

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE

LOVE OF LEARNING: AFFLUENT MOTHERS' MOTIVATIONAL PRACTICES

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
For the degree of Master of Arts  
in Educational Psychology

By

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## Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my exceptional family and friends. Your constant encouragement, support, love, and guidance has given me the strength and knowledge to surpass all obstacles in life. Thank you for your endless humor and positive outlook on all challenges.

This thesis is dedicated to my parents. To my father, Rouben Sulahian, who has instilled the value of ambition, dedication, and hard work and showed me unique ways to comprehend that success cannot be achieved without love and support. To my mother, Lucy Sulahian, who has shown me that through kindness, patience, and understanding the world can be a place of harmonious opportunities. I have followed in your footsteps and developed the same passions and dreams for education as you. I hope to make them reality through Learn to the Max™. I love you both always.

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## ABSTRACT

### LOVE OF LEARNING

By

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The purpose of this study is to explore the relationship between the motivation practices of affluent mothers and their children's motivation across academic subject areas, using the Children's Academic Intrinsic Motivation Inventory (CAIMI) (Gottfried, A.E., 2006), the Parental Motivational Practices Scale (PMPS) (Gottfried, A. E., Gottfried, A. W., & Fleming, J. S., 1994), and Motivation Interview Questions developed specifically for this study. This uses mixed-methods along with ethnographic research to delve into the bases of motivation in affluent families. The study consists of 10 mothers and their 10 children who were aged 8 to 13 ( $M=11.3$ ,  $SD= 2.11$ ; 50% male, 50% female) and of European-American and Middle Eastern ethnicity attending private and public schools in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) and Los Virgenes Unified School District (LVUSD). Interviews with the mothers involved in the study, yielded opinions about intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and their involvement in the children's learning success were examined. Overall, no significant correlations between mothers' intrinsic or extrinsic motivational practices and their children's CAIMI scores were found. Discussion will focus on the implications for future research on the relationship between affluent mothers' motivation practices and their children's motivation in various subject areas, and suggestions to educators for recognition of each child's unique motivational needs.

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

"Though a man without money is poor, a man with nothing but money is still poorer. Worldly gifts cannot bear up the spirits from fainting and sinking when trials and troubles come, any more than headache can be cured by a golden crown or toothache by a chain of pearls."

Anonymous

Throughout history there has been a strong emphasis placed on the importance of discovering the different factors that motivate learners. Several theorists, among them Fredrick Herzberg, David McClelland, and Abraham Maslow, have developed extensive theories regarding the dynamic psychological aspects of motivation (Herzberg, 1987; McClelland, 1955; Maslow, 1943). Naturally, there are several sociocultural pressures on all individuals which greatly impact all learners in terms of their motivation. When an individual's thoughts, feelings, actions, and beliefs are influenced by a social or cultural factor, one often develops a framework on which to build ones development and learning (Forgas, Williams, & Laham, 2004). Motivation is multifold; it can be shaped by many sociocultural influences, including but not limited to, home environments, peers, socioeconomic status, parental involvement, parenting styles, early intervention programs, and community involvement.

Some studies have focused on the reasons why some students lack motivation in the realm of academics (Green-Demers, Legault, Pelletier, & Pelletier, 2008). Several key elements have been proven to contribute to a lower motivation level, including poverty, the transition from middle school to high school, parental involvement, family dynamics, and even the lack of a tutor or mentor. Most studies in this area have focused on the population suffering from poverty.

It is assumed in most cases that the lack of resources, mentors, parental involvement, and proper education are causes of lack of academic motivation in this group.

### **Statement of the Problem**

What several studies have failed to focus on is the levels of motivation for children from affluent families. In many ways, affluence can be subjective; for the purpose of this paper affluent people will be defined as a group who live in a wealthy, upper-class neighborhood, including Encino, Bel-Air, Beverly Hills, Studio City, and West Los Angeles, California.

There is a pervasive belief that because affluent families have resources, the lack of motivation in that population does not merit in-depth studies (Recum, 1981). However, affluent learners suffer from stress and anxiety, engage in cheating, and place a strong emphasis on surpassing their peers academically (Howard & Gaztambide-Fernandez, 2012). However, this population has not been adequately studied.

Motivation is unique to each individual but is largely shaped based on one's upbringing. A mother's motivational influences can either promote greater or hinder drastically her child's motivation. Motivation is related to emotions, ideas, control, and behaviors (Harmon-Jones and Honk, 2012). Motivation is multifaceted and can be related to just about every aspect in one's life. Motivation can be shaped and molded, and even triggered by personal experiences (Grossberg, 1974).

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this paper is to study the relationship between students' motivation and the parental motivation practices of their mothers, adding to existing literature and research. Through a series of interview questions and questionnaires, several aspects of motivation will be studied. The study will examine and analyze the relationship of parental involvement on

motivation in learning and development for affluent school aged children. School aged children are those who range between the ages of 6 to 17. Since there is minimal amount of research on this population, the purpose of this study is also to provide educators with new information to increase affluent student school motivation and love of learning. With the widening gap between the poor and rich, this issue is bound to be one for growing concern.

### **Definitions of Relevant Terms**

**Extrinsic Motivation** can be defined as engaging in an activity for pleasures or rewards independent of the activity itself (Deci, Koestner, & Ryan 2001).

**Intrinsic Motivation** is engaging in an activity for the exclusive pleasure of the activity and enjoyment of the learning process, rather than for external incentive (White, 1959).

**Locus of Control** refers to one's expectations of where control over certain events exists (Rotter, 1954).

**Parental Involvement** is defined as parents' roles in educating their children in the home environment and in school (Christenson & Sheridean, 2001).

**Reinforcement** is the positive or negative consequence of a particular behavior intended to either promote the behavior or hinder it (Skinner, 1953).

**Self-efficacy** is the beliefs that determine how people, think, behave, feel, and motivate themselves (Bandura, 1994).

### **Research Hypotheses**

On the basis of prior evidence, along with research, observations, and interviews the following hypotheses were formulated: 1) A child's intrinsic motivation is correlated with parental motivation and involvement; 2) The more a child's mother assumes that her child is

dependent on a hired tutor, the lower a child's intrinsic motivation and the lower the mother's intrinsic motivation.

### **Assumptions**

The main purpose of this study is to determine whether or not affluent mothers' intrinsic or extrinsic motivation is related to that of their children. Several assumptions were made.

1. Participants answer questions on the CAIMI, PMPS, and interviews objectively, independently, and honestly.
2. All student participants understand the questions on the CAIMI.
3. All mother participants understand the questions on the PMPS and the interview.
4. There are no errors in the data entry.
5. There are no inaccuracies in the data analyses.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

For centuries educational and developmental theorists who have studied the interactive socialization process of parents and children (Spera, 2005). The concept of socialization refers to how a child acquires skills that are obligatory for thriving in a particular culture or family. A child usually will gain socialization skills such as education, observation, experiences, skills, motives, attitudes, and behaviors with the guidance of his or her parent(s) (Spera, 2005).

Parents who are involved in a child's learning and development process tend to spend significant amounts of time guiding the child before he or she enters school. The parent's involvement and parenting style shapes a child's motivation for schooling.

Studies show that parents who provide their children with stimulating activities such as providing ample reading materials and musical instruments, and those who have higher expectations regarding their children's achievement, influence their children's intrinsic motivation positively (Gottfried, 1985). Some studies also show that parents who provide their children with extracurricular lessons, such as afterschool tutors, also influence their children's intrinsic motivation positively (Gottfried, 1985). Yet, studies did not provide the effects of full-time tutors on parental involvement. Limited studies have been done to demonstrate whether a relationship exists between affluence and educational drawbacks, but an ample amount of researchers have studied the unique educational practices of affluent students and their parents (Aven & Chrisp, 1971; Floud, 1962; Gross, 2008; Kleinert, 1968; Osborne, 1986; Pine, 1966; Recum, 1981).

## **The Role of Parental Involvement on a Learner's Motivation**

There are distinctions between the concepts of parenting styles and parenting practices (Spera, 2005) that are essential to note when analyzing parental involvement in his or her child's academic motivation and progress. One tends to be more of an emotional connection while the other is a physical concept. A parenting style is the emotional environment in which parents educate and nurture their children (Spera, 2005), while parenting practices are particular behaviors of parents which intend to socialize their children (Spera, 2005). Both concepts set the foundation for and the connection between student motivation and parental involvement.

### **Importance of Parental Involvement in Intrinsic Motivation**

Gottfried, Fleming, and Gottfried (1994) researched the impact of parental motivational practices in children's academic intrinsic motivation and achievement. The researchers focused their study on academic intrinsic motivation by studying parents' task- intrinsic and task- extrinsic practices. Task-intrinsic practices are ones which promote curiosity, persistence, and pleasure in learning, while task-extrinsic practices stress external control and decrease independence. Task-intrinsic practices positively shape intrinsic motivation, while task-extrinsic practices negatively affect intrinsic motivation (Gottfried et al.,1994).

