Relations of Perceptions of the School Goal Structure and Personal Achievement Goals
to Early Adolescents' Emotional Well-Being

by

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Abstract

Adopting a goal theory perspective, the current study explored the relations of early adolescents' perception of the school goal structure and their personal goals, to their emotional well-being. Specifically, the current study examined the independent contribution of personal goals and perception of the school goal structure to emotional well-being and explored how the mismatch between early adolescents' personal goal orientation and their perception of the school's goal structure relates to their emotional well-being.

Accordingly, 251 middle school students in grades 6, 7, and 8 completed self-report questionnaires assessing their personal goals, perceptions of the school goal structure, mental health (anxiety and depression), and self-perceptions (academic competence and self-worth). In addition, teachers completed ratings of the participants' school functioning (problem and competent behaviours).

Correlational results indicated that personal task goals and perception of a school task goal structure was negatively associated with depression, anxiety, and problem behaviours and positively associated with perceptions of academic competence, feelings of self-worth, and competent behaviours. In contrast, personal relative ability goals and perception of a school ability goal structure was positively associated with depression, anxiety, and problem behaviours and negatively associated with perceptions of academic competence, feelings of self-worth, and competent behaviours.

Hierarchical regression analyses revealed that both students' personal goals and their perceptions of the school goal structure predicted their mental health and their self-perceptions of academic competence. However, perceptions of the school goal structure rather than personal goals predicted their feelings of self-worth. In contrast, personal goals rather than school emphases were related to teacher ratings of competent and problem behaviours. Overall,
perceptions of a school ability goal structure emerged as the strongest predictor for all
the indices of emotional well-being used in the current investigation.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT .......................................................................................................................... II

LIST OF TABLES .................................................................................................................... VI

LIST OF FIGURES .................................................................................................................. VII

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ........................................................................................................ VIII

INTRODUCTION .................................................................................................................... 1

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND: A GOAL THEORY PERSPECTIVE ........................................ 6

Definition of Achievement Goals .......................................................................................... 8

INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES IN STUDENTS’ GOAL ORIENTATION ...................................... 9

THE INFLUENCE OF THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT .......................................................... 10

THE RELATION BETWEEN ACHIEVEMENT GOALS AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING .......... 12

THE RELATION BETWEEN ACHIEVEMENT GOALS AND ACADEMIC COMPETENCE .......... 16

INTERACTION BETWEEN PERSONAL GOALS AND PERCEPTION OF THE SCHOOL GOAL STRUCTURE ......................................................................................................................... 18

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM .......................................................................................... 19

SUMMARY ............................................................................................................................. 20

METHOD .................................................................................................................................. 21

PARTicipants ............................................................................................................................ 21

MEASURES ............................................................................................................................. 22

Demographic Information ...................................................................................................... 22

Personal Goal Orientation ...................................................................................................... 22

Perceived School Goal Structure .......................................................................................... 23

Perceived Academic Competence ........................................................................................ 24

Self-worth ............................................................................................................................... 25

Internalizing Problems .......................................................................................................... 25

Teacher Report of School Adjustment .................................................................................. 26

PROCEDURE ......................................................................................................................... 28
## List of Tables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Means, Standard Deviations, and Range for all Measured Variables</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Zero-order Correlations Among the Measures</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Summary of Hierarchical Regressions Examining the Relation of Perceptions</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of School Goal Structure and Personal Goals to Anxiety</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Summary of Hierarchical Regressions Examining the Relation of Perceptions</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of School Goal Structure and Personal Goals to Depression</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Summary of Hierarchical Regressions Examining the Relation of Perceptions</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of School Goal Structure and Personal Goals to Perceptions of Academic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Competence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Summary of Hierarchical Regressions Examining the Relation of Perceptions</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of School Goal Structure and Personal Goals to Self-worth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Summary of Hierarchical Regressions Examining the Relation of Perceptions</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of School Goal Structure and Personal Goals to Problem Behaviours</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Summary of Hierarchical Regressions Examining the Relation of Perceptions</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of School Goal Structure and Personal Goals to Competent Behaviours</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## List of Figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Figure 1</td>
<td>Schematic representation of the constructs of early adolescents' school perceptions, goals pursued, and psychological outcomes.</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Introduction

The academic and emotional well-being of early adolescents has long been a source of concern for parents, educators, and policy makers. A review of the literature indicates that during the early adolescent period, many students experience a deterioration in perceptions of self, affect, motivation, and performance (e.g., Eccles et al., 1993; Roeser, Eccles, & Strobel, 1998). For instance, there is evidence that perceptions of academic competence, academic values, and course grades grow more negative (Eccles & Midgley, 1989) and school is perceived as less interesting, important, and useful (Eccles et al., 1989; Wigfield, Eccles, Maclver, Reuman, & Midgley, 1991). School related worries and concerns also increase during early adolescence (McGuire, Mitic, & Neumann, 1987). In terms of emotional functioning, researchers have found that during early and middle adolescence there is an increase in behavioural problems and emotional distress (Kazdin, 1993; Roeser & Eccles, 2000). Reports from the Canadian Ministries of Education Council (CMEC) indicate that in Canada, 27% of students drop out of school before completing secondary school and 43% of secondary school leavers express dissatisfaction with their school experience. Furthermore, the CMEC reports indicate that about 7% of students between the ages of 12-17 years experience emotional difficulties, such as depression. Although, most adolescents progress through this stage of development showing academic, social, and emotional success, for a significant number of students this is not the case.

Research has shown that the quality of adolescents' emotional functioning has significant effects on their academic functioning. These two domains of functioning, the academic and emotional, likely influence each other in a reciprocal fashion over time (Roeser, Eccles, & Sameroff, 1998). For example, children with internalizing problems such as depression, tend to experience declines in achievement-related behaviours such as lower teacher-rated grades and standardized test scores, lack of persistence in the face of academic failure and challenge.
avoidance (Kovacs, 1992 as cited in Roeser & Eccles, 2000). Similarly, children with externalizing problems also tend to do poorly on both classroom-based tests and standardized achievement tests. In addition, they spend more time off-task and have more behavioural problems within and outside class at school (Roeser, Eccles, & Strobel, 1998). It has been suggested that an understanding of the co-occurrence of emotional, behavioural and academic problems could aid in the assessment of the specific "barriers to learning" and appropriate interventions (Roeser, Eccles, & Sameroff, 1998).

Although it seems that there is an important link between emotional and academic functioning, these two domains have usually been studied in isolation from each other. Therefore, the present study focused on exploring further the links between students' emotional and academic functioning. In studies that do focus on these two domains, emotional well-being has been conceptualized in different ways. In the current study, emotional well-being was defined as the absence of depression and anxiety symptoms over the past two weeks (e.g., Roeser, Eccles, & Sameroff, 1998).

The present study looked at adolescents within a middle school context for several reasons. First, the transition to middle schools or junior high schools has been linked to the decline in academic and emotional well-being (e.g., Eccles & Midgley, 1989; Simmons, Rosenberg, & Rosenberg, 1973). Changes in early adolescents' attitudes and beliefs may be partly linked to the differences in the school environment of elementary schools compared to middle schools or junior high schools. According to Eccles and Midgley (1989), the transition to junior high school is accompanied by changes in the structure and organization of classroom variables. These changes affect students' motivation and achievement beliefs, and consequently their emotional well-being. Eccles and Midgley (1989) in their stage-environment fit theory refer to the developmental mismatch between young adolescents and the environments they
experience at this stage of life. They suggest that this mismatch may be causally related to the negative age-related changes in early adolescents' motivation and self-perceptions. Research conducted to examine the differences in the classroom or school environment across grades or school levels, have provided support for the stage-environment fit theory (e.g., Eccles & Midgley, 1989). For example, Eccles and Midgley (1989) found that the shift to junior high schools was associated with an increase in practices such as whole-class task organization, between-classroom ability grouping, and public evaluation of correctness of work. Furthermore, they found that junior high schools were characterized by less personal and positive teacher-student relationships.

Although a number of middle schools are trying to improve their environment for early adolescents, the changes have not always been successful (Midgley & Edelin, 1998). There is clearly a need for more research within middle school environments. Most of the research to date has focused on the effects of schools on achievement. Limited research has examined the effect of schools on social-emotional well-being (Roeser & Eccles, 2000).

It has been suggested that academic motivational processes play an important role at the individual level in explaining specific patterns of co-occurring externalizing and internalizing problems (Roeser, Eccles, & Strobel, 1998). Adolescents' motivation to learn is believed to be a predictor of their actual effort, learning and achievement in school as well as being an important process that links academic functioning and emotional functioning (Roeser, Eccles, & Sameroff, 1998). In the present investigation, a goal theory perspective on motivation was adopted. Within this perspective, achievement goals refer to the purposes for behaviour that are perceived or pursued in an academic setting (e.g., Midgley et al., 2001). These goals are believed to play an important role in shaping attitude, and the intensity and quality of behaviour (Ames, 1992).
Students' personal goal orientation refers to goals that are pursued whereas the school goal structure refers to goals that are perceived.

A review of current studies indicates that some researchers have focused mainly on the goals students adopted in achievement settings (e.g., Ames, 1992; Eccles, 1983) whereas others have focused mainly on the goals that students perceived in these settings (Jagacinski, 1992). However, it has been suggested that school effects on achievement and other achievement-related behaviours are mediated through students' perception of their environment, as well as their motivational beliefs and emotions (Roeser & Eccles, 2000). Therefore, it is important to take into consideration individual differences as well as situational factors when considering the implications for students' academic and emotional well-being.

