

MOTIVATION IN LEARNING

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ABSTRACT

Motivating the learner to learn is pertinent to curriculum implementation. This is because motivation is an influential factor in the teaching –learning situations. The success of learning depends on whether or not the learners are motivated. Motivation drives learners in reaching learning goals. Since modern education is compulsory, teachers cannot take learners' motivation for granted, and they have a responsibility to ensure learners are motivated to learn. Teachers must persuade learners to want to do what they ought to do. This task-understanding and therefore influencing learners' motivations to learn-is the thrust of this article.

KEYWORDS: Motivation, Self-determination, Intrinsic, Extrinsic.

INTRODUCTION

Motivation plays a vital role in every sphere of life and various phases of activities. Our success and achievement in life depends on motivation. It is, in one form or other, always present at the root of all human activities. Motivation is said to be the 'heart of learning', 'golden road to learning' and 'potent factor in learning', as all learning is motivated learning. Adequate motivation results in promoting reflection, attention, interest and effort in the pupils and hence promotes learning. Motivation plays a vital role in every sphere of life and various phases of activities. Our success and achievement in life depends on motivation. It is, in one form or other, always present at the root of all human activities. Motivation has become a central construct in both educational and psychological research and plays a significant role in several theories of human development and learning.

Motivation is the reason why people behave the way they do. Motivated behavior is energized, directed and sustained. Motivation is concerned with the inculcation and stimulation of learner's interest in the learning activities. Many people incorrectly view motivation as a personal trait, that is, some have it and others do not. Motivation is the result of the interaction of the individual and the situation. It is a move towards set goals. It is a force that energizes behavior of individuals. It is an art of inculcating stimulating interest in different activities in the pupils. Motivation can be defined as an inspiration that propels someone into an action.

Motivation is a process by which the learner's internal energies are directed toward various goal objects in his/her environment. An individual may be highly motivated to perform well in a task and completely unmotivated in another. This means that when people are motivated, they will work tirelessly to achieve their aspirations.

Types of Motivation

Based on Self-determination Theory (SDT), learners may be driven to learn by two sources— internal and external. Generally, there are two types of motivation; intrinsic and extrinsic motivation-

- **Intrinsic motivation-** Here stimulus is internal to the person; it can be biological, emotional, spiritual, or social. In this case, there are no external rewards. The activity is undertaken for self-pleasure and individual satisfaction. It may be characterized by curiosity and a desire to meet challenges. Intrinsic motivation is driven by an interest or enjoyment which a person feels in a task. It is within the individual and does not rely on external pressure. Intrinsic motivation is an inner force that motivates students to engage in academic activities, because they are interested in learning and they enjoy the learning process as well (Schiefele in Chow &Yong). Their (learners) abilities are put to the test and they are eager to learn even when there are no external rewards to be won (Chow &Yong). Students with learning goals of seeking understanding for mastery of science content and skills are said to be intrinsically motivated (Cavallo, et al.). Intrinsic motivation is more influenced than extrinsic motivation because intrinsic motivation raises from learner self not influenced by an external factor.
- **Extrinsic motivation -** Here stimulus is outside the person, it can be there in the form of operant conditioning or social cognition. It refers to the performance of a task for attaining an outcome. It may be in the form of some kind of reward, social approval, or appreciation. Harmer explained that extrinsic motivation is caused by any number of outside factors that might include the hope of financial reward; need to pass an exam or the possibility of the future level. In addition, Marsh defines motivation as an external stimulus that follows as a result of a certain response. So, extrinsic motivation is any stimulus that comes from outside of learner, and which drives the learner in the learning process. According to Ryan and Deci, Deci and Ryan; Niemic and Ryan, learners are externally driven to perform an action with an

anticipation of some outcome other than the learning itself. Chow and Yong posit that extrinsic motivation drives students to engage in academic tasks for external reasons. According to Benabou and Tirole, extrinsic motivation promotes effort and performance with rewards serving as positive reinforcers for the desired behavior.

Dimensions of Students' Motivation

Researchers generally agree on four major dimensions that contribute to students' motivation (Bandura; Dweck, Murray, Pintrich, Ryan & Deci, Seifert,). At least one of these dimensions must be satisfied for a student to be motivated. The more dimensions that are met, and the more strongly they are met, the greater the motivation will be. These dimensions are:

- **Competence:** The student believes he or she has the ability to complete the task.
- **Control/autonomy:** The student feels in control by seeing a direct link between his or her actions and an outcome and retains autonomy by having some choice about whether or how to undertake the task.
- **Interest/value:** The student has some interest in the task or sees the value of completing it.
- **Relatedness:** Completing the task brings the student social rewards, such as a sense of belonging to a classroom or other desired social group or approval from a person of social importance to the student.