Gottfried et al. surveyed mothers using a 6-point rating scale asking about their practices regarding the support of their child's academic intrinsic motivation and their task-extrinsic practices based upon their child's fine or imperfect school performance. The researchers found that parental motivational practices have a noteworthy impact on academic intrinsic motivation (Gottfried et al., 1994). Task-endogeny has a positive effect on academic intrinsic motivation, while task-extrinsic practices have a negative effect on academic intrinsic motivation (Gottfried

et al., 1994). The study found valid support demonstrating that extrinsic consequences have harmful effects on children's intrinsic motivation and academics (Gottfried et al., 1994).

### **Parenting Styles**

In the 1950's two prominent researchers, Sears and Macoby (1957) conducted over 300 interviews with mothers. The interviews consisted of analyzing the type of parenting style used by each mother while disciplining her child. According to their research, Sears and Macoby documented two distinctive types of disciplinary techniques including love-oriented and object-oriented disciplines came to the conclusion that love-oriented discipline is the use of maternal affection, praise, and emotional care. Mothers used these behaviors in response to the behaviors of their child. During times of "punishment" or attempts of correction, a mother would eliminate or decrease the maternal affection, praise, and emotional care (Sears, Macoby, & Levin, 1957).

Object-oriented discipline is the use of extrinsic objects such as rewards to regulate a child's behavior. During times of undesired behavior a mother who relied on object-oriented discipline would withdraw a reward from a child.

**Effects of intrinsic and extrinsic love.** Sears et al. used the results of the study to construe multifaceted outcomes. Students who are disciplined using the object-oriented disciplinary system spend their time, cognitive, and physical energy attempting to prevent object withdrawal, hence not being able to independently comprehend his or her parents' reason behind the withdrawal. This not only leads to a lack of understanding of parents' actions, but also a lack of accepting and attributing to a value system. On the contrary, children who were disciplined with love-oriented mothers were more likely to understand, respect, and adhere to his or her mother's values than the children of the mothers who used object-oriented discipline. The



children demonstrated managerial skills and self-regulation. They were able to assign meaning to certain withdrawals and values (Sears et al., 1957).

### **Motivational Theory and Social Cognitive Theory**

There is an obvious connection between motivation and achievement. According to Weiner (1986), there are two main motives which direct people's behavior. Atkinson's motivational theory states that the motives are achieving success and avoiding failure (Atkinson, 1964). Weiner elaborated on Atkinson's attribution theory, stating that an individual's motivated behavior is a function of his or her expectations of accomplishing a goal and the value of the goal. Weiner placed attributions at the root of motivation (Weiner, 1986).

Atkinson (1964) suggested that students tend to be more motivated when they are presented with moderately difficult tasks rather than simple or failure-threatening tasks. One's subject or activity choice, persistence, and level of performance are all factors which promote one's motivation (Atkinson, 1964; Weiner, 1986). Reasons why one strives for success are the need to succeed, one's belief of the probability of his or her success, and the incentive for his or her success. The reasons to avoid failure are one's need to prevent disappointment, one's belief of the probability of her or her failure, and the incentive for his or her failure (Atkinson & Feather, 1966). Parental involvement can shape a student's motivation and achievement, allowing one to either strive for success or avoid failure.

The Social Cognitive Theory by Albert Bandura states that social factors, cognitive factors and behavior play an important role in the learning process (Bandura, 1977). The Social Cognitive Theory emphasizes the importance of the environment in a student's development. Through observation and cognition this theory focuses on a reciprocal determinism model. The person, the behavior, and the environment all function together to induce a learning process.

Parental involvement has been shown to have a positive correlation with academic motivation for students in elementary, middle and high school (Hill & Taylor, 2004). Parental involvement is such a large factor in a child's academic motivation, that studies have shown, the second leading factor related to the decrease in academic motivation in middle and high school aged students is the reduction of parental involvement (Gonzalez, 2002).

### **High School Population Study**

Steinberg, Lamborn, Bornbusch, and Darling (1992) conducted a study, which reinforced the importance of authoritative parental involvement in academic motivation and achievement for high school aged students. As many as 6,400 high school students were involved in the study. The population consisted of individuals from diverse socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds. Steinberg et al. researched specific types of parental involvement, such as the parent's involvement in his or her child's homework, parent's attendance at school programs, parent's assistance with his or her child's course selection, and the degree to which parents remain up to date with his or her child's progress in school.

Steinberg et al. found that when parental involvement was high, students did better academically according to their grade point average. The specific types of parental involvement in this study were helping students with their homework, attending school programs, watching students in sports or other extracurricular activities, helping students to select courses, and remaining informed of their schooling progress. The study also demonstrated that students with authoritative parental involvement had a higher level of motivation and became more involved and engaged in their academics than students with no parental involvement or with nonauthoritative parental involvement (Steinberg et al., 1992). The students were said to be experiencing an internal locus of control, the belief that one can control events related to his or

her life, which led to obvious better academic achievement and more advanced career decisions. Through the parent's constant social and cognitive commitment in the student's education, the student is able to understand the importance of a solid education. Students can be intrinsically motivated to do better in school because they see their parent's active interest in their schooling. This study demonstrates the importance of authoritative parental involvement all throughout a student's education.

### **Positive Parental Involvement**

Hill and Taylor proposed that there are two distinct mechanisms that positively correlate parental involvement and student achievement and motivation, both involving social facets. As did Steinberg et al., Hill and Taylor predicted that student motivation was largely based on the amount of positive parental involvement in a student's environment. Hill and Taylor describe the two mechanisms as social capital and social control.

Social capital refers to parental school involvement, which increases parental skill and familiarity with school-related activities and programs. Social capital allows a student's parents to be better equipped to help the student, because having awareness with school-related staff, parents in the community, and school-related tasks gives parents the opportunity to set expectations which are closely associated with that of the school's rules and standards. If parents are aware of the school's expectations, they are likely to enhance the student's learning in the home environment. If the standards set at home by the parents are similar to those at school, the child will more likely have a clear understanding of his or her requirements and the importance of his or her education. Thus, parents who practice an authoritative type of parenting are more likely to be involved in the student's homework and studies, leading to student's achievement and motivation (Hill & Taylor, 2004).

Social control refers to the strong emphasis on the relationship between the family and the school. When parents in the school environment get to know one another and set up a uniform set of goals, behavior and academic, the students receive a form of social constraint that tends to reduce challenging behaviors (Hill & Taylor, 2004). In contrast, when families disagree with one another or with the schools about academics and behavior issues, the effectiveness of the teachers and parents might be destabilized (Hill & Taylor, 2004). Both social capital and social control communicate a message of school importance and increase the level of motivation to learn and engage in school.

### **Self-Efficacy**

According to Bandura (1977), self-efficacy is the belief that one can effectively implement the behavior necessary to generate the outcomes. Since self-efficacy has a significant impact on behavior, there have been several studies conducted that analyze the role of self-motivation of academic achievement in regards to one's own self-efficacy beliefs and goal settings. Parents can also play a considerable role in a child's self-efficacy level.

Because self-efficacy sets a strong foundation in a child through observational learning and experiences, parents can greatly increase their children's mastery from a young age. Albert Bandura elaborated on the concept of self-efficacy and theorized that self-beliefs of efficacy play a significant role in motivation (Bandura, 1977).

### **Self-Efficacy Leading to Intrinsic Motivation**

A key element of self-efficacy beliefs described by Bandura is modeling. Since students tend to model individuals who have similar competencies to which they aspire to be, parents should provide adequate strategies and skills to be acceptable models for students. A positive model from parents, which includes high levels of parental involvement in a child's schooling,

may lead to a strong sense of efficacy which in turn will promote and increase intrinsic interest in school-related activities for children (Bandura, 1977).

Factors that can affect a child's self-efficacy both in and out of the classroom have been studied and expanded upon are based on Bandura's studies (Bandura, 1977). Two significant factors are perceived self-efficacy and outcome expectation (Jinks & Morgan, 1999). Perceived self-efficacy is the feeling of assurance regarding the implementation of specific tasks (Jinks & Morgan, 1999). Outcome expectation is the belief that one has regarding the outcome of a task regardless of one's belief about one's self-efficacy to carry out the task (Jinks & Morgan, 1999). Parental involvement in the classroom and the school can develop a set of perceptions on behalf of the parents that will affect a child's performance. Both perceptions are learned and affect student motivation (Jinks & Morgan, 1999).