There is a current trend towards improving the middle school environment for adolescents (see Anderman & Maehr, 1994, for a review). Moreover, there is a growing body of research evidence to suggest that changes in the nature of the learning environment as students move from elementary to middle school are related to changes in academic motivation, achievement, and behaviour (Eccles, Midgley, et al., 1993; Midgley, Anderman, & Hicks, 1995). During the early 1980's, in the United States, a research team was set up to examine the transition from elementary to middle schools (Wigfield et al., 1991). They found that a number of young adolescents suffered a decline in emotional and academic well-being when they made the transition to middle-level schools. They also found that changes in adolescents' expectancies and valuing of different academic subjects were related to differences in the school environment before and after the transition (Midgley, Feldlaufer, & Eccles, 1989). Thus, students who moved to a more facilitative learning environment experienced no change or positive changes in their attitudes towards school subjects, whereas those who moved to a less facilitative environment suffered declines in their self-perceptions of performance and their valuing of particular
academic subjects (Midgley et al., 1989). The results of these studies (Midgley et al., 1989; Wigfield et al., 1991) have led to interventions that focus on improving motivation in middle-level schools. There is, however, a lack of research done among Canadian schools. Thus, studies such as this that examine the emotional well-being and school adjustment among Canadian students in middle schools are clearly needed.

The purpose of the present research, therefore, was to explore the relation of students' perception of their school goal structure and their personal goals to their emotional well-being. The indices of well-being examined in the current study included mental health (anxiety and depression), self-perceptions (academic competence and self-worth), and school functioning (teacher ratings of problem and competent behaviours). Furthermore, the present research investigated whether perceptions of the school goal structure or personal goals independently contributed to students' mental health, self-perceptions, and school functioning. In addition, the relation of the interactions among students' perceptions of the school environment and their personal goals to the outcome measures were examined. In order to set the stage for the study, an outline of the relevant theoretical perspective on motivation (i.e., goal theory) is described. This is followed by a review of the literature that focuses on research on individual differences in goal orientation, as well as research that has examined the effect of the learning environment on students' goal orientation. Next, a discussion of research examining the relation among achievement goals, emotional well-being, and students' self-perceived academic competence is presented. Figure 1 presents the constructs examined in this study.
Theoretical Background: A Goal Theory Perspective

In trying to understand the decline in academic and emotional well-being of early adolescents, achievement goal theorists have focused on examining aspects of the school environment that relate to the goals students adopt in a given academic setting (e.g., Ames, 1992; Anderman & Maehr, 1994; Eccles, 1983; Maehr & Midgley, 1991). The resulting framework is known as the theory of achievement goals or goal theory. Similarly, in the present study, an achievement goal perspective is taken in trying to understand students' well-being during early adolescence.

Several different approaches exist for the achievement goal perspective (see Eccles, Wigfield, & Shiefele, 1998, for a review). For example, some researchers (e.g., Bandura, 1986; Schunk, 1990, 1991) discuss academic motivation in terms of self-efficacy (defined as beliefs in one's ability to perform given tasks or solve given problems). Within this perspective, goal
setting is believed to be an important cognitive process affecting motivation and the motivational benefits of goals depend on their proximity, specificity, and level of challenge (Schunk, 1990, 1991). Research based on the goal setting theory suggests that specific, proximal and somewhat challenging goals promote both self-efficacy and improved performance (Schunk, 1990). Of relevance to the present investigation is the perspective taken by a number of researchers whereby goals are defined in terms of an individual's immediate achievement-related focus and definition of success (Ames, 1992; Blumenfeld, 1992; Butler, 1993; Dweck & Leggett, 1988; Nicholls, 1984). Within this perspective, an achievement goal concerns the purposes of achievement behaviour. This model represents a social-cognitive approach to motivation and personality in that both students' beliefs (cognitions and perceptions) about themselves and their learning environment are believed to influence their behaviour (e.g., Pintrich & Schrauben, 1992).

Different goal orientations have been found to influence the ways in which students approach, engage in, and respond to achievement-related activities (Ames, 1992). In other words, adopting different goals result in different motivational patterns. More specifically, one's achievement goals are thought to influence cognitive processes that, in turn control the quality of one's school achievements (Covington, 2000). Considerable research has been undertaken to identify different types of goal orientations among students, the motivational processes that are associated with these different goals, and the conditions that elicit them (e.g., Ames, 1984a, 1984b, 1992; Blumenfeld, 1992; Butler, 1993; Dweck & Leggett, 1988). This is because it is now recognized that appropriate motivational patterns play a critical role in achievement motivation (Dweck, 1985). Achievement motivation refers to the striving to perform difficult tasks as well as possible (Schunk, 1992). It refers to achievement-related behaviours such as striving for success, choice among achievement tasks, and persistence (Eccles et al., 1998).
Definition of Achievement Goals

Two types of achievement goal constructs have been identified: Relative ability and task goals. Individuals who have relative ability goals tend to focus on how their ability compares with that of others and they tend to judge their competence according to whether they can outperform others or do as well as others with less effort. In addition, for these individuals, success in school depends on being smarter than other students and trying to "beat them" (e.g., Dweck & Leggett, 1988). For individuals who have task goals, the focus is on understanding a problem or performing one's best. Task goals include working on a task because of its inherent interest; working for personal improvement; and working to gain understanding, insight, or skill (Dweck & Leggett, 1988; Nicholls, 1990). Consequently, for individuals with task goals, academic success depends on interest, effort, collaborating with peers, and trying to understand rather than just memorizing (Ames, 1992; Nicholls, 1990). Competence for these individuals is indicated by self-referenced standards, such as improvement in performance or effortful accomplishment (Jagacinski & Nicholls, 1987).

Achievement goals have been labeled differently by different researchers. These include task involvement versus ego-involvement (Nicholls, 1984), learning-oriented versus performance-oriented (Dweck, 1985, 1986), and as mastery versus ability-focused (Ames, 1984; Ames & Ames, 1984). Although, there are differences between these theories with respect to the exact nature and the implications for achievement behaviour for these two types of goals, the conceptual relations among task, learning, and mastery goals, and among ego, performance, and ability goals are convergent (Ames & Archer, 1988). Therefore, these perspectives are integrated and in the present investigation will be referred to as relative ability and task goals, respectively.
Individual Differences in Students' Goal Orientation

Achievement goals have been found to vary across individuals (Maehr, 1983, 1984). For example, Dweck and Bempechat (1983) found evidence of clear individual differences in children's tendency to orient towards task or ability goals in ambiguous situations, that is, situations that do not highlight one goal over the other. Research in this area has tried to identify various dispositional traits that influence the types of goals individuals adopt. For instance, self-perceived academic competence (Harter, 1981; Meece, Blumenfeld, & Hoyle, 1988) and beliefs about the causes of success and failure (Nicholls, Patashnick, & Nolen, 1985) are all traits that have been found to influence the types of goals children adopt. With respect to self-perceived academic competence, research has shown that children who perceive themselves as academically competent generally adopt task goals. In contrast, children with low perceived ability are likely to adopt ability goals. Others (e.g., Nicholls et al., 1985), have found that children who believe that success in school follows interest, effort, and attempts to understand are more likely to have task goals. In contrast, children who believe that success depends on luck, beating others, and pleasing the teachers tend to have ability goals.

Overall, it seems that children's goal orientation is influenced by certain dispositional characteristics. Thus in a particular context, they would already be predisposed to adopting a particular goal over and above environmental influences. Therefore, due to evidence of individual differences in goal orientation, the current investigation included a measure of students' personal goal orientation.
The Influence of the Learning Environment

Characteristics of the learning environment are also believed to influence the goals that students adopt (Ames, 1992; Ames & Archer, 1988; Maehr, 1991; Maehr & Midgley, 1991; Meece et al., 1988; Midgley et al., 1995). Studies have found that students' perceptions of the classroom learning environment as emphasizing either ability or task goals have different effects on the learning strategies students adopt, their preference for challenging tasks, their attitude towards class, and their beliefs about the causes of success and failure (Ames & Archer, 1988; Meece, 1991; Meece et al., 1988). Thus, it seems that different classroom structures make different types of achievement goals salient and consequently elicit different motivational patterns (Ames, 1992).

Schools as a whole have also been shown to reflect different goal emphases. Some schools, through their policies and practices, emphasize improvement, mastery, and intellectual development (task goals), and others emphasize social comparison, relative ability, and competition among students (ability goals) (Roeser, Midgley & Urdan, 1996). There is research evidence indicating that schools become more ability-focused when students move up in grade level, and in particular when they move to middle-level school (Eccles & Midgley, 1989; Midgley, 1993). In fact, it has been documented that middle school teachers and students perceived the school goal structure as more ability focused and less task focused than elementary school teachers and students (Midgley et al., 1995). Students in middle schools report an increasing emphasis on grades, competition, and performance evaluation with each new grade, which make them focus more on their own competence (Harter, Whitesell, & Kowalski, 1992).

Honor rolls, special privileges associated with relative ability, letter grades, more frequent and formal evaluations, are some of the characteristics of middle schools and junior high schools that suggest that they are more performance-focused than elementary schools.
These school characteristics make students focus more on their ability relative to others. Eccles and Midgley (1989) suggest that these kind of motivational practices are developmentally inappropriate because adolescents have a need to develop their competencies in a safe, non-judgmental environment. Furthermore, a perceived emphasis on ability goals may be especially detrimental during adolescence given that this is a period believed to be associated with heightened self-consciousness (Elkind, 1967). Thus, these practices would tend to make adolescents more sensitive to comparisons of their competencies with their peers (Eccles & Midgley, 1989). In fact, a study conducted by Simmons et al. (1973) provided evidence that adolescents, particularly between the ages of twelve and thirteen exhibited heightened self-consciousness, greater instability of the self-image, and a less favourable view of the opinions held of themselves by significant others. These adolescents were also more likely to be psychologically depressed. Simmons and her colleagues attributed these changes to the transition into junior high school. This assumption was based on evidence that the twelve-year olds in their study who moved to a junior high school had lower global self-esteem, higher self-consciousness, and greater instability of the self-image than their age-peers in elementary school. Thus in determining the developmental appropriateness of the environment, it is necessary to take into account individual differences in students' appraisal of the opportunities afforded by their learning environment (Roeser, Eccles, & Strobel, 1998).

