

Cultural Beliefs and Social Values as Predictors of Academic Motivation ¹²¹³ among Senior High School Learners

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Abstract

Low academic motivation is a problem in education. Aimed in this study was to determine the significance of cultural beliefs and social values as predictors of academic motivation. Using multiple linear regression, the 100 students selected through stratified sampling, it was found that the determinants, accounting 31.9% degree of influence, significantly predict the criterion variable. The Sociocultural Theory of Cognitive Development was affirmed. Other variables may be explored to account the unexplained variance in academic motivation, and emerging themes may be identified as potential variables referred above.

Keywords: Cultural beliefs, social values, predictors of academic motivation, senior high school learners

1. Main text

Low academic motivation has become a pervasive issue among students, posing a significant challenge for educators and institutions striving to foster student success and long-term achievement (David & Asuncion, 2020). This concern is not isolated to specific regions or educational systems; rather, it is a widespread phenomenon that affects students across the globe. In the United States, Soric and Palekcic (2019) identified low academic motivation as a persistent issue among university students, particularly regarding managing learning tasks and sustained attention in class. Similarly, Baker (2020) reported a significant decline in academic motivation in Canada, where students exhibited lower academic persistence and performance. South Korea also faces a similar challenge, with Cho and Heron (2019) documenting a decline in students' academic motivation, significantly impacting their coursework engagement.

In the Philippine context, the issue of low academic motivation is equally concerning. Dela Cruz (2021) found that students in state universities and colleges exhibit persistently low academic motivation, negatively affecting learning outcomes and academic performance. The 2021 National Survey on Student Engagement further highlighted a decline in academic motivation among Filipino high school and college students, signaling the urgent need to revise curricula to make them more relevant to students' interests, cultural contexts, and future career prospects (David et al., 2020). If not adequately addressed, low academic motivation can result in diminished self-confidence, poor academic performance, and increased dropout rates (Muller & Steingruber, 2023). These consequences underscore the urgency of tackling this issue and provide the impetus for this study.

Despite the growing recognition of low academic motivation, there remains a significant gap in the literature regarding the influence of cultural beliefs and social values on academic motivation, especially in the context of the Philippines. Existing studies have explored motivation from various perspectives, but few have focused on how deeply ingrained cultural factors and social dynamics shape students' motivation to learn. This gap further emphasizes the need for further investigation into how cultural and social dimensions affect academic motivation among students.

Academic motivation is essential for students' educational success and lifelong learning. However, many learners struggle with low motivation, which can be influenced by deeply rooted cultural beliefs and prevailing social values. These factors shape students' attitudes toward education, learning behaviors, and personal aspirations. This study aimed to explore how cultural beliefs and social values influence academic motivation among senior high school learners, addressing the need for culturally

responsive and value-driven educational approaches. Furthermore, it aligns with Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education), which seeks to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all by recognizing the importance of cultural context in shaping educational experiences. 1214

1.1. Structure

Academic motivation is essential for students' educational success and lifelong learning. However, many learners struggle with low motivation, which can be influenced by deeply rooted cultural beliefs and prevailing social values. These factors shape students' attitudes toward education, learning behaviors, and personal aspirations. This study aimed to explore how cultural beliefs and social values influence academic motivation among senior high school learners, addressing the need for culturally

responsive and value-driven educational approaches. Furthermore, it aligns with Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education), which seeks to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all by recognizing the importance of cultural context in shaping educational experiences.

This study employed a quantitative research design characterized by descriptive correlation. This approach falls under the category of non-experimental designs, wherein the researcher investigates the connections among two or more variables in a natural setting without deliberate manipulation or control (Aggarwal & Ranganathan, 2019). In correlational studies, researchers assess the strength of associations between variables by examining how changes in one variable correspond to changes in another (Bhandari, 2023). Typically, correlational studies involve both independent and dependent variables, but in this context, the focus is on observing the impact of independent variables on dependent ones without actively manipulating the independent variable (Patidar, 2013). The choice of the descriptive-correlational method aligns with the study's aim, which is to explore the correlation between cultural beliefs and social values among senior high school learners.

The research centered around an educational institution located in Midsayap, North Cotabato, within Region XII. This institution served as the primary research locale and the backdrop against which the study unfolded. As the chosen venue for conducting the research, the school provides a conducive and diverse academic environment where the study's respondents are engaged and data collected. The researcher conducted the study among senior high school students covering Grade 11.