Parental influence is great in self-efficacy. In the home environment, parents have the ability to set their own level of outcome expectation and reinforce the child's self-efficacy beliefs. This, in turn will give the child a strong foundation in order to conquer any type of learning environment he or she might encounter (Jinks & Morgan, 1999).

### **Academic Motivation**

Cross-domain generalization regarding issues of self-efficacy, task value, achievement goal orientations, and attributional beliefs has been often linked to academic motivation. Several hypotheses have been studied in order to determine whether or not students who have a certain motivational belief in one subject domain, will transfer the same principles to other subject domains. Using previous research (Gottfried 1985; Marsh & Yeung, 1996; Simpson, Licht, Wagner, & Stader, 1996; Smith & Fouad, 1999), Bong (2004) hypothesized that motivation in

each subject-matter domain will present weaker correlations than motivation toward school learning in general (Bong, 2004).

Using 389 participants from a freshman public all-girls high school, Bong adopted items and scales from similar previous studies to measure motivational beliefs toward general school learning. She rewrote items relating to academic self-efficacy, task value, achievement-goal orientations, and attribution. The items were focused on school learning in general as opposed to any specific school subject (Bong, 2004). Some of the items included “I’m certain I can master the skills taught in [subject] this year. The reason why I study [subject] is so that the teacher doesn’t think that I’m not smart as the other students in my class” (Patterns of Adaptive Learning Survey (PALS) Roeser, Midgley, & Urdan, 1996).

The results demonstrated that motivational belief was different across domains and contexts (Bong, 2004). Academic self-efficacy beliefs were also dependent on subject-matter domains. Bong’s research was largely consistent with prior research by Gottfried (1985; 1990) and Simpson, Licht, Wagner, and Stader (1996). After the study, there was further support that subject-specific motivational beliefs vary more strongly with beliefs regarding general school learning than with subject-specific beliefs, with the exceptions of performance-avoidance achievement-goal orientations and effort-attribution beliefs (Bong, 2004).

### **Obstacles Influencing Parental Involvement**

Much of one’s behavior and environment is interlinked with culture and background. The multifaceted relationship between the parent, the child, and the school is not segregated; hence there are many cultural differences that can arise in the community (Hill & Taylor, 2004). With increasing diversity comes a difference in socioeconomic status, ethnicity, and cultural

backgrounds. According to Hill and Taylor, these factors can greatly influence parental involvement in the school, as well as in the child's academics.

Previous studies show parents who are of a higher socioeconomic background are more likely to be involved in the child's schooling than parents that are of a lower socioeconomic status (Mayer, 2001). Due to the fact that higher socioeconomic background is positively correlated with a higher level of education, these parents are also more likely to advise their children to take honors classes and challenge themselves. They are also more likely to assist their children with their school work. They tend to volunteer more in the school environment, which in turn gives them a better understanding of what is expected for their children to excel. Just like the previously discussed studies, this study also proves that these children outshine.

Parents that are from a lower socioeconomic background are usually less flexible with the hours they have available to spend volunteering at school. Given that their work schedules are usually not accommodating, they are often faced with many more obstacles (Hill & Taylor, 2004). Lower socioeconomic status is usually correlated with a lower level of education, which in turn might also be a great barrier for the parents to be involved with the school or the child's academics because parents without higher education are inherently unaware of many of the obligations and standards set forth by schools (Lareau, 1996). The parent's low socioeconomic status might also lead them to hesitate questioning the teachers or the school for clarity. This, in turn can lead the child to greater difficulties in understanding new and challenging concepts (Lareau, 1996).

### **Ethnicity Differences**

According to a study conducted by Eccles & Harold (1996), African-American parents seem to be more involved with a student's school related activities in the home setting, rather

than in the school setting, while European-American parents are generally more involved with a student's academics in the school setting rather than the home setting. Ethnic minorities who do not speak English tend to follow the same practices and ideologies as African-American parents, that of being more involved in a student's academics and putting more emphasis on academics in the home environment (Hill & Taylor, 2004). Children whose parents are more involved in the home environment than the school environment are raised with constant emphasis of their school work and values in the family setting, thus they also seem to excel, just like the children of families who seem to be more involved in the school setting rather than in the home.

The emphasis that is put by the parents on either the school involvement or the home involvement, with regard to academics, has produced differences in how children excel in the school environment (Hill & Taylor, 2004). Ethnic minority parents tend to be more involved with their child's academics in the home environment. Children of ethnic minority parents tend to have a higher level of achievement (Hill & Taylor, 2004). Children of parents who are more involved in the school setting tend to have an enhanced level of academic skill (Hill & Taylor, 2004).

### **Affluent Education as a Consumer Good**

Education is much like wealth; one who is educated has prestige and power. We live in a society which offers public education; hence it is assumed that education is an entitlement for all individuals (Recum, 1981). For some parents who do not send their children to public schools, education can be seen as a consumer good. It is a product for immediate consumption. Taking into account the economics of education, researchers frequently study the significance of education for economic growth, making the utilization aspect easy to understand (Recum, 1981).



Individuals who are affluent have a different understanding of education, motivation, and involvement. Once affluent families have reached their consumption summit with material goods and products, non-material goods and services such as education, tutoring, and mentoring gain a great deal of importance (Recum, 1981). This section will discuss the widening gap between the educational differences of the rich and poor.

### **A New Society of Poverty**

Individuals who live in poverty tend to have their own culture, their own customs and traditions. They tend to live in the same communities, have similar incomes, and be part of the same social class. They share parenting techniques and strategies and have similar views on education. Individuals who live in affluence have much in common. Just like those who live in poverty, affluent individuals also are isolated from the rest of the community, forming a community all their own. They live in areas with other individuals who have similar incomes, belong to the same class, and have much of the same customs and traditions as them. They have a view of society that is all their own (Osborne, 1986).

There are many reasons for studying this elite society's patterns. The affluent children need to be educated and the affluent parents need to know how to be at-home educators. It has become an increasingly difficult task to educate the affluent child due to a lack of literature, lack of studies, and lack of awareness, leaving the affluent school district with one of the greatest teacher turnover rates. (Kleinert, 1968). Although there is a lack of recent studies regarding teacher turnover rates in the affluent school district, Kleinert discovered that in a 3-year period an affluent school had a teacher turnover rate of over 35%. A majority of these teachers reported conditions which were not favorable enough to merit a longer stay (Kleinert, 1968).

## **The Education Gap**

Children from affluent families performing better academically in a school setting brings the issue of income divide to attention. The disparity in the rate of the wealthy and poor in college completion has grown about 50% since the late 1980s (Reardon & Bischoff, 2010). The reasons for the education gap are multifold. Since the affluent have more time and money to invest in their child's education, the child performs better since they are provided with extra resources to assist them with their academic obstacles. The lower-income families on the other hand tend to struggle with not just finances, but with resources and time for involvement in their child's schooling, which negatively impacts their child (Reardon & Bischoff, 2010). As the gap continues to widen, the affluent begin to form a culture all their own, a culture with unique customs and traditions. It is becoming increasingly important to study the unique qualities of these families and students.

### **A Self-Determination Approach**

Self-determination has often been closely correlated with intrinsic and academic motivation. Self-determination can be defined as the ability to choose and have those choices be the determining factors of one's actions, instead of other drives, forces, or pressures (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Deci and Ryan's (1985) Self-determinism theory provides a complete and universal viewpoint regarding motivation. Deci and Ryan (1985) placed special emphasis on regulation, energization, and social contexts (Young, Johnson, Hawthorne, & Pugh, 2011). According to the theory, motivation can be driven in two distinctly differently paths- it can be an internal choice or an external force (Young et al., 2011).

Young et al. (2011) divide behavior into two categories: self-determined and controlled behavior. When the behavior is self-determined, one's locus of causality is internal. When the behavior is controlled, the locus of causality is external (Young et al., 2011).

### **Intrinsic Motivational Needs**

There are basic needs that should be met in order for one to be motivated intrinsically. There are needs which energize motivation, which include competence, relatedness and autonomy. Motivation is magnified in situations where goals set by individuals are aimed for their basic needs to be met. (Young et al., 2011). When needs seem to be met, students perform better socially and academically. According to self-determination theory, factors that are associated with extrinsic motivation significantly weaken one's intrinsic motivation (Young et al., 2011). Students who are intrinsically engaged are more likely to experience greater perseverance and superior learning quality (Deci, Vallerand, Pelletier, & Ryan, 1991).

### **Cultural Differences**

Young et al., (2011) conducted a study with 93 culturally diverse undergraduate students ranging from ages 18 to 24. The study included European Americans, African Americans, and Hispanic Americans. There were an equal number of students from each group. All but 12 Hispanic students were born in the United States. The researchers used three materials to further assess cultural predictors of academic motivation and achievement. They used the Academic Motivation Scale (AMS), the Hollingshead Two-Factor Index of Social Status, and the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (Young et al., 2001).