It has been argued that age effects are sometimes confounded with context effects (Eccles & Midgley, 1989). There is evidence that as children enter early adolescence, they develop a more differentiated conception of the nature of ability, moving from equating ability and effort to an understanding of the notion of ability as capacity (Nicholls, 1984; Nicholls & Miller, 1983). These developmental changes are likely to impact the relation between students' orientation to demonstrating their ability and their patterns of learning (Midgley, Kaplan, & Middleton, 2001).
However, Nicholls (1984) suggested that although the changes in ability conception are age-related, context also influences which notion of ability is adopted.

The Relation Between Achievement Goals and Emotional Well-being

Achievement goals have been found to affect learning and achievement, therefore they are also likely to have an effect on adolescents' emotional well-being (Kaplan & Maehr, 1999). In this section, the effects of achievement goals on students' emotional well-being are discussed.

Holding relative ability or task goals is likely to trigger different behaviours, emotions and ways of coping. The effect of goals on well-being is more apparent in stressful situations, such as when students are faced with failure. For example, some studies have found that students with relative ability goals react to failure in strikingly different ways compared to those with task goals (e.g., Diener & Dweck, 1978; Dweck & Leggett, 1986; Elliot & Dweck, 1988). These researchers found that following failure, students with relative ability goals reported negative self-evaluations, displayed negative affect (such as depression and anxiety) and aversion to the task, along with performance deterioration. In contrast, students with task goals did not give up easily and would try to change their problem solving strategies. These students remained optimistic and displayed positive affect. In addition, task goals have been found to be positively associated with pride and satisfaction in success and negatively associated with anxiety in the event of failure (e.g., Jagacinski & Nicholls, 1984, 1987). Within an ability goal, failure represents a threat to self-esteem. Such a threat may lead to anxiety, depressed affect, and a sense of shame (Elliot & Dweck, 1988). From a mental health perspective, the presence of such conditions will in turn impair performance in everyday life including school performance and interpersonal relationships (Kazdin, 1993).
Students' perceptions of the goals emphasized by their school also influence their self-perceptions and emotional well-being. Schools can be perceived as emphasizing personal success (task goal structure) or competition, ability relative to others, and differential rewards for high achievers (ability goal structure). Students' perceptions of the school as emphasizing task goals have been found to be related to positive school affect (Kaplan & Maehr, 1999; Roeser et al., 1996) and positive emotional functioning (Roeser, Eccles, & Sameroff, 1998). In contrast, perception of an ability goal structure was related to negative school affect (Kaplan & Maehr, 1999; Roeser et al., 1996) and negative emotional functioning (i.e., feelings of increased hopelessness, anger, and sadness) (Roeser, Eccles, & Sameroff, 1998).

There is some evidence that relative ability goals can be adaptive. Some researchers have found that relative ability goals are related to positive self-concept, affect, attitudes, and the value of academic work (Midgley, Arunkumar, & Urdan, 1996; Midgley et al., 2001; Nicholls et al., 1985; Skaalvik, 1997). Furthermore, some studies have found that relative ability goals are associated with academic self-efficacy, course grades, and test scores (Elliot & McGregor, 1999; Elliot, McGregor, & Gable, 1999; Midgley et al., 1995; Skaalvik, 1997). It has been suggested that relative ability goals can also be adaptive as long as individuals effectively coordinate relative ability and task goals (Dweck & Leggett, 1988). There is evidence that relative ability goals have positive effects only for students who perceive their ability to be high (e.g., Elliot & Dweck, 1988). Thus, students under the relative ability goal condition who had high-perceived ability demonstrated adaptive patterns whereas those with low-perceived ability demonstrated maladaptive patterns (Elliot & Dweck, 1988). Given that there is still conflicting evidence regarding the effect of task versus ability goal orientation on students' well-being, the current investigation explored this further.
Of the few studies that have investigated the relation between perceived school goal structure and emotional well-being, only Roeser et al. (1996) and Kaplan and Maehr (1999) have considered the relation between personal goals as well as perceived school goal structure and psychological outcomes. In their study, Roeser et al. (1996) utilized a sample of 296 grade eight students from two middle schools. Measures of perceived school goal structure, personal goal orientation, and emotional well-being (perceived academic efficacy, self-consciousness, and general affective experience in school) were developed from the Patterns of Adaptive Learning Survey (PALS) at the University of Michigan and were administered to all students. Roeser et al. found that students who perceived their school as emphasizing task goals reported feeling more academically efficacious, with this relation being mediated through students' personal task goal orientation. In contrast, students who perceived an emphasis on competition and relative ability in their school were more likely to feel self-consciousness in academic situations, with this relation being mediated through their personal ability goal orientation.

In a similar study, Kaplan and Maehr (1999) examined the role of achievement goals in facilitating the emotional well-being of students. They conducted their study using 168 students in the sixth grade and in their first year after a transition to middle school. Kaplan and Maehr also adopted scales from PALS. In addition, they utilized a self-report measure of disruptive behaviour and a measure of general emotional well-being. The emotional well-being measure was adopted from the Self-Image Questionnaire for Young Adolescents (Petersen et al., 1984) and included scales such as general emotional tone, perceptions of relationships with peers, and general behavioural control. Kaplan and Maehr found that pursuing task goals and perceiving the school as emphasizing task goals were related to positive emotional well-being and academic behaviour, whereas pursuing ability goals and perceiving the school as emphasizing ability goals were related to negative academic and emotional well-being. Kaplan and Maehr's results also
indicated that perceptions of the goals emphasized in the school had indirect effects on the dependent variables (i.e., peer relations, emotional tone, impulse control, affect at school, and perceived disruptive behaviour) through perceived academic efficacy and through personal goals and perceived academic efficacy. However, the results also indicated direct effects of students' perceptions of the school goal structure on perceived academic efficacy, emotional well-being.

Both studies argue for the mediating role of personal goals between perceived school goal structure and the psychological outcomes. One limitation of these two studies is that they do not consider the independent contribution of personal goals to emotional well-being. However, research evidence suggests that there are individual differences in the goals children adopt in situations that do not highlight one goal over the other (Dweck & Bempechat, 1983), and that achievement goals vary across individuals (Maehr, 1983, 1984). Therefore, the current study investigated the relation between personal goals on the students' emotional well-being after taking into account students' perception of the school goal structure. Another limitation of the two studies is the fact that the findings were derived solely from self-report measures of emotional well-being. In the current investigation, teacher reports as well as self-reports of emotional well-being were used in order to avoid the problems associated with using information from a single source.

While there is a host of studies that have demonstrated the relation between task goals and adaptive patterns of cognition, affect, and behaviour (e.g., Ames, 1992; Dweck & Leggett, 1998), a number of studies have found evidence of the adaptive role of ability goals (e.g., Elliot & McGregor, 1999; Midgley et al., 1995; Midgley et al., 1996; Midgley et al., 2001; Nicholls et al., 1985; Skaalvik, 1997). Moreover, research done on the effects of performance goal structures at the school level has shown only modest, negative relations with academic and psychological
outcomes (Roeser & Eccles, 1998). Given the conflicting results, the relation between school perceptions and emotional well-being was explored further in the present investigation.

The Relation Between Achievement Goals and Academic Competence

Schools and school achievement are important in that they contribute to adolescents' self-evaluations and well-being. Self-perceived academic competence is an important motivational variable in that it contributes to children's emotional well-being (Roeser, Eccles, & Strobel, 1998). Furthermore, children's self-perception of their academic competence has been found to be a better predictor of their achievement processes independent of any objective measure of academic ability (Eccles, 1983; Meece et al., 1988).

Several researchers have found that children's beliefs about their competence with respect to different tasks become more negative across the elementary school years and into the middle school years (Dweck & Elliot, 1983; Eccles & Midgley, 1989). Harter et al. (1992) found a strong positive relation between the level of perceived academic competence and the level of intrinsic motivation. In their study, a heightened focus on social comparison was related to lower self-perception of academic competence. Harter et al. (1992) found that children who reported a high level of perceived competence reported a high level of intrinsic motivation and the most positive affect. In fact, intrinsic motivation is characteristic of mastery goals (Ames & Archer, 1988). Research that has examined how perceived school goal structure relates to students' feelings of academic competence have found that students who perceived their school as emphasizing task goals reported feeling more academically competent, whereas a perceived stress on ability goals was unrelated to self-perceived competence (Midgley et al., 1995; Roeser et al., 1996).
The decline in self-perceived academic competence has been linked to the transition from elementary to junior high school (Eccles et al., 1989; Wigfield et al., 1991). Both Eccles et al. (1989) and Wigfield et al. (1991) measured students' perceptions of their competence across various subject areas. For example, Eccles et al. (1989) assessed how children's self-concepts of ability for mathematics, English, social, and physical activities, and general self-esteem changed across the transition to junior high school. They found the children's self-esteem and self-concept of ability across social studies, math, and physical activities, declined right after transition.

Adolescents' competence beliefs are not only affected by the goals they adopt or perceive. They have also been found to be related to level of emotional distress (Roeser, Eccles, & Sameroff, 2000). For example, Roeser and his colleagues (2000) found that adolescents who felt more emotional distress at the beginning of seventh grade had lower grades one year later and lower self-perceptions of academic competence two years later. Thus, it seems that there is a negative relation between emotional distress and feelings of competence. As is the case with studies investigating the effect of goals on emotional well-being, studies on self-perceptions of academic competence also do not take into account the independent relation of personal goals and perceptions of the school goal structure on self-perceptions. Thus, the present study takes into account the relation between personal goals as well as perception of the school goal structure on the students' perception of their academic competence.
Interaction Between Personal Goals and Perception of the School Goal Structure

Given the conflicting results obtained in studies investigating the adaptive/maladaptive role of performance goals versus personal goals, discussed above (Ames, 1992; Dweck & Leggett, 1998; Elliot et al., 1999; Elliot & McGregor, 1999; Kaplan & Maehr, 1999; Midgley et al., 1995; Midgley et al., 1996; Midgley et al., 2001; Nicholls et al., 1985; Skaalvik, 1997), it is suggested that the students' level of emotional well-being may depend on the extent of a mismatch or a match between their personal goals and their perception of the school's goal structure. Thus, students who espouse personal goals that are congruent with the perceived school goal structure would experience more positive emotional well-being and self-perceptions compared to those students whose personal goals are discrepant to the perceived school goal structure. Therefore, in order to determine the effect of a mismatch between personal goals and perceived school goal structure, the relation between the interaction among these two constructs and the outcome measures was examined.