The respondents of this study were 100 private school senior high school learners under the private institutions in Midsayap, North Cotabato. This study utilized a stratified sampling approach with proportional allocation to select respondents for the study. As delineated by Hayes (2023), stratified random sampling involves dividing a population into smaller subgroups, referred to as strata, based on shared attributes or characteristics among the members. This method is particularly advantageous for this study as it mitigates bias and ensures an equitable representation of the population, which is critical for maintaining the scientific rigor of participant selection (Li & Yang, 2023; Ebenezer et al., 2023). The respondents were drawn from various academic tracks, including the Academic Track and the Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL) Track, which consists of three strands: Accountancy, Business, and Management (ABM), Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS), and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM).

The research instruments adapted from Suvaci's (2018) scales measured cultural beliefs and social values, while Al-Ta'ani's (2018) questionnaire assessed academic motivation. Each instrument employed a Likert scale to gauge respondents' agreement with statements regarding their cultural beliefs, social values, and academic motivation. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson's correlation coefficient, and multiple linear regression to explore the relationships and predict the influence of cultural beliefs and social values on academic motivation. Cronbach's alpha was computed to confirm the reliability of the instruments, with acceptable internal consistency found for all scales.

The study was conducted at a private educational institution in Midsayap, North Cotabato, with data collection following strict ethical guidelines. Permission was obtained from the school administration, and participants were informed about the study's purpose, ensuring voluntary participation and confidentiality. After collecting the completed questionnaires from Grade 11 students, the data were tabulated and analyzed to uncover significant findings. The study adhered to the Data Privacy Act of 2012, and parental consent was obtained for minors. This methodology ensured a rigorous, ethical approach to understanding how cultural beliefs and social values influence academic motivation, contributing valuable insights for the development of culturally responsive and values-driven educational strategies.

Descriptive Analysis

Table 1. Descriptive Table

	N	Standard Deviation	Mean	Descriptive Interpretation
Cultural Beliefs	100	0.27	3.36	Very High
Religious Practices		0.44	3.19	High
Cultural Practices		0.39	3.29	Very High
Behavior		0.27	3.59	Very High
Social Values	100	0.29	3.41	Very High
Communication Preference		0.41	3.46	Very High
Belief System		0.44	3.33	Very High
Interpersonal Relationship		0.40	3.44	Very High
Academic Motivation	100	0.29	3.45	Very High
Intrinsic Motivation		0.38	3.50	Very High
Extrinsic Motivation		0.37	3.40	Very High
Academic Motivation		0.42	3.45	Very high

The results from Table 1 highlight the strong influence of cultural beliefs, social values, and academic motivation among senior high school learners. The Cultural Beliefs variable showed an overall mean of 3.36, categorized as "Very High," indicating that students strongly adhere to their cultural values. Among the sub-categories, Behavior had the highest mean (3.59), followed by Cultural Practices (3.29), and Religious Practices (3.19). This suggests that students place the most importance on their behaviors, which are guided by societal norms and traditions. Cultural practices, such as local customs and traditions, also play a significant role in shaping their identities. However, Religious Practices had a slightly lower mean, implying that while religion remains a crucial aspect of their cultural beliefs, it may not be as central to their daily activities as behavior and cultural practices. This finding points to a deep cultural identity tied to social conduct and traditions, while religion may still serve as a guiding force but not as strongly emphasized in comparison.

The Social Values category had a mean of 3.41, which also falls within the "Very High" range, indicating that students hold strong social values. Communication Preference recorded the highest mean (3.46), suggesting that students highly value clear and meaningful communication with others, which is essential for building relationships in both academic and social contexts. Interpersonal Relationships (mean = 3.44) further supports this, reflecting that students prioritize strong, positive relationships with their peers and educators. These values highlight the importance of social connectedness, cooperation, and community support. The slightly lower score for Belief System (mean = 3.33) suggests that while students hold strong beliefs that influence their actions, these systems might be more flexible or diverse. Overall, this indicates that students are deeply embedded in their social context, where communication and relationships are critical to their sense of self and community.