The study found differences in motivation and achievement across different cultural groups. Young et al., (2001) concluded that socio-economic status (SES), family generation with college experience, and perceived social support was predicative of both intrinsic and extrinsic

motivation for African Americans, but not for European-Americans and Hispanic Americans (Young et al., 2001).

### **Intrinsic Motivation**

Intrinsic motivation, undertaking a task or activity for the enjoyment of learning without receiving external reward, as it pertains to a student's academics, varies based on different subject domains. Gottfried (1985) investigated the relationship of academic intrinsic motivation, school achievement, and school-related non-cognitive factors. The purpose of Gottfried's (1985) research was to examine the comparative importance of academic intrinsic motivation across school subject areas (Gottfried, 1985).

In order to gain a deeper insight into a student's academic intrinsic motivation, the Children's Academic Intrinsic Motivation Inventory (CAIMI) was developed. The CAIMI placed importance on cognitive discrepancy, mastery, and attribution. The CAIMI measures academic intrinsic motivation in the subject areas of reading, math, social studies, science, and general school learning (Gottfried, 1985).

The CAIMI was used to conduct three studies in order to investigate the impact of academic intrinsic motivation on subject areas and general academics. (Gottfried, 1985). Three distinct hypotheses were formulated, including academic intrinsic motivation and school achievement are positively correlated, academic intrinsic motivation and academic anxiety are negatively correlated, and academic intrinsic motivation and children's perceptions of their academic competence are positively correlated (Gottfried, 1985).

Using a representative sample size of over 141 individuals for each of the three studies, correlations were made between intrinsic motivation and academic competence and intrinsic motivation and anxiety (Gottfried, 1985). The students were asked to fill out the inventories

with questions relating to their motivation regarding subject areas Reading, Math, Social Studies, Science, and a General academic category. Motivation was then distinguished by subject area. The research found supportive evidence for all three hypotheses including, academic intrinsic motivation and school achievement are positively correlated, academic intrinsic motivation and academic anxiety are negatively correlated, and academic intrinsic motivation and children's perceptions of their academic competence are positively correlated (Gottfried, 1985).

### **Content Area Preferences and Motivation**

Aven and Chrisp (1971) conducted a study with 638 sixth-grade students from affluent areas and economically underprivileged areas. The researchers asked the students to mark their favorite subject and their least favored subject. The results showed significant differences between the student's choices. According to Aven's and Chrisp's data, students from affluent areas favored Science and Social Studies but disliked English more than the students from the economically deprived areas. Students from impoverished areas favored art and English significantly more than students from affluent areas (Aven & Chrisp, 1971).

The results seem to indicate differences in subject preference between the affluent and underprivileged. The findings signify that the methods used to teach languages should be reevaluated and examined (Aven & Chrisp, 1971). The findings also demonstrate that the methods of instruction being used in the classroom are not effective for both affluent and underprivileged students since they have different needs, and therefore they need to be approached differently in regards to instruction (Aven & Chrisp, 1971).

### **Academic Achievement**

Extensive research has been conducted which establishes that family socialization patterns have a significant impact on a child's cognitive characteristics (Gonzalez-Pienda,

Nunez, Gonzalez-Pumariiega, Alvarez, Roces, & Garcia, 2002). Gonzalez-Pianda et al., (2002) took family socialization patterns beyond a child's cognitive characteristics and decided to look into the idea that family socialization relationships are more pertinent in shaping specific attitudes, self-concept, beliefs, competence and casual attributions (2002).

Gonzalez-Pianda et al., (2002) hypothesized that parental involvement is necessary when examining family variables. They included six dimensions of parental involvement which included items about the parent's expectations, behavior, and satisfaction level. With parental involvement remaining a significant factor, the researchers also identified three main predictors of academic learning and achievement. Students' aptitude, motivation, and self-concept were all variables that were examined to determine their relationship with academic achievement (Gonzalez-Pianda et al., 2002).

Researchers hypothesized that attributions influence self-concept, which in turn shape academic achievement (Gonzalez-Pianda et al., 2002). Parental involvement was used as an independent variable in the study, so the relationship between parental involvement and the child's academic motivation would be indirect, altered by children's personal variables. With the participation of 261 students from elementary, middle, and high schools and their families, the researchers used several types of instruments to obtain parental expectations about children's achievement, school aptitudes, and student's causes for their academic success or failure, academic self-concept, and academic achievement.

The researchers confirmed several positive and negative relationships from their research. The researchers were able to provide significant evidence supporting that greater parental involvement leads to positive academic self-concept and a higher tendency to internalize or accept responsibility for the results of a child's academic behavior. Greater parental involvement

is also correlated to greater academic aptitudes for the child. Gonzalez-Pienda et al., (2002) were also able to confirm that the lack of parental involvement has a direct relationship on a child's academic achievement.

### **Parental Involvement Contribution on High School Students**

There have been many studies done that show the benefits of parental involvement regarding a student's academic motivation (Gottfried, 1985, 1990; Carreon, Drake, & Barton, 2005; Gonzalez-Pienda et al., 2002; Okagaki & Sternberg, 1993). Researchers have further shown that parental involvement in conjunction with an authoritative parenting style is the most beneficial to a student's motivation and school success (Steinberg et al., 1992). Most of the population studied is comprised of elementary and middle school students. During high school years, students often display a decrease in academic motivation (Gottfried A. E., Gottfried A. W., Morris, & Cook, 2008; Anderman & Maehr, 1994). Langdon and Vesper (2000) asked a group of elementary and secondary teachers what they believed to be the greatest problem of public schools. The respondents mentioned the lack of parental involvement as one of the leading complications. The lack of student interest is also a top concern for public school teachers (Elam, 1989). Teachers indicated that the lack of student interest and motivation tends to stem from lack of parental involvement (Elam, 1989).

### **Effects**

The concept of a student's locus of control can be correlated with the extent of parental involvement. A study conducted by Trusty and Lampe (1997) using over ten thousand high school students, revealed that high school seniors believed that parental control and parental involvement was linked to internal locus of control, while control lacking parental involvement was connected to external locus of control (Trusty & Lampe, 1997). The higher the parental

control was, the stronger the positive relationship to a students' locus of control was. Trusty and Lampe concluded that parental support is advantageous because it assists in offering security and comfort. Parental support also aids a student with the development of his or her self-identity and self-development. (Trusty & Lampe, 1997).

### **Mastery Orientation through Parental Involvement**

Students who are focused on mastery goals rather than performance goals tend to be more intrinsically motivated. A focus on mastery goals is associated with advantageous achievement behaviors including better learning techniques and strategies, increased positive attitudes, and desire and selection of challenging and stimulating tasks (Gonzalez, 2002). A study using 196 high school students found that students were more intrinsically motivated regarding their academics if they had parents who showed active interest in their schooling. The study was further evidence that parental involvement is positively related to mastery orientation, hence positively related to a student's academic intrinsic motivation (Gonzalez, 2002).

### **How Wealth Influences Parenting**

The Wealth Insight Initiative (2011) published an article expressing concern that affluent families are having certain difficulties in regards to proper communication. Affluent parents, in this case those who have \$5 million or more in investible assets, have feelings of fear and a lack of confidence in their children, which hinders them to guarantee the wealth of future generations (Comtex, 2011). The problem seems to be the lack of motivation for the children to learn the skills and capabilities of past generations which led to the establishment of wealth in the first place (Comtex, 2011).

SEI, which is a company that focuses on innovative solutions for creating and managing wealth, suggests that parents need to establish expectations and make their children well aware



of them. The team at SEI understands and voices the importance of parental involvement. They state that the most successful families are the ones who create an agenda to assist and educate future generations about finances and wealth generating activities. (Comtex, 2011).

Based on the foregoing, the purpose of the present study is to explore and better understand the unique structure and makeup of affluent parental involvement and student motivation. This study will take a deep look into how a mother's intrinsic or extrinsic motivation affects her child's academic motivation. Through interviews this study also aims to examine mothers' opinions regarding expectations, goals, and motivation factors for their children.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Research Design**

This is an exploratory study that uses mixed-methods. Both quantitative (i.e. the use of questionnaires) and qualitative (i.e. interviews) procedures were used to collect a set of research data with regard to the views of parents and students pertinent to this study. Ethnographic research was used to capture particular examples during interviews with the mothers in order to gain a better understanding of the relationship between the mother and the child. Member checking, asking the participants to review the research, was used in order to have the participants verify the accuracy and completeness of the observations, avoiding bias and judgments.