In summary, situational demands as well as dispositional factors can affect the type of goals students adopt. This results in differential patterns of cognition, affect, and performance. Although most of the research described above implies that an emphasis on ability goals, that is, a focus on competition and social comparison settings, has adverse effects on adolescents' academic motivation and achievement, there is evidence that for some early adolescents, a focus on ability goals does not necessarily lead to a decline in academic motivation and achievement (Dweck, 1986; Maehr, 1989; Urdan, 1997). In fact, it has been argued that it is important to consider both individual differences in students' personal goal orientations as well as their perception of the school's goal structure when assessing how well an environment fits the students' psychological needs (Roeser, Eccles, & Strobel, 1998). Therefore, the current
investigation takes into account both students' personal goal orientation and their perception of the school's goal orientation.

Some theorists have suggested that a mismatch between individual's needs and the opportunities afforded by the environment may result in unfavorable affective, cognitive, and behavioural outcomes for that individual (Eccles & Midgley, 1989; Lewin, 1935). For example, Eccles and Midgley (1989) in their stage-environment fit theory refer to the developmental mismatch between young adolescents and the environments they experience at this stage of life. They suggest that this mismatch may be causally related to the decline in self- and achievement-related beliefs. The possibility that the outcomes for students might depend on whether their personal goal orientation match their perception of the school's goal structure, has not been explored. Therefore, in the current study, the relation between interactions among adolescents' perception of the school goal emphases and their personal goals on their emotional well-being, was explored.

Statement of the Problem

The aim of this research was to (a) explore the relation of perception of the school goal structure and personal goals to emotional well-being, (b) to examine the independent contribution of personal goals and perception of the school goal structure to emotional well-being, (c) to explore how the mismatch between students' personal goal orientation and their perception of the school's goal structure relates to their emotional well-being.

This study targets early adolescents due to the fact that a review of the literature indicates that many students experience deterioration in perceptions of self, affect, motivation, and performance during this stage of development (e.g., Eccles et al., 1993; Roeser, Eccles, & Strobel, 1998). It is hoped that the present study will contribute to the growing body of research which aims to understand the associations among adolescents' school experience, their academic
achievement, and psychological functioning during a developmental period that is accompanied by normative declines in several indicators of school adjustment. Furthermore, this study aims to provide an integration of educational and mental health perspectives on adolescent development. An understanding about how the context of schooling is related to aspects of children's mental health will provide valuable information to teachers, administrators, and mental health professionals.

Summary

In the present study, the relation of perceived school goal structure and personal goals to emotional well-being was explored. First, the relations of personal goals above and beyond perceived school goal structure, to the outcome variables was examined. The outcome variables included: mental health (anxiety and depression), self-perceptions (academic competence and self-worth), and school functioning (problem and competent behaviours). Second, the relations of students' perceptions of the school goal structure above and beyond their personal goals, to the outcome variables was also examined. Furthermore, the relations between interactions among perceived school goal structure and personal goals on the outcome variables were explored. The interactions among these two constructs were explored in order to ascertain the relation of a match or mismatch among personal goals and school perceptions and the outcome variables.
Method

Participants

The participants were 251 students (127 boys, 124 girls) who were enrolled in grades six
\((n = 66)\), seven \((n = 48)\), and eight \((n = 137)\). Participants were recruited from a public middle
school near a large Western Canadian city. Participation in this study was voluntary and required
both student assent and parent consent. Of those students recruited for participation, 71% received parental consent. Of those students who participated, an incomplete questionnaire was obtained from one student. Data from this student was therefore excluded from analyses.

Participants' ages ranged from 11 to 15 years \(M = 13.11, SD = 0.90\). With regards to
ethnicity, 57.8% of the students were of Western European descent, 16.7% were Asian, and the
remaining 25.5% comprised students from other or mixed racial origins (e.g., East Indian,
Russian, First Nations, African, Latin, Persian, Turkish).

Parental education was used as a measure of socioeconomic status of (SES), with a range
of 1 (grade school) through 5 (graduate school). However, 41% and 46% of the participants did
not know the educational level of their father and the educational level of their mother,
respectively. Of those who reported their parents' educational level, mean education level was
4.30 \(SD = 1.75\) and 4.17 \(SD = 1.70\), for the fathers and mothers, respectively. With respect to
family composition, 73% of the participants reported living with both parents, 13% reported
living only with their mother, 8% reported living with their mother and stepfather, and the
remaining 6% with their father, mother and grandparents, father and grandparents, or in foster
care.
Measures

Demographic Information

A demographic questionnaire (see Appendix C) was administered to each of the students in order to gather information about their age, grade level, parents' or guardians' occupation and education, family composition and ethnic origin.

Personal Goal Orientation

Two scales were used to assess students' personal goal orientation (task goals/relative ability goal orientation - see Appendix D). These two scales were adopted from the PALS, the Patterns of Adaptive Learning Survey (Midgley et al., 1995), developed at the University of Michigan. The scale measuring personal task goals consists of five items and assesses students' preferences for challenging work, task mastery, understanding, and developing new skills (e.g., "Understanding the work in school is more important than the grade I get"). The scale measuring personal relative ability goals is made up of six items and assesses students' desire to demonstrate their ability relative to others and to be recognized by their teachers and parents for their ability relative to others (e.g., "I like to show my teachers that I'm smarter than the other kids"). Students were asked to respond on a five-point Likert scale (1 = "not at all like me"; 2 = "a little bit like me"; 3 = "kind of like me"; 4 = "a lot like me"; 5 = "always like me"). Total scores for the Personal Task Goals Scale were created by averaging the five items. Similarly, total scores on the Personal Relative Ability Goals Scale were created by averaging the six items.

The two personal achievement goals scales were used by Roeser et al. (1996) and were found to have acceptable reliability (Personal Task Goals, \( \alpha = .81 \) and Personal Relative Ability Goals, \( \alpha = .84 \)). Midgley et al. (1998) also tested the reliability and validity of personal goals and found them to be valid and reliable. Internal consistency for task goals was greater than .70 and
greater than .60 for relative ability goals. Stability, tested over a two-year period was .63 for task goals and .61 for relative ability goals. The scales also have good construct and convergent validity. For the present study, internal consistencies assessed via Cronbach's alpha, were found to be adequate (Personal Task Goals Scale, $\alpha = .77$; Personal Relative Ability Goals Scale, $\alpha = .78$).

*Perceived School Goal Structure*

Two scales were used to assess students' perceptions of a task and a relative ability goal orientation in their school (see Appendix E). These scales were also adopted from the PALS. The Perceived Task Goal Structure Scale consists of six items and assesses adolescents' perceptions of their school as emphasizing improvement, mastery, and intellectual development (e.g., "In this school, teachers think how much you learn is more important than test scores or grades"). The Perceived Ability Goal Structure Scale consists of five items and assesses adolescents' perceptions of their school as emphasizing social comparison, relative ability, and competition among students (e.g., "In this school, special privileges are given to kids who get the highest grades"). Students responded to the items using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = "not at all true in this school"; 2 = "a bit true in this school; 3 = "kind of true in this school"; 4 = "true in this school"; 5 = "very true in this school").

Both scales have good internal consistency. For example, Roeser et al. (1996) reported Cronbach alphas of .81 for both the Perceived Task and Ability Goal Structure Scales. In the present investigation, internal consistencies assessed via Cronbach's alpha, were found to be adequate for both the Perceived Task Goal Structure Scale ($\alpha = .83$) and the Perceived Ability Goal Structure Scale ($\alpha = .84$).
Perceived Academic Competence

The Perceived Competence Scale for Children (Harter, 1982, see Appendix F) was used to assess students' perception of their academic abilities. This measure consists of four subscales: (a) Cognitive or Scholastic Competence; (b) Physical or Athletic Competence; (c) Social Acceptance, and (d) General Self-worth. For the purposes of the present investigation, only the Scholastic Competence and the General Self-worth Scales were administered in this study. The Scholastic Competence Scale consists of five items which involve doing well at school, thinking one is smart, being able to do one's homework quickly, figuring out answers and so on. The responses were scored on a four-point scale ranging from 1 (not very competent) to 4 (very competent). Total competence scores were computed by reverse scoring the negative items and averaging the scores of all the five items, with higher scores reflecting higher perceived scholastic competence.

The Scholastic Competence Scale has adequate psychometric properties (see Harter, 1982). Internal consistency ranged from .75 to .83. Test-retest reliability after three months and nine months ranged from .78 to .80 and .75 to .80, respectively. The convergent validity of the Scholastic Competence Scale, as measured by the correlation between teachers' and students' ratings, was in the .40's. The scale demonstrated good construct and discriminant validity, showing differences between the perceived scholastic competence of learning disabled kids and normal kids of the same age, with learning disabled kids rating their competence as lower. In this study, internal consistency as measured via Cronbach's alpha, was .81.
**Self-worth**

The General Self-Worth Scale from the Perceived Competence Scale for Children (Harter, 1982, see Appendix G) was also administered. The items on this scale tap the extent to which one likes oneself as a person, is happy with the way one is leading one's life, and is generally happy with one's life. The responses were scored on a four-point scale ranging from 1 (low self-worth) to 4 (high self-worth). Total self-worth scores were computed by reverse scoring the negative items and averaging the five items. Higher scores reflected higher self-worth. Internal reliability coefficients reported by the author (Harter, 1982), range from .73 to .82. In the current investigation, internal consistency assessed via Cronbach's alpha, was .79.

