated in the program during the Fall 2009 semester. This study contributes valuable insights into understanding the diverse motivational factors that drive students to participate in leadership development programs. By applying McClelland's Achievement Motivation Theory, the research sheds light on the multifaceted nature of student motives, emphasizing the significance of both personal achievement and social affiliation.

Statement of the problem

The statement of the problem is "A comparative analysis of Vocational Interests and Achievement Motivation in Govt. Central High School Aizawl".

Objectives

1. To identify the prevailing vocational interests of students using the RIASEC model.
2. To study the level of achievement motivation of the students.
3. To compare the vocational interests of Class 9 and Class 10 students.
4. To compare the achievement motivation of Class 9 and Class 10 students.
5. To study the correlation between achievement motivation and vocational interests of the students.

Hypothesis

1. There is no significant difference in vocational interests between class 9 and class 10 students.
2. There is no significant difference in achievement motivation between class 9 and class 10 students.
3. There is no significant difference between vocational interests and achievement motivation of the students.

Methodology

• Description of the test:

- o *Realistic* – They enjoy working with tools and they like to work outdoors. They prefer to deal with objects rather than ideas or people.
- o *Investigative* – They give more attention to science and scientific activities. They generally are task oriented and not very much enjoy working around other people. Their preference is to think through problems rather than acting upon them. They are likely to be creative when it comes to scientific activities.
- o *Artistic* – They are interested in problems that can be dealt with self-expression in artistic way. They tend to avoid tasks that are highly structured or require physical strength and usually are more sensitive and emotional.
- o *Social* – Social people are getting well with other and care for the welfare of others. They like attention and enjoy being at the centre of the group. They are generally joyful, famous and good leaders.
- o *Enterprising* – They are good in persuading others. They see themselves as enthusiastic, pro-active, explorative and self-confident. They are leadership enthusiast and are good orator.
- o *Conventional* - They prefer highly structured verbal and numerical tasks of office work. They are at ease working in a well-established chain of command, respond to power, and blend in well with large organizations without pursuing leadership. They characterize themselves as conventional and trustworthy, and they would rather know exactly what is expected of them. They are best at clearly defined tasks and show little interest in problems involving physical skills or close

interpersonal relationships.

- **Sample:** The sample was collected based on purposive sampling technique, focusing on 200 students from Class 9 and Class 10. Out of which, 100 students were male and 100 students were female.
- **Tools:** To study the vocational interests of the students, Self-developed Vocational Interest Inventory (RIASEC-based) was used and to study the achievement motivation of the students, Deo Mohan Achievement Motivation Scale developed by Deo Mohan was employed.
- **Collection of data:** Permission was sought in advance from the School Principal. Following the approved application, the investigator went to the school. After instruction was given, the vocational interest inventory and achievement motivation test was administered. The completed sheet was collected. The scores were tabulated, analysed and interpreted.
- **Data Analysis:** To analyze the data, Descriptive statistics (Mean and Percentage) and Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (r) were used.

Analysis and interpretation

Objective 1: Vocational interests of the students:

Table No. 1

Type	Mean scores (N=200)	Percentage
Conventional	31.1	20.4%
Investigative	26.1	17.1%
Artistic	25.2	16.5%
Enterprising	24.6	16.1%
Social	24.5	16.0%
Realistic	21	13.7%

Source: Field Work

From the Table No. 1, it can be observed that students scored highest in Conventional with the mean score of 31.1. This score is higher than all other type of interest. The result indicates that this group of student preferred structured and organized task which includes data management, clerical work or adhering instructions. This type of interest is followed by Investigative (26.1) and Artistic (25.2) showing moderate preference toward analytical or intellectual thinking, creative and expressive activities. The scores of these two types of interests are fairly close to each other. The Enterprising (24.6) and the social (24.5) are also exist in close proximity revealing equal interest in leadership or persuasion and people-oriented as well as helping roles among the student group. The least preferred interest type is Realistic (21) suggesting limited inclination towards working with tools and machinery.

Objective 2: Level of achievement motivation of the students:

Table No. 2

Level	Students	%	Mean
Very High (≥ 137)	27	13.5%	117.5
High (118–136)	63	31.5%	
Average (99–117)	71	35.5%	
Low (80–98)	35	17.5%	
Very Low (< 80)	4	2.0%	

Source: Field Work

Table No. 2 shows that the mean value is 117.5 which is lower than the published national norm of approximately 134. This indicates that the student group has moderate achievement

drive which is not high level of motivation. About 45% of students fall in the high or very high level, which means that almost half of the students have a strong inner drive to succeed. 19.5% of the students are in the low or very low level of achievement motivation.

Objective 3: Vocational interests of Class 9 and Class 10 students.

Table No. 3

Area	Group	N	Mean	SD	MD	t	p
Realistic	Class 9	100	21.06	5.978	.210	.238	.812
	Class 10	100	20.85	6.514			
Investigative	Class 9	100	26.42	6.836	.640	.681	.496
	Class 10	100	25.78	6.443			
Artistic	Class 9	100	25.61	6.535	.740	.792	.429
	Class 10	100	24.87	6.683			
Social	Class 9	100	25.26	6.517	1.550	1.610	.109
	Class 10	100	23.71	7.083			
Enterprising	Class 9	100	25.48	6.962	1.740	1.714	.088
	Class 10	100	23.74	7.389			
Conventional	Class 9	100	31.27	7.145	.280	.295	.768
	Class 10	100	30.99	6.227			

Source: Field Work

Table No. 3 reveals that the comparison between Class 9 and Class 10 students across the six dimensions exhibits no statistically significant differences. Although Class 9 students showed slightly higher mean scores in most areas, the differences were minimal and not significant ($p > 0.05$), the gap between them could have happened by chance. This indicates that class-wise does not have a significant impact on vocational interests in this study. Thus, the hypothesis No.1 which states that 'There is no significant difference in vocational interests between class 9 and class 10 students' is accepted.