#### **Study Sites and Research Participants**

The present researcher runs an educational company called *Learn to the Max*. The business is located in Encino, California. It currently comprises over 70 students who work with the head tutor/mentor, who is the present researcher. Throughout the past 3 years, the present researcher has observed different expectations of the parents and students. The present researcher has found that the parents' motivation is a great factor in determining the child's academic success.

The present researcher contacted 10 different families and requested their voluntary participation. These participants were chosen for a variety of different reasons. The mothers of these families are involved with their child's tutor, the present researcher, on a regular basis. After each session, as part of the present researchers ongoing protocol, the mothers expect to have open communication with the tutor regarding how their child is doing and what they can do

to better assist him or her after the tutoring session. These families also hold education as a high priority. Finally, these particular families were asked to participate because their tutor's, the present researcher's, abilities were multifaceted in the sense that the tutor had also established a mentorship program with the students. The children in these 10 families not only are recipients of regular tutoring sessions; they also have the advantage of having an educational mentor to assist and guide them with academic difficulties or obstacles. This was a selective sample due to high academic achievement expectations and degree of parental involvement.

There were 10 mothers and an initial pool of 20 students who varied from ages 7 to 17 ( $M=12.25$ ,  $SD= 2.88$ ), a total of 30 participants. A majority of the students were above the age of 10. Of the 20 students, 15 (75%) were 11 years of age or older. There were 10 (50%) male students and 10 (50%) female students; 6 were from high performing private schools, 10 (50%) from high performing Los Angeles Unified School Districts (LAUSD), and 3 (15%) from high performing Los Virgenes Unified School Districts (LVUSD). All students and parents were Caucasian. Two-thirds or 15 (75%) were Iranian, 2 (10%) were Russian, 2 (10%) were Armenian, and 1 (5%) was European-American. All the mothers speak English, but English is not their primary language. All students speak English as their primary language, but often use their mother's primary language to communicate in the home environment.

### **Sample Descriptive**

The mean age of the students ( $M=12.25$ ) was used to select one child from each family. The student closest to the mean age was used in the analysis for this thesis. Only one child per mother was selected to ensure accurate results on the quantitative portion of the study to further prevent biased results. Having one child per mother ensured that the results will be weighted

evenly. The students in the pool varied from ages 8 to 13 ( $M=11.3$ ,  $SD= 2.11$ ). Given the sample size, separate analyses were not conducted for gender differences.

Table 1

*Descriptive Data for the Sample of Students*

Student	Age	Gender	School Type
1	13	Male	Public
2	12	Female	Public
3	12	Female	Public
4	13	Female	Private
5	9	Male	Public
6	12	Male	Private
7	13	Female	Public
8	13	Female	Private
9	8	Female	Public
10	8	Male	Public

Table 1 indicates that most of the students (70%) attend public school, while the rest (30%) attend a private educational institute. The students who attend a public school are students of Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) or Los Virgenes Unified School District (LVUSD).

The target population of interest consisted of affluent families. Affluence was based upon the inhabited neighborhoods of the participants. Affluent neighborhoods in California include Encino, Encino Hills, Bel-Air, and West Los Angeles. All students attend either private schools or well-funded public schools.

## **Environment of Study**

All portions of the study were conducted in the homes of the participants. The students were not present while the mothers were being interviewed and completing the survey. The parents were also not present while the students were completing their surveys.

## **Instrumentation**

For this study, the researcher developed a set of 10 interview questions for the mothers to measure their perceptions of their children's motivation (see Appendix A), and to gain an insight into how involved they are in their children's academics. The interview questions also focused on the reasons as to why the mothers had hired a tutor for their children, their expectations of their children and whether or not there is open communication about their children's goals regarding academics. The same questions were administered to all the mothers in the study in the same order. The researcher probed the participants until detailed and meaningful responses were given. Some of the interview questions were, "How often do you attend parent-teacher conferences? How dependent is your child on you in regards to his or her academics? How dependent is your child on their tutor?"

The mothers were also administered the Parental Motivation Practices Scale (PMPS), which uses a 20-item Likert-type scale to rate their task-intrinsic and task-extrinsic practices (Gottfried, Fleming, & Gottfried, 1994). Responses were given on a 6 point scale. The first 8 ranged from 'not at all true' (1) to 'very true' (6), while the last 12 ranged from 'rarely' (1) to 'always' (6). The items included mothers' use and support of task-endogenous strategies and stipulation of task-extrinsic activities. Samples of the questions from the intrinsic items include, "I encourage my child to be persistent in school work". "When my child finds schoolwork difficult, I expect him/her to spend more effort on it". Samples for the extrinsic items are,

“When my child does well in school, I usually reward him/her with a privilege”. “When my child does well in school, I usually reward him/her with money”.

The students were each administered the Children’s Academic Intrinsic Motivation Inventory (CAIMI) Gottfried, A. E. (1985, 1986). The CAIMI is designed to measure a student’s academic intrinsic motivation, the enjoyment inherent in learning, distinguished by mastery, curiosity, persistence, task-endogeny, and the culture of embracing complex, demanding, and innovative ideas and information all within subject areas and general learning (Gottfried, 1985, 1986).

The CAIMI is a self-report instrument which presents a Likert rating scale across four subject areas; reading, math, social studies, science, and school in general. There are 26 items in each subject area subscale and 18 in the general subscale, which account for the difference between the scores in Table 2—between general and subject areas. To ensure accuracy of the responses, reversed items are part of the CAIMI. Non-reversed questions on the CAIMI include, “When I get bored, I look for new things to do”. “I try to learn more about something that I don’t understand right away so that I will understand it”. The option ‘Strongly Agree’ is indicated with a higher level of intrinsic motivation. Regarding the reversed items, ‘Strongly Agree’, which is the first option, is indicated with a lower level of intrinsic motivation. For example, one of the questions states, “I am not curious about learning things in.... reading, math, social studies, science”. If a student marks the first option, ‘strongly agree’, he or she will indicate a lower level of intrinsic motivation. The total raw score was for each subscale was used in the analysis for both the CAIMI and PMPS.

## **Procedure**

To ensure the ethical treatment of the participants, the researcher discussed confidentially thoroughly prior to the study. Before the study, the researcher meticulously explained the study and measures along with the consent forms for both the mothers and the children (see Appendix B and C). The present researcher was the only person to administer the consent forms, interviews, and questionnaires. Each interview with the mother, along with the motivational scales form and CAIMI, were distributed in the homes of the participants. The interview was conducted first. After the mother had effectively completed the interview, the Parental Motivational Practices Scale was distributed to the mother, and the CAIMI was distributed to the child/children. The administration of the interview and questionnaires took about two hours for each family. This two hour period included questions that both the mothers and the students had about the study, concerns about their privacy, explanations for the purpose of the study, and the filling out of consent forms. The researcher was present during the entire process, and was readily available for any comments or distresses.

Due to the fact that the interviews were not audio taped, after each interview, the researcher transcribed her notes without delay. The researcher included observations and side comments that were shared throughout the process. The researcher entered scored quantitative data into a Microsoft Excel program and analyzed the data by calculating correlations between the mothers' score on the Parental Motivational Practices Scale and the students' CAIMI scores.

## **Demographics**

Demographic information was collected from the students including age, gender, and school type. The mothers' background data consisted of their age and ethnicity. The students'

demographic information was written on the CAIMI, and the mothers' data questionnaires were developed by the researcher.

### **Analysis**

The quantitative data was analyzed using a series of correlations to examine if there is a significant relationship between the type of parental motivation and a child's intrinsic motivation level in affluent families. Question 6 of the interview, which states "How dependent is your child on his or her tutor in regards to his or her academics?", was answered by the mothers with either 'very dependent', 'dependent', 'independent', or 'very independent'. The present researcher then took the answers and assigned a quantitative value to each; 'very dependent' was assigned as 4, 'dependent' as 3, 'independent' as 2, and 'very independent' was given a value of 1. Correlations were computed, then analyzed with these values and the students' CAIMI scores, as well as the mothers' intrinsic and extrinsic PMPS scores.

The qualitative data was analyzed concomitantly with the data collection. Mini case studies were created and further analyzed for some of the questions whose responses were exclusive. Themes emerged and were analyzed. The researcher's goal of using mini case studies was to illuminate the diverse and dynamic world of motivation for an affluent mother and her child/children.



## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

After the data was collected and analyzed from the CAIMI and The Parental Motivational Practices Scale, comparisons were made with the data gathered from the interviews with the mothers. Each hypothesis stated in chapter one was individually examined using the Pearson correlation coefficient and mini-case studies. The results of all the analyses are presented and discussed in this chapter.

#### CAIMI Scores

Pearson correlations were computed between each of the student's CAIMI scores and his or her mother's intrinsic and extrinsic scores. Each student was assigned an identification number which matched that of his or her mother.