**Internalizing Problems**

**Anxiety.** The total score from the Revised Children's Manifest Anxiety Scale - RCMAS (Reynolds & Richmond, 1985, see Appendix H) was used in this study to measure anxiety. The participants were asked to respond to each item by circling a "Yes" or "No" answer. Items on this 37-item self-report measure are scored 0 to 1, with higher scores indicating a higher anxiety level. Total anxiety scores were computed by summing 28 of the anxiety items. The remaining nine items on the RCMAS are part of the Lie subscale and therefore were not included in the total score.

Acceptable reliability and validity have been reported for this measure. For instance, research by Reynolds and Richmond (1985) report a reliability estimate of .85. Evidence of convergent validity has also been obtained by comparing the RCMAS and the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory for Children (STAIC) (Reynolds, 1982). The RCMAS total score was correlated substantially with the STAIC A-Trait scale with correlations of .65 for males and .67 for females. There was no significant relation between the RCMAS total score and the A-State
scale, which provides support for the divergent validity of the scale. In the current investigation, internal consistency, as measured by Cronbach's alpha was .84.

Depression. The Children's Depression Inventory - CDI (Kovacs, 1992, see Appendix I), a 27-item self-report scale designed for school-aged children and adolescents, was used to assess depressive symptoms in the present study. Each item consisted of three choices, with scores ranging from 0 to 2: 0 (absence of symptom); 1 (mild symptom); 2 (definite symptom). A total depression score was created by summing all of the items, with higher scores indicating more severe depressive symptoms.

The CDI has acceptable internal consistency as well as criterion and concurrent validity with reliability coefficients ranging from .71 to .89 (Kovacs, 1992). In the present investigation, internal consistency as assessed via Cronbach's Alpha was .86.

Teacher Report of School Adjustment

The Teacher Child Rating Scale (T-CRS; Hightower, Work, Cowen, Lotyczewski, Spinell, Guare, & Rohrbeck, 1986, see Appendix J) was given to teachers who have known the participants the longest and see the participants most regularly, in order to assess the participants' school adjustment. A 38-item scale, the T-CRS assesses behaviours within two domains; problem behaviours and competent behaviours. Eighteen items are designed to assess problem behaviours, such as externalizing problems (e.g., disruptive in class), internalizing problems (e.g., shy, does not express feelings), and learning problems (e.g., poorly motivated to learn and poor work habits). Teachers rated participants on a 5-point scale (1 = "not a problem"; 2 = "mild problem"; 3 = "moderate problem"; 4 = "serious problem"; 5 = "very serious problem"). The total score consists of the sum of teacher ratings on the four subscales relating to Acting-Out, Shy-Anxious, and Learning Problems.
The T-CRS also includes twenty items which assess competent behaviours. These include frustration tolerance (e.g., accepts imposed limits), assertive social skills (e.g., comfortable as a leader), task orientation (e.g., well-organized), and peer relationships (e.g., friendly towards peers and well-liked by classmates). A total score is comprised of the sum of teacher ratings on the following subscales: Frustration Tolerance, Assertive Social Skills, Task Orientation, and Peer Social Skills. The teachers rated each item on how well they describe the student using a 5-point rating scale (1 = "not at all"; 2 = "a little"; 3 = "moderately well"; 4 = "well"; 5 = "very well").

Acceptable psychometric properties have been reported for the T-CRS (see Hightower et al., 1986). Reliability coefficients ranged from .85 to .95 for the subscales. Test-retest reliability, over ten and twenty-week periods, ranged from .61 to .90. Hightower et al's study also indicated high validity, showing differences between well-adjusted and poorly adjusted students. Construct validity has been shown through correlations with other measures of school adjustment and competencies (see Hightower et al., 1986). In the current investigation, internal consistency assessed via Cronbach's alpha, was found to be acceptable (α = .93, Total Problem Scale and α = .96, Total Competency Scale).
Procedure

Initially, the purpose and the procedures of the study were explained to the teachers in order to solicit their cooperation. Subsequently, classroom visits were scheduled whereby the study was explained to the students and parental consent forms (see Appendix A) and student recruitment forms (see Appendix B) were given to students to take home. As an incentive for students to return their signed consent forms, they were informed that those who return signed permission slips (indicating either a "yes" or a "no" response) would have their name entered into a draw for a $20 gift certificate from a local music store.

Arrangements were then made with the class teacher for testing the students (with parental consent). Students whose parents did not permit them to participate worked on independent assignments given by the classroom teacher before the questionnaires were distributed. Data were collected by two trained research assistants and the author during the spring term. Data collection took place during a single session of approximately 45 minutes (one class period) within the students' classroom during regular school hours. The students were given a booklet containing the questionnaires (described in the above section). Research assistants read aloud the instructions and questions. Students were encouraged to answer the questions honestly and were ensured that their answers would be kept confidential. While students completed the questionnaires, teachers completed the T-CRS for each student participating from their class. Teachers who did not complete the questionnaires on the same day handed them in when they were done.
Results

The results of this research are presented in three sections. The first section describes the intercorrelations among all the measures. The second section examines the relation of perceptions of the school goal structure and personal goals on the criterion variables, after taking into account gender, age, and ethnicity differences. The criterion variables included mental health (anxiety and depression); self-perceptions (academic competence and global self-worth); school functioning (problem and competent behaviours). A third series of analyses considered the relation between interactions among students’ personal goals and their perceptions of the school goal structure on their mental health, self-perceptions, and school functioning, after taking into account gender, age, and ethnicity differences. Table 1 includes the means, standard deviations, and range for all the measures used in the study.

Table 1

 Means, Standard deviations, and Range for all Measured Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal Relative Ability Goals</td>
<td>2.72</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal Task Goals</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>.81</td>
<td>1 - 4.6</td>
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<td>School Ability Goal Structure</td>
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<td>1 - 5</td>
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<td>School Task Goal Structure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anxiety</td>
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<td>Depression</td>
<td>7.90</td>
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<tr>
<td>Perceived Academic Competence</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>.73</td>
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<td>Self-worth</td>
<td>3.21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher-rated Problem Behaviours</td>
<td>27.77</td>
<td>11.69</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher-rated Competent Behaviours</td>
<td>73.09</td>
<td>16.36</td>
<td>35 - 100</td>
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Interrelations among Variables

Table 2 reports zero-order correlations among the variables. Of particular interest in this study were the relations of personal goals and perceptions of the school goal structure to the outcome measures. As can be seen, personal task goals were significantly and positively related to self-perception of academic competence and teacher-rated competent behaviours, and significantly and negatively correlated with depression and teacher-rated problem behaviours. In contrast, personal relative ability goals were significantly and positively correlated with anxiety and self-perception of academic competence. Perceiving an emphasis on mastery and improvement in the school (school-task goal structure) was significantly and positively related with self-perception of academic competence, self-worth and teacher-rated competent behaviours, and significantly and negatively correlated with depression and teacher-rated problem behaviours. In contrast, perceiving an emphasis on relative ability and competition in the school (school-ability goal structure) was significantly and positively correlated with anxiety, depression, teacher-rated problem behaviours, and significantly and negatively related with self-perception of academic competence, self-worth, and teacher-rated competent behaviours.

In sum, perception of a school task structure and personal task goals were related to positive outcomes (i.e., higher self-perceptions of academic competence, self-worth, and competent behaviours and lower levels of depression and problem behaviours) whereas perception of an ability goal structure and personal relative ability goals were related to negative outcomes (i.e., higher levels of anxiety, depression, and problem behaviours, and lower levels of competent behaviours, as well as diminished feelings of academic competence and self-worth).
Table 2: Zero-Order Correlations among the Variables (N = 237)

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Note: Gender is coded 0 = Female, 1 = Male; Ethnicity is coded 0 = Non-White, 1 = White.
Predicting Emotional Well-being from Perceptions of School Goal Structure and Personal Goals

It will be recalled that the one of the goals of the present investigation was to determine the extent to which perceptions of the school goal structure and personal goals predict mental health, self-perceptions, and school functioning. To examine these relations, a series of hierarchical multiple regressions employing the mental health, self-perceptions, and school functioning measures as criterion variables was conducted. Perceptions of the school goal structure (school task goal structure and school ability goal structure) and personal goals (personal task goals and personal relative ability goals) were predictor variables.

This series of analyses addressed the question of whether (a) personal goals were independent predictors of emotional well-being outcomes when school goal structure and background variables (gender, age, ethnicity) were taken into account, and whether (b) perceptions of the school goal structure were independent predictors of emotional well-being outcomes when personal goals and background variables were taken into account.

The relative contribution of personal goals and perception of the school goal structure on each of the emotional well-being outcomes after controlling for gender, ethnicity, and age was assessed in two ways. In Model 1, dummy variables representing gender (Girls = 0, Boys = 1), ethnicity (White = 0, Non-white = 1) were entered first together with age in order to control for these demographic variables. In step 2, school perceptions were entered as a block into the equation and in step 3, personal goals were entered as a block. This allowed for the determination of the amount of variance in the criterion variables that is explained by personal goals, above and beyond that explained by gender, age, ethnicity, and perceptions of the school goal structure. In Model 2, the second and third steps were reversed. Personal task goals and personal relative ability goals were entered first, followed by school task goal structure and
school ability goal structure. This allowed for the determination of the amount of
variance in the criterion variables that is explained by perception of the school goal structure,
above and beyond that explained by gender, age, ethnicity, and personal goals.