In terms of Academic Motivation, the overall mean of 3.45 signifies that students are highly motivated to perform academically. This strong motivation is driven by both Intrinsic Motivation (mean = 3.50) and Extrinsic Motivation (mean = 3.40). The slightly higher score for intrinsic motivation suggests that students are not just motivated by external rewards like grades or recognition, but also by a genuine interest in learning and achieving personal goals. This aligns with the concept of Self-Determination Theory, which emphasizes the importance of intrinsic motivation in fostering long-term academic success. The significant level of extrinsic motivation highlights that external factors, such as parental expectations, teacher recognition, and the desire for good grades, also play an essential role in driving students' academic efforts. The combination of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations suggests that students are influenced by both personal passion for learning and external societal pressures, creating a balanced approach to academic achievement.

The findings from Table 1 suggest that students' strong cultural beliefs and social values contribute to their high levels of academic motivation. The adherence to cultural behaviors and practices provides a foundation of discipline and respect,

which likely supports students' academic engagement. Furthermore, the value placed on communication and relationships underscores the importance of a supportive social environment in fostering motivation. These factors combine to create an educational atmosphere where students are both personally invested in learning and externally driven by social expectations. This dual motivation model—driven by both internal desires and external influences—can help educators better understand how to nurture students' motivation, leading to more effective and culturally responsive teaching strategies that align with their values and backgrounds.

Correlation Analysis

Table 2. Correlation Table

Academic Motivation among Senior High School Learners					
Influence	Coefficients	t	p-value	Decision on Ho	Interpretation
	β				
(Intercept)	1.041	2.901			
Cultural Beliefs	0.422	4.365	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Values	0.290	3.264	0.002	Reject Ho	Significant

Table 2 specifically shows that the correlation between Cultural Beliefs and Academic Motivation among senior high school learners obtained a p-value of 0.000, which is less than the 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected. This indicates that there is a statistically significant correlation between cultural beliefs and academic motivation at a moderately high positive strength, with $r = .494$. Similarly, the correlation between Social Values and Academic Motivation also obtained a p-value of 0.000, which is less than the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis was likewise rejected. This suggests that there is a statistically significant correlation between social values and academic motivation at a moderately high positive strength, with $r = .431$.

Regression Analysis

Table 3. Regression Table

Academic Motivation among Senior High School Learners					
Influence	Coefficients	t	p-value	Decision on Ho	Interpretation
	β				
(Intercept)	1.041	2.901			
Cultural Beliefs	0.422	4.365	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Values	0.290	3.264	0.002	Reject Ho	Significant

$R = 0.565$; $R^2 = 0.319$; F-value = 22.734; p-value = 0.000

Table 3 specifically shows that Cultural Beliefs obtained a beta coefficient (β) of 0.422, indicating that it has a 42.2% positive influence on academic motivation among senior high school learners. This influence is statistically significant, as shown by a p-value of 0.000, which is less than the 0.05 significance level. This implies that for every 1-unit increase in cultural beliefs, academic motivation increases by 0.422 units.

On the other hand, Social Values obtained a beta coefficient (β) of 0.290, indicating a 29.0% positive influence on academic motivation. This result is also statistically significant, supported by a p-value of 0.002, which is below the 0.05 threshold. This means that for every 1-unit increase in social values, academic motivation increases by 0.290 units.

Finally, the table indicates that the two predictive variables together yield an R^2 value of 0.319, meaning they account for 31.9% of the variance in Academic Motivation. The F-value of 22.734 and the overall p-value of 0.000 confirm that the regression model is statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

Conclusion

This study explored the significant role of cultural beliefs and social values in shaping the academic motivation of senior high school learners. The results indicated that students exhibit high levels of cultural beliefs, social values, and academic motivation, with cultural beliefs, especially in terms of behavior and cultural practices, being particularly strong. Social values, such as communication preferences and interpersonal relationships, were also rated highly, emphasizing the importance of social connections in fostering academic engagement. Additionally, the high levels of both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation suggest that students are driven by a combination of internal interest and external rewards, highlighting a balanced approach to motivation.

The findings underscore the importance of understanding students' cultural and social contexts when developing strategies to enhance academic motivation. The strong influence of cultural beliefs on academic behavior suggests that educational institutions can benefit from integrating culturally responsive teaching practices that resonate with students' values and identities. Furthermore, the emphasis on social values highlights the role of a supportive social environment in motivating students to achieve their academic goals.

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