Table 2

#### *CAIMI Scores*

Student	CAIMI-R	CAIMI-M	CAIMI-SS	CAIMI-Sc	CAIMI-GEN
1	99	109	119	81	82
2	109	102	102	108	78
3	61	79	83	108	60
4	96	116	86	86	75
5	77	123	118	116	79
6	49	107	89	87	75
7	77	79	75	83	63
8	62	95	75	93	62
9	87	90	87	103	80
10	103	107	94	103	70

Table 2 lists the raw scores of the students used in the study. The higher the score, the greater the student's intrinsic motivation in that particular subject area.

Table 3

*Parental Motivational Practices Scale Scores*

Mother	Intrinsic	Extrinsic
1	49	27
2	49	39
3	39	37
4	49	51
5	54	43
6	58	46
7	47	40
8	51	40
9	57	40
10	57	47

Table 3 illuminates the mother’s scores on task-intrinsic and task-extrinsic practices. The scores indicate the motivational strategy used by the mothers with their children.

**Correlations with Mother’s Task-Intrinsic Motivation Score**

The results were analyzed to examine whether there were significant correlations between mothers’ intrinsic parental motivation practices and their children’s intrinsic motivation. Correlations were done with each CAIMI score including reading, math, social studies, science, and the general category. Finally, correlations were done with the average across the scores.

The results are displayed in Table 4.

Table 4

*Intrinsic Motivation Correlations*

CAIMI-R	CAIMI-M	CAIMI-SS	CAIMI-Sc	CAIMI-GEN	CAIMI-AVERAGE
0.063	0.495	0.186	0.023	0.519	0.316

The results in Table 4 indicate that the CAIMI-GEN (general) had the highest correlation value of 0.519, where the CAIMI-R (reading) had the lowest correlation of 0.063, but it is essential to note the small population of individuals used in the study. These results fall in line with previous research conducted by Gottfried et al. (1994), which has found a significant positive path between all the CAIMI scores of the students' and their mothers' intrinsic motivation practices score.

### **Correlations with Mother's Task-Extrinsic Motivation Score**

The results were analyzed to examine whether there were significant correlations between mothers' extrinsic motivation practices and their children's intrinsic motivation as reflected in their CAIMI scores. Correlations were done with each CAIMI score including reading, math, social studies, science, and the general category. Finally, correlations were done with the average of all the scores. The results are displayed in Table 5.

Table 5

#### *Extrinsic Motivation Correlations*

CAIMI-R	CAIMI-M	CAIMI-SS	CAIMI-Sc	CAIMI-GEN	CAIMI-AVERAGE
-0.082	0.314	-0.361	0.116	-0.096	-0.040

The positive correlations present for the math and science scores suggest that there is a positive relationship between a student's intrinsic motivation for the subjects and his or her mother's extrinsic motivation. However, these CAIMI-Math and CAIMI-Science correlations are not and cannot be considered conclusive.

## Tutor Dependency

Pearson correlations were computed between each of the student's CAIMI scores and his or her mother's belief regarding her child's tutor dependency. Each answer given by the mother was assigned a value, which was then used in the correlations.

Table 6

### *Child's Tutor Dependency Based on the Mother's Opinion*

Mother/Child	Tutor Dependency	Value Assigned
1	Very Dependent	4
2	Dependent	3
3	Very Dependent	4
4	Very Dependent	4
5	Very Dependent	4
6	Independent	2
7	Dependent	3
8	Independent	2
9	Independent	2
10	Very Dependent	4

Table 6 presents the answers each mother gave regarding her belief on the dependence of his or her child on his or her tutor. The table also displays the value assigned for each measure.

Table 7

### *Tutor Dependency and Student CAIMI Score Correlations*

CAIMI-R	CAIMI-M	CAIMI-SS	CAIMI-Sc	CAIMI-GEN
0.444	0.332	0.487	0.171	0.062

The results in Table 7 suggest no significant correlations. However, the trend reveals there is a positive relationship between a child’s dependency on his or her tutor and his or her academic intrinsic score on the CAIMI. The CAIMI- Social Studies had the highest correlation value of 0.487, while the CAIMI-General had the lowest correlation of 0.062.

The results were analyzed to determine whether there were significant correlations between a mother’s belief on the dependency of his or her child on his or her tutor and the mother’s task-intrinsic parental practices and task-extrinsic parental practices. Correlations were done with both task-intrinsic and task-extrinsic values. The results are displayed in Table 8.

Table 8

*Tutor Dependency and PMPS Intrinsic and Extrinsic Score Correlations*

Task-Intrinsic	Task-Extrinsic
-0.417	-0.056

The negative correlations are not significant, but they suggest that a mother’s belief of his or her child’s dependency on his or her tutor is negatively related to both her task-intrinsic and her task-intrinsic practices.

**Interviews**

This section explores a number of the interview questions. (The complete list of interview questions can be found in Appendix A). All direct quotations are presented verbatim, excluding pauses. There were some significant similarities and differences between the answers given by the mothers during the interviews.

### **How often do you attend parent-teacher conferences?**

All of the participants stated that they attend conferences regularly or as needed. Slightly more than half of the mothers noted that they used to attend parent-teacher conferences more often when their child was younger. The mother of an eighth grader stated:

Whenever it is necessary for me to speak with any of his teachers I immediately schedule an appointment. When he was in elementary school I would speak to his teachers often, maybe even once a week since I would pick him up from on campus. Now, he is older and the teachers are not as readily available (Parent 1).

Parent 1 had the lowest extrinsic parental practices score in this study. Her child's CAIMI scores demonstrated that the child was intrinsically motivated in most subject areas, with the exception of Science (81). Reading, Math, Social Studies, and General raw scores were 99, 109, 119, and 82 respectively (Gottfried, 1994).

One mother of an, eighth grader explained:

I go about two times a year for my younger children, but I am in constant communication with their teachers through emails. For my older son I do not attend conferences anymore. I do not even know when they are (Parent 4).

Parent 4 was the only mother in the study who had a higher extrinsic parental practices score than intrinsic parental practices score. There was not a great difference between the two scores; her intrinsic score was 49, while her extrinsic was 51. Her child's CAIMI scores in Reading, Math, Social Studies, Science, and General were 96, 116, 86, 86, and 75 respectively, indicating that the child is intrinsically motivated in most subject areas, especially Math.

### **Motivation**

**What do you consider a form of motivation for your child? Do you believe intrinsic or extrinsic motivation is more successful?**

After both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational practices were explained to the mothers, a majority responded with a wide array of answers to the question about motivation for their child. Some were highly in favor of extrinsic motivation, while others believed that intrinsic motivation was the best form of motivation. Two parents had extreme views on opposite sides of the spectrum. “Extrinsic motivation works a lot better for him. Usually I bribe him with his Nintendo DS or other such games. At times he does not work for either, but if he was to it would be for extrinsic reasons” (Parent 1). A mother of a seventh grader stated:

There is absolutely no extrinsic motivation in this house. We do not believe in bribing in this family. My husband and I both believe they either want to do it or not. The only thing my husband and I do is lecture them on the importance of education (Parent 2).

Mother 2 had an intrinsic parental practices score of 49, and an extrinsic parental practices scores of 39. Her child had high CAIMI scores across all subject areas. Reading, Math, Social Studies, Science, and General raw scores were 109, 102, 102, 108, and 78 accordingly.

Other mothers did not have strong opinions regarding motivating factors for their child/children. A mother of an eighth grader gave an answer much different than the others.

Honestly, I think their tutor is their best motivator. I do not think intrinsic or extrinsic motivation works very well for any of them, but when they know that their tutor is coming over, it is like a switch connects them on and they are ready to learn. She must know how to get them motivated (Parent 4).

**How high would you rate your child’s/children’s motivational level in regards to his or her academics on a scale of 1-10?**

When the mothers where asked how high they would rate their child’s motivation level in regards to his or her academics on a scale of 1-10 (Research Question Eight), without exception, all mothers rated their child at least a 6. Seven out of the 10 mothers rated their child’s/children’s motivation an 8 or above.

## **Road to Success**

### **What are your goals for your child after high school? Are your child's goals the same?**

### **Have you shared your goals? Have they shared their goals with you?**

This question was the only one where all 10 of the mothers answered with near identical answers. All mothers indicated that they expect their child to attend a four-year university. A majority of the mothers presumed that their child's selected profession would be one which their child would love.

Five of the mothers indicated that it was important for their child/children to choose a profession where he or she will be financially secure. A mother of a third grader expressed:

They need to go to a University, and then they need to attend either Medical School or Law School. I know they do not have the same goals. One wants to be a teacher and the other an athlete, but they both know and understand my goals for them; after all I share it with them every single day (Parent 10).