*Multiple Regression Analyses Predicting Mental Health Outcomes*

As can be seen in Table 3, both school perceptions (Model 1) and personal goals (Model
2) contributed significantly to anxiety, after controlling for variance associated with gender,
ethnicity, and age. Model 1 indicates that personal goals contributed a significant amount of
variance in anxiety, above and beyond perceptions of the school goal structure, gender, age, and
ethnicity. Similarly, Model 2 indicates that school perceptions contributed a significant amount
of variance in anxiety, above and beyond personal goals, gender, age, and ethnicity. Overall,
15% of the variance in anxiety was accounted for in both models. The standardized Beta weights
from both models indicate that the strongest predictor of anxiety was personal relative ability
goals ($\beta = .222, p < .05$). With respect to school emphases, school ability goal structure was a
significant and positive predictor for anxiety ($\beta = .214, p < .01$).

Table 4 presents the hierarchical regression results for depression. The results were
similar to what was obtained for anxiety. Model 1 indicates that personal goals contributed a
significant amount of variance to depression, above and beyond perceptions of the school goal
structure, gender, age, and ethnicity. Similarly, Model 2 indicates that school perceptions
contributed a significant amount of variance to depression, above and beyond personal goals,
gender, age, and ethnicity. Overall, 13% of the variance in depression was accounted for in both
models. In terms of relative predictive power, the standardized Beta weights from both models
indicate that the strongest predictor of depression was perception of a school ability goal
structure ($\beta = .294, p < .01$). Personal task goals was found to be a significant and negative
predictor for depression ($\beta = -.187, p < .05$).
In sum, results of the hierarchical regression analyses on measures of mental health showed that personal goals and perception of the school goal structure accounted for significant proportions of variance in adolescents' self-reports of anxiety and depression symptoms after controlling for gender, age, and ethnicity. The findings indicate that perceiving a school ability goal structure was a significant and positive predictor of anxiety and depression for these early adolescents. Moreover, holding personal relative ability goals was a significant and positive predictor of anxiety, whereas holding personal task goals was a significant and negative predictor of depression.
Table 3
Summary of Hierarchical Regressions Examining the Relation of Perceptions of School Goal Structure and Personal Goals to Anxiety (N = 251)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model 1 Variables</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SEB</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>ΔR²</th>
<th>Model 2 Variables</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SEB</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>ΔR²</th>
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<td>.044</td>
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<td>.672</td>
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<td>.044</td>
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<td>Gender</td>
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<td>-1.31*</td>
<td>.044</td>
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<td>.680</td>
<td>-1.44*</td>
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<td>Pers. task goals</td>
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<td>-1.27*</td>
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<td>.023</td>
<td>.023</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>.379</td>
<td>.214*</td>
<td>.214</td>
<td></td>
<td>Pers. abil. goals</td>
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<td>.375</td>
<td>.222**</td>
<td>.222</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pers. task goals</td>
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<td>.458</td>
<td>.023</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sch. task struct.</td>
<td>.332</td>
<td>.549</td>
<td>.046</td>
<td>.046</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pers. abil. goals</td>
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<td>.375</td>
<td>.222**</td>
<td>.222</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sch. abil. struct.</td>
<td>1.177</td>
<td>.379</td>
<td>.214*</td>
<td>.214</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Gender is coded 0 = Females, 1 = Males; Ethnicity is coded 0 = Non-white, 1 = White. *p < .05, **p < .01.
### Summary of Hierarchical Regression Examining the Relation of Perceptions of School Code Structure and Personal Goals to Depression (N = 251)

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Step 2</th>
<th>Step 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
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<td>0.106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R^2</td>
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<td>0.011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model 2 Variables</td>
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<td>SE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
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<td>69.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>916</td>
<td>916</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Gender is coded 0 = Female, 1 = Male; Ethnicity is coded 0 = Non-White, 1 = White. **P < 0.05, *P < 0.01, **P < 0.001.
Multiple Regressions Predicting Self-perceptions

The results of the regression analyses predicting perceptions of academic competence and self-worth, are presented in Tables 5 and 6, respectively. As can be seen from Table 5, both school perceptions (Model 1) and personal goals (Model 2) contributed significantly to perceptions of academic competence after controlling for variance associated with gender, ethnicity, and age. Model 1 indicates that personal goals contributed a significant amount of variance in the adolescents' perceptions of academic competence, above and beyond perceptions of the school goal structure, gender, age, and ethnicity.

Similarly, Model 2 indicates that school perceptions contributed a significant amount of variance to self-perceptions of academic competence, above and beyond personal goals, gender, age, and ethnicity. Overall, 15% of the variance in self-perceptions of academic competence was accounted for in both models. In terms of relative predictive power, the standardized Beta weights from both models indicate that the strongest predictors of self-perceptions of academic competence were perception of a school ability goal structure (β = -.202, p < .05) and personal task goals (β = .268, p < .01).

Table 6 presents the hierarchical regression results for feelings of self-worth. Model 1 indicates that personal goals did not contribute a significant amount of variance to adolescents' feelings of self-worth, above and beyond perceptions of the school goal structure, gender, age, and ethnicity. In contrast, Model 2 indicates that school perceptions contributed a significant amount of variance to feelings of self-worth, above and beyond personal goals, gender, age, and ethnicity. Overall, 8% of the variance in feelings of self-worth was accounted for in both models. The standardized Beta weights from both models indicate that school ability goal structure was a significant and negative predictor of feelings of self-worth ((β = -.140, p < .05).
In sum, results of the hierarchical regression analyses on measures of self-perceptions showed that personal goals and perception of the school goal structure accounted for significant proportions of variance in adolescents' self-perceptions of academic competence after controlling for gender, age, and ethnicity. However, personal goals did not explain feelings of self-worth after taking into account perceptions of the school goal structure, gender, age, and ethnicity. The findings indicate that perceiving a school ability goal structure was a significant and negative predictor of the adolescents' perceptions of their academic competence and their feelings of self-worth. Moreover, holding personal task goals was a significant and positive predictor of self-perceived academic competence.

Multiple Regressions Predicting School Adjustment

In order to obtain an independent measure of the adolescents' emotional well-being, teachers were asked to rate the participants' on a measure of problem and competent behaviours in school. Tables 7 presents the hierarchical regression results for problem behaviours. Model 1 indicates that personal goals contributed a significant amount of variance in problem behaviours, above and beyond perceptions of the school goal structure, gender, age, and ethnicity. In contrast, Model 2 indicates that school perceptions did not contribute a significant amount of variance in problem behaviours, above and beyond personal goals, gender, age, and ethnicity. Overall, 13% of the variance in problem behaviours was accounted for in both models. The standardized Beta weights from both models indicate that the strongest predictor of problem behaviours was personal task goals ($\beta = -.250, p < .01$).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sch. dist. &amp;</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Sch. dist. &amp;</th>
<th>Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** Gender is coded 0 = Female, 1 = Male; Ethnicity is coded 0 = Non-White, 1 = White. **p** > 0.05, ***p** > 0.01, ****p** > 0.001.
Table 6

**Summary of Hierarchical Regressions Examining the Relation of Perceptions of School Coal Structure and Personal Goals to Self-Worth (N = 231)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 1</th>
<th>Step 2</th>
<th>Step 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Model 1 Variables</td>
<td>Model 2 Variables</td>
<td>B SEB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>R2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>R2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Gender is coded 0 = Female, 1 = Male. Ethnicity is coded 0 = Non-White, 1 = White.
Table 8 presents the hierarchical regression results for teacher ratings of the adolescents' competent behaviours. The results were somewhat similar to what was obtained for problem behaviours. Model 1 indicates that personal goals contributed a significant amount of variance to competent behaviours, above and beyond perceptions of the school goal structure, gender, age, and ethnicity. In contrast, Model 2 indicates that school perceptions did not contribute a significant amount of variance to competent behaviours, above and beyond personal goals, gender, age, and ethnicity. Overall, 10% of the variance in competent behaviours was accounted for in both models. In terms of relative predictive power, the standardized Beta weights from both model 1 and 2, indicate that the strongest predictor of competent behaviours was personal task goals ($\beta = .173, p < .05$).

In sum, results of the hierarchical regression analyses on measures of school adjustment showed that personal goals accounted for a significant portion of variance in adolescents' problem and competent behaviours as rated by their teachers, after controlling for gender, age, and ethnicity. However, perception of the school goal structure did not explain a significant portion of the variance in the adolescents' problem and competent behaviours, after taking into account personal goals and demographic characteristics. The findings indicate that holding personal task goals was a significant and negative predictor of problem behaviours. In contrast, holding personal task goals was a significant and positive predictor of competent behaviours.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>B</td>
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<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.02</td>
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<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.02</td>
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</table>

*Significant at p < 0.05. **Significant at p < 0.01.*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 1</th>
<th>Step 2</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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</table>

Summary of Hierarchical Regressions Examining the Relation of Perceptions of School Goal Structure and Personal Goals to Teacher-Rated Compliance Behaviors (N = 251)

Table 8
Interactions Between Perceptions of School Goal Structure and Personal Goals

In order to examine the relation between a mismatch (or a fit) among personal goals and perceptions of school goal structure on the outcome variables, the interactions between school perceptions and personal goals were explored. In this case, gender, ethnicity, and age were entered first. In step 2, perceptions of the school goal structure and personal goals were entered as a block. Step 3 comprised of the four interaction terms (school task structure x personal task goals; school task structure x personal relative ability goals; school ability goal structure x personal task goals; school ability goal structure x personal relative ability goals). Adding the interaction terms to the model did not make a significant contribution to any of the criterion variables.
Discussion

This study explored two aspects of achievement motivation -- personal goals and perception of the school goal structure -- in relation to early adolescents' emotional well-being. Specifically, the relation between early adolescents' perceptions of the school goal structure and personal goals and their emotional well-being was explored. This was done in order to better understand early adolescents' functioning and experience in school in relation to their general emotional well-being. Studies that look at the link between these two aspects (i.e., schools and emotional well-being) are believed to be important given the fact that these two dimensions, the academic and emotional aspects, have been identified by researchers as having reciprocal influences over each other (Roeser, Eccles, & Sameroff, 1998; Roeser, Eccles, & Strobel, 1998).