Objective 4: Achievement motivation of Class 9 and Class 10 students.

Table No. 4

Groups	Number	Mean	SD	MD	T Value	Sig. Level
Class 9	100	117.82	18.300	0.680	0.260	NS
Class 10	100	117.14	18.714			

Source: Field Work

From table No. 4, it is observed that Class 9 students obtained a mean score of 117.82, while Class 10 students obtained a mean score of 117.14. The mean difference is only 0.68. This t-value for the two compared groups is found to be 0.260 which is not significant at any level, It may be inferred that the difference between the two groups is not statistically significant. Therefore, the hypothesis No.2 which states that 'There is no significant difference in achievement motivation between class 9 and class 10 students' is accepted.

Objective 5: Correlation between Achievement Motivation and Vocational Interests of the students.

Table No. 4

Variable	Pearson r	Sig. (2-tailed)	N	Sig. Level
Total_VIR × Total_AM	.044	.536	200	NS

Source: Field Work

The above table revealed the correlation between Vocational Interest (VIR) and Total Achievement Motivation (AM). To find out the relationship of these two variables, Pearson correlation was used and the result was 0.044 which is very small number. In line with official research rules, any number below .10 is considered negligible signifying that it is so small that it basically does not count. Consequently, the result is not statistically significant (NS). Thus, the hypothesis No.3 which states that 'There is no significant difference between vocational interests and achievement motivation of the students' is accepted.

Discussion:

- This study revealed that students have the highest preference for Conventional interests (mean = 31.1), indicating a strong inclination toward structured, rule-based, and organized tasks. Investigative (26.1) and Artistic (25.2) scores suggest that students also possess analytical and creative abilities, though these may not be fully developed due to limited opportunities. The lowest score in Realistic (21) indicates less interest in hands-on or technical work, possibly due to lack of exposure. Students lean towards structured academic paths, highlighting the need for broader career exposure and skill-based.
- The group shows a moderate level of achievement motivation, with an average score of 117.5, which is lower than the national norm of about 134. Although 45% of students have high or very high motivation, nearly 20% fall into the low motivation category and may need focused support to improve their motivation levels.
- Although Class 9 students have slightly higher mean scores in most areas of vocational interests, these differences are very small and not meaningful, students need more exposure to different careers, practical activities, and counselling support at an earlier stage to help them make informed choices.
- The achievement motivation remains stable across classes 9 and 10, and the transition from these classes does not significantly influence students' levels in this area.
- The findings highlight that even highly motivated students require professional career counselling to discover their true vocational path. Without alignment, high motivation may be misdirected.

Conclusion:

The study comes to the conclusion that although the students' motivation for achievement varies, their career interests are still in the early stages of development. From the findings, the necessity has been observed for treating vocational interest and achievement motivation as distinct dimension in student profiling, career guidance and counselling, and in planning educational strategy. Career counsellors and educators should deal both constructs independently – helping students identify passion - driven career pathways, and at the same time executing achievement-enhancement strategies to uplift their achievement drive especially those students in the lower motivation level. Future study should study additional variables such as locale, socio-economic background, management of the school; parental influence etc. so that, the factors that shape both vocational interest and achievement motivation in student should be understood better. Moreover, the weak correlation between the two implies that the desire to succeed is not the only factor influencing professional interest. In order to assist students in bridging the gap between their aspirations and their future careers, it is advised that schools establish comprehensive career orientation programs, such as "Exposure to Vocational Education" and "Career Counseling."

Works Cited

- Atkinson, J. W. (1964). *An introduction to motivation*. Van Nostrand.
- Chan, K. Y., & Rounds, J. (1999). "The relation between vocational interests and the motivation to lead." *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 84(4), 620–633. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.84.4.620>
- Deo, P., & Mohan, A. (1985). *Deo-Mohan achievement motivation scale (n-Ach)*. Agra Psychological Research Cell.
- Holland, J. L. (1997). *Making vocational choices: A theory of vocational personalities and work environments (3rd ed.)*. Psychological Assessment Resources.
- Leuty, M. E., Hansen, J.-C., & Speaks, S. Z. (2015). "Vocational and leisure interests: A profile-level approach to examining interests." *Journal of Career Assessment*, 24(2), 215–239. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1069072715580321>
- McClelland, D. C. (1961). *The achieving society*. Van Nostrand. <https://doi.org/10.1037/14359-000>
- McClelland, D. C., Atkinson, J. W., Clark, R. A., & Lowell, E. L. (1953). *The achievement motive*. Appleton-Century-Crofts. <https://doi.org/10.1037/11144-000>
- Moore, L. L., Grabsch, D. K., & Rotter, C. (2010). "Using achievement motivation theory to explain student participation in a residential leadership learning community." *Journal of Leadership Education*, 9(2), 1–13.
- Ziegler, M., Schmukle, S. C., Egloff, B., & Bühner, M. (2010). "Investigating measures of achievement motivation(s)." *Journal of Individual Differences*, 31(1), 15–21.