Mother 10 had an intrinsic parental practices score of 57 and an extrinsic parental practices score of 47. Her child had raw scores of 103 in Reading, 107 in Math, 94 in Social Studies, 103 in Science, and 70 in the General category.

A parent of a seventh grader stated: "The higher their education the better. I would not be content with them going to just any university; it would have to be a prestigious one" (Parent 3). Mother 3 had an intrinsic parental practices score of 39 and an extrinsic parental practices score of 37. Her child had raw CAIMI scores of 61, 79, 83, 108 and 60 in Reading, Math, Social Studies, Science and General respectively.

The other 5 mothers indicated that it was not important to them what their child/children studied as long as he or she loved his or her chosen profession.



I expect them to go to college then graduate school. Honestly, I expect them to be professionals, but at what they love. I want them to be successful, but it is also very important to me that they are happy (Parent 8).

Mother 8 had an intrinsic parental practices score of 51 and an extrinsic parental practices score of 40. Her child had raw CAIMI scores of 62 in Reading, 95 in Math, 75 in Social Studies, 93 in Science, and a 62 in the General category. A mother of a fourth grader said, “I would absolutely love for my child to get a great education. What he decides to do with it is up to him, but I share my goals with him frequently and I encourage him to do the same” (Parent 5). Mother 5 had an intrinsic parental practices score of 54 and an extrinsic parental practices score of 43. Her child has fairly high intrinsic scores on the CAIMI with the exception of Reading, 77. Math, Social Studies, Science, and General raw scores were 123, 118, 116 and 79 respectively.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **DISCUSSION**

This purpose of this study was to examine and analyze the relationship of parental involvement with motivation in learning of affluent school aged children. The study used data collected from the CAIMI, PMPS and interviews with the mothers. The study was designed to evaluate whether affluence affects a mother's intrinsic and extrinsic motivation practices and views on motivation relating to her child's motivation.

#### **Summary of Findings**

According to the data, as expected, all of the mothers' intrinsic scores on the PMPS had a positive but primarily insignificant correlation with all of the students' CAIMI subject areas, including reading, math, social studies, and science. Only the general CAIMI scale was significantly related to the intrinsic PMPS scale. It was expected that the mothers' extrinsic scores would all be negatively correlated with the students' CAIMI scores, but that was not the case for all the categories. For the math and science category, there was a positive, albeit insignificant correlation between the mothers' extrinsic score and that of their child's CAIMI score.

All of the CAIMI scores were positively, yet insignificantly correlated with the mother's belief of her child's dependency on his or her tutor. The mother's intrinsic and extrinsic PMPS scores were both negatively, yet once again, insignificantly correlated with the mother's belief regarding the extent to which her child is dependent on his or her tutor.

Regarding the interviews, mothers' who had set higher expectations for their child, shared their goals with their child, and had their child share his or her goals with theirs, tended to have a child with higher intrinsic motivation. Mothers who stated that her child was independent with

his or her academic work also had a child with higher intrinsic motivation. Mothers who felt as if her child was greatly dependent on his or her tutor had lower intrinsic parental practices scores and had a child with lower intrinsic motivation.

### **Discussion**

Regarding the first hypothesis in this study, a child's intrinsic motivation is correlated with parental motivation and involvement, shows evidence to be true based on the scores of the children's CAIMI scores and their mothers' PMPS scores. Based on the interviews, the second hypothesis, the more a child's mother assumes that her child is dependent on a hired tutor, the lower a child's intrinsic motivation and the lower the mother's intrinsic motivation, is also evidence of truth.

### **PMPS Score Differences**

Previous research has found that tasks which promote intrinsic motivation, task-endogenous tasks, support the increase of academic intrinsic motivation and achievement (Gottfried, Fleming, & Gottfried, 1994). Task-extrinsic motivational strategies had an undesirable effect on students' academic intrinsic motivation and achievement (Gottfried, Fleming, & Gottfried, 1994).

Findings in the current study show that all mothers with the exception of one (90%) had higher intrinsic scores. It is interesting to note that 60% of the mothers had a difference of 11 or less between their intrinsic and extrinsic scores.

**Higher extrinsic score.** The mother who had a higher extrinsic score explained in her interview that her children are especially dependent on their tutor. She did not believe that her children are dependent on her in regards to their academics, but she did say that at times her children show absolutely no interest in their homework, unless they know that the tutor is

coming. This revelation might indicate that there should be further research with a larger sample of participants who have the same beliefs.

Regarding the second hypothesis, the more a child's mother assumes that her child is dependent on a hired tutor, the lower a child's intrinsic motivation and the lower the mother's intrinsic motivation, shows evidence of some truth based on the quantitative results. Mothers' belief regarding their children's dependency on their tutor reflected positively on their children's CAIMI scores. Mothers' belief regarding their children's dependency on their tutor reflected negatively on their intrinsic and extrinsic PMPS scores. This data suggests a tutor might have a positive effect on a child's intrinsic academic motivation, yet might have an adverse effect on parental motivational practices. The results further indicate that more extensive research with a larger population is needed in order to attain significant results.

### **Interview Data**

The interviews suggest that all mothers place a strong emphasis on education. All of the mothers expect their child to obtain higher education after high school.

**Parent Conferences.** All mothers noted that they attend conferences regularly or are involved in their children's education. Some mothers noted they are not involved with their older children's schooling as much as they used to be when their child/children was/were younger. Regardless of the lack of involvement, those students did not have lower CAIMI scores than the students whose mothers were still involved in his or her schooling.

Previous longitudinal studies conducted by Gottfried, Marcoulides, Gottfried, and Oliver (2009) suggest that parents motivation practices might be a contributing factor to a student's decline in motivation. The results of the study imply that further research can be conducted to see if there

is a significant correlation between the lack of parental involvement in the school environment and that of a student's motivation.

**Motivation.** An interesting finding, as a result of the interviews, is that most mothers believed that a combination of both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation works best for their children's academic success and achievement. Most mothers (80%) stated that they did not believe in monetary rewards, but that games, punishments, play dates, and toys were great ways to encourage their child/children to do better in school. Further research with a larger population would be able to determine if the affluent population responds differently to extrinsic rewards than the non-affluent population.

### **Limitations**

This study has several limitations. The greatest limitation is the sample size. With a greater number of participants, it is predicated that the statistical significance would have been obtained. With a larger sample size, there will also be a greater diversity in participants. The results of the study are not representative. A wider variety of individuals from different ethnicities, backgrounds and regions would be more representative and apparent of the actual affluent population.

Another limitation to the study is convenience sampling. All the participants have been known the researcher for several years, making them possibly inclined to participate in the study, hence causing participant bias.

Lastly, the fact that the study was not a longitudinal study is a limitation. The analysis of motivation and parental involvement in affluent families through elementary, middle, and high school will offer an array of data and insight into the unexplored world of affluence in education.

## **Future Directions**

There is an ample amount of educational research conducted for a population in poverty. It is natural to anticipate and even believe that individuals and families with less finances will need greater aid in regards to education than affluent families. It is true that the affluent have more resources which are readily available for them, but are they being used in a manner to promote intrinsic motivation?

Educational facilities, tutoring companies, mentors, and therapists alike should expand on preexisting notions that there are only a certain group of students and families who need increased aid.

**Raising awareness.** Educators and parents should first understand the needs of each child. We live in a society where we have an ability to understand what is happening around us, yet quite often we fail to take the proper measures to obtain the deeper answers. What many fail to understand is that questions regarding children do not have one specific answer.

There are theories and research about almost every age group, but it is essential to know that each child can be an exception; each child has his or her own goals and dreams regardless of wealth, social class, race, and religion. Just as individuals from a particular background tend to have a private culture, children from affluent families do as well.

## **Recommendations for Further Studies**

This study raises questions that require further research. Since there is limited literature and research on this topic, several questions remained unanswered. First, would the statistical significance be greater between a mother's extrinsic motivation and that of her child's/children's with a larger population? Also, how do the children feel about their affluence and its effect on their motivation? Interviews with the children will be able to gain insight into their thoughts and

opinions regarding motivation. Lastly, how were the parents of the child raised; are they from affluent families?

It was fascinating that the study presented a positive relationship between a mother's extrinsic PMPS score and her child's math and science score on the CAIMI. Although the positive relationship was not significant, it would be interesting to see if there is a significant relationship within a larger population. It will also be interesting to study the reasons as to why these subjects had a stronger correlation than the others. While the positive relationship between students' CAIMI- Math scores and their mother's extrinsic motivation is too minor to be a trend, could the relationship be due to the students' expectation of extrinsic rewards in the subject area of Math? Most of these mothers expect their child/children to attend law school or medical school. Are the mother's expectations and goals related to her child's scores? This population of mothers has the resources necessary to intrinsically motivate their child, but is the extreme use of the resources having an adverse effect for their child?