The current study, therefore, contributes to existing literature by adding to the limited number of studies exploring the links between achievement goals and the emotional well-being of early adolescents (Roeser et al., 1996; Roeser & Eccles, 1998).

The findings will be discussed according to the main purposes of the study. In addition, sections concerning strengths and limitations of the current study, and future directions, will be discussed. The indices of well-being included in this study were mental health (anxiety and depression), self-perceptions (academic competence and self-worth), and school functioning (problem and competent behaviours).
Relations between Achievement Goals and Emotional Well-being

One of the purposes of the present study was to investigate the relations of perceptions of the school goal structure, personal goals, to emotional well-being. Correlational findings indicated that students who perceived a school task goal structure reported feeling more academically competent, had more positive feelings of self-worth and reported less symptoms of depression than those who did not perceive a school task goal structure. These students were perceived by their teacher as displaying more competent behaviours and less problem behaviours. Competent behaviours included frustration tolerance (e.g., accepts imposed limits), assertive social skills (e.g., comfortable as a leader), task orientation (e.g., well-organized), and peer relationships (e.g., friendly towards peers and well-liked by classmates). In contrast, students who perceived a school-ability goal structure reported higher levels of anxiety and depression. In addition, they viewed themselves as less academically competent and had lower self-worth. These students were perceived by their teacher as displaying more problem behaviours and less competent behaviours in class. Problem behaviours included externalizing problems (e.g., disruptive in class); internalizing problems (e.g., shy, does not express feelings), and learning problems (e.g., poorly motivated to learn and poor work habits).

Regarding the relation between students' personal goals and their mental health, self-perceptions, and school functioning, correlational findings indicated that students with personal task goals felt more academically competent and felt less depressed than students who did not have task goals. These students were rated by their teacher as displaying more competent behaviours in class and less problem behaviours. In contrast, students with personal relative ability goals reported more anxiety symptoms.
Overall, the results of the present study are in accord with findings from previous research (Kaplan & Maehr, 1999; Roeser et al., 1996; Roeser & Eccles, 1998). Perception of a school task goal structure and holding personal task goals are related to positive outcomes, whereas perception of a school ability goal structure and holding personal relative ability goals, are related to negative outcomes for these early adolescents. The few studies that have explored the relations among these constructs, have conceptualized emotional well-being in terms of affect in school, academic self-efficacy, self-worth, use of effective learning strategies, and self-report of in-school conduct (e.g., Kaplan & Maehr, 1999; Roeser et al., 1996). In the current study, in addition to measures of self-perception of academic competence and self-worth, measures of depression and anxiety were included. Thus these findings extend previous work in this area by including mental health outcomes. In addition, past studies utilized only self-reports of school functioning. In the present study, the participants' teacher provided ratings of problem and competent behaviours. This was done in order to avoid the problems associated with mono-method and shared variance.

*Predicting Emotional Well-being from Perceptions of School Goal Structure and Personal Goals*

The second purpose of the study was to examine whether personal goals can significantly predict students' emotional well-being after taking into account perceptions of the school goal structure. Similarly, the contribution of perceptions of school goal structure to students' emotional well-being, above and beyond personal goals was examined. Past studies (e.g., Kaplan & Maehr, 1999; Roeser et al., 1996) concluded that personal goals contribute to students' emotional well-being. Keeping this in mind, the present study examined the predictive nature of personal goals while controlling for school perceptions, and demographic characteristics. Moreover, the predictive nature of perceptions of the school goal structure while controlling for personal goals and demographic characteristics was also examined.
Results suggest that perceptions of the school goal structure as well as personal goals significantly contributed to students' mental health and their self-perceptions of their academic competence and self-worth. However, personal goals rather than school emphases were related to teacher ratings of competent and problem behaviours. This suggests that personal goals are related to actual behaviour in school.

A consistent trend emerged across all of the outcome variables: the associations found between perceptions of a school task goal structure and the measures of emotional well-being were weaker than those found for perception of a school ability goal structure. Previous studies have reported similar findings (Kaplan & Maehr, 1999; Roeser & Eccles, 1998). In the current study, perception of a school ability goal structure was consistently related to negative outcomes across most of the variables of interest in this study. While perception of a school ability goal structure was not a significant predictor of competent and problem behaviours, there was a trend towards significance. In other words, the relation between school ability goal structure and these two outcomes approached significance, in the appropriate directions.

Educational theorists have posited that a focus on competition and social comparison undermines adolescents' motivation, achievement, and well-being (Ames, 1992; Eccles & Midgley, 1989). In fact, previous researchers have found that perceptions of a school ability goal structure were related to diminished feelings of self-esteem and academic abilities as well as an increase in feelings of anger and sadness (Roeser & Eccles, 1998). The results of this study provide further support for these findings.

That perception of a school ability goal structure emerged as the strongest predictor of students' emotional well-being is not surprising given findings from the literature that indicate that during early adolescence there is an increase in self-consciousness (Elkind, 1967). Schools that emphasize competition and social comparison during a time when adolescents are
increasingly sensitive to comparison of their abilities with those of their peers, could potentially lead to feelings of incompetence which could in turn have negative implications for their mental health. These findings fit in with the argument that school practices that focus on ability goals are developmentally inappropriate for early adolescents, providing further support for the stage-environment fit theory (Eccles & Midgley, 1989).

A finding of interest was that personal goals rather than perceptions of the school goal structure emerged as a significant predictor of problem and competent behaviours in school. It is important to note that these two aspects of school functioning were rated by teachers who know the students best. This provided information about the students' well-being from a source other than the students themselves. Thus, it seems that personal goals contribute to actual behaviour in school. These results suggest the need to consider both school perceptions as well as personal goals in order to obtain a more complete picture of early adolescents' well-being in school.

*Interactions Between Perceptions of School Goal Structure and Personal Goals*

The present study also investigated the relation of a mismatch (or a fit) among the adolescents' personal goals and their perceptions of the school goal structure to their emotional well-being. This was done by looking at the interactions between school perceptions and personal goals. The results suggest that a fit or a mismatch among students' personal goals and perception of the school goal structure is not related to their emotional well-being. One possible explanation is that the sample was too homogeneous to provide big enough subsets of students with a fit or a mismatch between the goals they perceive and the goals they pursue, in order to obtain significant results. It is also possible that regardless of the other factors involved, it is the perception of a school ability goal structure that is more related to the students' emotional well-being. In fact, results of the current study and others (Kaplan & Maehr, 1999; Roeser & Eccles, 1998) have found a stronger relation between perception of an ability goal structure and
emotional well-being compared to perception of task goals. Nonetheless, this is an area that merits further investigation.

In sum, the results of this study add to existing literature in that it indicates that perceptions of the school goal structure as well as personal goals affect students' emotional well-being. This suggests that in determining the appropriateness of the school environment to the needs of early adolescents, it is important to consider both their perceptions of the school goal emphases as well their personal goals. In addition, the present study strengthens the findings from previous research that have reported negative relations between perception of a school ability goal structure and early adolescents' well-being.

Strengths, Limitations, and Future Directions

There are several strengths of the present investigation. First, the sample size was large ($N = 251$) and included diverse ethnic backgrounds. In addition, the present study utilized a sample of Canadian adolescents. The measures used to assess the relevant constructs had good psychometric properties. Furthermore, in addition to self-report measures, ratings of the students' problem and competent behaviour in school were obtained from teachers. This provides additional validity to the findings.

The correlational nature of this study and the fact that the data were collected at one point in time limits the interpretations that can be made regarding these findings. Thus, although the results suggest relations among variables, they do not lend themselves to causal interpretation. Longitudinal studies are needed in order to ascertain causal relations among the variables investigated in this study.

Self-report was used which introduces bias in terms of over- or under-reporting. Furthermore, the observed relations among the variables (e.g., personal goals and perceptions of school goal structure) may be inflated due to common method variance with respect to
adolescents' self-reports. While the teacher ratings provided a second source of information regarding the participants' emotional well-being and school functioning, no other measure of school goal emphases was used. It has been argued that it is important to consider individual students' construction of meaning in school when considering the relation between the actual school context and students' well-being (e.g., Ames, 1992). However, obtaining information about the school goal structure from other sources, such as teacher and principal reports or observation (Roeser & Eccles, 1998) in addition to those obtained from the adolescents would provide a more complete picture.

One other limitation is the fact that the findings from this study provide only modest support for the relation between achievement goals and the indices of well-being. This suggests that other factors in addition to achievement goals may be contributing to these outcomes. In fact, it has been suggested that student motivation and achievement may be better explained by studying multiple goals (Wentzel, 1989). Thus in addition to achievement goals, Wentzel (1989) suggested that goals that reflect social competence within the classroom are also necessary for academic success. Thus, future studies on adolescents' emotional well-being and school functioning may need to include measures of social goals as well as academic goals.

Notwithstanding the limitations of the present study, the results of this research provide further support for the usefulness of the achievement goal framework in trying to understand adolescents well-being in school and provides suggestions for directions in future research. While the achievement goal framework has been used mostly to understand achievement and achievement behaviour, these results strengthen the argument that achievement goals are also associated to some degree to emotional well-being and school functioning.
Summary and Educational Implications

The current investigation replicated many findings already established in the literature. Perception of a school ability goal structure is related to adolescents' emotional well-being and school functioning. However, it also points to the importance of personal goals. Although generalization of these findings must be made with caution, they suggest that one potential way of improving the school environment for early adolescents is by de-emphasizing school practices that causes them to focus on their ability relative to others. Studies such as these are particularly relevant given the current move towards improving the school environment for early adolescents.
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Appendixes

*Appendix A - Guardian Consent Form*
PARENT/GUARDIAN CONSENT FORM
(Keep this portion for your records)

Project: Understanding Middle School Students' Feelings About School and Themselves

Principal Investigator: Dr. Kimberly Schonert-Reichl, Associate Professor
University of British Columbia

Co-Investigator: Patricia Charlette, B. Sc. (Master's candidate)¹
University of British Columbia

I have read the letter describing the research project entitled "Understanding Middle School
Students' Feelings About School and Themselves" and I understand the nature and extent of the
involvement for those students who agree to participate. I am aware that my child's participation in this
study is entirely voluntary and that I may withdraw consent for my child's participation without jeopardy to
her or his standing at school.