The interplay of these dimensions—along with other dynamics such as school climate and home environment—is quite complex and varies not only among different students but also within the same students in different situations.

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE LEARNERS' MOTIVATION

Some of the most interesting authors and their classifications factors that influence learners' motivation will be mentioned as follows. According to Spolsky, the most meaningful factors that affect the teaching/learning process are the teaching method, the age, the aptitude, the attitude of learners. Among these factors, the last factor i.e. attitude is the one that most affects motivation because it directly relates to the education context (teachers, friends, and family) that surrounds the learner (Redondo & Ortega Martín,). Skehan lists four motivating factors as the most significant:

1. **The activities in the teaching/learning process:** This factor is important because a great part of the learner's interest in the subject will depend on the types of activities developed in class.
2. **The final results:** Good results are understood as a reward for the learner, whereas bad results are similar to a punishment. In this case, motivation is the consequence of these results. Students with good final results are going to be more motivated than students with bad results.
3. **Internal motivation:** This is connected to the student's inner drive about the subject as a consequence of previous experiences and the use of the subject to their daily lives.
4. **Extrinsic motivation:** The influence of external stimuli such as rewards or punishments.

IMPORTANCE OF MOTIVATION IN LEARNING

- ❖ Learning the motivation of students in education is important. A learner learns best when he/she recognizes the need and develops the desire to learn. This is through motivation. Motivation stimulates learners to think, concentrate, and learn effectively. Bakar stated that motivation increases the performance of learning. Learning is an active process requiring a participative role. It influences the rate of learning, the retention of information, and the desire to learn.
- ❖ Motivation increases the speed of work that a learner is putting to achieve a goal. In education, motivation is a factor of high or low points of the goal (Brown,). When not well-motivated, a learner learns very little with difficulty as he/she sees no need to learn. Therefore, motivation provides the effort and energy that a learner needs to achieve the task. It brings the learner to the proper frame of mind for learning. It concentrates the attention and energy of a person on the activity or knowledge to be learned. Motivation determines whether a student will pursue a task (even a difficult one) with enthusiasm or a lack luster attitude.

- ❖ Motivation is a significantly important factor for academic learning and achievement across childhood through adolescence (Elliott & Dweck.). Inspiring learners to learn is a major concern in any training situation. Motivation is one of the prime tasks of teaching. The instructor should ensure that it is built in every lesson presentation. Motivation should be started during the introduction of the lesson to ensure the learners' interest and to direct attention to what is to be learned. It should not stop at the introduction stage but be continued throughout the entire lesson presentation.
- ❖ The motivation of learning activities helps the learner to concentrate on what he/she is doing, and thereby gain satisfaction. Continuous motivation is needed to help learners concentrate on the lessons to be learned. If an individual is motivated, he/she will exude some form of satisfaction. This helps in the self development of the learner.
- ❖ Motivation directs learners' behavior toward particular goals. It determines the specific goals toward which learners strive; thus, it affects the choices students make. For example, whether to enroll in an art class or science, whether to attend a school football game during the week or complete an assignment that is due the next day.
- ❖ Motivation increases the initiation and persistence of learning activities. It increases students' time on task and is also an important factor affecting their learning and achievement. vii. Motivation enhances cognitive processing. It actually affects what and how information is processed, because motivated students are more likely to pay attention and try to understand the material instead of simply going through the motions of learning in a superficial manner.

CONCLUSION

Students' motivation is a critical part of success in education and later life, but it has often been overlooked by educators. This article has demonstrated that, in the process of teaching and learning, the motivational variable have a potentiating effect on students' learning. Efforts geared towards improving the quality and effectiveness of teachers is unlikely to improve students' achievement if large numbers of students are unmotivated to learn. Therefore, the present article provides teachers and educators with valuable information on students' motivation to learn. Understanding of how each of the motivational goals, types, and dimensions influences learning will place teachers and educators in a better position to help and support students who have long been struggling with learning. The role of teachers in motivating learners cannot be overemphasized. It is recommended that teachers should create an active learning environment that enhances students' perceived autonomy and competence, providing students with choices and opportunities for self-directed learning, and planning learning activities that might increase their feeling of mastery. Finally, teachers are encouraged to employ all the motivation strategies earlier discussed. This will enhance students' learning and improve their academic achievement.

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