One of the most remarkable aspects of this study was the interviews with the mothers. It would be interesting to conduct interviews with the children as well. Several questions arose during the time of the study. How do they feel about being motivated? Is their tutor also their greatest motivator; and if so, why? Is the tutor's involvement a proxy for the mother's involvement? Would they want their parents to be more involved? What motivates them? Do they feel as if their goals and dreams matter, or are they set in stone by their parents from a very early age? Interviews with the students will give researchers an opportunity to understand the pressures of education for this population.

Further research can also be done to better understand the parents' past. It would be useful to know whether or not the parents grew up in affluence or was financial prosperity

attained over time? By understanding their childhood, it would allow researchers to gain a deeper comprehension into the reasons why they motivate their children differently than non-affluent parents.

Studies can be done to examine the effects of culture and affluence. Since a majority of the subjects in this study were Middle Eastern, it would be interesting to research how much influence their culture has on the priority of education. Does culture play a significant role on educational values for affluent families? For families who are not originally from the United States, further research can be done to determine the factors necessary to reestablish their children in a new home country.

“You can teach a student a lesson for a day; but if you can teach him to learn by creating curiosity, he will continue the learning process as long as he lives”. Clay P. Bedford



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## Appendix A

### Interview Style Questionnaire:

1. How often do you attend parent-teacher conferences?
2. Do you know all of your child's/children's teachers?
  - a. Their contact info?
3. Are you part of a parent/teacher organization?
4. How involved are you in your child's everyday homework on a scale of 1-5?
5. Do you help with project ideas or homework daily? Weekly? Monthly?
6. How dependent is your child/children on you in regards to his or her academics?
  - a. On their tutor?
  - b. What are the main reasons you have hired a tutor?
7. What do you consider a form of motivation for your child/children?
  - a. Do you believe intrinsic or extrinsic motivation is more successful?
    - i. Intrinsic motivation being factors that come internally.
    - ii. Extrinsic motivation being mostly materialistic factors such as money or toys.
8. How high would you rate your child's/children's motivational level in regards to his or her academics on a scale of 1-10?
9. What are your goals for your child/children after high school?
  - a. Are your child's/children's goals the same?
  - b. Have you shared your goals?
  - c. Have they shared their goals with you?
10. Do you believe your expectations are at times too high or too low?



- a. Are you aware of your child's/children's expectations of you?
- b. Is your child's/children's tutor fully aware of your expectations as well as your child's/children's expectations?

**Appendix B**  
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE  
Project Title: LOVE OF LEARNING PROJECT  
INFORMATION CONSENT FORM: PARENTS

**Introduction**

The Love of Learning Project is conducted by Karine Lucy Sulahian as part of the requirements for the Master of Arts degree in Educational Psychology, Development Learning and Instruction. The project is designed to train professionals, parents, students, and learners of all kind in working with the most effective methods of motivation to strengthen one's enthusiasm for learning.

**Description of Research**

The research will add to the limited literature available in regards to the level of motivation of children who come from affluent families. The information derived from the research will aid students of a broad age group, teachers, psychologists, educational therapists, tutors, child development specialists, occupational therapists, behavioral therapists, and mentors. Along with new research that will be available, I also plan to develop innovative strategies which will assist in increasing the motivation and love of learning for elementary, middle, and high school children and adolescents.

**Subject Information and Risks**

Each parent will be participating in the study for two hours. You will be asked a series of 10 questions regarding your child's schooling and academics along with a Parental Motivational Survey. I will be highly engaged in answering any questions on an individual basis as well as helping with any concerns relating to you. The risks for participating in this study might include but are not limited to emotional distress, anxiety, and discomfort. You will not receive monetary compensation for participation in this study.

**Confidentiality and Final Disposition of Data**

Any information that is collected in this study that can be identified specifically with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your written permission or if required by law. The cumulative results of this study will be published, but the names or identity of all the subjects will not be made known. All data and documents collected as part of this project will be kept on file by the researcher at the conclusion of the study.

**Benefit of Participation**

However, there may be specific benefits which you can expect as a result of participation in this study, including but not limited to strategies which can possibly assist in increasing the child's motivation and love of learning. This study also has potential to benefit society. By studying individuals of different cultural and religious backgrounds, this study hopes to come up with individualized methods and strategies of motivation. By taking cultural parenting styles into consideration, the strategies will be unique and pioneering.

### Concerns

If you wish to voice a concern about the research, you may direct your question(s) to Research and Sponsored Projects, 18111 Nordhoff Street, California State University, Northridge, Northridge, CA 91330-8232, and by phone at 818-677-2901. If you have specific questions about the study you may contact Dr. Adele Eskeles Gottfried, faculty advisor, 18111 Nordhoff Street, Northridge, CA 91330-8265, and by phone at 818-677-2032.

### Voluntary Participation

You should understand that your participation in this study is completely voluntary, and you may decline to participate or withdraw from the study at any time without jeopardy. Likewise, the researcher may cancel this study at any time.

I have read the above and understand the conditions outlined for participation in the described study. I have been provided with a copy of this consent form to keep and I give informed consent, named below, to participate in the study.

Parent Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First MI

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Witness/P.I. signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

If you have signed this form, please return one copy in an envelope by mail to:

Dr. Adele Eskeles Gottfried  
Department of Education  
California State University, Northridge  
18111 Nordhoff Street  
Northridge, CA 91330-

Or give this form to Karine Lucy Sulahian.

Keep one copy of this consent form for your records.

**Appendix C**  
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE  
Project Title: LOVE OF LEARNING PROJECT  
PARENTAL INFORMED CONSENT FORM: STUDENTS

**Introduction**

The Love of Learning Project is conducted by Karine Lucy Sulahian as part of the requirements for the Master of Arts degree in Educational Psychology, Development Learning and Instruction. The project is designed to train professionals, parents, students, and learners of all kind in working with the most effective methods of motivation to strengthen one's enthusiasm for learning.

**Description of Research**

The research will add to the limited literature available in regards to the level of motivation of children who come from affluent families. The information derived from the research will aid students of a broad age group, teachers, psychologists, educational therapists, tutors, child development specialists, occupational therapists, behavioral therapists, and mentors. Along with new research that will be available, I also plan to develop innovative strategies which will assist in increasing the motivation and love of learning for elementary, middle, and high school children and adolescents.

**Subject Information and Risks**

Each child will be participating in the study for two hours. I will have the children fill out the CAIMI, a booklet which will measure their intrinsic motivation. I will be highly engaged in answering any questions on an individual basis as well as helping with any concerns relating to your child. The risks for participating in this study might include but are not limited to emotional distress, anxiety, and discomfort. Your child will not receive monetary compensation for participation in this study.

**Confidentiality and Final Disposition of Data**

Any information that is collected in this study that can be identified specifically with your child will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your written permission or if required by law. The cumulative results of this study will be published, but the names or identity of all the subjects will not be made known. All data and documents collected as part of this project will be kept on file by the researcher at the conclusion of the study.

**Benefit of Participation**

However, there may be specific benefits which your child can expect as a result of participation in this study, including but not limited to strategies which can possibly assist in increasing the child's motivation and love of learning. This study also has potential to benefit society. By studying individuals of different cultural and religious backgrounds, this study hopes to come up with individualized methods and strategies of motivation. By taking cultural parenting styles into consideration, the strategies will be unique and pioneering.

### Concerns

If you wish to voice a concern about the research, you may direct your question(s) to Research and Sponsored Projects, 18111 Nordhoff Street, California State University, Northridge, Northridge, CA 91330-8232, and by phone at 818-677-2901. If you have specific questions about the study you may contact Dr. Adele Eskeles Gottfried, faculty advisor, 18111 Nordhoff Street, Northridge, CA 91330-8265, and by phone at 818-677-2032.

### Voluntary Participation

You should understand that approval for your child to participate in this study is completely voluntary, and you may decline to allow your child to participate or withdraw your child from the study at any time without jeopardy. Likewise, the researcher may cancel this study at any time.

I have read the above and understand the conditions outlined for participation in the described study. I have been provided with a copy of this consent form to keep and I give informed consent for my child, named below, to participate in the study.

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First MI

Age \_\_\_\_\_ Years \_\_\_\_\_ Months

Parent/Legal Guardian Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First MI

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Witness/P.I. signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

If you have signed this form, please return one copy in an envelope by mail to:

Dr. Adele Eskeles Gottfried  
Department of Education  
California State University, Northridge  
18111 Nordhoff Street  
Northridge, CA 91330-

Or give this form to Karine Lucy Sulahian.

Keep one copy of this consent form for your records.