I have received a copy of this consent form for my own records.

☐ Yes, my son/daughter has my permission to participate.
☐ No, my son/daughter does not have my permission to participate.

PARENT/GUARDIAN CONSENT FORM
(Portion to be returned to the school)

I have read the letter describing the research project entitled "Understanding Middle School
Students' Feelings About School and Themselves" and I understand the nature and extent of the
involvement for those students who agree to participate. I am aware that my child's participation in this
study is entirely voluntary and that I may withdraw consent for my child's participation without jeopardy to
her or his standing at school.

I have received a copy of this consent form for my own records.

☐ Yes, my son/daughter has my permission to participate.
☐ No, my son/daughter does not have my permission to participate.

Signature of Parent or Guardian ____________________________

Today's date____________

Son or daughter's name (please print) ____________________________

¹ This study is being completed by Patricia Charlette in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the Master of Arts in School Psychology at the University of British Columbia, under the supervision of Dr.
Kimberly Schonert-Reichl.
Appendix B - Student Recruitment Form

Dear Kwayhquitlum Student:

You have been invited to participate in a research project that we are conducting at Kwayhquitlum Middle School entitled “Understanding Middle School Students’ Feelings About School and Themselves.” This study is being completed by Patricia Charlette in fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts in School Psychology at the University of British Columbia, under the supervision of Dr. Kimberly Schonert-Reichl.

The purpose of this study is to investigate your opinions about your school’s approach to learning and your feelings about school and yourself. Your participation in this study will help educators better understand the needs of middle school students. We also hope that the results of this study will provide information about how to make middle schools better suited to the needs of students. Listed below are several aspects of the project that you need to know.

1. If you decide to participate in this study, you will be asked to fill out questionnaires that will take you approximately 30-40 minutes to complete. One of the questionnaires will ask you about your background, which will tell us more about yourself and your family. The others will ask you questions about how you like to learn, how you think your school approaches learning, and how you generally feel about yourself. There are no right or wrong answers; the only answers we are looking for are your honest ones. In addition, your classroom teachers will be asked to complete a checklist assessing various dimensions of your classroom behaviours, as well as their perception of how your school approaches learning.

2. After data collection, your name will be removed from the questionnaires and replaced with a code number, so all your answers will be completely confidential. This means that your answers will not be available to anyone at the school, including your teachers, or your parents. However, if your level of emotional well-being as determined from your responses warrants further investigation, your name will be given to the school counsellor who will be prepared to work with you if you and your family choose to do so.

3. Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary and withdrawal from the research study or refusal to participate at any time will not jeopardize your class standing or your marks. Those of you who decide not to participate in this study will be given something else to do in your class related to your regular classroom instruction.

4. IF YOU RETURN YOUR SIGNED PERMISSION SLIP, YOUR NAME WILL BE ENTERED INTO A DRAW FOR A $15 GIFT CERTIFICATE FOR FUTURE SHOP. ONE STUDENT’S NAME WILL BE RANDOMLY DRAWN IN EACH CLASS.

In order for you to participate, you need to take home the attached permission slip and give it to your parent or guardian, so that they may sign it. Please do your best to return the permission slip to your teachers by TOMORROW. Thank you for considering this request. We hope that you agree to participate!

Sincerely,

Kimberly Schonert-Reichl, Ph. D. & Patricia Charlette, B. Sc.
**Participant Assent Form**

I have read and understand the details outlined in this letter regarding the study entitled "Understanding Middle School Students' Feelings About School and Themselves."

I understand that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time without jeopardy to my class standing.

Please check (✓) one box.

☐ Yes, I agree to participate

☐ No, I do not agree to participate

Student's Signature: __________________________

Date: __________________
7. What is your father's occupation? Describe the kind of work he does: Please be specific about what he does and where he works.

- Bachelor's degree (4 year university degree) □
- 1 or 2 years of university or college □
- Don't know □
- High school □
- Grade school □
- Master's (M.A.), doctoral (Ph.D.), or professional (doctor, lawyer) degree □
- Graduate level of education (CHECK ONE)

6. Indicate your father's (stepfather or male guardian) highest level of education (CHECK ONE)

□ Other adults (EXPLAIN, for example, aunt, uncle, mom's boyfriend, friend, parents, etc.)(CIRCLE ONE)

□ Foster mother □ Foster father □
□ Step mother □ Step father □
□ Grandmother □ Grandfather □
□ Mother □ Father □

5. Which of these adults do you live with most of the time? (CHECK ALL THE ADULTS YOU LIVE WITH)

□ Other Adults □ Other Family Members □

4. What grade are you in this year? (CIRCLE ONE)

□ 4th Grade □ 5th Grade □ 6th Grade □ 7th Grade □ 8th Grade

□ 4th Grade □ 5th Grade □ 6th Grade □ 7th Grade □ 8th Grade

□ Year you were born □ (DAY) □ (MONTH) □ (YEAR)

□ What is your birthday? □

□ Years □

3. How old are you? □

□ Years □

□ Are you boy or girl? (CHECK ONE)

□ Boy □ Girl □

2. Are you boy or girl? (CHECK ONE)

1. Are you boy or girl? (CHECK ONE)

Tell us about yourself.

Appendix C - Demographic Questionnaire
9. What is your mother’s occupation? Describe the kind of work she does: Please be specific about what she does and where she works. — e.g., manager of future shop, salesperson at the Gap.

10. How would you describe yourself in terms of ethnic or cultural heritage? (Please check only one)

- European (British, French, German, etc.)
- Russian
- East Indian
- Black (African, Haitian, Jamaican, etc.)
- Latin (Spanish, Mexican, South American, etc.)
- Asian (Chinese, Japanese, Korean, etc.)
- Turkish
- Persian
- First Nations

The space provided (mixed or other if you would describe your ethnic or cultural heritage in some way that is not listed above, please describe your heritage in...
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<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
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<tr>
<td>I worry about doing worse than other students in school.</td>
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<td>I dislike how my parents think I'm smarter than the other kids.</td>
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<td>I would feel successful in school if I did better than the other kids.</td>
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<td>Kids in my class think I'm as smart as they are.</td>
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<td>I like to show off how smart I am.</td>
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<td>I feel good if I am the only one who can answer the teacher's questions in class.</td>
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<td>I feel most successful in school when I learn something I didn't know before.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I like school work the best when it really makes me think.</td>
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<td>I like school work the most if I learn from even if I make a lot of mistakes.</td>
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<td>The main reason I do work in school is because I like to learn.</td>
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<td>I like school work that I will learn from even if I make a lot of mistakes.</td>
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<td>I never think about learning.</td>
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<td>Understanding the work in school is more important to me than like me</td>
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<td>I like me all of the time.</td>
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<td>I like me a little of the time.</td>
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<td>I like me a lot of the time.</td>
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<td>I like me a lot.</td>
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<td>I like me a little.</td>
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<td>I like me a lot.</td>
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<td>I like me a little.</td>
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**Instructions:**

Appendix D - Personal Goal Orientation
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**Appendix E - School Goal Structure**

**Instructions:**

Please indicate your response for the following items by circling the number of the answer that suits you best. (Circle 1 - 5)

1. In this school, teachers believe all students can learn.
2. In this school, understanding the work is more important than test scores or grades.
3. In this school, mistakes are okay as long as we are learning.
4. In this school, teachers think how much you learn is more important than test scores or grades.
5. Teachers in this school work to really understand their students.
6. I as a teacher count a lot in this school.
7. In this school, teachers treat kids who get good grades better than other kids.
8. In this school, only a few kids get praised for their school work.
9. In this school, teachers only care about the smart kids.
10. In this school, teachers have given up on some of its students.
11. In this school, special privileges are given to kids who get the highest grades.
### Example:

Try the example. Do you understand how to do it?

### Sample:

For the example in the sample question, the person decided she was more like the teenager on the left (she likes to go to movies in her spare time)

If the example in the sample question, she decided she was more like the teenager on the left (she likes to go to movies in her spare time).

For you, and put a check (✓) or a cross (✗) in the appropriate box. For each sentence, you only check one box!

### Instructions:

First, decide whether you are like the teenager on the left side of the page or like the teenager on the right side. Don't mark anything yet, but go to that side of the sentence. Decide whether that is only sort of true for you or really true.
| 5. Some teenagers feel they are pretty intelligent, but other teenagers question whether they are intelligent. |
|---|---|
| 4. Some teenagers have trouble figuring out the answers, but other teenagers almost always can. |
| 3. Some teenagers do very well at their classwork, but other teenagers can do their school work more quickly. |
| 2. Some teenagers are pretty slow in finishing their school work, but other teenagers aren't so sure and wonder if they are as smart. |
| 1. Some teenagers feel that they are just as smart as me, but other teenagers aren't so sure and really sort of me. |
Appendix C - Global Self-Worth
Appendix H - Revised Children's Manifest Anxiety Scale

The Revised Children's Manifest Anxiety Scale (RCMAS - Reynolds & Richmond, 1985), is available from Western Psychological Services, 12031 Wilshire Blvd, Los Angeles, California, 90025-1251.
Appendix I - Children's Depression Inventory

The Children's Depression Inventory (CDI - Kovacs, 1992), is available from Western Psychological Services, 12031 Wilshire Blvd, Los Angeles, California, 90025-1251.
Appendix J - Teacher-Child Rating Scale

The Teacher-Child Rating Scale (T-CRS; Hightower et al., 1986), is available from PMHP, Primary Mental Health Project, 575 Mt. Hope Avenue, Rochester, New York, 14620